**STATSVETENSKAPLIGA INSTITUTIONEN**

# THE "STATE"

# The concept of statehood and the European Union

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# Abstract

This study uses a qualitative approach to examine the criterions and specific characteristics of the abstraction which is referred to as the state. The ambition is to explain and identify the characteristics that needs to be present whenever something is to be called a state. To achieve this, theories on statehood are presented, resulting in six specific criterions and characteristics of the state. These six characteristics are then applied to a specific case, the EU, with the ambition to investigate if the EU, based on the theoretical framework presented, can be described as a state. This study is limited to what makes a state a state and therefore, regimes or political systems in terms of normative references is not studied. As for the EU, the study is limited to whether the EU is to be considered as a state or not, i.e. not what kind of a state or regime that the EU could possibly constitute. The results and conclusions of this study is that EU is not yet able to be referred to as a state. However, it is clear that the Union certainly has the ambition to one day become something which might be a United States of Europe.

Keywords: state, statehood, state definition, European Union, EU.

# Contents

# Introduction

## *Presentation of the subject*

The term "state" is probably as old or older than political science itself. The Greek philosopher, mathematician, and author Platon, 428 – 348 BC (Platon, October 29) discusses the concept and the design of an ideal state in one of his main publications, Politeia (The State). Since the almost 2500 years that has passed from the times of Platon, political scientists still discuss the term state and the concept of statehood, yet still there is no academic consensus on what the state is (Cudworth, Hall and McGovern, 2007, p. 1.).

The issue of state concept and what constitutes a state is set in new perspectives given our present time. According to Nye (2008, p. 9), the number of states has increased from around 50 states 1945 to four times as many at the beginning of the 21st century, and recently in Europe, we have seen several events and initiatives related to varying degrees of independence and/or sovereignty efforts within states with at least ambitions to create new semi-independent or independent states. On the other hand, what if we group states together, such as perhaps within the EU. Can the current 28 Member States of the Union, actually be seen as a state?

At the same time, we see the emergence of something other than "states", an increase of powerful non-state actors, MNEs, with economic resources that exceeds those of many states. There are more than 10´s MNEs whose annual turnover is greater than GDP in more than half of the states in the world. As an example, the turnover of the IT-company IBM is larger than countries such as Hungary, Ecuador, and Senegal (Nye, 2008, p.10).

Surely this must question the perception of the state being the only actor in the international arena that matters, as well as challenge the perception of the term "state" and the concept of statehood. It raises questions such as: what defines a "state"? What factors are of importance for the state concept?

71 years has passed since Winston Churchill's speech in Zurich where he called for a "United States of Europe" (Bache, George, Bulmer, 2011, p.590) – are we there yet? Can the EU be called a "state" based on a given theoretical framework?

This study sets out to investigate the concept of statehood, to explore the criterions and characteristics of the state. This is relevant to the political discourse, because if we are to discuss state´s and perhaps their relation to society, we need to know what we are referring to – what is the state?

This study also sets out to investigate the EU in relation to the concept of statehood. If a theoretical framework can provide clear criterions/characteristics of what makes a state a state. Then what would happen if we apply those to a specific case, the EU? Would we then consider the EU to constitute a state?

## *Aims and objectives*

The aims and objectives of this study is to examine the criterions and specific characteristics of the abstraction which is referred to as the state, i.e. to identify the characteristics that needs to be present whenever something is to be called a state.

Other aims and objectives is to investigate whether the EU as an organization, based on specific characteristics on statehood, can or cannot be called a state.

## Research questions

1. What are the key criterions of a state? What are the characteristics of a state?
2. Can the European Union be described as a state?

## Delimitation

This thesis sets out to explore the concept of statehood, what makes up the state and what the key criterions/characteristics is of a state. It is not the aim or objective of this thesis to examine types of regimes or political systems in terms of a normative reference. The aim is not investigate what constitutes good or bad states, rather what defines it – what makes a state a state.

This attitude is also reflected in the choice of material. For the state defining part of this thesis, I have chosen material that is related purely to the concept of statehood and deliberately disregarded materials that treat what the state should do, its character in terms of good/evil, democracy (or the absence of) or its driving forces and the alike. The inclusion of such material had certainly provided an interesting dynamic and depth to this thesis and subject, and could be an area to include for anyone else in the future.
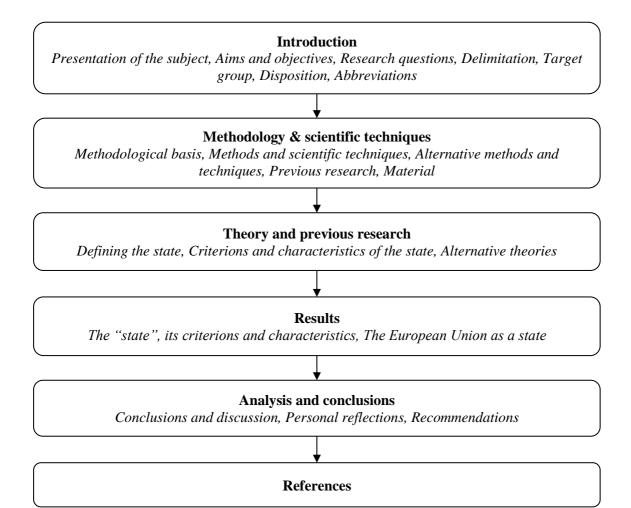
As for the EU and the investigation of whether the EU is to be considered a state or not, I have limit this thesis to a yes or no approach, i.e. not what kind of state the EU would possibly be, nor is there any focus of the type of regime that the EU would constitute.

## Target group

The target group for this thesis is any student or researcher within social- or political science, international relations and similar scientific fields, that are investigating the concept of statehood. This thesis could serve as material for any study on state definition, criterions and characteristics of the abstract "state". Moreover, this study can be used by anyone examining state-like matters in relation to the EU, its institutions, agencies or bodies.

## Disposition

The following illustration provides an overview of this thesis disposition and chapter layout.

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**Introduction**

*Presentation of the subject, Aims and objectives, Research questions, Delimitation, Target group, Disposition, Abbreviations*

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**Methodology & scientific techniques**

*Methodological basis, Methods and scientific techniques, Alternative methods and techniques, Previous research, Material*

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**Theory and previous research**

*Defining the state, Criterions and characteristics of the state, Alternative theories*

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**Results**

*The "state", its criterions and characteristics, The European Union as a state*

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**Analysis and conclusions**

*Conclusions and discussion, Personal reflections, Recommendations*

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**References**

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## *Abbreviations*

This thesis contains the following abbreviations as described below:

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| IGO | International Governmental Organization/Intergovernmental Organization |
| CJEU | Court of Justice of the European Union |
| EC | European Commission |
| ECA | European Court of Auditors |
| ECB | European Central Bank |
| EDA | European Defense Agency |
| EEAS | European External Action Service |
| EESC | European Economic and Social Committee |

Eurojust                          The European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit

Europol                           European Police Office

MNE                               Multinational Enterprise

NGO                               Non-Governmental Organization

# Methodology & scientific techniques

## *Methodological basis*

All scientific research should be factual, objective, and balanced. Being factual means that the research must be true and accurate. It is thus important to be source-critical.

Within science there must always be a strive for objectivity, which means that it is of importance to reflect the viewpoint from all relevant directions. With balance is understood the right to secure proper space for what is presented. Argumentation, assessments, and conclusions, should be given a lot of space while insignificant details should be minimized (Ejvegård, 2009, p.34). Therefore, I will, to the extent possible, not focus on insignificant details and wherever there is a focus on details, I will clearly argue why they are relevant to the context.

Ethics is a highly important aspect of all research, including all research related to social and/or political science. This thesis is based, where applicable, on the good research practice published by the Swedish Research Council (Good Research Practice, 2017, p.10).

Furthermore, objectivity, i.e. compliance with reality is the highest truth criterion (Halvorsen, 1992, p.165) and means that any claims, conclusions etc. should have evidence in source material, references and similar that can be checked by others. Because of this, I will continuously reference any source used throughout this paper, but also openly account for methods used and results achieved.

Another important ethical aspect that I would like to briefly mention is the choice of subject and/or study (thesis) area. The chosen area is my own decision, I am not executing this thesis due to assignment or special interest of anyone – merely my own interest in this subject area has been decisive. However, the subject and focus area has been selected based on another thesis I previously have read in the same area. I will off course, reference this in chapters and sections to follow.

## *Methods and scientific techniques*

One the most fundamental decisions to make when conducting a study, is which method or methods to use. From a methodological perspective, a basic distinction is that between quantitative and qualitative methods. Something is quantitative if it can be measured, i.e. if it can be expressed in terms of numbers or figures, while qualitative is more related to something that says something about something quantitative, e.g. what is "typical" (Halvorsen, 1992, p.78).

For this study, I have chosen a qualitative approach, an approach that, according to Marsh & Stoker (2012, p.197) has played a major, yet understated, role in political science. I have chosen a qualitative approach since the aim and goal of this study is to investigate the concept of statehood through theory testing on a specific case – the EU. A qualitative approach is suitable since the research questions are formulated in explanatory wording, i.e. with ambition to explain a certain phenomenon – in this case; what is a "state" and can the EU be defined as such. Using a qualitative approach will also provide a lot of information about a few research units (in this case only one) (Halvorsen, 1992, p.82). In addition, the qualitative approach will allow proximity and involvement in the subject of investigation (Halvorsen, 1992, p.82), I may participate in the gathering of facts, and the interpretation of facts can be made in accordance with its relevance, and finally the results can give an understanding of the peculiar, the unique, in this case the concept of statehood and the EU.

This study consists of two parts, both connected to the term state and the concept of statehood. The first research question, i.e. "what are the key criterions of a state?" has a concept investigative approach since the research question explores the concept of statehood. In general, according to Esaiasson et al (2002, p.34) all scientific research contains a certain measure of conceptual investigation. However, Esaiasson et al (2020, p.34) also states that the term concept investigative studies should be limited to those studies that stops at that exact moment where the term has been investigated and which does not continue in using the investigated term in an empiric study. The study of the term itself can be enough (Esaiasson et al, 2002, p.34). I however intend not to focus on the term state, but rather the key criterions of a state and thus conceptual investigation will not constitute my major method in this study. Yet still, conceptual investigation will allow me to search and collect relevant information written on the concept of statehood, which in turn constitutes a significant factor for the answering of the second research question.

The second part of this study is theory testing using a case study, the EU to answer the second research question: "can the European Union be described as a state?" So why theory testing and why a case study? Political science differs significantly from natural science in such a way that in natural sciences, the replication of results is the key form of control of theoretical statements (Marsh & Stoker, 2002, p.250), i.e. X+Y will always be Z given certain circumstances. In political science however, it is not always that straightforward since it is not easy to find laboratory conditions where theories can be tested. Still political science needs to be able to explain by finding general principles, which is done by "guessing" using theories and hypotheses in specially arranged conditions and circumstances (Backman, 2008, p.25). In some cases, political science has the purpose of studying causality, i.e. cause and effect by trying to explain how an independent variable affects or causes a dependent variable (Backman, 2008, p.26). This could be done using theories. So, this is where theory testing becomes interesting. By using a specific theory on statehood, would it be possible (or not) to constitute the EU as a state by applying a specific theory on a specific case. Would the case according to the theory constitute a state?

As for using a case study – why a case study? Case studies focuses on one (or a few) research units with the ambition to provide a statement on events, circumstances or processes that occur in that particular case (Denscombe, 2009, p.59). In case studies the primary interest is how something relate or develop and the selection of research case(s) is not based on whether or not to make generalizations, but rather out of more analytic purposes (Halvorsen, 1992, p.67). This suits my research well, since my ambition is not to make far reaching generalizations, e.g. if the EU can be described as a state given a specific theory, then in general it could be said that any similar organization can also be called states. If my ambition was to generate far reaching generalizations, a case study would not be suitable.

The purpose of case studies is to give an intense description of a social system – to develop an overall understanding of something (Halvorsen, 1992, p.68). This is my ambition, to provide an overall understanding of the concept of statehood in general and the EU in specific.

It has become increasingly common to use case studies in political science research, in particular with regard to small-scale researches (Denscombe, 2009, p.59), which this is. Case studies is characterized by emphasizing the special rather than the general, relations/processes rather than results and natural environments rather than artificial situations, and case studies works best as an approach when the researcher wants to investigate a question in depth and provide an explanation that can handle both the complexity and all subtleties in real contexts (Denscombe, 2009, p.62). This is a good fit for this

study, where I will go explore the concept of statehood and how a theory on the concept of statehood can be applied to a real, complex and unique case such as the EU.

However, according to Denscombe (2009, p.62) it is unusual to use case studies for theory testing. Case studies has primarily been used to detect information by following an inductive logic. I will however use a case study to illustrate how a specific theory can be applied to a real context.

## *Alternative methods and techniques*

I have in the previous section argued, why the methods and techniques that I have chosen for this study are relevant and suitable for answering of my research questions. However, it can be argued against my choices, and in this section, I will respond to possible counter arguments and highlight possible, alternative methods and techniques.

Quantitative research is often seen as representative and reliable, and research findings and interpretations are often seen as robust, it produces "hard" scientific data (Marsh, Stoker, 2002, p.204). Criticisms of qualitative research is often that it is neither replicable nor comparable and because of this, not the basis on which generalizations can be made, i.e. qualitative research produces "soft", unscientific results, and that it in contrast to qualitative research is unrepresentative and atypical (Marsh, Stoker, 2002, p.204). I would argue that these criticisms are misplaced in this study. What constitutes a valid method depends on the aims and objectives of a study. I am not interested in frequencies or numbers, but rather to go in depth on a particular phenomenon by testing a theory on a specific, real and unique case and for this, a qualitative approach is the best choice.

Another area that is typically criticized when it comes to qualitative research is that of objectivity, especially in terms of collection of empirical material (Marsh, Stoker, 2002, p.205). There is a lot of truth in this criticism. Personally, I do not necessarily subscribe to a view that would say that this study is all that objective or even seek full objectivity. As I have argued, the method chosen is chosen precisely based on the fact that it allows me to play an active part in the gathering and interpretation of facts. Nevertheless, to mitigate any shortcomings regarding objectivity, I try, to the best of my ability, to always refer to sources where the material can be retrieved as well as arguing for the choice of material and wherever possible, clearly state what is my own opinion and what is evidenced by empirical material.

This study is a case study and it must be said: there are disadvantages and limitations with case studies. One the most apparent concerns the credibility of generalizations that can be made from its results, and according to Denscombe (2009, p.62) the ability to generalize is one of the core elements of social/political science. Typically, it could be questioned how representative the specific case is for similar cases and /or situations. Another question that could be asked is whether the results, even though they (possibly) are interesting, are unique to this particular case and its circumstances, and finally if it really is possible to generalize on the basis of having examined only one single case?

For this research, the issue of generalization is not a major issue. Rightfully so, it could be questioned whether examining one case, in this case the EU, really would be representative for other institutions of its resemblance. This is one of the problems, there isn´t really any organization like the EU, especially in terms of multi-level governance and supranational tendencies (Hay et al, 2006, p.194-195). This research sets out to identify the main criterions of statehood, apply a specific theory on statehood on the EU and analyze whether the EU, based on that theory could be interpreted as being a state, and I argue that generalization is not be possible due to the exceptionality of the EU.

Another possible limitation with case studies could be that it sometimes is difficult to determine its boundaries, its end point. If there is no conception of the case´s boundaries, it would be impossible to determine what the case is (Denscombe, 2009, p.70). The boundaries must be clear enough so that it is possible to distinguish what is in scope and what is out of scope. In this particular study, the boundaries are clear: the EU, which in turn is a rather self-contained unit. Furthermore, the EU will be studied using specific and clearly defined elements and key criterions from a specific theory on statehood. This approach will ensure a self-contained case with distinct limits and thus the possible limitations of case studies in terms of boundary and limit wise, will be mitigated.

I will finish of this section by briefly addressing the choice of theory testing. A theory testing study assumes that the theory used can be specified in a relevant way, that is, it will be possible to predict what will happen and then try if this is really the case (Esaiasson et al, 2002, p. 120). Doing this, will provide to possible scenarios. Either the theory can be at the center or the case could be at the center. For this study, I have chosen to place the case in the center. However, it could be argued that it for the sake of theory testing, would have been more interesting to place the theory in the center, rather than the case.

## Previous research

This study was inspired by a thesis presented by Jonathan Ryman at the University of Örebro in 2009. The thesis is named: United States of Europe? An analysis of the European Union as a state. In this thesis, Ryman approaches the issues of the concept of state´s, how the abstraction state should be described today and what criterions that are necessary for a state to "exist". Furthermore, he examines how the European Union can be classified, given his study of the concept of statehood and the criterions necessary for a state (Ryman, 2009, p.5).

As can be seen, I have been fully inspired by Ryman for this thesis. I have picked the same subject: concept of statehood and the same case, the European Union. This is, as can be assumed, a very conscious choice. Some of the ideals that govern scientific work are the contribution to general knowledge, to build and add to what others have done (Esaiasson et al, 2002, p. 18), which I do with this thesis. I continue to build on what Ryman has done, hopefully adding value to the area of statehood in relation to the European Union.

Furthermore, social/political science is about describing and explaining social phenomenon, meaning that yourself or others, at least eventually, will use the descriptions or explanations in the search for their own explanations (Esaiasson et al, 2002, p.25). This is very much true for this study. In my search for explanations, I found Ryman, decided to build upon his study for my own study. In the future, someone else might find both our studies to use them for their own study. By this, I hope that I contribute to the science of this particular area.

Where I differ from Ryman is in the theoretical framework on statehood. Ryman has based his research on Max Weber and Christopher Pierson, where the latter's criterions on statehood has been analyzed and then applied to the European Union. I have chosen another theoretical framework and thus partially different criterions on statehood. I mean that this is developing and the core essence of science. Will I, using a different theoretical framework come to the same conclusions as Ryman?

## Material

This study is based solely on material of the type of "document" in the form of written sources, i.e. no questionnaires, interviews or observations are used. There are several advantages of using documents

as the basis for a study; they are easy to access which means that it is easy to get access to the sources used, and they are "steady", meaning that they are available for control by others. On the other hand, it is important to be discerning about their credibility. They must be assessed in terms of being factual and objective (Ejvegård, 2009, p.71). I have, to the best of my abilities tried to be source critical towards any material used. In each case/material, I have made an assessments of the materials authenticity, independence, "freshness" (new/old), and its simultaneity.

I have strived to use primary sources whenever and wherever this has been possible, especially for my second research question. For my first research question, I have used secondary sources, since a lot of the literature on statehood refers to other authors and previous research. However, for the answering of my first research questions, I have chosen to build on a theory that is presented by the actual author of the book, making it a primary source.

## Articles, magazines and books

I have mainly used scientific literature/books, written by prominent scientist in the field of statehood. Some of the books used, are secondary sources, such as Cristopher Piersons book: The Modern State, in which he quotes, analyzes and interprets Max Weber (Weber being the primary source) theory on the ideal state type. Other sources used is (for example), Ralph Miliband and Graeme Gill, which are both primary sources. Especially the latter has been relevant for the answering of my first research question: "What are the key criterions of a state? What are the characteristics of a state?".

I have utterly conscious and, to a very limited extent, used Wikipedia as a source. The reason for this is, that is it very difficult to evaluate its authenticity and independence. Sometimes references to relevant sources are missing and sometimes it is difficult to check the sources. Furthermore, Wikipedia can be edited by anyone at any time, making it difficult to use both from an authenticity perspective as well as from a freshness perspective, it is hard to know, what piece has been written by whom and when. Wikipedia has only been used for the answering of my first research question in matters related to basic facts of scientists used, or to provide a very limited view on the definition of a state.

## Official publications

I have used official publications from EU governments, authorities and institutions of the Union. This material should in this context be seen as official publications, since they are all published by official governmental institutions. The research question: "Can the European Union be described as a state?" have been able to be answered with the use of official publications.

# Theory and previous research

## *Defining the state*

The concept of statehood is the most central concept of all concepts to political discourse and political analysis (Hay, Lister, Marsh, 2006, p.1). It is fair to assume that most, whenever the term "state" is brought up for discussion, experience that they have an idea of what is being discussed, what the state is. Still it is not an easy task to clearly define what the "state" really is.

One clear definition of the state is: "A state is a type of polity that is an organized political community living under a single system of government" (State (polity), 2017, 9 December), but again it is not that simple and according to Cudworth, Hall and McGovern (2007, p.1.) it is difficult to find an academic consensus about the definition of the state. They express that political writing and analysis from different perspectives all fail to agree on the most important question, such as: what is the state? The state has and continues to mean different things to different people from different perspectives (Cudworth et al, 2007, p.1).

A US Supreme Court judge was once asked to define and express what was meant by pornography. The judge failed to clearly define what it was, but stated that he knows what it is when he sees it (Pierson, 2011, p. 4). Most may feel the same way when it comes to state´s, we might believe that we know what it is, but when asked to clearly and comprehensively define what it is, we might not be able to provide a clear and concise answer. We do recognize it though, such as when we need to declare our taxes to the Tax Agency or when we receive our yearly pension notice and the alike, but we do not know what the state is when we see it, because we can´t – it is something abstract and according to Miliband (2009, p.36) it is a fact that the state is not a thing and that it as such does not exist. Hay et al (2006, p.4) shares Milibands view in terms of abstraction by quoting Dunleavy and O´Leary; "the state is not a material object: it is a conceptual abstraction". Due to the diversity of theoretical resources and the various perspective on the definitions of the term state it is very tempting to simply conclude that what the state is, is really a question for each and every one that approaches the state and just leave it at that. However, it is not and should not be that simple, and according Hay et al (2006, p.4) diversity cannot be allowed to provide an excuse for a failure to define what the state is.

The term "government" can add confusion to the discussion off what the state is, if it is treated as the state itself. Miliband (2009, p.36) means that if the government is in fact the state, it may also be assumed that governmental power is equivalent to state power and such beliefs can lead to great risks and disappointments. The government is one part of the state which speaks on behalf of the state, and Miliband (2009, p.36) means that in order to understand the nature of the state it is necessary to first distinguish and then relate the elements which makes up the state system.

Pierson (2011, p.4) argues (something which could be considered criticism of Miliband) that some researchers try to circumvent the problem of defining the state by asking us to instead focus upon governments and the political system, i.e. institutions and practices which can be measured.

Michel Foucault argues that the state is nothing more than a composite reality and mythicized abstraction and that it is not as much the state that matters, but rather governmentality (art of governing). The state in this view is just a part of the management of conduct to conduct (Pierson, 2011, p.5). So, in a sense Foucault means that it is more a normative approach that is relevant, a standpoint that can be backed up by the many theories and ideologies surrounding the state concept.

Cudworth, Hall and McGovern (2007, p.2) means that states can be defined in two distinct forms. The state can be defined by its organization which is an interrelated set of governing institutions. Alternatively, it can be defined functionally as a set of institutions that pursue certain objectives, or as a set of institutions whose actions have particular consequences.

Although most definitions of the state differ some in detail, the core is still widely accepted (Gill, 2003, p.2). Most political scientists believe that there are structures, institutions and practices which make sense to try to explain under the term state. Pierson (2011, p.5) believes, just as Gill, that there is a surprisingly broad area of agreement about what constitute the essential elements of the modern state.

## *Criterions and characteristics of the state*

There are various common elements, key criterions to the notion of the state and without doubt, the most influential and authoritative source of definition of the state comes from the German political sociologist and economic historian; Max Weber (1864 – 1920), which sees the state as a vague entity made up of institutions. The Nottingham professor, Cristopher Pierson interprets, concretizes, and isolates Weber's ideal type of the state in essentially 8 mechanisms that together constitutes a state (Pierson, 2011, p.6): monopoly (control of the means of violence), territoriality, sovereignty, constitutionality, impersonal power, the public bureaucracy, authority/legitimacy, and citizenship. To these 8 mechanisms, he adds one of his own: taxation.

To Pierson (2009, p.7), the control over the means of violence is one of the main defining characteristics of the state, that it is able to do so within a given territory. State are entities which occupy a clearly defined physical space over which they claim authority (however not in isolation) Sovereignty is another feature of the modern state and means that it within its jurisdiction can act on its own will (Pierson, 2009, p.12). Constitutions provides the basic rules of the political process by establishing the laws necessary to make laws, and creates or at least secures the existence of the state itself (Pierson, 2009, p.14). Bureaucracy is the rational way in which authority is exercised and the modern state is absolutely dependent upon a bureaucratic structure. Authority and legitimacy is central to the modern state since no state can survive for very long merely on power based on threat of coercion (Pierson, 2009, p.18). A stable state requires that, most of the people most of the time will accept its rule, that they will accept its authority. Another characteristic of the modern state is the incarnation of legal principles enforced through an impartial bureaucratic and judicial apparatus, and perhaps more importantly, that the state expresses the sovereign will of its people (Pierson, 2009, p.18), which provides the state with legitimacy. Citizenship is an integral part of the state and is a duality. On the one hand it may empower individuals over and perhaps against the state, and on the other, it strengthens the authority and the obligations of the state´s rule (Pierson, 2009, p.24). The modern state could not exist without substantial and regular tax revenues (Pierson, 2009, p.24). To some extent, taxation and the apparatus required to manage it, is one of the most basic and fundamental characteristics of the modern state, distinguishing it from its feudal predecessors and remains the cornerstone of the politics of the modern state (Pierson, 2009, p.27).

Ralph Miliband, a left-wing, often known as a prominent Marxist sociologist (Ralph Miliband, 2017, 12 December) notes that the state is a number of institutions, which, together, constitutes the states reality, and interacts in what may be called the state system (Miliband, 2009, p.36). He identifies six institutions that together make up the state: the government, the administration, the military and the police, the judicial branch, sub-central government, and parliamentary assemblies. Together these institutions form the state system and constitutes the state power. These institutions and their power

are, according to Miliband, exercised by the people who occupy the leading positions in each of these institutions, they constitute what he calls the state elite (Miliband, 2009, p. 40).

The government is one part of the state, one of its institutions, it does not constitute the state as such (Miliband, 2009, p.36). The administration is the second element of the state, it is more than traditional bureaucracy and consist of a large variety of institutions, ministerial departments, public corporations, central banks etc. (Miliband, 2009, p.37). These can have a various degree of independence, but manages economic, social, cultural and other activities in which the state is (directly or indirectly) involved. The same principles that apply to the administration of the state system, applies also to the military and the police, to which Miliband also includes para-military and security forces. Together they all manage violence (Miliband, 2009, p.38). The judicial branch is an integral part of the state system (Miliband, 2009, p.38). Sub-central government is an extension of the central government, representing the periphery (Miliband, 2009, p.39). Parliamentary assemblies are usually (formally) independent institutions, having a relation of conflict and cooperation with the government (Miliband, 2009, p.39). Together with the government they share state power (Miliband, 2009, p.39).

Emeritus Professor Graeme Gill with a history of research in the origins and development of states, currently active at the university of Sydney (Graeme Gill, 2017, 12 December), presents in his book The Nature and Development of The Modern State, a perspective on state capacity and the characteristics that distinguishes the modern state from its earlier ancestors. He draws up six (6) characteristics of a modern state; bureaucracy, autonomy, sovereignty, authority, territoriality, and identity. According to Gill (2003, p. 6), the state is defined by characteristics that are used by a regime to achieve its ends and not on the type of regime. The characteristics of the state may be shared by many associations and organizations, but no other such organization shares all of them. What differentiates the state from other organizations is mainly; sovereignty, territoriality, its institutional structure (bureaucracy), and its wide-ranging responsibilities. The state uses public power within a particular territory through acceptance of its sovereignty, its bureaucratic structure, and the monopoly of coercion in the pursuit of its aims (Gill, 2003, p.7).

Gill argues that other organizations than the state may claim sovereignty, but the difference between the state and such organizations is that the state is defined territorially. Other organizations are for the most defined functionally, such as for example religious communities such as churches (Gill, 2003, p.7). Furthermore, the state´s power is depersonalized and exercised through bureaucratic channels and the projection of public power is used to serve social interests and is the basis upon which the modern state is legitimized.

## *Alternative theories*

There is a lot of literature on the nature of the state, literature that is mostly divided as either focused on the state´s organization or its function. The attentive reader can therefore conclude that I have not choose to include classic theories and ideologies on statehood, such as pluralism, elitism, conservatism, or public choice theory. Furthermore, I have chosen not to include more recent theories and ideologies such as transformation theories, globalization theories or even multi-level governance theories. There is a rather simple answer to this. The aim and purpose of this thesis, is to identify the main characteristics, the main criterions of statehood. The examples mentioned above are directions that are more focuses on the intentions of the state, what it does and why it does it, rather than focusing on clear definitions on what constitutes the state, what identifies it. Using such theories and ideologies would not have been suitable for my research questions and for what I am trying to achieve.

Nevertheless, they are not unimportant, and if allowed to in terms of time and space, I would have explored some of them and would have associated them to the theories that I have chosen to present.

# Results

## *The "state", its criterions and characteristics*

So, what is the state and what makes up the state, what defines it and what is its clear criterions?

Most theories on statehood identifies a core number of criterions that needs to be fulfilled for something to be called a state. Such could be having a territory, being sovereign, having a constitution, a bureaucracy and administration, or the ability to raise taxes from a population.

Cristopher Pierson presents nine characteristics of the state, but eight of those nine are mainly based on Weber´s ideal type of the state, i.e. is a variation and interpretation of another established (and well-recognized/dominant) researcher's view on the characteristics of the state. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, one of the aims and objectives of this study is to build on Ryman´s study on the same subject. Ryman chose to base his study on Pierson´s theory and if I am to continue to develop and build on previous research, I would do better applying a different theory to the same context.

Ralph Miliband presents six characteristics of the state. However, Miliband has a tendency towards a more normative approach to the concept of statehood in such that he identifies the state as a set of institutions that are run by the state elite, i.e. he has a tendency towards the characteristics of the persons within institutions rather than the institutions as such, which is not suitable for this thesis aims and purposes.

As a consequence of the above, I have chosen to base the criterions and characteristics of the state on what is presented by Graeme Gill.

### Bureaucracy

To Gill, central to the generally accepted view of the state is that it is bureaucratic form of organization (Gill, 2003, p.3). Most of the state has and is structured in formal hierarchy with a clear chain of command and accountability. This formal hierarchy is essential for the central state in terms of being able to execute their power and authority over the territory for which it has jurisdiction.

The bureaucracy is run on formal rules which ensure efficiency and is the center of decision making. This setup makes it professional and not dependent on personal or partial consideration (Gill, 2003, p.3). Gill argues that the bureaucracy is filled by professional full-time officials that advances in the system based on merit, qualifications, and performance (Grill, 2003, p.3).

Typically, the bureaucracy is divided into central (national level) and regional institutions and this structure is characterized by specialization and differentiation from other bodies and institutions, i.e. from other organizations and bodies found within the society (Gill, 2003, p.3). However, the state is tied to other institutions such as political parties, pressure groups, NGO´s and private companies, and through these institutions to the society as a whole. What distinguishes the state from these other institutions is that the state focuses on political affairs and all aspects of political life, which makes the state more wide-ranging than other institutions. Furthermore, the state has become increasingly involved in the organization of life in present-day society by being more concerned about other areas than purely the political sphere, such as environmentalism, welfare, safety at work and childcare. This distinguishes the state from other institutions, i.e. its overall responsibility for multiple areas (Gill, 2003, p.4).

## Autonomy

The state is autonomous, independent and is not under the control of other organizations. The state can pursue its own aims and objectives, which could be different from those of other parts of society (Gill, 2003, p.4). This is mostly because of the fact that states are highly and organizationally differentiated as well as centralized. Firstly, the state consists of several institutions, agencies, organizations, and bodies of which many have branches throughout different regions as well as a central office. Secondly, the state is functionally organized into executive, legislative and judicial branches, which in turn may be divided into distinct parts. Looking at the executive branch, it usually consists of a range of government departments, agencies, and organizations, which also could be regionally divided. Looking at the judicial and legislative branches, they could be divided by hierarchy and spread across the territory of the state (Gill, 2003, p.4). All this means that the state is highly differentiated; organizationally, functionally and from a territorial perspective. Nevertheless, they are all bound together by centralism and linked to each other. All these different parts/institutions of the state do not exercise authority by themselves but gains authority by being a part of the state (Gill, 2003, p.4). This enables the state to carry out its functions and assists the state in assuring its autonomy and independency.

## Sovereignty

The state is sovereign, the highest authority within the territory under its jurisdiction (Gill, 2003, p.4).

Gill divides sovereignty into two aspects, internal sovereignty and external sovereignty. Internal sovereignty means that the state is the highest authority within its territory, it is supreme, and a citizen cannot appeal against the state to any other authority (Gill, 2003, p.5). External sovereignty means that the state is recognized by other states as being the authority within its territory and that it can speak on behalf of its citizens in international affairs, making external sovereignty the international recognition of the internal sovereignty of a state (Gill, 2003, p.5).

According to Gill (2003, p.5), sovereignty is the focus of the state´s role in such a way that it puts the state in a position where it can make binding decisions upon those who lives within its territory. This right is paramount to the state´s power and role. Sovereignty is central to the state as a principle for defining it (Gill, 2003, p.5).

## Authority

A state´s authority is dependent on its possibilities to exercise that authority, i.e. its capacity. A state´s capacity to exercise authority is in turn dependent on the monopoly over the legitimate use of force (Gill, 2003, p.5). The state has control over the legitimate use of force through institutions such as the armed, police and para-military forces. The difference between states and other entities in terms of force is that the state possesses a monopoly of the legitimate use of force, i.e. only the state has the right to use organized force to get its way (Gill, 2003, p.5). The authority and monopoly of the legitimate use of force is essential to state sovereignty and is a prerequisite for one of the state´s most basic purposes, the security of its citizens through the maintaining of law and order (Gill, 2003, p.5).

## Territoriality

The state is territorially based and bounded, and exercises authority within territorial boundaries which are clearly defined and internationally recognized. The state possesses no authority outside those boundaries and no other state possesses authority within another state´s boundaries (Gill, 2003, p.6).

The state´s territorial bound, its geographical definition, differentiates it from most other organizations and associations. According to Gill (2003, p.6), it is this territorial bound that creates an amount of uncertainty to the notion of the state, since the word state can be used for both the administration that runs a country and the territorial formation of which the country consists. From Gills perspective, it is the former which is relevant for the notion of the state.

## Identity

A state has a community of feeling, a feeling of identity. Gill (2003, p.6), means that this must not be confused with the term nation states, which implies something different, but rather the state´s strive to achieve a sense of identity with the state, a feeling of attachment and identification with the state. Although this has been the strive of states during the nineteenth century and although this is a common feature of most states, it is not a defining quality of the state, i.e. it might be there but does not necessarily define the state (Gill, 2003, p.6).

## *The European Union as a state*

Having examined the key criterions/characteristics of a state as Graeme Gill present them, it is now time to apply them to the European Union and investigate the second research question; can the European Union be described as a state?

## Bureaucracy and the EU

It is fair to assume that most would not contest that the EU can and should be seen as organized in a bureaucratic way. Despite this supposed common belief, I will still deal with this criterion on statehood and treat it in relation to Gill´s view on bureaucracy.

As I have presented, the state is a bureaucratic form of organization, with hierarchy and a chain of command with accountability. This hierarchy is essential for the state to be able to execute its power and authority over its territory. Furthermore, the bureaucracy of a state is divided to into several institutions, characterized by specialization and differentiation.

The EU is based on seven institutions which forms the basis of the organization. These institutions are in place to ensure the aims and goals of the organization, its efficiency, to promote the EU and to service the EU member states. These seven institutions are the: EC, Council of the European Union, European Parliament, European Council, CJEU, ECB, and ECA. In addition to these seven institutions, there is a number of other institutions, interinstitutional bodies, as well as several agencies (EU-Information, 2017).

The seven institutions have different duties. The EC proposes laws that the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament then decide on. The European Council, where the Heads of State and Government of the Member States sit, hold summits and decide on the EU's goals and priorities. The CJEU judges in disputes arising in the EU. The ECB keeps track of inflation and cooperation on the single currency Euro. The ECA reviews the EU's expenditure and revenue (EU-Information, 2017).

These institutions rests on formal hierarchy with a clear chain of command and accountability (accountability at least to the EU system and not necessarily the EU citizens) and they are there to execute their power and authority over the territory, in terms of the member states. The powers and responsibilities of the institutions are laid down in EU Treaties, which also lay down the rules and procedures that the EU institution must follow. All treaties are agreed by the heads of states of all the EU member states and ratified by their parliaments (About the EU, 2017). Based on what has been

presented, the EU meets Gill´s criterions for bureaucracy. Moreover, all these institutions rests on formal rules which is the center of decision making.

Another criterion that is to be met for bureaucracy is that it consists of professional full-time officials. I do not intend to deepen this in terms of the EU´s all institutions, but it can briefly be stated that only the European Commission alone consists of 3000 officials, distributed throughout the Commissions various departments and the directorates-general (EU-Information, 2017), and in total approximately 40000 individuals are employed in all institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the EU (Presentation of Court of Justice, 2017).

Lastly, the bureaucracy of a state is characterized by being connected to (although separated from) other groups in civil society. This is also true for the EU. As an example, the legislative procedure in the EU is such that a number of advisory bodies must be consulted when a proposed legislation involves their area of interest (does not mean that their advice is taken, but at least heard). An example of such a body could be the EESC which represents civil society groups such as employers, trade unions and social interest groups (How the European Union Works, 2014, p.7).

## Autonomy and the EU

Autonomy is when a state can pursue its own aims and objectives. A state´s autonomy and independence are based on institutions that are very differentiated in terms of organization, function and from a territorial perspective, yet still being bound together by centralism and linked to each other. A state consists of several institutions, agencies, organizations, and bodies, hierarchically divided and geographically dispersed. Furthermore, the state is functionally organized into an executive, legislative and judicial branch.

In short, it can be said that the EU meets all of Gill´s criterions and requirements regarding autonomy. I choose to limit the reasoning below (limitations in available space) to only what is absolutely necessary.

EU is functionally organized. The basic functions of EU are handled by the seven main institutions. These institutions all have different purposes (functions) and are geographically dispersed. The EC, the European Council and Council of the European Union are admittedly all located in Brussels, but the European Parliament is located in Strasbourg, the CJEU and ECA in Luxembourg, and the ECB in Frankfurt (EU-Information, 2017).

To further exemplify differentiation in the form of functionality, it can briefly be said that the European Council sets the EU´s overall political direction (executive), but cannot pass laws. Law-making is executed not only through one institution, but from three different institutions; the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, and the European Commission. In principle, the Commission proposes new laws, and the Parliament and Council adopt them. (About the EU, 2017). Together they constitute the legislative branch.

The Court of Justice of the EU in particular and the Court of Auditors to some extent, constitutes the judicial branch. The former upholds the rule of European law and the latter checks the financing of the EU´s activities (About the EU, 2017).

Some of the institutions are linked and bound together at least functionally, such as the European Council, European Commission and European Parliament. Others are deliberately separated such as for example the CJEU.

Within the institutions and across interinstitutional bodies there is a hierarchical distinction. To mention one example there is a hierarchy in the judicial branch of the Union. Appeals on points of law may be brought to the Court of Justice only if the issue has first been judged by the General Court (Presentation of Court of Justice, 2017).

## Sovereignty and the EU

The criterion of sovereignty means that the state is the highest authority within the territory under its jurisdiction, i.e. it can make binding decisions for those living within its territory, making sovereignty central to the state as a principle for defining it.

There is a difference between internal and external sovereignty. Internal sovereignty means that the state is the highest authority within its territory and that a citizen cannot appeal against the state towards any other authority. External sovereignty means that the state is recognized by other states as being the authority within its territory and that it speaks on behalf of its citizens.

The Treaty of Lisbon clarifies the powers of the EU, and distinguishes three types of capabilities; exclusive, shared and supported capabilities. With regards to exclusive capabilities, the EU alone can legislate, and Member States only implement. The Lisbon treaty gives the EU full legal personality, which means that the EU can, as a legal entity, sign international treaties in areas of its accredited powers or join an international organization, and a Member State may only sign international agreements that are compatible with EU law (Fact Sheet – The Treaty of Lisbon, 2017).

To some extent, the EU may therefore fulfill the criterion on authority and making binding decisions for those living within its territory. However, this is not absolute. Member States still have areas of sovereignty reserved for them. As stated by the EU: The powers of the EU institutions have been laid down by founding treaties negotiated and ratified by member countries. In policy areas not covered by the treaties, national governments are free to exercise their own sovereignty (About the EU, 2017).

It is therefore important to note that the Member States are the one´s empowering the EU, so any sovereignty is not unlimited, rather it is limited by what the Member States empowers the Union with (Treaty of Lisbon, 2007/C 306/01, p.14). This implies that the Member States, still, at least to some extent, have internal sovereignty towards the EU. Nevertheless, the Lisbon Treaty shows the intentions of the Union, and the fact that the EU positions itself as its own legal entity is certainly interesting from a statehood perspective.

Another criterion on internal sovereignty is that of the state being the highest authority and that the citizens cannot appeal to anything above it. The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) is actually divided into two courts. The Court of justice deals with matters related to national courts of the Member States, as well as certain actions for annulment and appeals. The General Court deals with matters related to individuals, companies, and in some cases EU governments, which means that the court deals with competition law, state aid, trade, agriculture, trademarks etc. (About the EU, 2017).

The position of CJEU, makes it possible for citizens of the Member States to appeal to the EU, meaning that the Member States to some extent has lost part of its sovereignty in terms of the judicial branch. Still, it is not possible for a citizen of a Member State to appeal the ruling of CJEU to another organization. The only possibility for appeal is within the CJEU, i.e. from the General Court to the Court of Justice (Presentation of Court of Justice, 2017). From this perspective, the EU must be seen as being the highest authority and the citizens of the Member States cannot appeal a ruling of the CJEU to any other organization or instance.

Finally, there is the matter of external sovereignty, i.e. if the EU is recognized by other states as being the authority that speaks on behalf of its Member States. The EU has a database that contains all the bilateral and multilateral international treaties or agreements concluded by the EU (Treaties Office Database, 2017), i.e. the EU is internationally recognized as being a legal entity with which states may sign agreements, agreements that will apply to all the Member States of the EU.

In the end, my claim is that the Member States still have some sovereignty towards the EU, but the EU fulfills most of the criterions set up by Gill on sovereignty, making the EU, at least mostly, a sovereign entity towards the international community and partially towards the Member States.

## Authority and the EU

The state´s authority is dependent on its possibilities to exercise that authority, its capacity. Capacity to exercise authority is in turn dependent on the monopoly over the legitimate use of force, manifested through institutions such as the armed- and police forces. The difference between states and other organizations is that the state has monopoly on the legitimate use of force, something being the basic obligation of the state: security of its citizens through the maintaining of law and order.

With regards to the criterions of institutions in terms of armed- or police forces, this is easily treated when it comes to the EU. The Union, simply does not have any of their own. Of course, there is the Europol, which is a platform in which law enforcement officers from the Member States cooperate to counteract large-scale organized crime and terrorism (How the European Union Works, 2017, p.38). Europol is however not a police force as such. It is dependent on authority provided by the polices forces of the Member States.

Secondly, there is no armed forces of the EU, but there is the EDA, which, like Europol, is an agency responsible for cooperation within the military area. Some of EDA´s tasks are to identify military capabilities of the Member States, promote harmonization of operational needs, propose multilateral projects to fulfil the objectives in terms of military capabilities, and support defense technology research (Treaty of Lisbon, 2007/C 306/01, p.38).

Even if the EU does not have police- or military force of its own, there are certainly ambitions to eventually create such institutions. According to the Treaty of Lisbon (2007/C 306/01, p. 36), the Member State shall make civilian and military capabilities available to the Union for the implementation of the common security and defense policy, and those Member States which together establish multinational forces may also make them available to the common security and defense policy. Moreover, Member States are obliged to improve their military capabilities, and are also obliged to aid and assist by all the means in their power, if another Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory (Treaty of Lisbon (2007/C 306/01, p. 37).

In the end, the EU as an organization does not have the necessary institutions in place, to fulfill Gill´s criterion on monopoly of the legitimate use of violence. Nevertheless, it is not the same as to say that the EU as an organization, does not have the capability of providing what, according to Gill, is the most basic purposes of the state, the security of its citizens through the maintaining of law and order. There are several other institutions within the EU that partially can assist in achieving this, such as the CJEU, Europol, EDA, Eurojust etc.

## Territoriality and the EU

It is the territorial bound, that really differentiates the state from most other organizations. The state is territorially based and exercises authority within territorial boundaries which are clearly defined and internationally recognized.

The question of territorial bounds and the EU, can from one perspective be seen as fairly uncomplicated. The territorial bounds of the EU are the bounds of the member states, i.e. EU´s territory is the same as the Member States and the authority of the EU is mainly based within those territories.

The Treaty of Lisbon contains interesting information on this topic. In article 2 it is stated that the EU shall promote economic, social and territorial cohesion, and solidarity among Member State. In Article 3a, it is stated that the EU shall respect each Member State function, including ensuring the territorial integrity of the state, maintaining law and order and safeguarding national security (Treaty of Lisbon, 2007/C 306/01, p.13-14). It is the word "territorial" that has been added to much of these texts, and this is certainly interesting from the perspective on territorial bounds. The treaty suggests that Member States territorial integrity shall be respected and that the EU as an organization shall promote territorial cohesion, i.e. the territorial boundaries of the EU Member States are important for the Member States, but also for the EU as an organization, which in turn means ensuring the territorial base for the EU´s rule.

The EU can surely be said to meet Gill's criterions with regards to territoriality. As a side note it can be mentioned that the word "territorial" recurs 15 times in several important aspects of the Treaty of Lisbon.

## Identity and the EU

Identity means a community feeling, a strive to achieve a sense of identity, attachment, and identification with the state. Gill points out that this must not be confused with or seen as the same as citizenship, and also that in reality this is not really a defining criterion of the state, but it remains a common feature of most states.

Although Gill specifically points out that identity should not be confused with citizenship, it is still relevant to address one of the consequences of the Treaty of Lisbon, namely that with it, every national of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union. However, the Treaty of Lisbon clearly states that citizenship of the Union, shall be additional to the national citizenship and that it is not meant to replace it (Treaty of Lisbon, 2007/C 306/01, p.16). This is certainly relevant when evaluating the strive to achieve a sense of identity, since it makes it clear that the EU wants the citizens of the Member States to feel that they are also citizens of the EU, an attempt to build a EU community feeling.

This conscious identity building is recurring in much of what the EU does, such as representation of the citizens in the European Parliament and political parties on the European level. Moreover, institutions of the Union are required to give citizens and representative organizations the opportunity to make known and publicly exchange their views in all areas of the Union (Treaty of Lisbon, 2007/C 306/01, p.17).

The EU takes other measures, much like those taken by nations to create a community feeling, such as symbols and a single currency. The EU has adopted a flag, an anthem, a "Europe Day" (9 May), and its own Motto, which is, perhaps fittingly: "United in Diversity" (About the EU, 2017). The currency

"Euro" is currently used by 19 out of 28 Member States. These are all examples of how the EU consciously and actively attempts to establish a community feeling, a sense of identity as such it is presented by Gill.

# Analysis and conclusions

## *Conclusions and discussions*

So, what becomes of the EU? Can it be described as a state? Before revealing my conclusion on this, let´s have look at how the EU looks at itself. It claims to have a unique institutional set-up in such a way that the broad priorities are set by the European Council, which brings together national and EU-level leaders. It has directly elected members of the European Parliament representing the European citizens. The interests of the EU as a whole are promoted by the European Commission, whose members are appointed by the Member States governments, and lastly, Member States can defend their own country's national interests in the Council of the European Union (About the EU, 2017). It is perhaps needless to say, but the EU is undoubtedly a unique occurrence, a unique set-up different that of any other organization.

It is clear that the EU itself does not really want to clearly define itself. The organization wants to be seen as something unique, undecided and undefined. In the information sheet, How the European Union works, the following is stated (How the European Union works, 2017, p.44):

> "The European Union (EU) is unique. It is not a federal state like the United States of America because its Member States remain independent sovereign nations. Nor is it a purely intergovernmental organization like the United Nations because the Member States do pool some of their sovereignty — and thus gain much greater collective strength and influence than they could have acting individually.
>
> They pool their sovereignty by taking joint decisions through shared institutions such as the European Parliament, which is elected by the EU citizens, and the European Council and the Council, which both represent national governments. They decide on the basis of proposals from the European Commission, which represent the interests of the EU as a whole."

The conclusions I draw are that the EU must be seen as close to a state as close can be, i.e. very close, but not really a state as such it is defined through the theoretical framework used in this study. Surely, it, to great extent, has state-like features, and from the six criterions/characteristics drawn up by Graeme Gill, my study shows that the EU meets just about four and a half of them, but not all six.

My study shows, that the EU through its extensive institutions, its areas of responsibility and dissemination, fully meets the criterions on bureaucracy. Secondly, the EU meets the criterions on autonomy by being functionally organized, its institutions being differentiated in terms of organization, hierarchy and from a territorial perspective, yet still all bound and linked together. Thirdly, the EU has a clear territorial base/bound, which is a clear characteristic of a state, differentiating it from other types of organizations. Lastly, the EU has built and continues to build a community feeling and strives to achieve a sense of identity and attachment towards the organization. This is manifested through flags and symbols, "citizenship", a national day, an anthem etc.

Where the EU falls short, is in criterions/characteristics related to authority and sovereignty, as they are defined from the theoretical framework. The EU does not (yet) have neither armed forces nor a police force of its own. Apart from this fact, it is clear that there are ambitions to eventually create such institutions, as suggested by the Treaty of Lisbon. What concerns sovereignty, the EU to some extent fulfill this criterion and characteristic, since the EU can make binding decisions for those living

within its territory and have what is called external sovereignty. However, the internal sovereignty is limited to what is empowered from the Member States and the EU cannot allocate greater powers to itself. This means that the Member States, to some extent have internal sovereignty towards the EU.

In the end, the EU is very close to be able to be defined as a state. If it at some point of time creates its own institutions for armed forces and a police force of its own, and if it becomes a little bit more independent in relation to its Member States, it would be very hard to say that the EU is not a state, at least not in the way a state is defined by the theoretical framework used in this study, and perhaps then Winston Churchill´s call for a "United States of Europe" may become a reality.

## *Personal reflections*

The EU challenges the perception of the state by being very different from any other organization, but also different form any other type of state. It is not a traditional state, nor a state for that matter, still it is something different if compared to other organizations with similar ambitions such as for example the African Union. At the same time, it is not far from being comparable with the United States, and would anyone really argue that the United States is not to be considered a state?

Looking at the EU, we must move away from the traditional concept of statehood in political science and international relations, the conception of the traditional sovereign state as the dominating part of the international system. There is a new actor on the international arena and it is getting stronger, becoming more meaningful and increasingly recognized.

Will there be a United States of Europe in the future? It is certainly not unthinkable, but if so, probably not in a way that we today consider a federation, but in an European Union style. In a way and form that continues to make the EU a unique, something particular, a phenomenon different from everyone else.

## *Recommendations*

In the end, I hope that I have, just a Ryman have, contributed in adding knowledge on the concept of statehood in general and its relation to the European Union in particular. Furthermore, I hope that others can use this study as a base for any study related to state-like organizations and the concept of statehood, perhaps in a study where another organization is investigated in relation to state definition.

Lastly, I would like to challenge the reader of this study. It is my opinion that it would be of academic value to use this study in a similar investigation. This study, together with Ryman's study on the same case, has both, using different theoretical frameworks, concluded that the EU cannot really be defined as a state. What would be the outcome if another theoretical framework is used and applied to the same case?

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