iD Yosua Saut Marulitua Gultom

Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta

iD Abel Josafat Manullang

Universitas Padjadjaran

TUİC
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STRENGTHENING THE EUROPEAN UNION'S FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA IN THE FACE OF RUSSIA'S INVASION OF UKRAINE

This article provides an analysis of the EU's collective response to Russia's foreign policy, particularly in the context of Ukraine in 2014 and 2022. This article uses the qualitative descriptive research method that utilizes both primary and secondary data pertaining to the opted issue. The ongoing developments reflect a significant shift in the EU's view of relations with Russia, transitioning from the concept of strategic partnership to a more assertive framework of strategic competition. This transformation became sharper with Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, and reached its peak during the Russia-Ukraine war in 2022. This article highlights aspects of the development of norms and values in the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in response to Russia's aggressive policy, as well as their impact on strengthening EU institutionalism as a global player. Through the use of the normative institutionalism theoretical framework under said method, this article brings to the table two major developments that the CFSP underwent in the face of the two aforementioned conflicts. First, it demonstrates how the norms held by the EU, such as peace, democracy, and human rights, play a key role in forming the basis for strengthening EU institutions in the implementation of the CFSP. In addition, this collective response not only reflects the EU's stance towards Russia, but also has a significant impact on the evolution of the dynamics of EU institutionalism itself.

Keywords: European Union, CFSP Normative Institutionalism, Russia

Introduction

From the time of World War I to World War II, Europe's security was shaken by these devastating wars, which caused a lot of damage to many sectors in European countries, especially security and economy. After the end of the world war, there were still conflicts resulting in the cold war, namely the division between the eastern bloc and the western bloc which finally climaxed in the cold war which triggered the threat of nuclear war until the war finally ended in the 1990s. During this period, the idea of integration among European countries emerged through the Treaty of Rome in 1957 which established the European Economic Community. This agreement then developed to give birth to further integration, namely the European Union which consists of 27 member states headquartered in Brussels, Belgium. The integration of European countries under the European Union led to a shift in policy from individual countries to the common institutions of the European Union (Mix, 2013).

The European Union has become a global actor that plays an important role in the domestic and foreign affairs of EU member states. The EU in its foreign policy strives to always speak with one voice in all world affairs. This allows member states to solve all challenges uniformly and especially those challenges that cannot be solved alone (European Commission, 2019). To some extent, European integration is moving past Westphalia, resulting in a post-Westphalian mode of state in Europe. Policymaking is getting further decentralized at multiple levels of government (subnational, national, and EU). Despite this multi-tiered governing framework, the state endures as the main actor. Nonetheless, the modern EU is built on a partnership, combining supranational and intergovernmental elements uniquely. The carefully negotiated merging of sovereignty in certain areas has boosted governments' efficacy, helping them to better address the difficulties of the Cold War and, more recently, the globalization movement. However, governments are no longer the only major players in European policy making. In accordance with the policy domain, decisions take place by various subnational groups, government ministries, and institutions in Europe (Wunderlich, 2010).

CFSP comes as a fulfilment of EU integration. The Maastricht Treaty, which formed the CFSP, was signed in 1993. It succeeded the European Political Cooperation (EPC), which had coordinated member states' foreign strategies since the 1970s. The CFSP is supported by a specific institutional architecture in which national diplomats and EU officials establish policy by agreement. The CFSP is managed by the High Representative, the EU's foreign policy leader, and is backed by the European External Action Service (EEAS), which is headquartered in Brussels and maintains approximately 140 EU representatives in foreign nations and international bodies.

Following its inception, the CFSP has witnessed its share of conflicts or problems to address. For example, in response to a violation carried out by the Uzbek Security Forces in Andjian, the EU responded through the CFSP by implementing an arms embargo which would later be extended up to 2009 (SIPRI, 2012). Such a feat demonstrated the EU's steadfast commitment to its values and norms, in this case respect to human rights and rule of law, as an institution. In doing so, the EU demonstrated its capacity as a regional actor that dances to its own tune. A tune that is imbued by values and norms that guide the EU and its members through the anarchic international system. With that in mind, it can be seen how the CFSP would be directed across numerous problems around the globe, from the Myanmar crisis in Southeast Asia to regional issues stemming from some of Russia's strides in Eastern Europe.

CFSP is under challenge since Russia's attack on Ukraine (2014-Current). While the EU is highly dependent on energy supplies, there are threats to the integration of EU foreign relations. The war waged by Russia in Ukraine has had two significant implications for EU foreign policy. First, it is inconceivable that there won't be a coordinated EU policy reaction given the severity of Russia's breach of the European security order. In this instance, the EU's foreign policy response had to come quickly, and failing to respond as a group was not an option. Secondly, It is necessary for the EU to respond to this situation across multi-sector policy areas due to Russia's significant influence in economies, societies, and security order for EU member states, especially in the eastern part. Furthermore, the dire impact of the attack has gain attention of the affected people to call the functioning of the EU as political community, inciting a heightened response from member states both inside and outside of the EU to oppose the Putin regime's acts This situation has rendered the need for a coordinated response even more apparent. Putin's aggressiveness can be used to explain the collective reaction of EU member states to the conflict, but it is not possible to properly explain this response without also acknowledging that it is based on a norm that has been developed over more than 50 years in the Europe. (Maurer et al, 2023). Therefore, the author in this article will focus on how the EU responded to Russia's invasion of Ukraine collectively through the CFSP and what development to the CFSP itself?

The author begins this article with building the theoretical framework using normative institutionalism followed by the explanation of qualitative research methods. In the results and discussion, the author separates it into four main points. First two half of the discussion is to describe the actorness of the European Union with the construction of CFSP to validate it.

The second two half of the discussion is to explain the EU's CFSP in response to Russia during annexation of Crimea in 2014 and invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Then the author concludes the research by summarizing the findings and giving his suggestion to further enhance the CFSP framework.

I. Theoretical Framework: Normative Institutionalism

The study of institutionalization internationally can be seen back through the formation of the 1815 Congress of Vienna. In this historical event, European countries systematically began to gather to negotiate international issues after the Napoleonic wars in a forum, which formed institutions. During the formation of the 1815 Congress of Vienna, basic regulations regarding diplomatic rules were established. This was an important development in one of the main institutions governing interstate relations, transforming diplomacy from a somewhat discredited activity to one that served the international system as well as individual states. Subsequently, the Congress of Vienna became an International Governmental Organization (IGO) formed by the major European powers to re-establish order and stability on the continent through international cooperation, particularly on European security and trade. Institutionalization in international relations then developed continuously, with the Concert of Europe, the Nations League, to the current United Nations. Institutionalization also does not only occur at the international level, but regionally, such as ASEAN, CONCACAF, the Arab League, and the most established is the European Union.

The study of the international system as the foundation of institutionalization tends to be dominated by rational perspectives such as realism with its balance of power theory or liberalism with its liberal institutionalism (Barkin & Weitsman, 2019). Both perspectives were deeply rooted especially during the cold war. However, in the contemporary world period after the collapse of the Soviet Union, we can see many ideational aspects that shape international cooperation. Wendt's notion of social construction in international relations became a monumental foundation for the emergence of alternative ideas in the study of international relations, which then spread to the study of international organizations.

Against contemporary conditions in international relations, there is dissatisfaction among academics in analyzing various phenomena regarding the behavior of international institutions in recent times. This has led to demands for the emergence of new ideas in international relations studies that seek to restore and refine the study of institutions as important variables in international political life. In its development, various ideas on this new institutionalism emerged.

There are at least four different approaches, namely historical, rational choice, sociological, and feminist. These different alternative approaches are then collectively categorized as Neo-Institutionalism (Schmidt, 2017; Bodnieks, 2020; Ansell, 2021).

The use of normative institutionalism in international relations studies is relatively rare. Such is the case given said perspective's focus on the importance of norms and values within an institution. In a way, the normative institutionalism posits a logic of appropriateness given the role of value and norms in influencing the moves or policy of its states (Jönsson & Tallberg, 2001). This is contrasted by the more established traditional view that emphasizes the logic of consequences behind the moves taken by states (Krasner, 1999). Such a logic can be understood given the rational disposition of states in an anarchical international system where they would pursue their respective national interests with any means they see fit. The logic of consequences resonates well with the realism theory, which in itself is already a popular school of thought in international relations studies. However, the normative institutionalism perspective nonetheless provides a relevant tool in the contemporary international system where it is witnessing the growing role of international organizations for its member states, among them is the EU and its firmly held norms and values.

Here, the author opts to use the normative institutionalism approach. Normative institutionalism examines how political institutions' enshrined norms and ideals influence the conduct of decision-makers (Miller & Banaszak-Holl, 2005). Regardless of their differing preferences with regard to specific policy issues, normative institutionalism supposes the fact all member nations are actually determined to guarantee the political continuation of the EU (although probably to some extent) and that its values are considered as performing their normative and policy commitments. This demonstrates that normative and policy commitments made by member states throughout the establishment of EU institutions, border expansion, and adoption of policies to govern internal dynamics and external interactions impact EU decision-making on a given subject.

EU members have established two norms as a basis for their foreign policy and external relations: collective action as a fundamental characteristic, which includes advance for the EU's functionality and credibility in international stage; and uniformity as well as coherence in the formulation of EU policies across different areas of concern. In addition, the EU has established various other norms through its official statements (both treaties and official statements).

The EU has collectively reaffirmed its support for democracy and the rule of law, human rights, conflict prevention, strengthening multilateral institutions, free trade and development, and environmental protection (Thomas, 2009).

Normative institutionalism offers a valuable lens to analyze the European Union's (EU) foreign policy, emphasizing how shared norms and values guide member states' decisions. However, the authors acknowledge that this approach has limitations. Critics argue it underestimates the persistent influence of national interests and power politics within the EU, particularly in crisis scenarios where states prioritize sovereignty over collective action. Furthermore, normative institutionalism may oversimplify the complexity of institutional dynamics by overemphasizing norms while overlooking pragmatic considerations, such as economic or security trade-offs, that often shape policy decisions. Furthermore, due to the scarce use of this approach in International Relations Studies, very few have looked at the empirical evidence of normative institutionalism (Jönsson & Tallberg, 2001).

A comparison with competing theoretical frameworks highlights these critiques. Realism, for instance, posits that states act primarily in pursuit of power and security, focusing on the role of national interests even within a normative-driven institution like the EU. From this perspective, the EU's response to crises, such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine, can be interpreted as a pragmatic alignment of member states' strategic interests rather than a purely normative endeavor. Liberalism, on the other hand, underscores the role of interdependence and institutional design in fostering cooperation. While normative institutionalism aligns with liberalism's emphasis on institutions, it diverges by prioritizing ideational factors over economic and political interdependencies.

However, the EU's sui generis character as an institution designed to address interstate power struggles, as well as its self-conception as a new type of actor in world politics and a normative or ethical force, has led EU research to focus on how the EU and its foreign and security policies differ from traditional forms of state foreign policy, rather than applying conventional IR concepts (Jorgensen et al, 2015). Therefore, the author argues that the normative institutionalism approach is crucial to analyzing the EU's behavior, especially in analyzing their response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine through the CFSP mechanism.

II. Methodology

This research was conducted using a qualitative research method. Qualitative research seeks to find the meaning, process and context of a behavior or social event that is being observed.

In general, qualitative research realizes the results of research from analytical power so researchers are required to be able to use theories that are relevant to the phenomenon being studied (Bakry, 2016). The data sources used in this research are primary and secondary data sources procured from books, journals, reports, official statements to other sources such as news. This qualitative descriptive research method is used with the aim of understanding developments in the implementation of EU foreign policy in relation to Russia's strides through the normative institution theoretical framework. With the framework in mind, it will be used to assist the writers in understanding how the EU, through the CFSP, maintains its norms and principles as a regional actor that encompasess its members' interests as it traverses through issues stemming from Russia. The aforementioned data would be called upon to ground the argument and interpretation provided by the normative institution framework.

III. Understanding the EU's Capacity as an International Actor

Having a solid institutional framework, the European Union has grown rapidly thanks to the benefits of pooling sovereignty from state actors to become a supranational actor that is important in decision-making in many different fields, and better than other global actors that are still state-centric because the declared goals of the EU's founding spirit are to promote peace through integration, human rights and democracy (SciencesPo, 2018). European integration is the result of specific historical circumstances and the voluntarism of actors who prioritize the search for consensus within a multilateral framework over and above power relations. European development is a political endeavour whose ultimate goal is to realize collective peace and security on the continent by transcending national state interests (Colomba-Petteng et al, 2022).

The European Union (EU) has emerged as an influential international actor in the security domain, shaping security dynamics within and beyond its borders. Through diplomatic efforts, security cooperation frameworks and countering transnational threats, the EU has demonstrated its commitment to promoting peace, stability and resilience in a complex world. The EU has stood to date based on its legitimacy and embeddedness in the broader foreign policy framework of security-related policies. The EU's foreign relations framework is primarily guided by the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The CFSP provides a platform for member states to coordinate their foreign policy positions and promote common security interests. This framework allows the EU to address security challenges collectively and project its influence as an international actor (Chaban et al, 2017).

Then one of the EU's main achievements as an international security actor is its focus on conflict prevention and crisis management.

Through diplomatic initiatives, mediation efforts, and peacebuilding measures, the EU has played an important role in preventing conflicts and resolving crises. Examples include its involvement in the Iran nuclear negotiations, mediation efforts in the Balkans, and peacebuilding missions in Africa. EU civilian missions, such as the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), have contributed to strengthening institutions and promoting stability in conflict-affected regions (Greiçevci, 2011).

The EU also recognizes the importance of international cooperation in addressing global security challenges. The EU actively engages with international partners, including regional organizations and other international actors, to enhance security cooperation and promote stability. The EU works closely with the UN, NATO, and the OSCE to coordinate efforts and share best practices. Through its partnership agreements, the EU collaborates with countries and organizations around the world to address common security threats, such as terrorism, organized crime, and cyber threats.

However, the EU faces challenges that affect its effectiveness as an international security actor, including diverging interests among member states and the need for coherent and agile responses to evolving security threats. Palm & Crum (2019) identified significant variation among EU outward military operations in their strategic structure. Some systematic shifts have occurred over time. Most EU military missions are value-based. The EU in its missions emphasizes the humanitarian concerns at issue. Typically, EU military operations in this regard aim to support the implementation of peace agreements or democratic elections. But in recent years, they have found that utility-based interests, such as trade, combating terrorism, and border control, are increasingly coming to the fore.

In the case of the Russia-Ukraine war, it has developed numerous sanction packages over the course of the war. Unfortunately, the path to its implementation and development has not been without bumps. For example, during deliberations on the 12th sanction package, Austria blocked the sanction. Such a move was taken given its interest in having Raiffeisen Bank International removed from Ukraine's list of entities that support Russia's war (O'Donnell, 2023). Eventually, Ukraine removed said bank from the list following a discussion with the European Commission (Payne, 2023). This particular example demonstrates one of the challenges for an actor as big as the EU. Despite its enormous resources, it must cater to its member states' interests to ensure or support the strides or policies it wishes to pursue. For issues in the security field, such a landscape would be one riddled with more interests given the far-reaching implications of issues in that field.

We can see that the EU has significant prospects as an international security actor. The ongoing development of the European Defense Union, which aims to strengthen defense cooperation and capabilities among member states, is a positive step towards increasing the EU's effectiveness in addressing security challenges. Moreover, the EU's focus on integrating security with other policy areas, such as migration, climate change and cyber threats, reflects a comprehensive approach to security that is in tune with the complex and interrelated nature of contemporary security challenges (Renard, 2016).

A. CFSP: Development and Institutional Framework

When examining the CFSP, it is important to emphasize the importance of intergovernmentalism, particularly in defense-related matters that distinguish the CFSP from other policy areas within the EU. Although the CFSP may be a distinct policy compared to other mechanisms in the EU, it remains within the European External Action Service, where the European Commission plays a significant role in implementing the CFSP. This mutual influence between the communitarian and intergovernmental aspects of the CFSP is why EU officials and representatives of EU member states prefer to talk about 'effective multilateralism' rather than global governance when describing the EU's international presence (Miskimmon, 2010).

EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy is characterized by the principle of unanimity (Colomba-Petteng et al, 2022). This means, 27 member states should agree on clarifying their stance on issues to conduct joint action for common security. In its development, CFSP has been an important feature for EU's foreign policy institutionalization through governing bodies like the European External Action Service (EEAS) which allows the European Union to act more effectively and efficiently in this domain. However, the author here needs to emphasize that the promotion of peace and security by the European Union is very dependent on the European Union's ability to find and promote interrelated interests in relations between European Union member countries.

The European Union's CFSP involves a large number of intergovernmental and supranational components. Oversight of the CFSP rests with the European Council, which sets the tone and scope of what is possible for security and defense policy cooperation. The European Council can have an important role in setting the agenda and play an important role in conveying the EU's position in times of crisis. The European Council and Council of Ministers are responsible for negotiating the revision of the treaties discussed by the CFSP, ultimately codifying the new rules and norms that emerged through the process of cooperation in security and defense policy.

In this regard, the role of the European Commission in the implementation of the CFSP has increased sharply since 1993. Many aspects of what the European Commission does fall under the domain of foreign policy (Miskimmon, 2010).

Apart from that, there are important instruments for the European Union in implementing the CFSP. Through the Treaty of Amsterdam, the European Union first identified four main CFSP instruments: Principles and Guidelines, which provide general political direction; General Strategy, sets of goals and means; Collective Action, which addresses specific situations; and Common Standing, which define approaches to specific issues (Vanhoonacker, 2020). Elements of the CFSP created before December 2009 are officially referred to under the phrase Amsterdam Agreement. The Lisbon Treaty then restructured the CFSP instrument into a quartet of Decisions: (1) on the European Union's objectives and strategic interests, (2) on shared stances, (3) on collective actions, and (4) on mechanisms for the execution of joint perception and activities. Elements of the CFSP created after December 2009 are officially referred to as Decisions or consolidated versions of the European Union Treaty (Mix, 2013).

Although the members of the European Union certainly share many of the same perceptions and goals, the reality of the relationship is complex, and to some degree, divergent. trade and commerce weighted differently by some members compared to the issues such as democracy and human rights. Some believe that getting involved is the most effective technique to inspire desirable changes and behaviors, while others prefer alternate approaches. This is a challenge considering that the absence of an EU strategy in such cases can make member countries form a strong national position. Member states may be reluctant to unilaterally leave the European Union and instead wait for an acceptable consensus to form (Krotz & Schild, 2013).

B. The EU's CFSP Dynamics on Russia Leading up to the 2014 Crimean Annexation

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, relations between the European Union and the Soviet successor states began to take shape in the early 1990s along with the development of the CFSP. The European Union's foreign relations developed based on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement agreed with the countries concerned in the mid-1990s based on the CFSP General Strategy for each country, and/or decisions of the Council of Ministers. In many cases, this became the policy domain of the European Commission, and only then did the European Union's CFSP institutions begin to become more actively involved in seeking cooperation with several countries in the Eastern European region. This is especially true of the European Union's growing 'strategic partnership' with Russia (Zagorski, 2004).

The European Union's CFSP towards Russia has evolved significantly since the end of the Cold War. Initially, the European Union attempted to build positive relations with Russia such as the enactment of the Four Common Spaces in 2003 as a pillar of strategic cooperation between the two parties. However, this relationship has become increasingly tense to this day.

EU-Russia relations initially began to deteriorate after the 2006 cutoff of Russian gas to Ukraine which endangered supplies to EU member states in Central and Eastern Europe region. The relations also worsened when Russia failed to complete negotiations for free-flight rights for European airlines to flights over Siberia and NATO plans a missile shield over several new European Union member states in Central and Eastern Europe (Light, 2008). Despite significant warning indicators such as the 2007 cyberattack on Estonia and the 2008 Russo-Georgian war, European Union countries were hesitant to acknowledge Russia's transition in the last few years of the 2000s from strategic partner to strategic foe. Russia's drive to divide and rule the European Union received almost no attention until the 2013-2014 Ukraine crisis before European countries became aware of this change. As the campaign gained momentum, the EU was compelled to react. However, this reaction had an dual-edge outcome, first was to encouraging the creation of new EU capabilities while the second was to provide Russia with more motivation to use other strategies—such as Trojan horses, as analogized by Orenstein and Kelemen (2017)—to weaken the EU's unity.

Russia's relations with Ukraine heated up and there was Russia's annexation of Crimea to Ukraine in 2014. In response, the European Union decided to impose sanctions on certain sectors in the hope of suppressing Russia's aggressive actions. The scope of these sanctions has been expanded several times throughout 2014 and is valid until 2015. Even though initially there was disagreement regarding how sanctions could be applied, especially from European Union countries in Eastern Europe, sanctions were still implemented based on norms that had been agreed within the European Union by considering the interests of all member countries. Also, the sanctions imposed by the European Union are aimed not at hurting the economic conditions of Russian society, but rather at giving a signal to Russian domestic actors and pressuring Russia to change its behavior to withdraw from Ukraine and Crimea. (Veebel & Markus, 2015).

The sanctions imposed by the European Union, apart from providing a signal to Russian domestic actors, can also be seen as a political message to other countries that have not yet decided which side they will take in responding to the annexation of Crimea. The European Union uses alignment strategies to test the normative loyalties of its neighbors, in order to promote its own posture as an international actor.

The European Union, through its joint foreign policy, seeks to communicate judgments about who is 'good' and 'bad', inviting those who comply with international legal norms to come together and to isolate those who violate international law, in this case Russia (Hellquist, 2016).

The European Union's CFSP in response to Russia's aggressiveness towards Ukraine in 2013-2015 had a constructive impact on the larger institutionalization process of the CFSP itself. The dilemma previously faced by European Union member states in Central and Eastern Europe before Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 has gradually reached a clear political commitment to harmonize CFSP in the foreign policy of European Union member countries (Đukanović, 2015).

IV. European Union CFSP Responses to Russia's Attack Ukraine 2022

After Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the European Union demonstrated great consensus and determination in responding to the war in Ukraine. Although there are differences between member states such as Germany being more reluctant than Poland and the Baltic states to send heavy weapons in support of Ukraine. But this has not prevented the European Union from drawing up ambitious sanctions packages. To date, the European Union has implemented more than a dozen sanctions packages against Russia. The sanctions package imposed by stopping Russian media broadcasting in the European Union, freezing assets held by the Russian Central Bank, cutting off most Russian banks from the SWIFT system, limiting energy imports from Russia, restricting trade in core technologies, sanctions sanctions on President Vladimir Putin and his entourage, as well as other sanctions by encouraging strong unity among European Union members. Meanwhile, sanctions are not only aimed at Russia, but also at Russia's partners such as Belarus, which contributed significantly to this invasion (Consilium Europe, n.d.).

The responses that the EU has made speaks volume of its longstanding commitment to its values as the region's institution. In 2024 alone, the EU has added an additional 3 packages (the 12th, 13th, and 14th) to its arsenal along with another one (the 15th) that is still being formulated. While The 12th package was adopted in December 2023, it has some provisions that were in place in 2024 (Payne, 2023). Some of the 12th package focuses are on closing loopholes that Russia can exploit, adding import bans on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and other metals, and banning direct non-industrial diamonds from Russia. The 13th package, adopted in February 2024, continues to build upon its predecessor. Such a feat is done by expanding the listing that contains those who are involved in Russia's war effort in Ukraine.

An important element this package has lies in how it goes as far as highlighting the involvement of parties from other countries, like North Korea and Belarus (European Commission, 2024). As for the 14th package which was adopted in June 2024, it continues to reduce Russia's room to maneuver by adding an additional 69 individuals and 47 entities (Council of the EU, 2024). As of now, the 15th sanction package is also currently being developed. For this latest addition, the EU aims to close any leeways through which Russia could circumvent its fundraising endeavors (Serohina, 2024).

Sanctions have reached almost unprecedented levels and have become one of the main tools the European Union has used to respond to Russia's war in Ukraine. The European Union has succeeded in coordinating its sanctions in a remarkable way. This not only convinced European countries that do not have EU membership to adopt its sanctions regime, but also coordinated its sanctions with the United States, Japan, and other like-minded countries. This makes cooperation in the implementation of sanctions policies essential to the effectiveness of the CFSP (Szép et al, 2023).

As the war progressed and the impact on the European Union became increasingly severe, several internal concerns emerged within the European Union itself. The European Union's concern about this conflict is one, namely that the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war will spread to Europe. This concern is not only related to past trauma due to the Second World War, but also concerns that the European Union's economy will be affected, which will have negative implications for the European Union's society. The European Union's unanimity in agreeing to every European Union foreign policy, be it sanctions against Russia or aid to Ukraine, is strongly influenced by public perception of this war (Kurniasih & Nugrahani, 2023).

Apart from sanctions, the European Union is also pushing for aid to Ukraine. Assistance from the European Union in this conflict has implications for a shift in European Union policy which strengthens the role of hard power, even though previously the European Union tended to use soft power, civilian power, or even normative power. One of the foreign policy changes brought about by the war was the European Union's determination to utilize the European Peace Facility (EPF), an instrument for defense and security aid to the foreign nations and alliances, for funding the supply of deadly weapons to Ukraine. Though initially meant to support partner nations in their battles against rebels or other armed organizations, the EPF was not meant to be a weapon for intervening in major conflicts. The European Union has never supported the supply of armaments to a third party, much less one that is engaged in conflict, until their use in Ukraine (Fama & Musiol, 2022).

V. Path Forward for EU's CFSP

The European Union's foreign policy, as a continuation of the policy implemented in response to the 2014 annexation of Crimea, encourages third party countries to normatively determine their position. In their case study, Szép et al (2023) specifically found that European Union candidate countries such as Albania, Iceland, Norway and others implemented the same policy alignment as the European Union's foreign policy. In fact, other non-member countries such as Switzerland do the same. This, on the one hand, shows the normative capability of the European Union in practicing its normative values in the region.

The European Union has established itself as a global leader in terms of its sanctions capacity to increase influence beyond its geographic scope. The capability demonstrated by the European Union in establishing a sanctions regime and providing leadership in the region also provides an indication that normative sanctions will remain a characteristic feature of European Union foreign policy in the future (Cardwell & Moret, 2023).

However, EU normative approach are not flawless. This is particularly the case with the division between western and eastern part of the EU countries, given that these normative values generally emerged from the ideas of countries in the west as the founders of the EU, while countries from Central and Eastern Europe only joined in the mid-cold war to post-cold war, which means that ideationally, they have not really converged with the norms championed in forming the superstructure of the EU. Furthermore, the EU's decision-making processes require consensus or qualified majority voting among member states. This means that EU still dependent on each members goodwill to exercise their sovereignty to agree on proposed action, which in this case are sanctions against Russia's invasion. However, when one of the members have disagreements on how the sanctions should be conducted, EU might fails to have unified action. For instance, while many member states have strongly supported sanctions against Russia following its attack on Ukraine, others, such as Hungary and Slovakia, have resisted measures that could harm their economic interests or energy security (Liboreiro, 2025). These divisions highlight the difficulty of reconciling normative commitments with national priorities.

Conclusion

The European Union has become a significant international actor in the fields of security and foreign policy. For this reason, the CFSP is present as an important instrument for the European Union in coordinating the foreign policies of member countries and playing a role in responding to common security challenges.

The European Union's response to Russia reflects the importance of the CFSP in facing urgent security threats, as well as being a crucial point for the development of the CFSP itself. The European Union faces challenges in ensuring consistency and coherence in its collective response to Russian aggression. Despite differences in views and interests between member states, the European Union as a whole is engaged in formulating an effective response. This is reinforced by the institutionalization process that normatively occurs in the European Union and has played an important role in shaping collective behavior and responses. The norms and values espoused by the European Union, such as peace, democracy and human rights, form the basis for the European Union's decisions and actions in dealing with global conflicts.

The author suggests that the future trajectory of the EU's CFSP depends greatly on its capacity to overcome internal divisions and establish a more robust institutional framework for foreign policy and defense. This could potentially elevate the EU's stature as a significant global security actor. Key strategies to strengthen the CFSP include transitioning towards a strengthened voting system in specific domains to streamline decision-making processes, increasing investment in a collective military force to bolster the EU's capacity in global affairs, and prioritizing the utilization of non-military tools such as diplomatic and economic leverage to tackle pressing global conflict. In addition, efforts to strengthen the internal cohesiveness of the EU could also be done. In doing so, not only that the adherence to the EU's norms and values could be strengthened, but it also could accentuate the EU's relevance and primacy among its member states.

Moving on, future endeavors on the institution dimension of the EU and the CFSP through exploring either its internal and external dimension. For the former, future undertaking can seek to look into the acceptance or rejection of EU strides, for example in the case of Austria's decision to block sanction for Russia. In analyzing said topic, the theoretical framework of the two level games can be called upon. As for the latter, deliberation into how the external pressure stemming from ongoing conflicts in Europe influence the EU's longstanding norms and values can be carried out. The relevancy of this topic can be seen in the existing conflicts that are still ongoing in Europe and how the EU engages with it.

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