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A TRANSATLANTIC DIVORCE AND THE TIME FOR EUROPEAN SOVEREIGNTY?

A study on how US foreign policy, during 2010-2020,
impacted EU member state views on defence integration

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Abstract

This thesis explores the impact of US foreign policy, during 2010-2020, on EU member state willingness to integrate defence, by utilizing a mixed-method approach. The objective of the study is to investigate how EU member states reacted to the Obama administration's 'pivot to Asia' and the election and presidency of Donald Trump and whether those administrations contributed to further defence integration. The quantitative analysis focuses on changes in defence expenditure, military personnel, and European collaborative procurement expenditures, and finds that the 'pivot to Asia' did not have an impact on EU member states defence expenditures. Quantitative analysis finds that EU member state increased defence expenditures after 2015, which steepened from 2017 which could be a continued response to Russian aggression, Brexit, and Trump threats to the EU and NATO. Qualitative analysis focuses on changes in rhetoric regarding EU member state participation in the newly launched defence initiative PESCO, as well as their willingness to increase defence integration. The thesis finds no support that the changes in US commitment to Europe impacted the EU member states to participate in PESCO or was an argument for further defence integration. The thesis concludes that as PESCO is a member state-driven initiative, it enables EU member states to pursue projects that align with their self-interests. The thesis also concludes that the EU's reaction to US foreign policy is constrained by a lack of actorness. Further research on EU member state views on other defence initiatives is needed.

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List of Abbreviations

BCT	Brigade Combat Teams
CARD	Coordinated Annual Review on Defence
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
E3	France, Italy, and Germany
EDA	European Defence Agency
EDC	European Defence Community
EDF	European Defence Fund
EEAS	European External Action Service
EEC	European Economic Community
EI2	European Intervention Initiative
EPC	European Political Cooperation
ERI	European Reassurance Initiative
ESDI	European Security and Defence Initiative
EU	the European Union
EUMC	European Union Military Committee
EUMS	European Union Military Staff
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
MPCC	Military Planning and Conduct Capabilities
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PESCO	Permanent Structured Cooperation
PSC	Political and Security Committee
R&D	Research and Development
R&T	Research and Technology
SEA	Single European Act
UK	the United Kingdom
UN	the United Nations
US, USA	the United States of America
WEU	Western European Union
WRP	Website of the Republic of Poland

1. Introduction

The European Union's (EU) *Global Strategy 2016* states that “a more credible European defence is essential also for the sake of a healthy transatlantic partnership with the United States” (EEAS, 2016:20). The need for a more credible European defence has become increasingly evident over the last decade. The US strategic shift in focus from Europe to Asia, in combination with increasing tensions between the US and the EU, is contributing to global uncertainty. Since the Obama administration's ‘pivot to Asia’ and the election of Donald Trump, the EU has become increasingly aware of the need to invest in its own security and develop the capacity to defend itself without having to rely on the US (Fischer, 2017). The pivot to Asia signalled a shift in US strategic priorities and the unpredictability of President Trump, following his campaign in which he criticised various European countries and allies, have increased concerns about US commitment to European allies (Bugra Kanat, 2018).

This thesis focuses on how President Obama's pivot to Asia and the election and presidency of Donald Trump impacted European defence integration. Previous studies have examined how both the US and external events have impacted the historical development of European defence integration (Howorth, 2017a; Fischer, 2017; Pieper & Lak, 2019; Shea, 2020) and the possibilities as well as the challenges for the EU to develop into an autonomous strategic actor (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019; Howorth, 2017b; Fischer, 2017; Garies & Wolf, 2016; Kucera, 2019). Other studies have focused on the transatlantic relationship and how different events and presidents have impacted the relationship (Cox, 2012; Penksa & Mason, 2003; Stokes & Whitman, 2013; Smith, 2018; Rühle, 2013; Winn, 2003). However, there are research gaps on how US foreign policy has impacted EU member state arguments and views on defence integration and how European defence integration has changed due to announced changes in US foreign policy. By analysing how US foreign policy, from 2010 to 2020, impacted European defence integration and EU member state narratives and willingness to enhance defence integration, this study contributes with increased understanding of what drives EU member states to integrate defence and what impact changes in US foreign policy have on the development of European defence cooperation.

Consequently, in this thesis, I explore whether the ‘pivot to Asia’ and the election and presidency of Donald Trump increased EU member state defence expenditures and contributed to EU member state arguments and willingness to integrate further. The quantitative

analysis specifically focuses on trends and changes in EU member state defence budgets, particularly increased European collaboration procurement expenditures and military personnel, and whether the trends align with changes in US foreign policy. To determine whether US foreign policy has contributed to EU member state willingness to integrate and enhance defence capacity, I use qualitative text analysis to study EU member state arguments on increased European defence cooperation and willingness to allocate more defence capabilities to the EU institutions through new defence initiatives. Specifically, the qualitative text analysis focuses on how France, Poland, and Ireland views one newly launched defence initiative, Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO).

Based on three criteria of EU actorness, initiative, capacity, and cohesion, I analyse EU member state willingness to allocate greater defence capabilities to the EU and whether the narrative promoting increased European defence cooperation is due to US actions. This thesis sheds light on what drives EU member states to integrate European defence and concludes that there is heterogeneity between their arguments and narratives for participating in European defence initiatives. The quantitative analysis finds that the pivot to Asia had no impact on EU member state defence expenditures, but finds that defence expenditures increased after 2017, which could be due to Russian aggression, Brexit, and Trump. The qualitative analysis also finds limited support about US impact on defence integration. However, the thesis finds that EU member states are willing to cooperate and integrate within the context of member state control.

Previous research shows that European defence integration is largely due to external events and that “the developments of its defence structures has(sic) been reactionary, and tended to follow American dominated structures” (Pieper & Lak, 2019:34). In this study, the underlying presumption around the EU’s security and defence policy is that the EU is reactionary rather than proactive, which is demonstrated in the historical developments of European integration and how external events have pushed the EU towards deeper integration.

1.1. Research Aims and Question

This thesis aims to contribute to the scholarly literature on the external impact on the EU’s security and defence policy, by analysing EU member state reactions to announced changes in US commitment to Europe during the second Obama and Trump administrations. The ambition is to contribute to previous research by studying EU member state views on defence integration

from 2010 to 2020 and whether changes in US commitment to Europe during that period impacted their arguments. To this end, the thesis analyses whether EU member states have increased defence cooperation to improve EU actorness and whether these potential improvements were intended to replace US presences and defence efforts in Europe.

The research question is *what impact did the US announced changes in commitment to Europe during 2010-2020 have on European defence integration?*

1.2. Outline

The outline of the study is divided into the following section. I first review previous research, which includes the historical development of European defence integration and European strategic autonomy, to identify research gaps in this field of study. Thereafter, I explore what operational changes the US made in Europe during 2010-2020. Subsequently, the theoretical framework and the hypotheses are discussed. Then the methodological section outlines and discusses the method and the material, which the following sections analyse. The concluding section discusses the US impact on European defence integration from 2010 to 2020 and suggests areas for future research.

2. Previous Research

The study of European security and defence is a well-researched field that illustrates the struggles between national sovereignty and European supranationalism in European integration (Bickerton, Irondele & Menon, 2011:2). This section broadly describes the historical development of European defence integration between 1945 to 2010, then goes on to discuss European defence integration, European strategic autonomy, and the transatlantic relationship in the 2010s. The third part of the section analyses European integration theories and factors that have furthered European integration. The section concludes with a discussion on the research gaps in the scholarly literature.

2. 1. European Defence Integration, 1945-2010

In the study of European defence integration, understanding the transatlantic relationship is essential. The EU and the US share a historical bond based on common values, a shared identity, and mutual commitments to human rights, rule of law, and the liberal democracy. They are so-called “natural allies” (Tocci & Alcaro, 2014:367). Since World War II and throughout the Cold War, the allies cooperated in the field of security, which was crystallized with the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Through NATO, the EU – or rather its predecessor, the European Economic Community (EEC) – could rely on the US for security and defence (Hyde-Price, 2018:2). After World War II, the US desired the Europeans to organize themselves with the goal to create an economically interdependent union that would produce lasting peace in Europe (Bache, Bulmer, George & Parker, 2015:86).¹ The goal of NATO and EEC was to contain Germany and prevent war by organizing a Franco-German economic relationship (Foster, 1997:300). However, while the EU could rely on US aid and nuclear commitment, EU member states still aimed to integrate and develop a defence component throughout the Cold War, a desire which increased with the end of the Cold War.

In the 1950s, France proposed the creation of a European army and the creation of a European Defence Community (EDC), which was outlined in the so-called “Pleven Plan”. This French initiative was a response to the Truman administration’s call to strengthen NATO

¹ This is also referred to as the first ‘transatlantic bargain’, which consisted of two parts: the Americans would economically help with the reconstruction of Europe if the Europeans would coordinate the assistance effectively, and the Americans would also help defend Europe if the Europeans developed the capacity for self-defence (Sloan, 2016:6).

and include the possibility of German troops in the alliance (Cowles & Egan, 2012:4). The French suggestion failed when the French Parliament voted against ratification in 1954. Thereafter, there was an increased focus on European economic and political integration rather than defence and security integration, resulting in the European Economic Community (EEC) created by the Treaty of Rome in 1957. In the 1960s, the French tried to reduce the European dependence on the US and NATO by introducing the “Fouchet Plan” which aimed to establish an institutional framework for foreign and security policy. The “Fouchet Plan” failed when the smaller member states deemed it incompatible with their sovereignty (Cowles & Egan, 2012:7).

Throughout the 1970s, the focus of European integration was on political and economic integration. It was not until the 1980s that the EU renewed its efforts in security and defence (Hyde-Price, 2018:2). In 1981, the German “Genscher-Colombo” initiative sought to develop a security and defence element that would be incorporated into the framework of the European Political Cooperation (EPC), though this initiative was also rejected. However, part of the initiative was included in the 1985 Single European Act (SEA), which allowed EPC the “responsibility for the ‘political and economic aspects of security’” (Hyde-Price, 2018:2). Moreover, in 1984, French President Mitterrand renewed the efforts of the Western European Union (WEU), which was a loose organisation that had been established as an alternative organisation after the failure of the EDC (Bache et al., 2015:106). The revival of the WEU created a platform for coordinating security and defence policies between the members of the EEC.

With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the common enemy, the transatlantic relationship experienced significant political, economic, military, and institutional changes (Cowles & Egan, 2012:13). An important driver for increased integration was the German reunification after fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, which forced both the EU and the US to adjust strategically to Germany (Smith, 2009:256). The EU increased its efforts in developing security and defence structures, because the security issues the EU faced during the 1990s were regional and no longer an important part of the global-strategy balance (Penksa & Mason, 2003:258). There was a consensus among EU member states that US involvement in Europe could not be taken for granted. Therefore, a result of European efforts was the introduction of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in the Maastricht Treaty, signed in 1991. The US, however, wanted NATO to be the prime security actor and while they did not oppose the institutional developments and initiatives, the Americans wanted to make

sure the new initiatives would not challenge NATO's role in Europe (Art, 1996:10). US Secretary of State Madeline Albright expressed the US opinion on the initiative as the "three D's" which meant no duplication, no discrimination, and no decoupling (Pieper & Lak, 2019:30). Thereafter, the WEU established the European Security and Defence Initiative (ESDI), a framework within NATO that allowed the WEU to use NATO assets, in efforts to strengthen the European pillar and keep the Europeans within NATO and the transatlantic alliance (Pieper & Lak, 2019:30).

When the wars in Yugoslavia broke out in 1991, the US viewed them as mainly a European problem and wanted the Europeans to address the wars through the renewed WEU. During the beginning of the conflict, the Europeans considered the wars as an opportunity for the emerging EU institutions to take control over their security issues. As Foreign Minister Jacques Poos of Luxembourg stated, it was "the hour of Europe" and "if one problem can be solved by the Europeans, it's the Yugoslav problem. This is a European country, and it's not up to the Americans and not up to anyone else" (Sloan, 2016:134). However, as the conflict became more brutal and violent, NATO and the US intervened as the EU did not have the capacity to deal with the conflict. The wars in Yugoslavia demonstrated that despite the institutional efforts of strengthening, the EU still had a long way to go before it could be a security actor and proved that NATO remained the premiere security actor in Europe (Cowles & Egan, 2012:15).² The failures in the Balkans confirmed the EU's lack of political will and lack of military resources to take on international interventions and operations (Sloan, 2016:163). Christopher Hill explained the failures as a "capabilities-expectation gap," combining increasing demands for EU action alongside an inability to translate that demand into policy outcome (Bickerton, et al., 2011:7). For the EU to become independent from the US and NATO, it needed to integrate more by creating structures and stronger capabilities to respond to crises.

In the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997, the EU strengthened the CFSP and established a High Representative to oversee security and defence. In December 1998, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and French President Jacques Chirac met and agreed to the Saint-Malo Declaration, which proposed a Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) allowing the EU to act independently if NATO decided not to act (Sloan, 2016:164). Within the

² In this thesis, security actor is defined as an actor that has the ability to autonomously act in conflicts and challenges while being recognized as security actor by other international actors (Freire & Simao, 2013:465).

following year, the Saint-Malo declaration was approved by all EU member states at the EU summits in Cologne and Helsinki. At the Helsinki Summit, the member states agreed to incorporate the WEU into the EU and declared they would “develop an autonomous capacity to take decisions, and where NATO as a whole is not engaged, to launch and conduct EU-led military operations in response to international crises” (Sloan, 2016:167). However, the decision to implement a CSDP was made with the caveat that it would not mean the introduction of a European army. The launch of CSDP aimed only to improve “the Union’s ability to intervene in international security affairs through an internal process of *institutional* development; and to give the EU the practical means of intervening through a co-ordination and pooling of military and civilian *capabilities*” (Bickerton et al., 2011:4). At the beginning of the 21st century, the EU launched several new institutions, such as a Political and Security Committee (PSC), the Military Committee (EUMC), a Military Staff (EUMS), and the European Defence Agency (EDA). Moreover, the EU also published its first security strategy in 2003.

While the EU launched these new initiatives, the transatlantic relationship grew tense in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, President Bush’s ‘war on Terror’, and the Iraq war (Cowles & Egan, 2012:16). The day after the attacks, when NATO for the first-time invoked Article 5, stating that the attack was an attack on all member states, the transatlantic relationship seemed stronger than ever. However, President Bush’s harsh rhetoric and his actions in the Middle East not only divided the US and its European allies, but also divided the EU member states between those who supported Bush’s war and those who opposed it (Cox, 2012:73). Robert Kagan claimed that the 9/11-attack and the aftermath of it highlighted the differences between the US and the EU, stating that “it is time to stop pretending that Europeans and Americans share a common view of the world, or even that they occupy the same world” (Kagan, 2002). Kagan explained that the divisions in the transatlantic relationship were likely to remain because the US and Europe have profoundly different ideas about foreign policy objectives and priorities.

2.2. A Quest for Strategic Autonomy?

The European integration of foreign and security policy has been viewed as the last significant step to create a closer union that can be considered a major player on the international scene (Bickerton et al., 2011:1). Various scholars have studied European integration and European

strategic autonomy, and whether it is likely that the EU will develop into an autonomous actor (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019; Howorth, 2017b; Fischer, 2017; Pieper & Lak, 2019).³ Scholars have also focused on how external events and changes in the external environment impact the defence integration process (Howorth, 2018; Hyde-Price, 2018; Kucera, 2017; Shea, 2020). This section aims to discuss recent studies on European strategic autonomy and the developments in the transatlantic relationship.

Bickerton et al. (2011) identify and list several external and internal factors that can explain and account for the development of CSDP. The external factors include declining US interests in Europe, the conflicts and wars in the Balkans in the 1990s, increasing demand for international crisis management missions and resources, and a change in the balance of power both internationally and in Europe. The internal factors include leadership by select member state governments, a more tolerant public opinion towards cooperation, stronger cooperation between EU and NATO, and awareness of costs and benefits when sharing the defence burden (Bickerton et al, 2011:8).

However, Hyde-Price (2018) claims that while defence and security policy and European defence integration was higher on the EU's political agenda in the 2010s, the significant trend has been the "renationalization of security and defence cooperation" (Hyde-Price, 2018:13). Despite the increased call for cooperation in the field of security and defence, it does not, according to Hyde-Price, take place at the EU level, but rather in bilateral and minilateral agreements between certain members. Though, Hyde-Price concludes that a "major external shock [...] might provide the necessary catalyst for cohesive and resolute collective action" (Hyde-Price, 2018:14). This thesis argues such a shock takes the form of Obama's pivot to Asia and the election of Donald Trump.

The pivot to Asia indicated a significant change in US strategic priorities and a resulting decrease in US engagement in Europe (Gareis & Wolf, 2016:133). Some scholars, such as Stokes and Whitman (2013) and Gareis and Wolf (2016), argue that the pivot to Asia created the potential for the EU to develop a common European strategy and the ability to defend themselves and their interests (Stokes & Whitman, 2013:1088; Gareis & Wolf, 2016:135). Gareis and Wolf (2016) maintain that simply increasing defence budgets will not suffice – instead, the EU must work together even closer in the wake of US disengagement to

³ European strategic autonomy refers to the EU's "capacity to act autonomously when and where necessary and with partners wherever possible" (Borrell, 2020), which was stated in the November 2016 Council Conclusion.

manage the change in global politics, returning to the idea of a European Defence Community that was abandoned in 1954 (Gareis & Wolf, 2016:146-147).

Other scholars, such as Rühle (2013), argue that it is unlikely that the pivot to Asia will influence the EU to develop into a defence union because the lack of political will remains an issue and the EU and the US still have close cooperation. The EU member states also have different security priorities due to different geographical challenges, views, and interests, and different strategic cultures, capabilities, and systems, which are not easily addressed (Rühle, 2013:284). Rühle (2013) claims that the EU's call for strategic autonomy or an EU army will be fruitless because "defense has never been a driver of European integration, progress in this area will only occur as the result of deeper *political* integration" (Rühle, 2013:285).

Another event that analysts argue was the catalyst that the EU needed to strengthen the pursuit for collective European defence action was Brexit. Both Howorth (2018) and Kucera (2017) argue that the UK's decision to leave the EU revitalized the European efforts to integrate military and defence capabilities, because the UK was considered the brake on the development of European defence integration and with the UK leaving, the political obstacle was removed (Kucera, 2017:322; Shea, 2020:89). Once Brexit happened, the EU could move forward with new defence initiatives including Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO),⁴ European Defence Fund (EDF),⁵ and the permanent military command (Military Planning and Conduct Capabilities, MPCC).⁶

While Howorth (2018) acknowledges the importance of Brexit for further integration, he also claims that the EU needs to end "its dependency on the US" if the goal is to become an autonomous strategic actor (Howorth, 2018:534). By his definition, the EU would need to become a security actor on par with NATO, though it would be hard for the EU and NATO to coexist because there is no need to have two entities in Europe with the same purpose and task. Howorth suggests merging CSDP into NATO, and in that way Europeanize NATO,

⁴ *PESCO* is a framework and process to deepen the defence cooperation between EU member states that are willing and capable. The 25 member states that have joined *PESCO* have committed to invest, plan, develop and operate more in defence. Currently, there are 47 *PESCO* projects being developed (*PESCO*, 2021). More on *PESCO* on page 33.

⁵ *EDF* supports cross-border cooperation between EU countries by providing funding for collaborative defence research and the development of defence products and technologies. The fund started functioning in January 2021 (EDA, 2021a).

⁶ *MPCC* is responsible for planning and conducting the EU's non-executive military missions, and the goal with the establishment of *MPCC* was to enhance the EU's capacities to act faster and more effectively in crises and conflicts. Moreover, it was created to strengthen the civil/military cooperation (EEAS, 2018).

which would allow for a different alliance and partnership with the US (Howorth, 2018:354). Shea (2020) also highlights the benefits of directing defence cooperation towards NATO, to complement rather than challenge it. Stronger EU-NATO cooperation would, according to Shea, improve burden-sharing and improve the bilateral arrangements that neither the EU nor NATO do effectively, such as providing support to the UN in peacekeeping and conflict resolution (Shea, 2020:94).

Although Fischer (2017) agrees with the analysis that Brexit has had a significant impact on European defence integration, he identifies Brexit as one of three components that have pushed the EU to pursue strategic autonomy. The other two crucial events were the Russian invasion and illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the election of Donald Trump. Fischer (2017) claims the election of Donald Trump catalysed the EU's pursuit of strategic autonomy because Trump's rhetoric and "America First" policy sent a clear message to Europe that the dynamics of the transatlantic relationship had changed, intensifying the pre-existing debate on the EU's global role. Fischer (2017) concludes that disengagement from the US in combination with the creation of a stronger Franco-German alliance has given the EU the encouragement it needed to proceed with deeper defence integration, such as launching PESCO (Fischer, 2017:67). The shortcoming of Fischer's study is the lack of empirical evidence on how President Trump impacted defence integration and the launch of PESCO. Although Fischer (2017) describes the rhetoric between Trump and other European leaders and the impact on the transatlantic relationship, there is no clear analytical framework that supports the conclusion that the election of Trump enhanced European defence integration.

Pieper and Lak (2019) also find that President Trump's rhetoric "generated a renewed drive towards advancing 'strategic autonomy'" (Pieper & Lak, 2019:37). Trump's criticism of NATO and the EU itself caused Europeans to question whether this shift in the transatlantic relationship was a "symptom of a long-term tectonic shift or a temporary phenomenon" (Pieper & Lak, 2019:32). Through a historical analysis of previous disagreements in EU-US relations, Pieper and Lak (2019) claim that European defence integration has historically been linked to the US and when the US has been more involved in European defence, the EU's development is stalled (Pieper & Lak, 2019:38). Therefore, when the US increased its commitments to Europe and NATO, there was little incentive for the EU to invest in their defence. When the EU tried to develop more capabilities to act in the 1990s, the US warned EU member states against creating a NATO duplicate (Pieper & Lak, 2019:30).

Consequently, the US recent disengagement in Europe could explain the EU's new initiatives and pursuit for strategic autonomy.

Nonetheless, President Trump is not the sole reason for the decline of US interests in Europe and increased tensions in the transatlantic relationship (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019; Pieper & Lak, 2019). Aggestam and Hyde-Price (2019) maintain that President Trump was a mere "symptom of underlying problems" (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019:125). They argue that President Trump has made the underlying problems, including differences over priorities, policy preferences, interests, and identities, more visible than before. Since the end of the Cold War, EU member states have become more prone to defining their own foreign policy objectives as well as criticising US foreign policy, such as the Iraq war, the war on terrorism and more lately interventions in the Middle East. As Aggestam and Hyde-Price explain it, "the two continents face different geopolitical challenges, different strategy concerns, widening on differences on values and norms and differences over trade and economic relations" (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019:124).

Another significant factor that has impacted the EU and the transatlantic relationship is the domestic policies in both the European countries and the US. On both sides of the Atlantic, there has been a rise in populism and nationalism, where populist and nationalistic leaders have gained political ground (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019:118). These internal factors have challenged the political consensus on integration and globalization, and the resulting shift in domestic politics has impacted both European defence integration and the transatlantic relationship. In addition to the internal factors, external factors motivating defence integration include the worsening of the external security environment due to Russian aggression, a lack of trust in the US as a reliable security partner, and Brexit (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019:123). European defence integration is a result of the "combination of Russia's resurgence and revisionist approaches and Trump's unpredictability and deep Euroscepticism" according to Aggestam and Hyde-Price (2019:123). Together, these factors created the foundation for European strategic autonomy and stronger European defence and military capabilities. Furthermore, Aggestam and Hyde-Price (2019) note that three initiatives are closely linked to the defence integration: PESCO, EDF and Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD).⁷

⁷ The main objectives of CARD are to examine the existing defence capabilities in the EU and identify new possible areas for cooperation. The ambition is that CARD will make national defence spending more efficient (EDA, 2021b).

While Trump is not the only reason for the growth in tensions, his presidency played a significant role in the EU's renewed defence efforts and served as a catalyst for enhancing defence integration (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019; Fischer, 2017; Pieper & Lak, 2019). Throughout both Trump's campaign and presidency, he continuously criticised US allies and called NATO obsolete, which made the EU leaders question the US commitment to defence (Bugra Kanat, 2018:80). President Trump criticised the lack of burden-sharing within NATO, like presidents before him, but also withdrew from agreements signed with European allies, such as the Paris Climate Accord and Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), further demonstrating his lack of cooperation with the European allies. President Trump's criticism and actions did not go unnoticed or unmentioned by European leaders. In May 2017, Chancellor Merkel said, "the era in which we could fully rely on others is over to some extent" (Howorth, 2017b:457) and President of the Commission Jean-Claude Juncker called for more defence integration.

2.3. Explaining European Defence Integration

The theoretical understanding of why EU member states would be willing to allocate parts of their national sovereignty, especially in security and defence policy, needs to be reviewed as it allows for a deeper discussion on the relationship between defence integration and national sovereignty. The theoretical discussion on international cooperation emerged from realism, which argued that national interests motivate foreign and security policy. The realist's basic assumption of cooperation in foreign and security policy was that "the interests of single European nation-states will eternally block integration within the high politics realms of foreign, security and defence policy" (Bache et al., 2015:505).

The realist assumption is shared by the two well-established European integration theories, neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism. These two theories were established in the early years of the EU. Thus, they address economic integration rather than foreign and security policy, but they are well-used for explaining European integration. Neofunctionalism views integration as a process and explains European integration driven by 'spillover', which is defined as "a situation in which a given action, related to a specific goal, creates a situation in which the original goal can be assured only by taking further actions, which in turn create a further condition and a need for more action" (Bache et al., 2015:11). In practice, the spillover process means that the integration of one sector would trigger a similar

process that other sectors would follow. Additionally, supranational institutions, such as the European Commission, actively seek and advocate for more integration, since they are likely to benefit from the process (Bache et al., 2015:11; Foster, 1997:299). By contrast, liberal intergovernmentalism theory argues that the states are in control of the integration process and can control the pace and nature of it (Bache et al., 2015:13). According to the liberal intergovernmentalist theory, any major decisions that have resulted in greater European integration, like the single European market, stemmed from the preferences of the national governments and their domestic politics not supranational institutions (Bache et al., 2015:15). Both theories regard integration of foreign and security policy as unlikely to happen. The concept of spillover, which neofunctionalists view as the driver of integration, is only applicable to 'low politics', which means that 'high politics' such as foreign, security and defence policies are typically considered to be excluded from this process (Kucera, 2017:324). The liberal intergovernmentalists claim that states are unlikely to allocate power of national security as it is a fundamental element of state sovereignty (Kucera, 2017:323).

A more recent contribution to the theoretical discussion on European integration is the concept of multi-level governance, developed by Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks. They acknowledge that cooperation in 'high politics' has occurred but without any reduction in national sovereignty and increase of power in the supranational institutions. Integration in these policy areas "has meant the institutionalization of intergovernmental exchange and mutual oversight at the EU level" (Bache et al., 2015:19). Contrary to other theories, multi-level governance proposes a different way of understanding integration. Instead of viewing it as a gradual shift in authority and power from the member states to the EU, multi-level governance emphasises development of intergovernmental forms of cooperation.

While no theory explains why EU member states would integrate defence policy, they give an insight into why member states would be willing to allocate more powers to the EU and increasingly integrate. Neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism claim that either the member states are pressured to integrate more by interest groups or supranational institutions, or they view integration as favourable for their national interests. Multi-level governance, by contrast, views European defence integration as institutionalised intergovernmental exchange and cooperation.

2.3.1. The Reactive Union

The previous sections have discussed and accounted for European integration since the end of World War II and the events and factors that explain why the integration process has continued throughout the decades. As the historical discussion on European defence integration has illustrated, both the US and the global environment are closely linked to the EU and its development in becoming an autonomous strategic actor (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019; Howorth, 2017b; Howorth, 2018; Hyde-Price, 2018; Kucera, 2017; Pieper & Lak, 2019; Shea, 2020). In this way, both external actors and events have shaped and impacted the EU's efforts to integrate security and defence policy.

Nonetheless, internal dynamics and political will are also key elements to European integration, illustrated by economic integration in the first decades of the European project and then by German reunification (Bache et al., 2015; Howorth, 2017a; Smith, 2009). German reunification increased concerns by European leaders that Germany would become the dominant European power. As a result, President of the European Commission Jacques Delors suggested deeper integration to “bind Germany even more tightly to the European Community” (Smith, 2009:258). German reunification changed the internal dynamics in a way that increased the likelihood of integration and moved the EU towards a political union. Increased integration resulted in the Maastricht Treaty and the establishment of CFSP, both of which moved the EU towards defence integration (Meijer & Wyss, 2019:381).

While political will and internal dynamics are undoubtedly a central part of the integration process, external factors are often the triggering reason for deepening and furthering defence integration. Throughout the history of European integration, US involvement and position in Europe stand out as a catalyst for increased defence integration (Fischer, 2017; Hyde-Price, 2018; Howorth, 2017; Kucera, 2017; Pieper & Lak, 2019; Smith, 2009). The US was involved at the beginning of the European project and for the US, European integration was a condition for helping with economic aid and security after World War II. After the end of the Cold War when the US strategic interest in Europe shifted to other parts of the world, it also pushed the EU to integrate more (Penska & Mason, 2003:258). Therefore, the transatlantic relationship has played a crucial role in European defence integration.

The driving forces for European integration include both internal and external political changes. The European Union started as a reaction and response to the aftermath of World War II, and “it has taken steps forward not by following a predetermined plan or strategy

– Europe has historically proven that it is not a good planner – but by responding to emergencies and uncertainties” (Kaili, 2016:163). Jean Monnet, founding father of European integration, stated that “Europe would be built through crises, and that it would be the sum of their solutions” and “people only accept change when they are faced with necessity, and only recognize necessity when a crisis is upon them” (Schimmelfenning, 2018:986).

2.4. Research Gap

Studies on European defence integration have largely focused on how different historical events have impacted European integration. Recently the focus has been on how Brexit and Donald Trump’s rhetoric has impacted the EU (Fischer, 2017; Howorth, 2017a; Kucera, 2017; Pieper & Lak, 2019; Shea, 2020). Several studies have also focused on the EU’s possible development into an autonomous strategic actor (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019; Howorth, 2017b; Fischer, 2017; Garies & Wolf), and specifically in relations to the transatlantic relationship and NATO (Cox, 2012; Stokes & Whitman, 2013; Smith, 2018; Rühle, 2013; Winn, 2003).

These studies are often conducted through historical analyses of European defence integration and the transatlantic relationship (Cowles & Egan, 2012; Hyde-Price, 2018) or historical comparisons of crucial events (Howorth, 2017a) and critical developments in the transatlantic relationship (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019). Several studies focus on the rhetorical aspect, by either analysing the current and historical security debates (Rühle, 2013; Stokes & Whitman, 2013) or analysing the rhetoric of US Presidents and EU leaders (Pieper & Lak, 2019; Fischer, 2017). Others have analysed policy and strategy documents (Howorth, 2018; Gareis & Wolf, 2013) or conducted a theoretical discussion and analysis of European defence integration (Bickerton et al., 2011; Kucera, 2019).

Despite the great variety of different approaches to analysing European defence integration and the role of the transatlantic relationship, there is a lack of clear evidence on two aspects of the defence integration. First, there is a lack of evidence about how the external environment, particularly the US, impacts EU member state arguments and willingness to integrate defence. Most studies focus on current and historical security debates, how the rhetoric of US presidents and prominent EU leaders has impacted foreign and security policy (Fischer, 2017; Pieper & Lak, 2019; Rühle, 2013; Stokes & Whitman, 2013) or on historical developments (Cowles & Egan, 2012; Howorth, 2017a; Hyde-Price, 2018). Previous research can be complemented with a study on how EU member states view defence integration and how

the external environment impacts their arguments, which is necessary to increase the understanding of what drives EU member states to integrate defence.

Second, there is a lack of evidence of how European defence cooperation has changed because of the announced changes in the US foreign policy. Studies focused on European defence integration have analysed how the EU's ambitions and goals have changed throughout the years, rather than how EU member states have changed their operational capabilities due to the external environment. Some scholars (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019; Hyde-Price, 2018; Garies & Wolf, 2016; Meijer & Wyss, 2019; Pieper & Lak, 2019;) discuss to a certain extent changes in EU member state defence expenditures. However, there is a lack of a thorough and systematic analysis of how EU member state defence expenditures have changed, not only examining total defence expenditure but also the amount and changes in EU member state investments in European defence cooperation. This type of analysis contributes with increased understanding of how the US impact EU member state defence capabilities.

This study hopes to contribute to these two research gaps: the effects of US foreign policy on EU member state views on European defence integration and how EU member states capacities have changed because of US foreign policy between 2010 and 2020.

3. The US Foreign Policies in 2010-2020

To understand how US foreign policy affects European integration and EU member state views on European defence cooperation, it is critical to first distinguish what the pivot to Asia and the election of Donald Trump meant for Europe. The first part of this section describes the pivot to Asia and what operational changes were made in Europe. The second part describes what the election and presidency of Donald Trump meant for the EU, and what concrete operational changes President Trump made during his time in office.

3.1. President Obama's Pivot to Asia

The election of President Barack Obama in 2008 was greeted with optimism in Europe. However, that feeling did not last long. In 2011, President Obama announced that the US top foreign policy priority was Asia and stated that America had “made a deliberate and strategic decision: as a Pacific nation, the United States will play a larger and long-term role in shaping this region and its future” (Shambaugh, 2013:14). The US pivot to Asia was not completely new, as the US is also a Pacific power. But the pivot to Asia illustrated a more profound commitment, which left the Europeans with the potential to take greater responsibility for their own defence and security (Gareis & Wolf, 2016:139-140). Despite US efforts to reassure European allies that the pivot to Asia did not mean an abandonment or pivot away from Europe and the transatlantic partnership, the pivot did result in concrete changes in Europe which caused concerns for EU member states (Cuccia, 2013:10).

The first concrete change was in the strategic commitment. To reduce defence budget spending, the Obama administration decided to remove two of four Armoured Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) and replace them by assigning a US-based brigade to NATO's Response Force and keeping a rotating army unit that participated in training and exercises in Europe (Cuccia, 2013:16-17; BBC, 2012; Feickert, 2014).⁸ Before Obama's withdrawal, the four BCT in Europe were two armoured BCT in Germany, one infantry BCT in Italy, and one Stryker BCT in Germany.⁹ The remaining BCTs after withdrawal were the Stryker BCT in Germany

⁸ The Armoured Brigade Combat Teams refers to a mix of different types of units, which means that the BCT can consist of infantry, artillery, and engineering. Usually, one BCT contains around 4,500 soldiers (Talaber, 2016:17).

⁹ The difference between these three types of BCT is the type of forces. The armoured BCT have the largest amount of heavy armoured vehicles, the Stryker BCT has large number of light armoured vehicles and the infantry BCT has few armoured vehicles (Talaber, 2016:20).

and the infantry BCT in Italy. The NATO Response Force,¹⁰ which replaced the other two BCTs, is “a highly ready and technologically advanced multinational force made up of land, air, maritime and Special Operations Forces components that the Alliance can deploy quickly, wherever needed” (NATO, 2020a).

The second concrete change, a result of the first change, was a reduction of personnel: more than 10,000 out of 80,000 soldiers leaving Europe (Cuccia, 2013:18).¹¹ Since then, the military presence in Europe has fallen to around 35,000 soldiers and a few thousand more rotating soldiers (Petersen, 2017).

The third change was the removal of the US Army V Corps headquarters in Europe,¹² resulting in inactivation of “two Air Force Squadrons and close [closing] four of the twelve Army bases in Europe” (Cuccia, 2013:18). The V Corps headquarters had been active since World War I and was later a part of the D-Day invasion and liberation of Europe. The closing represented a “major milestone in U.S. Army Europe’s transformation to a more agile force built around a cavalry brigade equipped with highly mobile Stryker combat vehicles and an airborne infantry brigade” (Cole, 2013).

However, due to the Russian aggression and the annexation of Crimea, the US later reinstalled one Army Combat Brigade to maintain stability and to rebuild US presence in Europe and reactivated the V Corps headquarters (Ackerman, 2016; Peterson, 2017; Rempfer, 2020).

3.2. The Election and Presidency of Donald Trump

The pivot to Asia and the original reduction of US military presence caused the Europeans to doubt US commitment to Europe, which only became more intense after the election of Donald Trump in November 2016. Despite President Trump’s harsh rhetoric towards the EU and NATO, he increased the funding for the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI), which President Obama launched after the annexation of Crimea, and followed through with deploying an armoured Combat Brigade, consisting of 4,000 troops and 87 tanks to Romania

¹⁰ The NATO Response Force (NRF) is based on a “rotational system where Allied nations commit land, air, maritime or Special Operations Forces (SOF) units for a period of 12 months” (NATO, 2020). The operational command alternates between Italy and the Netherlands.

¹¹ The reduction included 10,000 service personnel and 2,500 from support units.

¹² A Corps is “the highest level of command that can provide operational direction for actual combat” and is commanded by a Lieutenant General (U.S. Dept of Defence, 2021).

and Poland (Peterson, 2017). The ERI aims to enhance defence and deterrence in Europe, and according to the US Air Force Major General David W. Allvin, it “is one of our nation's commitments to Europe, and it demonstrates our strong dedication to the trans-Atlantic bond and the defense of our allies” (Pellerin, 2017).

The President’s increased funding in the ERI, by \$1.4 billion in 2018, illustrated both support for NATO allies and support for deterrence of future Russian aggression (Pellerin, 2017). The funding of ERI resulted in increased US military presence, more training with the allies, increased infrastructure, and placement of equipment. In 2020, the Department of the Army announced the reactivation of the V Corps headquarters that Obama had removed and a decision to locate it in Poland (U.S. Army V Corps Headquarter, 2020). The newly reactivated V Corps headquarters mission is to conduct operational planning and the oversight of the rotational forces. The reactivation also includes an increase in presence by 1,000 soldiers in Poland.

However, in 2020, President Trump decided to withdraw 12,000 troops from Germany: 6,400 were to be sent home and the others relocated to other NATO members, namely Italy and Belgium (Lopez, 2020). The decision to withdraw troops came after President Trump’s criticism of Germany’s failure to meet the NATO 2-percent budget requirement (BBC, 2020). The withdrawal was put on hold after the Biden administration took over and will be reviewed again (White House, 2021b; Cooper, 2021).

Consequently, the Trump presidency consisted of increased operational capacities in Europe, all while maintaining strong rhetoric against Europe and its European allies with continued threats to decrease the military presence.

3. Theoretical Framework

This section begins with a discussion on the issue and definition of EU actorness, which is followed by a presentation of previous research on EU actorness in foreign and security policy. The section ends with a discussion on how EU actorness can be applied to this study by presenting a set of hypotheses.

3.1. EU Actorness

The concept of EU actorness is one of the most prominent analytical frameworks for the study of European foreign and security integration, as it is closely linked to the ability to ‘speak with a single voice’ in order to be a stronger international actor and to achieve strategic autonomy (Da Conceição-Heldt & Meunier, 2014:961; Pieper & Lak, 2019:24; Sus, 2019:413).¹³ As strategic autonomy has, in recent years, become more desirable for the EU, with leaders from both EU member states and the European Commission calling for strategic autonomy, the concept of EU actorness explains what is needed to be an international actor. There are several different definitions for actorness, but the standard definition was formulated by Gunnar Sjöstedt, who defined international actorness as “the capacity to behave actively and deliberately in relations to other actors in the international system” (Mueller, 2013:21; Sus, 2019:413). Other definitions focus on “the ability to exert influence and to shape the perceptions and expectations of others” (Sus, 2019:413).

Within the study of EU foreign and security policy, the concept of EU actorness is heavily debated and analysed with numerous of scholars attempting to define criteria to analyse and evaluate the concept (Kaunert, Léonard, MacKenzie, 2015; Greicevic, 2011). For example, Caporaso and Jupille have recognised four different criteria: *authority*, which refers to the legal competence; *autonomy*, which means independence from other actors; *cohesion*, which refers to having unified actions toward other actors; and *recognition*, which refers to other actors recognising and accepting the competence to act (Kaunert et al., 2015:361). By contrast, Bretherton and Volger have identified four other criteria: “a shared commitment to a set of overarching values and principles, the domestic legitimation of decision processes and priorities relating to external policy, the ability to identify policy priorities, and the availability of, as well as the capacity to utilize, policy instruments” (Kaunert et al., 2015:361). Kaunert et

¹³ Definition on page 8.

al., (2015) combined these eight criteria into six: capacity, initiative, legitimacy, autonomy, cohesion, and recognition (Kaunert et al., 2015:361).

It has been difficult for the EU to achieve actorness as a result of “the lack of a clear central authority and sometimes divergent interests between national and European interests” (Greicevic, 2011:287) and lack of recognition by other international actors (Baracani, 2020:381). To achieve international actorness, EU member states and the EU institutions need to agree on external actions, and to achieve an effective common foreign and security policy, both national and European policies would need to align around the same objectives (Greicevic, 2011:285). Political unity and cohesion between the member states are, therefore, key aspects to European integration and achieving actorness (Bache et al., 2015; Howorth, 2017a). To achieve EU actorness and strengthen the EU’s international role, certain tools and mechanisms have been developed by unifying policies, such as CFSP and CSDP. However, the EU is still not always able to behave actively and deliberately in relation to other actors, which continues to be an obstacle for achieving EU actorness (Greicevic, 2011:285).

While there is a drive to act collectively on foreign and security policy, there is also a will to maintain the status quo, which makes it difficult to achieve international actorness. Both neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism argue that security and defence policy is beyond the reach of European integration as it is considered ‘high politics’,¹⁴ which explains the struggle to achieve actorness in these areas (Bache et al., 2015:10-15). According to liberal intergovernmentalists, as states are unlikely to allocate powers related to security and defence, reaching autonomy and consensus that is needed to achieve EU actorness in foreign and security policy is difficult. Due to internal differences in interests and priorities, there is difficulty in adopting common strategies and achieving consensus. Therefore “European states continue to face collective action problems in responding to foreign policy episodes and crises” (Stokes & Whitman, 2013:1094).

Sus (2019) identifies three factors that influence changes in EU actorness: global changes, including the Syrian war, refugee and migration waves, Russia’s revisionist approaches, and President Trump’s pressures on the transatlantic relationship; internal dynamics, including the financial crisis, political polarization, domestic terrorism, and Brexit; and institutional changes from the Lisbon Treaty, like the enhanced role of the High Representative and introduction of the European External Action Service (EEAS) (Sus,

¹⁴ Definition on page 12.

2019:415).¹⁵ Sus summarises that EU actorness constitutes “the Union’s ability to react to global challenges by defining the interests that guide the formulation of its aims, which then become a basis for developing and implementing the instruments needed to fulfil these interest-led targets” (Sus, 2019:413). Consequently, the EU is a reactionary actor where external and internal crises drive integration, which results in EU actorness or the attempt to enhance actorness (Kaili, 2016: 163; Sus, 2019:415). One example of this understanding is during the wars in Yugoslavia. When the EU failed to intervene due to a lack of both political will and military capabilities, EU member states integrated foreign and security policy into the union and established CFSP and CSDP to address the shortcomings.

Previous research on EU actorness particularly shows that cohesion, capabilities, and initiative are central for achieving actorness. While Baracani (2020) concludes, in his study on EU actorness in the state-building process in Kosovo, that EU actorness depends on the international community rather than unity within the EU, he also acknowledges the impact of the internal division on the EU’s credibility and ability to implement policies (Baracani, 2020:381). During the state-building process, EU member states have been divided due to five EU member states not recognising Kosovo’s independence, which resulted in the EU’s ‘status neutral’.¹⁶ To overcome the internal division, the EU was required “to devise creative institutional and legal solutions”, such as aiding in the reconstruction and economic development, economic aid and providing the framework for the Stabilization and Association Process (Baracani, 2020:270).¹⁷ However, the internal conflicts or disagreements between EU member states reduce the EU’s ability and capacity to act because they undermine cohesion (Baracani, 2020:381; Greicevic, 2011:287).

Achieving cohesion between EU member states is central for actorness, but studies also highlight the importance of capabilities and initiative. According to theories on collective action, two factors are highly critical for achieving actorness: decision-making and control of resources. The EU institutions lacks both aspects regarding security, as the CFSP has intergovernmental decision-making procedures and the member states have control over

¹⁵ While the position of the High Representative already existed before the Lisbon Treaty, the treaty changed the competencies and abilities of the HR.

¹⁶ Status neutral refers to “the EU neither supporting nor opposing Kosovo’s independence, and [took] an ‘approach of diversity on recognition, but unity in engagement’” (Baracani, 2020:373).

¹⁷ The Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) is a policy framework for countries in the Western Balkans to develop closer relations with the EU. In 2000, the European Council enhanced the policy with a “future membership ‘perspective’ for all Western Balkan countries” (Baracani, 2020:270).

military capabilities (Gehring et al., 2017:731). In Maass (2020) study on EU actorness in Ukraine after the Russian annexation of Crimea, Maas argues that the EU lacked the required actorness to respond to Russia's unilateral policy towards Ukraine. Instead of setting the agenda for peace, the EU "became a passive bystander witnessing Crimea's annexation by Russia" (Maass, 2020:397). After the annexation, EU member states also lacked a unitary stance on how to address the annexation, which impacted the EU's actorness towards Russia and Ukraine. Consequently, to achieve cohesion and EU actorness, it is critical to have a unitary stance and policy objective.

3.2. Hypotheses

This thesis examines whether the announced changes in US commitment to Europe have impacted EU member states to further develop defence cooperation and build up European defence through newly launched defence initiatives. Specifically, the thesis focuses on increased defence cooperation between EU member states through PESCO and whether EU member states have increased their military spending and personnel due to the US changes in military personnel in Europe. To analyse these aspects, I hypothesize the following:

H1: The EU member states reacted to announced changes in US commitment to Europe during 2010-2020 by increasing their defence expenditures and launching initiatives to further European defence cooperation.

H2: The launch of PESCO makes EU member states coordinate themselves and align around the same objectives more effectively.

Based on the notion that the EU is a reactionary actor, the willingness for more European defence cooperation should arise as a result of the Obama administration's pivot to Asia and the reduction of military personnel in Europe, and the election of Donald Trump and his critical rhetoric towards the EU. Increased military personnel and defence cooperation should reflect EU member states increased defence cooperation with the ambition to replace the US as a security actor. The first hypothesis analyses whether EU member states reacted to the US's announced changes in Europe by increasing their defence expenditures and launching new defence initiatives, and in doing so increased European defence integration.

While the first hypothesis focuses on the external impact on European defence integration, the second hypothesis focuses on the internal dynamics of defence integration and the internal development of EU actorness. It investigates whether the launch of PESCO has led the EU member states to align around the same basic goals and objectives, despite variation in their historical stances on European defence integration and, as a result, developed EU actorness.

The study uses three of the six criteria identified by Kaunert et al., (2015): initiative, capacity, and cohesion (Kaunert et al., 2015:361). In previous research, these criteria were the most central for the study of the EU's institutional ability to respond to external events. The initiative criterion constitutes the ability to develop a strategic narrative and identify priorities and, based on those priorities, be able to formulate aims and policies (Kaunert et al., 2015:361; Sus, 2019:413). The ability to identify common interests, aims, and priorities are at the core of the initiative criterion.

Capacity can be understood as the legal capacity to act, the ability to pool resources, and the development and implementation of policy (Niemann & Bretherton, 2013:266; Sus, 2019:413). To have these abilities, the EU is highly dependent on the member states, both to implement policies and link their resources to EU institutions and other member states (Sus, 2019:414). Consequently, the EU is dependent on how EU member states act, their defence expenditures, and their willingness to allow the EU to utilize their resources. The issue is whether member states are willing to allocate some of their national sovereignty to give the EU institutions abilities and capabilities, outcomes that European integration theories suggests are unlikely. In this thesis, capacity is measured through both defence expenditures and EU member state willingness to allocate defence capabilities to EU institutions.

Cohesion refers to the capacity to act unitedly and presenting an objective externally with a single voice. Cohesion has several dimensions and degrees (Da Conceição-Heldt & Meunier, 2014:964). Sus identifies four different dimensions: “‘value cohesion’ as the degree of common basic goals; ‘tactical cohesion’ as the availability of methods to make diverging goals fit one another; ‘procedural cohesion’ as the degree of consensus concerning how to deal with conflicting issues; and ‘output cohesion’ as the degree of success in formulating common policies, regardless of substantive and procedural agreement.” (Sus, 2019:414). If there is a disagreement or conflict, either between member states and the EU or between member states, the EU is less able to act as the cohesion is low.

4. Method and Material

To examine the impact of US policy on defence cooperation and whether PESCO has led to increased actorness in EU defence policy, the thesis utilises a mixed-method design, which consists of two parts with the purpose to elaborate and expand the findings of the study (Gaber & Overacker, 2012:277; Morse & Cheek, 2014:4). The mixed-method approach is conducted through a two-part analysis. A quantitative method provides an overview of trends and changes in European defence expenditure. Based on those trends, the Obama administration is eliminated, while the impact of the Trump administration is studied in further detail in a qualitative analysis. The quantitative method illustrates when spending changes occurred and the qualitative method analyses more specifically EU member state strategic narratives and arguments for defence integration. EU actorness is addressed in each method, with the quantitative method examining capabilities in terms of expenditures resources and the qualitative method investigating all three criteria.

Previous research has mostly focused on either the historical development of European defence cooperation (Cowles & Egan, 2012; Howorth, 2017a; Hyde-Price, 2018) or the impact of on European defence integration with only brief discussion of changes in EU member state defence expenditures (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019; Hyde-Price, 2018; Garies & Wolf, 2016; Meijer & Wyss, 2019; Pieper & Lak, 2019;). By using a mixed-method approach, this thesis contributes to a more thorough understanding of how military spending and European defence cooperation have changed in the last decade.

The data analysis investigates whether EU member states have increased their total defence expenditures, collaborative defence procurement expenditures, and military personnel. This analysis shows changes in the last decade to determine whether those trends aligned with changes in US foreign policy and military presence in Europe. The quantitative analysis covers EU member states defence expenditures from 2005-2020.

The qualitative method analyses EU member state strategic narratives for further evidence of European defence integration, specifically whether the launch of PESCO has made EU member states more committed to and coordinated on European defence. Focus in this analysis is on whether the disengagement by the US is mentioned as an argument for more defence cooperation in the EU. Based on the theoretical discussion on EU actorness, the research focuses on the rhetoric of EU member states as an indication of how willing EU

member states are to allocate more responsibility to the EU and to coordinate defence efforts more effectively. The empirical material for the qualitative analysis consists of press releases and official statements made by government officials from 2017 to 2020. These types of documents provide the main arguments for launching or joining new EU defence initiatives.

The first section below presents and discusses the quantitative material and the method of analysis. The second section focuses on the qualitative material and the justification for the selected case studies. Thereafter, the operationalisation for the qualitative analysis is presented.

4.1. Quantitative Method and Material

The objectives of the quantitative method are to identify and analysis the overall trends and changes in EU member state defence expenditures, with a particular focus on European collaboration defence procurement expenditure and military personnel, in the last decade. To that end, three different datasets are used for the analysis. The statistical data consists of one merged dataset combining two datasets from the European Defence Agency (EDA) and one from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).¹⁸ The EDA datasets provide information on EU member states defence expenditures and the NATO dataset allows for both controlling the EDA information and contributing information on US defence expenditures. Using the merged dataset enables an analysis of how EU member states defence expenditures compared to each other and the US. The merged dataset illustrates what year changes in defence expenditure happened, either budget increases or decreases and how those aligned with changes in US foreign policy. Based on the operational changes made during the Obama administration's pivot to Asia, the increase or decrease in military personnel in Europe can illustrate an attempt to replace the US military presence.

The combined dataset from the EDA covers EU member state defence expenditures from 2005 to 2019, while the NATO dataset covers each NATO member state expenditures from 2013 to 2020. The EDA has annually, since 2006,¹⁹ collected defence data from all EU member states, except for Denmark, which has opted out of CFSP and thus is not

¹⁸ The analysis consists of two datasets from EDA: the first dataset covers defence expenditure from 2005 to 2017 and the second dataset from 2017 to 2019. To examine the period for the study they have been merged.

¹⁹ The 2005 data were collected as a pilot exercise and therefore only contain some of the indicators.

a member of EDA.²⁰ The EDA receives data from member state Ministries of the Defence and publishes aggregated figures as well as the national data.²¹

The EDA and NATO datasets use different currencies. EDA reports data in Euro. NATO uses US dollars as the common currency but also presents the data in all member states' national currencies (NATO, 2020:15). For the analysis, the NATO data were converted from US dollars to Euro to make comparisons. EDA and NATO both present the defence expenditure at current prices. The ministries report both the current and estimated defence expenditure.²²

Furthermore, by using a descriptive analysis, the quantitative data demonstrates how the EU as a whole and EU member state defence budgets have changed yearly, and whether certain countries are driving the increase or decrease in expenditure. Analysing whether certain actors drive the aggregated EU defence expenditure illustrates if there has been an absence of cohesion between EU member states in their strengthening of defence and if certain member states have been more inclined to strengthen their defence after the US operational changes. The analysis specifically focuses on E3+UK,²³ Poland, and Ireland.²⁴

4.2. Qualitative Method

The analytical method for this thesis is content analysis, a type of method focusing on the purpose of the text. The qualitative analysis aims to explore in-depth EU member state strategic narratives and arguments for launching new defence initiatives to enhance European defence cooperation. Also noted is whether the initiatives were considered a response to US foreign policy, particularly the announced changes in commitments to Europe.

²⁰ For some member states, the data is not provided, either because the state was not a member of the EU at the time or because the data is confidential. The UK data is excluded in the 2017-2019 dataset. The data is also rounded, which means the aggregated numbers for the total EU27 can differ from other sources. Moreover, the numbers might differ in some spending categories due to margins of error in the accounting systems.

²¹ NATO uses an agreed definition of defence expenditure, on which the Ministries base their reports, which is defined as “payments made by a national government specifically to meet the needs of its armed forces, those of Allies or of the Alliance” (NATO, 2020b:15). The EDA does not provide a definition for defence expenditure, but the numbers presented in the NATO and EDA datasets were, most of the time, the same. The EDA defines military personnel as “the authorised strengths of all active military personnel on 31 December of each year; includes all personnel in uniform who can operate under military command and can be deployed outside national territory” and European collaborative procurement as “Agreement by at least two EU Member States' Ministries of Defence for project or programme contracts” (EDA, 2021d).

²² In this dataset, the 2020 defence expenditure is estimated.

²³ E3 refers to France, Germany, and Italy.

²⁴ The UK is excluded in the EU total defence expenditure due to their decision to leave the EU. However, as the UK was still a member of the EU during the second Obama administration, it is still important to include them in the analysis.

Qualitative content analysis is a method that concentrates on the purpose of the text and aims to find a pattern in it by focusing both on explicit and implicit messages (Boréus & Bergström, 2012:51; Esaiasson, Gilljam, Oscarsson, Towns & Wängenerud, 2017:211). Instead of focusing solely on language, the content analysis focuses on the meaning of the text and the setting in which the text was produced. This method suits the research purpose of this study, as the narrative and the meaning behind official statements are central for the understanding of whether US foreign policy has impacted European defence integration. Additionally, the method also focuses on the context in which the texts were produced, which is important for this study, and whether the statements occurred as a response to changes in US foreign policy.

Specifically, the qualitative analysis focuses on the launch and implementation of the PESCO initiative, established in 2017 in the words of the European Council to send “a strong political signal towards our citizens and the outside world: governments of EU member states are taking common security and defence seriously and pushing it forward” (European Council, 2017:5). As security and defence policy is a competence of EU member states, the qualitative analysis focuses on the member states and their willingness to integrate defence further by allocating part of their sovereignty to the EU institutions. To study the EU member state views on allocating more capabilities to the EU through PESCO and their arguments for further European defence integration, three member states have been selected as case studies: France, Poland, and Ireland. These three member states extend and deepen the analysis, as their stance on European defence integration varies due to differences in views, interests, and preferences on defence cooperation. By analysing these three member states, the analysis has applied a stratified sampling method, which covers different perspectives on European defence cooperation: France, which prefers defence integration; Poland, which supports integration but still prefers NATO; and Ireland, which is neutral and militarily non-aligned. The purpose is not only to compare their views on PESCO but to analyse different perspectives on defence integration. The analysis of the French, Polish, and Irish perspectives allows for a broader understanding of the main perspectives on European defence integration.

In the following sections, PESCO and the three case study historical stances on European integration are presented. Thereafter, the material used for the analysis is discussed. Finally, operationalisation and analytical framework for the qualitative analysis follow.

4.2.1. Permanent Structured Cooperation

On December 11, 2017, the European Council formally established PESCO and presented 17 projects on which the member states would work together on. The decision to launch PESCO was greeted enthusiastically by President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, who stated “In June I said it was time to wake up the Sleeping Beauty of the Lisbon Treaty: permanent structured cooperation. Six months later, it is happening. I welcome the steps taken today by the Member states to lay the foundations of a European Defence Union” (European Commission, 2017a). Likewise, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Frederica Mogherini, who noted “a truly historic day”, viewed the launch of PESCO as the “foundation of a future European defence” (Frederica Mogherini, 2017).

The idea for PESCO originated in the Lisbon Treaty. Article 42(6) in the Treaty of the European Union states that any willing and capable member states can participate in PESCO (PESCO, 2020). PESCO allows the participating member states to “improve their respective military assets and defence capabilities through well-coordinated initiatives and concrete projects based on more binding commitments” and offers “the most important instrument to foster common security and defence in an area where more coherence and continuity, coordination and collaboration are needed” (European Council, 2017:4). Since participating in PESCO is voluntary,²⁵ national sovereignty remains unaffected.

The structure of PESCO is two-fold. First, the European Council is responsible for policy objectives and decision-making, which includes the evaluation of whether member states are completing their commitments. In the decision-making, only PESCO members can vote, and the decisions must be unanimous (PESCO, 2020). Second, each project must be managed by the participating member states.

The EEAS and EDA act as the secretariat of PESCO. The EEAS contributes to PESCO in two ways: (1) “contributing to the High Representative’s assessment [...] of participating member states’ contributions with regards to operational aspects” and (2) “coordinating the assessment of project proposals, notably in the areas of availability, interoperability, flexibility and deployability of forces” (PESCO, n.d.). The EDA contributes with the assessment of participating member states contributions and with “facilitating capability development projects, in particular coordinating the assessment of projects

²⁵ While participating in PESCO is voluntarily, there are certain binding commitments that each member state needs to uphold, such as taking part in at least one project under PESCO and increasing defence budgets to achieve agreed objectives (European Council, 2017).

proposals, notably in the area of capability development” (PESCO, n.d.), which includes ensuring that there are no duplications with existing projects and initiatives.

Every two years, based on recommendations from the High Representative, the Council adopts new projects. There are currently 46 PESCO projects in the areas of capability development and operational dimension, which include projects like European Military Command, Cyber Rapid Response Team, and Military Disaster Relief (PESCO, 2020). France participates in a total of 30 projects and leads 10 of those projects, including one as co-lead with Sweden.²⁶ Poland participates in 10 projects and leads one of those.²⁷ Ireland only participates in 2 projects and does not lead either of them.²⁸ France has the highest level of participation, together with Italy (27 projects), Spain (24 projects), and Germany (16 projects). Ireland has the lowest level of participation together with Latvia (2 projects) (Blockmans & Crosson, 2019:7).

4.2.2. France and More Defence Cooperation

France has historically had a distinctive view of European defence policies, dating back to the 1950s when it first proposed the Pleven Plan that would have created a pan-European military,²⁹ only to later fail to ratify the plan (Hyde-Price, 2018:2). Despite the refusal to ratify the Pleven Plan, France continued to push for an increased security and defence role for the EU (Tardy, 2018:124). Together with other Europeanist member states,³⁰ such as Belgium, Spain and Italy, France has advocated for a stronger and more independent Europe, in which the Europeans could be responsible for their own security and defence and be an equal power to the US (Hyde-Price, 2018:3).

French President Charles de Gaulle disliked the European dependence on the US and wanted more European defence integration. When the US refused to support de Gaulle on

²⁶ Among projects that France leads are: “European Attack Helicopters TIGER Mark III”, “EU Collaborative Warfare Capabilities”, and “European Secure Software defined Radio” (Consilium, 2020).

²⁷ Poland is leading a project called “Special Operational Forces Medical Training Centre”, for which the main objective is to establish a medical training centre in Łódź to enhance medical capabilities (PESCO, n.d.).

²⁸ Ireland participates in two projects: “European Union Training Mission Competence Centre” and “Upgrade of Maritime Surveillance”. The first project aims at improving the capabilities of the military personnel and prepare them for future missions. The second project aims at improving maritime surveillance (Consilium, 2020).

²⁹ The Pleven Plan was an ambition idea that called for the creation of a European Army, which would work under supranational authority with a common budget and a European Defence Minister. Most Western countries supported the Plan, including the UK and the US. The Plan was signed in 1952 but collapsed when the French National Assembly rejected the Plan, without debating it (EDA, n.d.).

³⁰ Europeanist refers to countries that advocated and supported a more independent Europe. Their ambition was for the EU to be an equal power to the US (Hyde-Price, 2018:3).

his proposed Fouchet Plan,³¹ de Gaulle began a seven-year disengagement from NATO military cooperation (Cowles & Egan, 2012:7). The French disengagement with NATO continued until President Nicolas Sarkozy, in 2008, re-joined NATO's integrated military command (Ghez & Larrabee, 2009:77). President Sarkozy argued that European defence and NATO were closely linked, and France needed support NATO, so that the Atlanticist EU member states would support CSDP (Ghez & Larrabee, 2009:80).³²

During the 2008 French presidency of the EU, President Sarkozy advocated for more European defence cooperation but due to the Irish rejection of the Lisbon Treaty and external events such as the Russian invasion of Georgia and the financial crisis, the political agenda had to be adjusted, which meant a less ambitious defence agenda (Ghez & Larrabee, 2009:81). While the support for European defence cooperation may vary between EU member states, French leaders have continued to advocate for a common defence policy. In 2019, President Emmanuel Macron stated, "Europe must become autonomous in terms of military strategy and capabilities" (The Economist, 2019).

Throughout the history of European integration, France has advocated for more defence integration. Therefore, France was selected for this case study as it is a member state that both favours more European defence cooperation and is a long-standing EU member.

4.2.3. Poland and Status Quo

Poland has a pro-Atlanticist stance on defence with a strong commitment and attachment to NATO and the security guarantee of Article 5 (Chappell, 2010:225). Due to its geopolitical position and the concerns of Russian aggression and interference, Poland prefers NATO and its Article 5 security guarantee as the main security provider in Europe.

Poland's view on security is based on its historical experience of defeat and the victimisation of Realpolitik (Chappell, 2010:229). With the combination of the European allies' failure to assist and protect Poland during 1939 and then the Soviet domination following Yalta in 1945, the Poles remain sceptical of European security and defence competence (Chappell, 2010:229). The scepticism of the development of a common security and defence policy is that it could challenge NATO, cause a distance with the US, and give Russia more influence. In the

³¹ In 1960, de Gaulle proposed the Fouchet Plan with the ambition of creating an institutional framework for a common foreign and security policy that could balance NATO and reduce the European dependency on the US. The Plan failed to be ratified and collapsed in 1962 (Cowles and Egan, 2012:7).

³² Atlanticist refer to countries that favours a close cooperation with the US and NATO, which includes the UK, Denmark, and the Netherlands (Hyde-Price, 2018:3).

accession talks before joining the EU in 2004, the Poles were still hesitant about CSDP and were particularly against a permanent structured cooperation within the EU. Polish Defence Minister Bogdan Klich stated, “we were indeed a bit hesitant in the first round of the constitutional debate on permanent enhanced cooperation because we found ourselves faced with a concept of a ‘select’ club, with just a few participating states” (Chappell, 2010:231). The fear was rooted in the concern that it would develop into a collective defence that would duplicate and replace NATO. However, Poland has participated in most CSDP missions and operations, even before joining the EU (Website of the Republic of Poland, 2021). While Poland has had reservations about European defence integration, they are not completely opposed, if it is compatible with NATO (Chappell, 2010:244).

Poland can be considered an Atlanticist country, where the goal is to keep NATO as the main security provider and continue to benefit from EU membership. Poland shares perspectives with other Eastern and Central European member states that are more concerned with Russia’s aggression and therefore prefer NATO and the US as a security provider in Europe.

4.2.4. Ireland and Neutrality

In the post-World War II era, the Irish public and elite have embraced neutrality based on mistrust towards the great powers and a fear that an alliance with them would automatically result in Ireland’s involvement in wars (Devine, 2011:356). Ireland did not join the European Coal and Steel Community,³³ but when the Irish economy stagnated in the 1960s, a potential membership in EEC was considered an opportunity for economic prosperity (Devenney, 2010:101). In the EU’s first enlargement in 1973, Ireland, with 83 percent voting in favour in a referendum, joined together with the UK and Denmark to join in the referendum (Devenney, 2010:101).

The main issue during the Irish referendum on joining the EU concerned whether a membership was compatible with the country’s policy on neutrality (Devine, 2011:335). The neutrality issue was also a concern for other European members and many of them were hesitant to approve the entry of Ireland as they believed it would hamper development and integration (Devine, 2011:339). In the accession talks, defence and neutrality were not discussed nor did the white paper on the Irish entry mention defence or military commitments. Instead, the Irish

³³ By the time Ireland joined, it was called the EEC.

government claimed that “there are no military or defence commitments whatsoever in Ireland’s acceptance of the Treaties of Rome and Paris. Our obligations as a member of the Communities will not entail such commitments” (Devine, 2011:340).

After Ireland joined, the issue of neutrality continued. In the 1987 referendum debate on the Single European Act (SEA), the government argued that there was a distinction between the political and economic aspects of security and that cooperation with the other member states would not affect Ireland’s position of neutrality. In the discussion on merging the WEU into the EU, Ireland argued that the mutual defence clause would violate Irish neutrality.³⁴ The establishment of a Common Foreign and Security Policy in the Maastricht Treaty also posed a challenge for Ireland and its neutrality. Later, the Irish public first rejected the Lisbon Treaty, partly due to neutrality concerns. The Irish government declared that “it will be for Ireland, acting in a spirit of solidarity and without prejudice to its traditional policy of military neutrality, to determine the nature of aid or assistance to be provided to a Member State which is the object of a terrorist attack or the victim of armed aggression on its territory” (Devine, 2011:354).

Consequently, Ireland as a case study allows for an understanding of how a neutral and non-aligned EU member state, similar to Austria, Finland, and Sweden, views European defence integration. Neutrality is often the reasoning for being against defence integration and therefore Ireland offers a case study in which neutrality constitutes the main issue.

4.2.5. The Selection of the Material

To analyse the EU member state perspectives on PESCO, the thesis uses material consisting of both national parliamentary speeches and official government press releases. Since the national system from the three EU member states varies, the type of documents differs. However, the documents used are official statements from government representatives, making the content of the material comparable. The parliamentary speeches and press releases give insights into how the countries view European defence integration and whether it might be favourable or

³⁴ The discussion on neutrality and WEU continued after the merger process of the WEU into the EU had started. Several wordings of the mutual defence clause were discussed, such as a member state “may request that other member states give it aid [...]” and that member states should give aid “by all means in their power, military or other” (Devine, 2011:354). In the end, wording of the mutual defence was not resolved until the Lisbon Treaty. In the Lisbon Treaty, the member states agreed on European military solidarity with the wording of “by all means in their power” (Devine, 2011:360).

unfavourable toward further integration. The material also gives insight into what the narrative is around further integration.

The empirical material for each case study consists of 4-6 different documents published between 2017-2020, translated into English, and including the term PESCO. The empirical material for the analysis of the French position has been retrieved from four different governmental websites: the *Élysée*, *Ministère de l'Europe et Des Affairs Étrangères*, *Gouvernement*, and *Ministère des Armées*.³⁵ The empirical material for Poland has been retrieved from *Serwis Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* and from *Ministertwo Obrony Narodowej*.³⁶ The empirical material for Ireland has been retrieved from three different governmental websites: *The Department of the Taoiseach*, *the Department of Defence*, and *the Oireachtas*.³⁷

4.2.6. Operationalisation

Based on the theoretical discussion on EU actorness, the following table presents the coding of the material:

Figure 1. Analytical Framework

EU Actorness	High degree of actorness	Low degree of actorness
1. Initiative	High level of support for PESCO	Low level of support for PESCO
1.2. Aims and Priorities	Advocates for more defence integration	Does not advocate for more defence integration
1.3. Narrative	Similar threat perception or framing of the issue	Differ in threat perception and framing of the issue
2. Capacity	Willing to allocate more capabilities to the EU	Underlines the importance of national sovereignty
3. Cohesion	A similar line of argument, narrative, and vision	Differ in argument, narrative, and vision

The first three rows are based on the initiative criterion, which refers to the ability to formulate aims and pursue policies priorities, and the ability to develop a strategic narrative (Kaunert et al., 2015:361). In particular, the first row focuses on support for PESCO. Since

³⁵ *Élysée* is the official presidential website, *Ministère de l'Europe et Des Affairs Étrangères* is the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, *Gouvernement* is the government's website, and *Ministère des Armées* is the Ministry of Defence.

³⁶ *Serwis Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* is the Website of the Republic of Poland, and *Ministertwo Obrony Narodowej* is the Ministry of National Defence.

³⁷ *Taoiseach* is the Irish Head of the Government, and *Oireachtas* is the Irish parliament.

France, Poland, and Ireland all participate in PESCO, the specific focus is on the level of support. Phrases expressing the potential and benefits of PESCO indicate a high level of support, whereas phrases expressing conditions or hesitancy indicate a low level of support. The analysis of the level of support for PESCO indicates the overall commitment to the new defence initiatives, as the support would show that EU member state policy interests align (Greicevic, 2011:285).

The second row examines the ability to identify policy aims and priorities. Since the study analyses defence integration, the focus is on whether EU member states advocate for more defence integration and what they identify as necessary to achieve effective defence cooperation (Kaunert et al., 2015:370). In this analysis, advocating for defence integration constitutes pushing for stronger and more binding defence commitments and suggesting more defence initiatives. Explicitly, phrases emphasising commitments and strengthening of capabilities would indicate a high level of actorness.

The third row examines the strategic narrative, particularly whether EU member states have similar threat perceptions and arguments for joining PESCO. To utilize and direct resources to a common objective, EU member states need to express their objectives “within a general strategic narrative” or a common strategy (Sus, 2019:413). Developing a narrative for PESCO means agreeing on a common vision and goal. Adopting a defence narrative involves having a common threat perception and argument for why PESCO is needed. Specifically in this analysis, phrases discussing threats, crises, and challenges indicate what threat perception EU member states have. Since the study investigates the role of US foreign policy, a particular focus is on how EU member states discuss and address the US as a European partner and ally.

The fourth row is based on the capacity criterion, which refers to the ability to pool resources, act independently from external actors and implement policies (Kaunert et al., 2015:361; Niemann & Bretherton, 2013:266). Two aspects are critical to achieve actorness: decision-making and control of resources. As security and defence policy is intergovernmental, EU member states remain in control of both these aspects. To determine whether US foreign policy has impacted European defence integration and contributed to a high degree of actorness, the quantitative analysis examines capabilities in terms of resources and expenditure, whereas qualitative analysis focuses more specifically on EU member states willingness to share capabilities with the EU institutions. Therefore, the emphasis is on the relationship between national sovereignty and European autonomy. To achieve a high degree of actorness, EU

member states must be willing to allocate parts of their sovereignty and control to the EU. Phrases expressing stronger commitments, development of EU defence capabilities, and increased operational capabilities would indicate a high degree of actorness, whereas phrases emphasising national sovereignty would indicate a low degree of actorness.

The fifth row is based on the cohesion criterion, which refers to the ability “to act in a unitary way towards other actors” (Kaunert et al., 2015:361) and to making diverging goals converge (Sus, 2019:414). Therefore, the fifth row focuses on whether the member state visions for PESCO are parallel and whether their narratives are similar for why PESCO and European defence integration is needed. If the member states present a consistent line of argument, with similar narratives and visions for PESCO and defence integration, there is a high level of actorness. The analysis of cohesion is based on the empirical evidence from the analysis of initiative, including aims and narrative, and capacity criteria.

To provide transparency of how the material was analysed and reliability in the study, quotations are included in the qualitative analysis.

4. Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative analysis examines trends and changes in EU defence capabilities and defence cooperation, by specifically focusing on EU member state defence expenditures, expenditures in European collaboration and military personnel. The analysis explores changes in defence expenditure, examining whether those align with changes in the US foreign policy. Based on the earlier argument made in this thesis, changes should happen in 2012-2013, following the announcement of the pivot to Asia in 2011, and after 2017 when Donald Trump was elected president. Due to budgeting processes, there should be a lag between announcement and reaction.

4.1. Total Defence Expenditure

As previous scholars already have identified, the EU member state defence expenditures have increased in the last few years (Aggestam & Hyde-Price, 2019; Hyde-Price, 2018; Garies & Wolf, 2016; Meijer & Wyss, 2019; Pieper & Lak, 2019). Figure 2 shows that the EU, on an aggregated level, started increasing defence expenditure after the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, a trend that has continued to increase.³⁸ The EU's total defence expenditure shows a steep increase from 2017 to 2019, with an increase of around 6 percent each year (Figure 3). Due to the delay in budget changes, the steep increase in 2017 and 2018 is not likely to be a result of events during those years, but a result of Russian aggression towards Ukraine and a commitment by NATO members at the 2014 Wales Summit to increase defence spending (NATO, 2018).

³⁸ The UK has been excluded from the total EU expenditure.

Figure 2. Total Defence Expenditure in the EU, 2005-2020

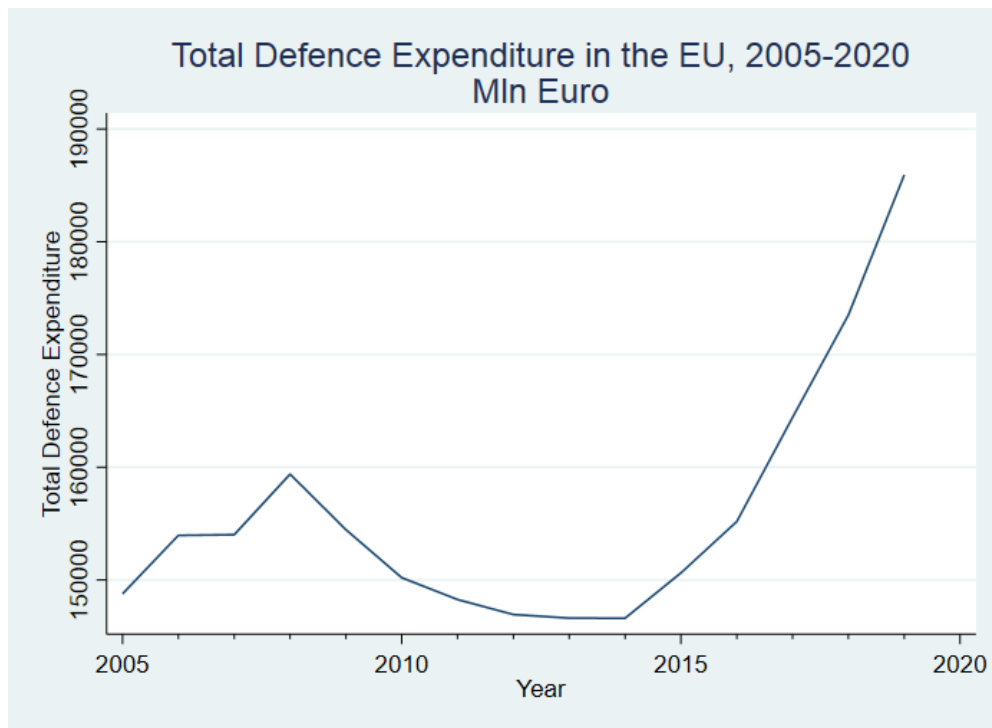
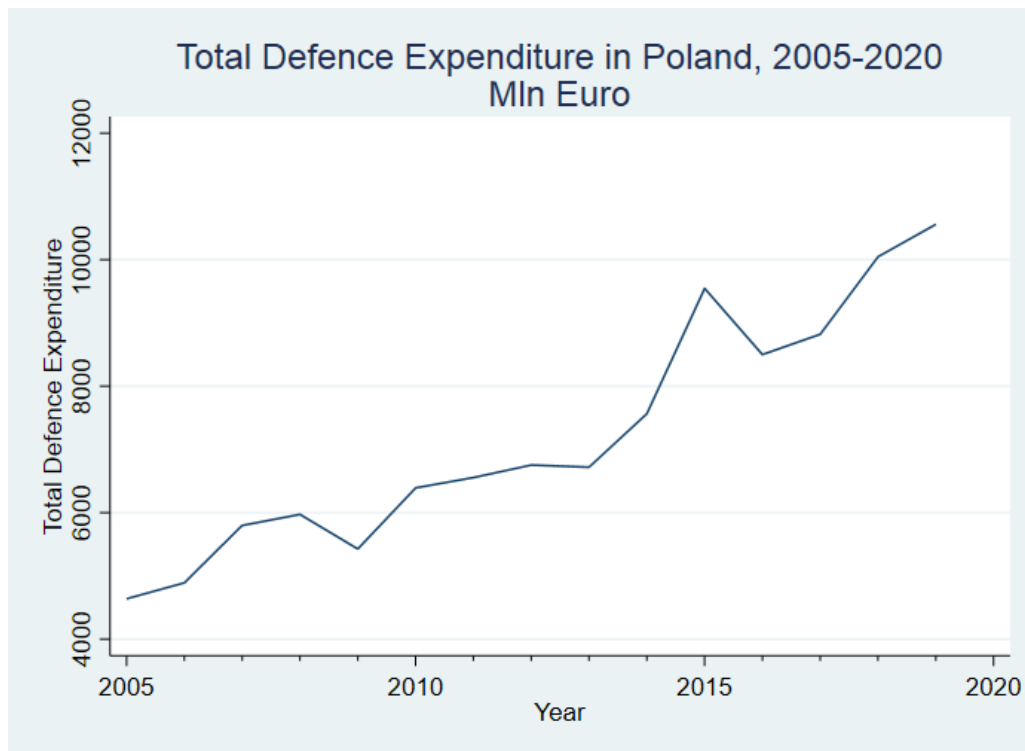


Figure 3. Yearly Increase in Percent

Year	The EU	France	Poland	Ireland	The US	Germany	Italy	The UK
2006	3,5%	2,2%	5,4%	0,3%		-0,8%	-1,2%	7,1%
2007	0,0%	1,9%	18,5%	6,1%		2,4%	-21,4%	6,3%
2008	3,5%	2,5%	3,0%	10,0%		2,1%	8,1%	-16,5%
2009	-3,1%	-13,6%	-9,1%	-8,2%		13,8%	-3,0%	-0,8%
2010	-2,8%	0,1%	17,8%	-7,9%		-7,2%	-1,4%	9,4%
2011	-1,3%	-2,0%	2,6%	-3,2%		0,9%	0,5%	-0,7%
2012	-0,9%	1,7%	3,0%	2,2%		-3,8%	-5,2%	0,2%
2013	-0,2%	0,7%	-0,5%	-1,1%		4,0%	-2,5%	-3,4%
2014	0,0%	-0,5%	12,6%	0,2%	-4,0%	2,9%	-8,2%	9,9%
2015	2,7%	0,0%	26,2%	-0,2%	17,4%	3,3%	-4,3%	11,4%
2016	3,0%	1,9%	-11,0%	0,8%	2,6%	4,7%	14,6%	-6,1%
2017	6,0%	2,3%	3,8%	2,4%	-4,0%	7,1%	4,6%	0,4%
2018	5,5%	4,6%	13,9%	2,5%	0,0%	4,6%	2,5%	0,9%
2019	7,2%	3,8%	5,1%	6,7%	14,6%	11,4%	-2,6%	3,8%
2020		4,1%			10,6%	9,8%	8,0%	3,4%

Some EU member states show a steadier increase in defence expenditure, while others had a more drastic increase in 2017 and after. Poland, one of the countries that has shown a steadier increase, experienced the most significant increase in expenditures in 2015 with a 26.2 percent increase, and then again in 2018 with a 13.9 percent increase (Figure 3 and 4). The Polish total defence expenditure suggests that the Russian aggression and annexation of Crimea, as well as the election of President Trump, could be reasons for increased expenditure.

Figure 4. Total Defence Expenditure in Poland, 2005-2020

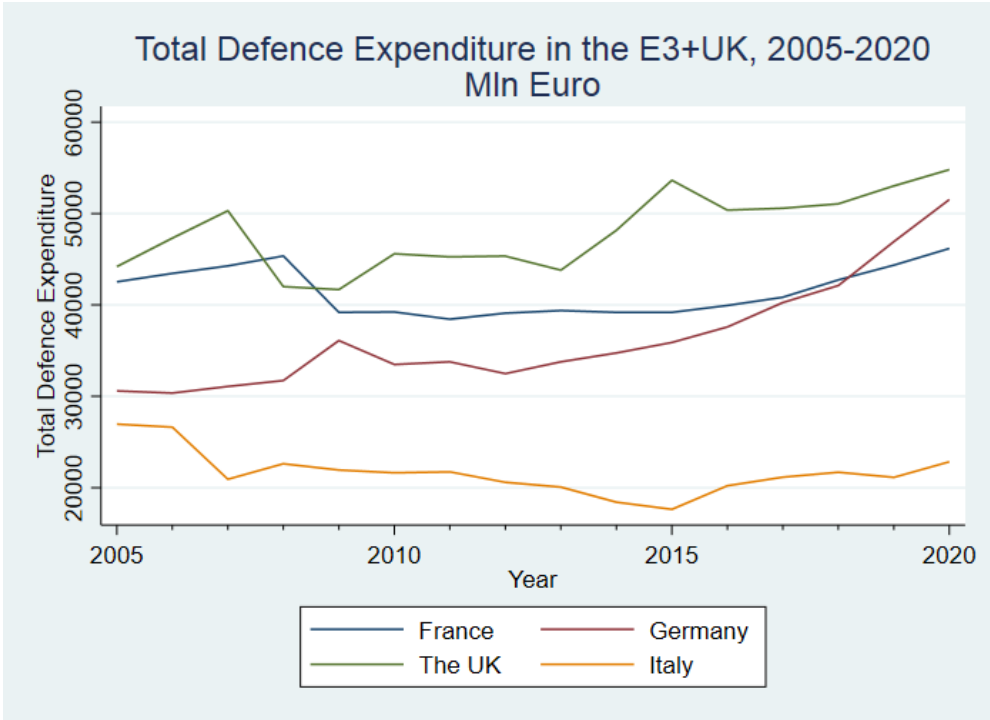


The E3+UK all experienced a decrease in defence expenditure after the financial crisis in 2008,³⁹ but the timing of the decrease varies. In only a few years, the decrease stagnated for all of them, except for Italy (Figure 5). Italy continued to decrease their defence expenditure until 2016, which show a potential continuing impact of the financial crisis. The E3+UK differs in when their defence expenditures started to increase.⁴⁰ Neither France nor Italy increased their defence expenditures in 2014-2015, which suggest either delays in budget after the Russian annexation or that the annexation was not an immediate threat. For France total defence expenditure began increasing in 2016, with the most significant increase in 2018, at 4.6 percent. Italy increased their defence expenditure in 2016 by 14.6 percent and has since continued to increase, with exception of 2019 (Figure 3). The German defence expenditure began increasing in 2013, experiencing the steepest increase in 2019, at 11.4 percent. The UK has the most significant increase in 2014 and 2015, with increases of 9.9 percent and 11.4 percent respectively. After a decrease in 2016, the UK defence expenditure grew again.

³⁹ E3 refers to France, Italy, and Germany.

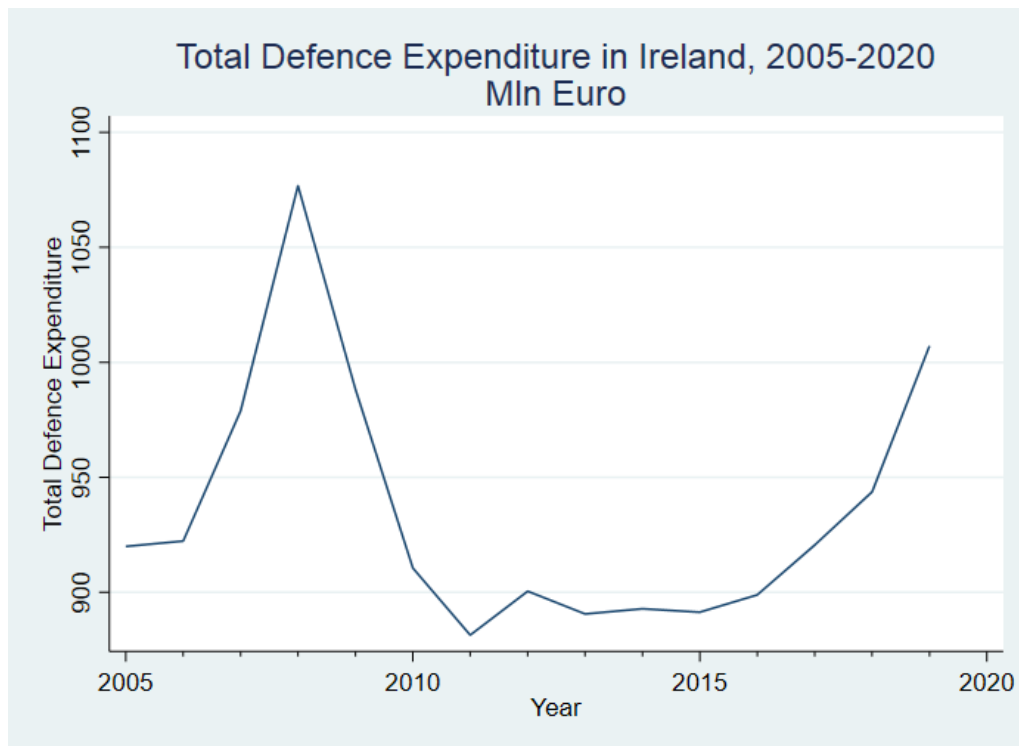
⁴⁰The UK is included in this graph as they were a part of the EU during the Obama presidency. These four countries are the largest West European countries, and therefore it is interesting to see if they follow the same trends and development or if there is any absence in cohesion that could impact the aggregated data.

Figure 5. Total Defence Expenditure in the E3+UK, 2005-2020



Ireland also drastically decreased their defence expenditure during the financial crisis, reversing an increase in total expenditure from 2006-2008. The Irish defence expenditure did only slightly increase in 2012, by 2.2 percent, and only to stagnate until 2017. The stagnation in Irish defence expenditure after 2012 could be due to Ireland’s policy on military neutrality and that Russian aggression was not an immediate threat for Ireland. The Irish defence expenditure increased substantially in 2019, by 6.7 percent (Figure 3).

Figure 6. Total Defence Expenditure in Ireland, 2005-2020

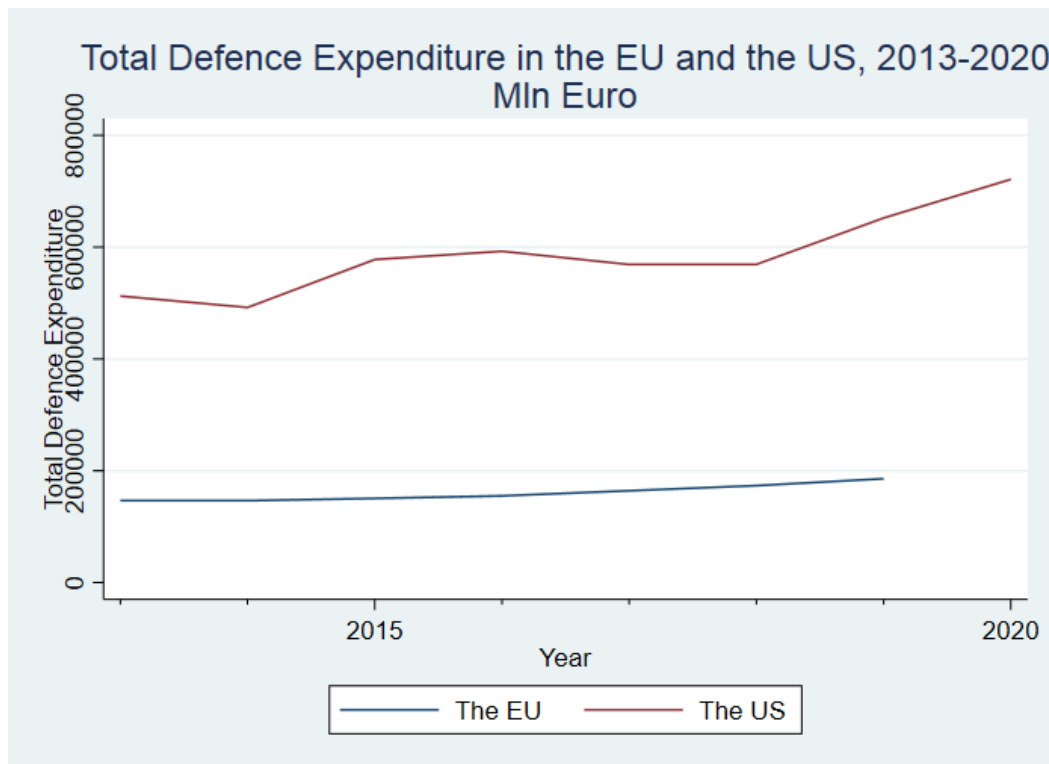


Both the EU and the US started to increase total defence expenditure in 2014, though the US increase was more substantial. The US increased defence expenditure substantially in both 2015 and 2019, 17.4 percent and 14.6 percent respectively (Figure 3), while the EU increased by 2.7 percent and 7.2 percent respectively. Graph 7, comparing the EU and the US total change from 2013 to 2019, show that their increase in total defence expenditure is almost the same. The EU and the US, therefore, show somewhat similar trends in total defence expenditure.

Figure 7. The EU and the US change between 2013 and 2019

	2013	2019	Chg 2013-19
EU	146619,71	185943,42	26,8%
US	512647,21	652224,77	27,2%

Figure 8. Total Defence Expenditure in the EU and the US, 2013-2020



4.2. Other Expenditures and Personnel

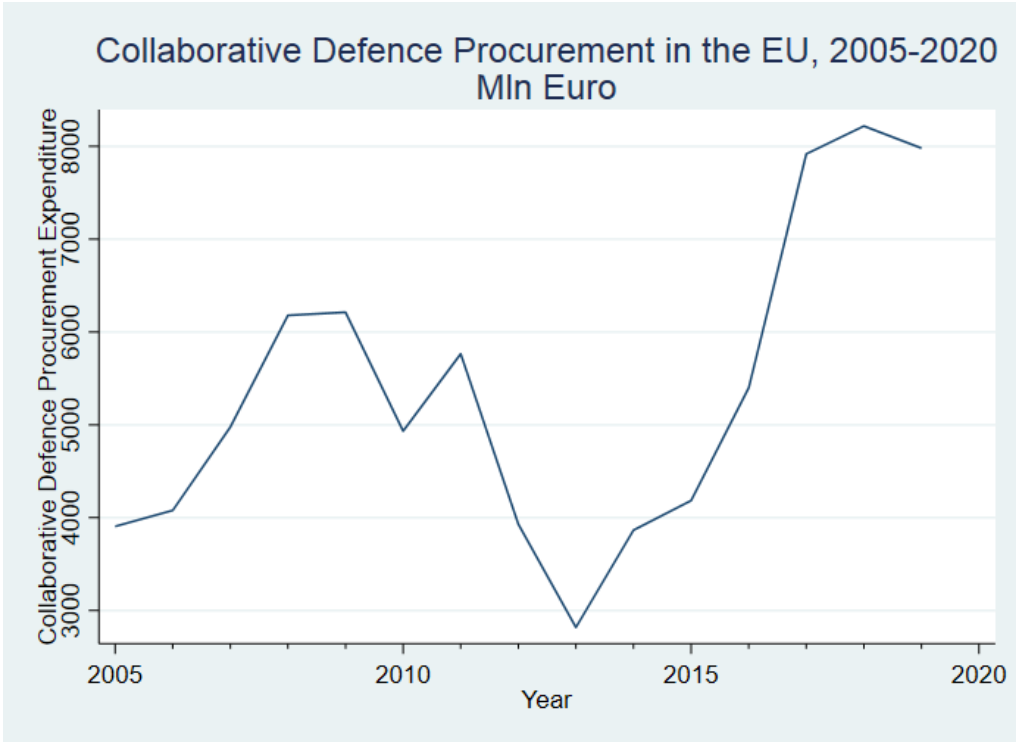
As figure 8 illustrates,⁴¹ the trend among EU member states since 2005 has been a decline in military personnel which started before the financial crisis but significantly increased with the start of the financial crisis. The graph of total military personnel indicates that despite the Obama administration's removal of more than 10,000 troops in Europe and the removal of two Armoured BCT (Cuccia, 2013:18), the EU member states did not increase their military personnel to replace US troops. Instead, the number of military personnel has decreased across Europe through 2017, which is not consistent with increasing trend in the total defence expenditure after 2014. Some EU member states started to increase their military personnel after 2016. France and Poland increased slightly in both 2016 and 2017, while Ireland and Italy started to increase in 2017 (Figure A1). Nonetheless, the EU as a whole continued to experience a decrease.

⁴¹ Total Military Personnel for E3, Poland, and Ireland can be found in the Appendix.

Figure 9. Total Military Personnel in the EU member states, 2005-2020



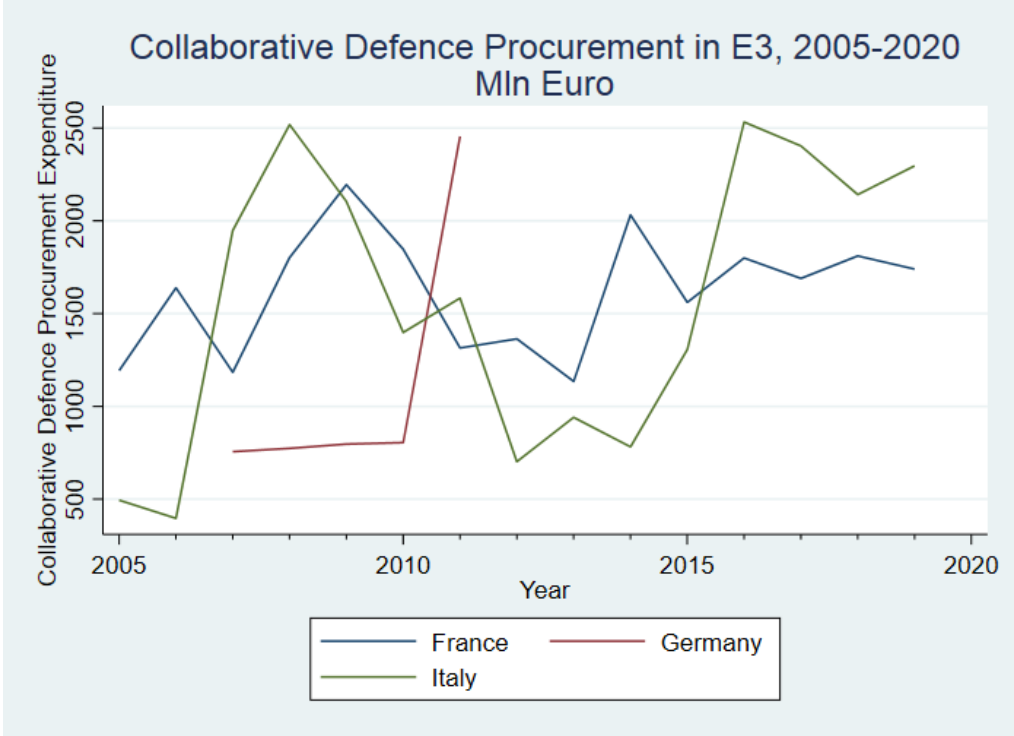
Figure 10. European Collaborative Defence Procurement in the EU, 2005-2020



Focusing on the aggregated level of EU member state expenditures on European collaborative defence procurement (Figure 10), there was a substantial increase between 2015

and 2017. This spending has since stagnated. However, focusing on specific countries (Figure 11), the trends are not as clear. For example, France and Italy show a W-shaped development of European collaborative defence procurement expenditure throughout 2005-2020,⁴² but with Italy as one of the major drivers of the increase in 2016.⁴³

Figure 11. European Collaborative Defence Procurement in E3, 2005-2020



Poland, by contrast, only started investing in European collaborative procurement in 2014 (Figure 12). In 2017, the increase was substantial and continued until 2018. The Polish increase is equal to Italy’s increase, demonstrating that Poland also was as a major driver in European collaborative procurement expenditures. Ireland does not spend anything on European collaborative procurement expenditure, so no figure is provided.

⁴² The European collaboration demonstrates how much the member states are collaborating and investing together in R&T and equipment. The collaborative procurement is an attempt to increase efficiency and cost benefits, by sharing research and development (R&D) costs, standardizing equipment, and acquiring expensive equipment in common (Heuninckx, 2016:110; and Hartley, 2006:486). For it to be considered collaborative defence expenditure, at least two member states need to have agreed on the project.

⁴³ The UK is excluded from the EU data.

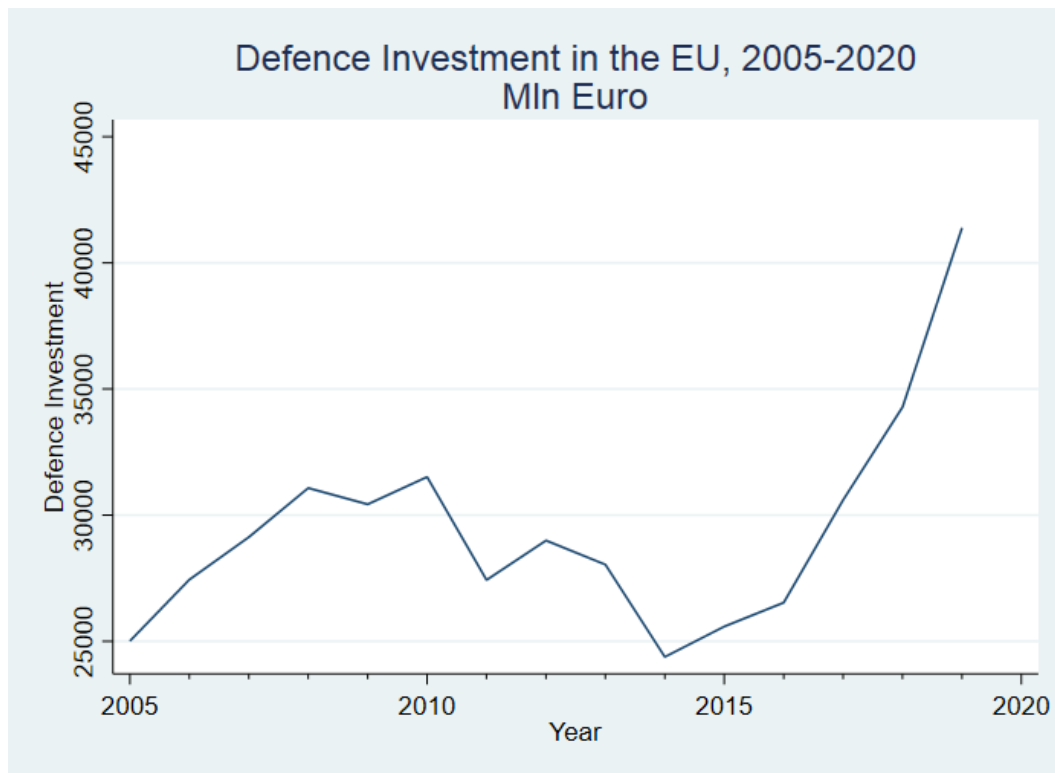
Figure 12. European Collaborative Defence Procurement in Poland, 2005-2020



After mostly declining from 2008, defence investments in the EU also started increasing in 2015.⁴⁴ The increase became much steeper in 2017 through 2019. This increase in defence investment could reflect the launch of PESCO, as the participating member states committed to spending more on defence (EDA, 2021d). But as the increase began in 2016, it could also be result of Russian aggression.

⁴⁴ EDA defines defence investments as “Defence equipment procurement and R&D (including R&T) expenditure” (EDA, 2021c).

Figure 13. Defence Investment in the EU, 2005-2020



4.3. Discussion

Based on total defence expenditure in the EU, the Obama administration's pivot to Asia does not seem to have an impact on EU defence. The EU member states did not increasingly invest in their own security after 2011 to replace the US security umbrella in Europe. Despite the removal of more than 10,000 troops, the closing of the V Corps headquarters and the removal of two BCT in 2012 and 2013, there is no indication that these changes impacted EU member state defence expenditures. When the US increased their military commitment to Europe, through the reestablishment of one BCT and the V Corps headquarters as well as increased funding of ERI after 2016, the EU continued a trend of increased defence expenditure. This result suggests that the US commitment in terms of troops and military personnel did not impact European defence expenditure. The lack of impact could also be because EU member states were, during the Obama presidency, still recovering from the financial crisis and needed to reduce budget deficits (Morcos, 2020).

The analysis also shows that while President Trump increased US funding of ERI and reactivated the V Corps headquarters, which included increased military personnel in Europe, EU member states continued to increase their defence expenditures. Increased defence

expenditures after 2017 suggests that President Trump's harsh rhetoric towards the EU and the European allies, in combination with the continuing geopolitical tensions, impacted the trust in US commitment to Europe.

In conclusion, the thesis finds partial support for the argument made in this thesis. Based on the quantitative findings, small increases in EU member states defence expenditure happened in 2015 and steepened from 2017. The findings suggest that the increase in defence expenditure could be a reaction to the Russian annexation of Crimea and resulting geopolitical tension from 2014. But as increases also happened after 2017, the defence expenditure could also be due to the election of Donald Trump. The findings also show that the Obama administration's pivot to Asia had no impact on the EU's military capacity and defence expenditure. Therefore, the quantitative analysis does not support the first part of the argument that the Obama administration had an impact on European defence integration as measured in spending. To determine whether the election of Donald Trump was the reason for the increases in 2017, the qualitative analysis focuses more specifically on the period of the Trump administration.

5. Qualitative Analysis

As the quantitative analysis illustrates, the EU's defence expenditure and expenditure in European collaborative defence procurement remarkably increased in 2017 and continued increasing after. The qualitative analysis focuses on European defence integration from 2017 to 2020, following the launch of PESCO. This period covers the Trump presidency, and as the quantitative analysis showed, the expenditure increased during his presidency and, therefore, it is interesting whether Trump and the US are mentioned as an argument for further integration. Specifically, the analysis concentrates on the rhetoric for further defence integration and EU member state willingness to enhance EU defence capabilities. The analysis is structured to address the three criteria of actorness separately, starting with initiative, which includes aims and priorities and narrative, followed by capacity, and lastly, cohesion.

5.1. Initiative

The initiative criterion constitutes the ability to formulate aims and policy priorities and the ability to formulate a strategic narrative (Kaunart et al., 2015:361). To achieve a high degree of actorness in the initiative criterion, the EU member states should express a high level of support for PESCO, advocate for more defence integration, and have similar threat perceptions and arguments for why PESCO is needed. This section specifically focuses on EU member state views on further defence integration and their arguments for PESCO. The different perspectives on defence cooperation and whether US foreign policy impacted European defence integration are illustrated by analysing EU member state opinions, views, and arguments for defence integration.

In an open letter in March 2019, addressed to all European citizens, President Macron called for a "European renewal" and wrote about "the trap of the status quo and resignation" (Élysée, 2019). In this letter, Macron equated the nationalists who want to limit the European project with those that do not want to change anything, the so-called un-reformists. The quote captures the core of the French, and Macron's, approach, to the European project, that neither status quo nor disintegration is the answer to global challenges. Rather more integration, which can renew the European project, should be the response. Throughout Macron's statements and speeches in 2017-2020, he has stressed the importance and vitality of more European defence integration to face new common challenges and crises, arguing more

integration can ensure European security and stability (Gouvernement, 2019). The French perspective on European defence is clear: France supports, initiates, and pushes for initiatives and programmes that can strengthen European defence cooperation and enhance the strategic convergence (République Française, 2017:60).

For example, in Macron's published *Defence and National Strategic Review* (2017), he stated that "meanwhile, the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) should allow for a qualitative leap on European defence. Commitments must be strong enough to encourage ambitious, unifying projects, and above all, address the operational needs of European armed forces" (République Française, 2017:57). While France did not initiate PESCO, the statement shows that France pushes PESCO further by requesting to make commitments stronger and follow through with the ambitions of projects and operational needs. Advocating for stronger commitments and more ambitious projects demonstrates both the French willingness to further integrate defence and the French view that more cooperation is essential for the creation of an effective European defence.

The call for more defence integration is further emphasised in a letter, in May 2020, to the High Representative and 23 other EU member states. France, together with Germany, Spain, and Italy, advocated for "a more integrated, effective and capable European Union" and stressed the importance of furthering and strengthening the development of PESCO by declaring that "we must deliver, both on commitments and on projects, in particular regarding military operations, where significant progress has to be done" (Gouvernement, 2020). France, and the other three EU member states, identified PESCO as a key initiative for European defence cooperation and fully supported it, even wanting to enhance it. In the letter, France also pushed for more binding commitments for PESCO and a more ambitious EDF. France is not only pushing for more integration in the already proposed and implemented initiatives but also suggests further initiatives, such as the European Intervention Initiative,⁴⁵ which would strengthen strategic convergence (République Française, 2017:60). The letter shows that by identifying PESCO as a key initiative, France supports it completely and enthusiastically. This effort also shows that France is entirely committed to European defence, by both supporting and suggesting improvements for PESCO.

⁴⁵ The European Intervention Initiative (EI2) was launched in 2018 and aims at facilitating the emergence of a common strategic culture and at creating pre-conditions for coordinating and preparing for future commitments (Defense.gouv.fr, 2020). The EI2 does not duplicate already existing activities within EU, NATO, or UN but complement them.

France wants to make Europeans take greater responsibility for their own security, which indicates that France supports and contributes to the enhancement of EU actorness in this field. In a speech in 2020, Macron encouraged the Europeans to take more responsibility and said, “let’s face it, and listen to the United States of America, telling us: ‘Spend more on your security, I may no longer be, over time, your guarantor of last resort, your protector’ Let’s take our responsibility, finally” (France Diplomacy, 2020). While the emphasis is on Europeans taking more responsibility for security, this statement also shows that the role of the US is used as a narrative and argument for increased European cooperation and integration. The uncertainty of the Trump administration’s commitment to Europe and whether the US will continue to be a security provider is contributing as a driver for Macron and France to push for more European defence cooperation.

At the NATO Summit in London 2019, which occurred only weeks after Macron had declared NATO “brain-dead” (The Economist, 2019), Trump allegedly called Macron’s comment “very insulting” and continued to emphasise that the allies must meet the required 2 percent spending commitment (New York Times, 2019). Macron responded, in his speech at the summit, by stating the need for rebalancing the alliance and noting the reduced American contribution to NATO “that requires strategic thinking within the Alliance” (Gouvernement, 2019).

The NATO summit was not the first time that Macron emphasised the need for rebalancing the alliance nor that recent developments had impacted the transatlantic relationship. In Macron’s *Defence and National Strategic Review* (2017), he stated that “the growing distance between Europe and the American political class and population, together with recent political changes in the United States, are raising serious concerns in Europe, more so than in the past” (République Française, 2017:58). While Macron does not explicitly claim that the new initiatives are a response to the US foreign policy, implicitly it seems like the uncertainty in the transatlantic relationship is driving Macron and France to push for more European cooperation. The uncertainty in the relationship could also be regarded as an opportunity for Macron to push for more defence cooperation in the EU, something that the French have historically advocated. Macron also points to the changing external environment and states “to Build the Europe of tomorrow, our norms cannot be controlled by the United States, our infrastructure, our ports and airports owned by Chinese capital, and our computer networks under Russian pressure” (France Diplomacy, 2020). This quote is noteworthy as it

highlights the external environment as a reason for a stronger Europe, but also hints of a divide between Europe and the US, in which Europe must become more independent from the US.

The divide between the EU and the US became apparent when Macron stressed the importance of Europe being a part of US-Russia negotiations,⁴⁶ and declared that “France wishes to see broader discussion start, in which Europe must have its voice heard and ensure that its interests will be taken into consideration in negotiations for a new instrument that could ensure strategic stability on our continent” (France Diplomacy, 2020). Macron argues that the security and stability of Europe depend on the relationship with Russia, and he emphasises that maintaining a relationship and engaging in dialogues with Russia are essential, and cannot be delegated to others (France Diplomacy, 2020).

By contrast, Poland stresses the importance of not risking existing commitments, such as to NATO (Website of the Republic of Poland,⁴⁷ 2017). The defence of the Eastern flank is at the core of the Polish security and defence policy, as it serves as deterrence from an increasingly aggressive Russia that aims at enhancing its global position (WRP, n.d.).⁴⁸ At the ceremonial signing of the notification of accession to PESCO on November 13, 2017, the Polish Minister of National Defence Antoni Macierewicz stated that the “issue of the Eastern Flank is extremely important” and stressed the importance of PESCO being able to support it (WRP, 2017). Before the Polish government decided to join PESCO, they sent a letter to the High Representative and all EU member states involved in PESCO, listing three conditions for joining the initiative:

(1) PESCO activities will be implemented on an equal principles with respect to all challenges, including defense of the Eastern Flank; (2) The development of national defense industries will be supported to ensure their competitiveness, innovation and sustainability; (3) Within the PESCO, will not be created any parallel structures, competitive to NATO. Furthermore, all undertaken initiatives will be complement to the capabilities of the Alliance. (WRP, 2017).

⁴⁶ The negotiation refers to American-Russian negotiation on the reduction of nuclear arsenals.

⁴⁷ Henceforth, abbreviated as WRP.

⁴⁸ The Eastern Flank is the bordering flank to Russia. Due to the Russian annexation of Crimea, NATO has increased its presence and capabilities to demonstrate “the Alliance’s solidarity, determination, and ability to act immediately in response to any aggression” (NATO, 2021). The defence of the eastern flank refers to the defence against Russian aggression.

These conditions explicitly illustrate two issues that caused the Poles to be hesitant about joining PESCO: the Eastern flank and NATO. Due to Poland's geopolitical situation and the fear of Russian aggression, maintaining NATO's security guarantee is a top priority to ensure the safety of the Eastern flank. The hesitancy and indifference of joining PESCO indicate the Polish scepticism of the EU's defence initiatives, which was evident already in the Polish accession talks in 2004 (Chappell, 2010:231). The half-hearted support for PESCO and European defence appears more to do with the Poles strong commitment to NATO, not an indifference to engage in EU activities. The Polish government's priorities become further evident in their continuous statements on the importance of NATO, which note that "PESCO should be complementary to the activities undertaken by NATO" (WRP, 2018a) and "EU efforts in defence can effectively compliment the NATO transformation" (WRP, 2019). Poland does not oppose EU initiatives if they are compatible with NATO. Their concern regarding defence integration is rooted, instead, in their concern about impact on relationship with NATO and consequently, their territorial safety.

The Polish government supports the launch of PESCO and believes in strengthening the EU's defence capacities with initiatives such as PESCO and EDF, as these initiatives contribute to the EU's common interests. However, the Poles view PESCO as a complement to NATO, viewing the strengthening of EU defence capabilities also as a means of strengthening NATO capabilities. The Polish government argues that "the EU with its programs is a support [to NATO]" (WRP, 2018c) and "PESCO is a collection of programs that give a change to strengthen defense capabilities based on NATO" (WRP, 2018b). These statements show that the Polish argument for PESCO is an enhancement of NATO capabilities, which happens through the strengthening of EU defence capabilities. While they state that "Poland supports all the efforts aimed at making Europe an important player in the increasingly divided world" (WRP, 2019), it is evident that the European defence integration must not happen at the expense of NATO or try to duplicate it. The Poles do not necessarily view further integration as essential for European defence, but rather as essential for a stronger NATO, which suggests that Poland is not fully committed to increasing EU actorness and the EU's role as a defence provider in Europe. As with the support for PESCO, the Polish government appears view further defence integration as subordinate to NATO strengthening.

As for the narrative of why defence integration is necessary and the role of the US in European defence, the Polish government stresses the importance of a close relationship with the US. Former Foreign Minister Jacek Czaputowicz argued that “transatlantic relations and NATO are the key building blocks of our security” (WRP, 2019). Czaputowicz also argued that:

We definitely cannot agree with the opinion that NATO is in crisis, but for our security, also bilateral relations with the US are relevant and important. The US military presence in our country will increase. The number of US troops in Poland should soon reach five and a half thousand. It is based on our bilateral declaration with the United States, we invest in our infrastructure and in headquarters (WRP, 2019).

The Poles reject the idea that the US has become increasingly disengaged in Europe. For them, the US presence is the guarantee for security as they stress that “classic threats have not disappeared” (WRP, 2018a) and that “the priority is to ensure that they [the Polish troops in cooperation with NATO and EU] will be able to defend the territory of our country” (WRP, 2018a). The emphasis on classic threats and being able to defend national territory implies that Russian aggression and annexation of Crimea worry the Polish government and, therefore, it is critical that they can rely on NATO and the US military presence in Europe and Poland. Any additional European defence integration is just a supplement to NATO.

The Irish view of PESCO and further European defence cooperation differs from both Poland and France. As the historical overview of Irish membership in the EU illustrated, Irish membership has consistently been discussed in relation to neutrality. Therefore, when Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and his government brought the PESCO initiative to the Irish Parliament for approval, they stated that “participation in PESCO has no implications for Ireland’s policy of military neutrality” (Government of Ireland, 2017). While Ireland strives to maintain neutrality, there is also a goal to be an active and involved member in the EU (Government of Ireland, 2017). To be an engaged member in the EU is emphasised by the Irish government in several statements about PESCO. Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney stressed that engaging in CSDP processes and initiatives “ensures that we continue to have a

voice and that we can influence the evolution of all initiatives, including PESCO” (House of the Oireachtas, 2017). In 2020, Minister of State at the Department of Defence Paul Kehoe said that

For Ireland, it was important that we joined PESCO. We have been at the centre of the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy since its inception, playing a key role in the EU’s overseas operation. PESCO was, therefore, a natural progression for us in working with other member states to develop capabilities together that are needed for peacekeeping and crisis management (Government of Ireland, 2020).

Minister Kehoe’s statement illustrates two things. First, the goal for Ireland is to maintain a strong voice in EU policymaking, particularly regarding defence. Both Minister Kehoe’s and Minister Coveney’s statements show that maintaining influence over the defence development is critical. Second, the ambition with PESCO and other defence initiatives is not to take greater responsibility for European security, but instead for Ireland to coordinate more on peacekeeping missions and develop better tools for crisis management. The Irish goal of PESCO is not the initiative in of itself but rather the Irish position in the EU. The Irish overall commitment to European defence is not strong, which is clear in their emphasis on peacekeeping and crisis management.

The Irish government supports the new defence initiatives and argues that common security and defence policy is in both Irish and European interests, which indicates a commitment to the European project, though not necessarily further integration. Taoiseach Varadkar described, in his speech in November 2017, that new threats such as human trafficking, cyber terrorism and international terrorism, mass migration and natural disasters call for common solutions and argues that Ireland should be a part of European actions against these threats (Government of Ireland, 2017). Also, Foreign Minister Coveney claims that no country can address the challenges of today alone. They require collective action. Therefore, the Irish government does agree that EU action is necessary, which to some extent could suggest that the Irish views greater defence integration favourably to ensure that the EU can act to address these challenges.

The Irish government engages in debates regarding European defence, but they are also clear that “Ireland will not join a European army, nor will we be a part of a single European defence budget” (Government of Ireland, 2017), maintaining that “PESCO also has absolutely nothing to do with the creation of an EU army” (House of the Oireachtas, 2017). They stress that Ireland’s policy of military neutrality will not change as a result of joining PESCO and argue the other non-aligned EU member states are also committed to PESCO (House of the Oireachtas, 2017). To further argue that PESCO is not a military commitment, the Irish government emphasises that “PESCO has had the strong endorsement of the United Nations, which is important to note because, in essence, the United Nation is about trying to maintain a positive impact on global stability and peacemaking” (House of the Oireachtas, 2017). The Irish support of PESCO comes with firm expectations about what type of project PESCO is, which is a programme that enhances the EU’s coordination and efficiency in peacekeeping and crisis management.

Taoiseach Varadkar and his government identified external events and challenges as key factors in the Irish reason and narrative for joining PESCO and further European defence cooperation. The Irish government did not mention the US or any changes in the transatlantic relationship as a factor for further defence cooperation. Instead, Taoiseach Varadkar argued that contemporary challenges, like Brexit and “war and instability to the East and South; unprecedented uncontrolled migration flows; the effects of climate change; and increased fears about international terrorism” (Government of Ireland, 2017) are reasons for closer cooperation. Minister Coveney added to this by saying that the threats and challenges are transnational and multidimensional, which require states to cooperate as no country or member state alone can address them. Minister Kehoe summarised, “Threats do not remain static. Therefore, our response must also evolve” (Government of Ireland, 2020). The Irish government does not address relations with other countries as a reason for more defence cooperation. Instead, Ireland focuses on events and trends, in line with the country’s policy on neutrality. Therefore, the Irish reason for participating in PESCO appears to be only to maintain their influence and position in the EU.

The findings show that the three EU member states differ considerably in their view on PESCO and further defence cooperation. The French approach is to push for further defence cooperation and enhancing the scope of the proposed defence initiatives, demonstrating a strong commitment to PESCO and European defence. Poland, by contrast, stresses the

importance of not risking existing commitments to NATO, and views PESCO as a complement to NATO. The Irish approach is different from both France and Poland and regards PESCO as a tool to coordinate peacekeeping and crisis management. The Irish goal for PESCO is not the initiative in of itself but rather the Irish position in the EU. The level of support for PESCO also differs between the member states with France enthusiastically supporting it, compared to the Irish support and the Polish indifference.

The arguments for joining PESCO also differ. France argues that PESCO and greater defence cooperation can make the EU stronger and more capable, which is necessary to rebalance the alliance with the US and NATO. Despite his acknowledgement of the importance of maintaining a close transatlantic relationship, Macron also emphasises the need for the EU to strengthen European defence capabilities and he raises concerns about the growing distance between the US and Europe. Poland, on the other hand, views PESCO and enhanced European defence capabilities as enhanced NATO capabilities, which is due to the Polish argument that PESCO is only a complement to NATO. The Poles also disagree that the US have become increasingly disengaged in Europe. The Irish reasons for joining PESCO is the increasing instability and unpredictability in the external environment, in combination with maintaining Irish influence in the EU. The French and Irish reasons for joining are similar, with both emphasising the external environment, but their goals for joining PESCO differs. France does also to some extent regard the changes in the US as an opportunity for Europe to take greater responsibility for their security.

In summary, the three EU member states all support PESCO, though they vary in enthusiasm for it. They also vary in their views on European defence integration: France advocates for it, and Ireland and Poland are more hesitant to the vision of a defence union. Their narratives for PESCO are also different, with only France hinting at the US as a reason for a stronger EU, which suggests that the reason for participating in PESCO is self-interest rather than enhancing the EU's defence capabilities and the EU actorness. The Polish self-interest for participating in PESCO is to both enhance European capabilities, which they believe will have a positive impact on NATO capabilities, and to make sure that European defence initiatives do not compete with NATO. For Ireland, their participation in PESCO is a mechanism to guarantee their political influence in the EU. Considering both the historical discussion on the French approach to defence integration and Macron's statements, French self-interest appears to be the opportunity to become independent from the US and strengthen both the EU and France. In

conclusion, the PESCO design enables for member states to pursue projects that align with their self-interests, which explains why all member states support PESCO but with different narratives and aims. Due to differences in narratives and aims between the member states, there is a low degree of actorness in the initiative criterion. Only France demonstrates a high degree of actorness in as France strongly support PESCO and advocates for more integration. By contrast, Poland and Ireland do not want to integrate defence further, and their support for PESCO is more hesitant, which demonstrate a low degree of actorness.

5.2. Capacity

For the EU to achieve actorness, the union needs to be able to develop aims and policies, and to react to global challenges (Sus, 2019:413). To have the ability to act, two components are critical: decision-making and control of resources. Due to the intergovernmental component of security and defence policy, the EU currently lacks control of resources, and the decision-making still requires consensus between the member states. Therefore, to determine if the EU has increased its capacity due to PESCO, the focus of this section is on the member states willingness to allocate to the EU abilities to act and to pool resources. If the member states are willing to allocate some defence abilities to the EU, which the European integration theories deemed unlikely, it would essentially mean giving up part of their national sovereignty. Specifically, this section focuses on EU member state views on national sovereignty, European strategic autonomy, and how capabilities can be enhanced.

The French position on allocating more defence abilities to the EU is contradictory. Macron is inconsistent in his statements on capabilities, national sovereignty, and strategic autonomy. He calls for rebuilding and strengthening European forces and capabilities by increasing the member states defence expenditures. He is explicitly stating that these efforts are not “a response to American demands of fairer burden sharing” and NATO members spending 2 percent of GDP on defence, but rather “Europeans taking increasing responsibility for their own security” (République Française, 2017:58). Macron’s emphasis on Europeans taking responsibility for their security suggests a lack of trust towards some allies, like the US and Turkey, and implies that the EU needs to rely on themselves. This view is supported by German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s statement in 2017 that “the era in which we could fully rely on others is over to some extent” (Howorth, 2017b:457). The call for strengthening European forces is not only a budgetary discussion. Macron has called for

stronger operational capabilities, which he argues can be achieved through the new defence initiatives that “could help us develop common awareness, defend shared interests, and act autonomously and in solidarity every time it is necessary” (France Diplomacy, 2020). Macron also stresses strengthening PESCO and the EDF, as well as implementing the European Intervention Initiative to build up a shared European strategic culture and to develop the necessary capabilities (France Diplomacy, 2020; Gouvernement, 2020a).

While Macron seeks and advocates for European strategic autonomy, he is also strongly proclaiming the protection of national sovereignty and national autonomy. Repeatedly Macron states that French and European security “inevitably requires that Europeans have a greater capacity for autonomous action” and that the “desire for national sovereignty is absolutely not incompatible with our desire to develop European capabilities” (France Diplomacy, 2020). Conspicuously, Macron visualizes a link between national strategic autonomy and European autonomy, without allocating national sovereignty to achieve that vision. Yet, Macron also proclaims that “France must preserve its capability to decide and act alone to defend its interests” (République Française, 2017:54) and that the new European defence initiatives, including PESCO and EDF, “must not come at the cost of freedom of use, action, and decision at the national level” (République Française, 2017:64-65).

The French position can be interpreted as wanting the EU member states to define common challenges, security interests, and prioritise together, and only if the member states agree on a particular action, Europe can “draw strength from national forces” (France Diplomacy, 2020). This understanding indicates that PESCO, and the other new initiatives, do not give the European Commission further capacity to act beyond the preferences of the member states. According to the French position, PESCO would only allow the European Commission to act as a coordinator or representative of the objectives decided unanimously. The French view is that neither PESCO nor any other defence initiative will result in more capabilities to the EU, which means that the French government is not willing to allocate national sovereignty to the EU. However, at the same time, the French government wishes to create stronger operational capabilities through defence initiatives, which could be explained by France wanting the defence initiatives to be led by France and member state driven, to work as an agent of member states.

Just as the Polish government focused on not developing PESCO or any other defence initiative as a competitor to NATO, the Polish government has also been firm in

statements about developing and enhancing European defence capabilities. Repeatedly, has Minister of National Defence Blaszczak stated that “separate structures cannot create competitive to NATO solutions because the North Atlantic Alliance has a defensive capability, not the European Union. The European Union has not been established to create a common defense system. NATO was appointed for this” (WRP, 2018b). Minister of National Defence Blaszczak is hesitant about whether the new European defence initiatives are compatible with NATO. Instead of stressing the importance of maintaining national autonomy, Blaszczak emphasises the importance of NATO and the compatibility of the European programmes with NATO. Blaszczak declares that “we want the European system to be compatible with the NATO system, that the basic formula of providing defense capabilities to the states forming the EU is the North Atlantic Alliance, and therefore all programs that are proposed by the EU should complement to what is implemented within the North Atlantic Alliance” (WRP, 2018b). Evidently, the most important issue of PESCO for the Poles is security and not national sovereignty. The Polish government does not want to commit to any initiative that could jeopardize NATO, as NATO is vital for territorial defence.

The Polish view on security is based on historical experiences and the geopolitical situation. Due to the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, maintaining NATO as a security guarantee is clearly of uttermost importance for Poland and while they do not oppose further integration, their objectives are clear: keep NATO and the US involved in European security (Chappell, 2010; WRP, 2019). Minister Blaszczak explained Polish defence objectives:

We focus our forces and resources in the framework of NATO and the EU. We achieve real defense capabilities thanks to the synthesis of several components: thanks to the fact that the Polish Army is becoming stronger, that it is better armed and that we are NATO member. This is the key to ensuring security for Poland and Poles. The EU with its programs is a support and we have to use it. For us the most important thing is to provide real security, and this happens within NATO and within the EU (WRP, 2018c).

Therefore, “real defence” for the Poles is the result of a high level of national defence capabilities and defence expenditure, staying an active and close member of NATO, and supporting and engaging in all EU initiatives. The Poles do not support increased

capabilities for the EU but rather view PESCO as a way for EU member states to coordinate better with NATO.

The Irish government does consider PESCO as giving the EU some intergovernmental capabilities, which they argue is through a framework to “improve the means by which EU member states can participate jointly in projects” to “develop capabilities that will enhance crisis management and peacekeeping operations” (House of the Oireachtas, 2017). However, according to the Irish government, these enhanced capabilities do not come at the expense of the member states, as PESCO does not require EU member states to participate in specific projects. Instead, member states can freely pick in which projects to be involved. In the Irish view, PESCO “is simply about making more binding commitments to each other to jointly develop military crisis management capabilities to use in support of CSDP operations” (House of the Oireachtas, 2017), while keeping the deployment of those capabilities entirely under the control of member state. The Irish government is willing to develop intergovernmental capabilities within the EU, which demonstrates the importance of national sovereignty. To ensure respect for national sovereignty, Ireland pushed for the inclusion of the wording that all commitments are entered “while respecting constitutional provisions of the member states” (House of the Oireachtas, 2017), which include Ireland’s policy on military neutrality. Likewise, in the protocol attached to the Lisbon Treaty a note on Irish neutrality was included and it stated that “[t]he Lisbon Treaty does not affect or prejudice Ireland’s traditional policy of military neutrality” (House of the Oireachtas, 2017).

To emphasise national sovereignty, Minister Coveney also argues that since participating in PESCO is voluntary, so is the decision to step out of PESCO. However, Minister Coveney stresses that any “decision to leave would likely result in a member state having less influence on the direction of the EU common foreign and security policy as inevitably that member state would be seen as less committed to the CSDP” (House of the Oireachtas, 2017). In addition, the Irish government strongly highlighted that the Irish people voted on the Lisbon Treaty, where the launch of PESCO was included (House of the Oireachtas, 2017). Therefore, the Irish government underlines national sovereignty through several different aspects, by stating that PESCO is voluntary, pushing for including the wording of respecting member states constitutions, and by arguing that the Irish public has voted to participate in PESCO.

In comparison between EU member state views on allocating more capabilities to the EU institutions, there are some differences. France and Ireland have similar views on

allocating more capabilities, while Poland does not address more EU defence capabilities or national sovereignty. The Polish government only stresses the importance of compatibility between European defence initiatives and NATO. France and Ireland both address national sovereignty and increased EU capabilities. Macron is inconsistent in his statements, arguing both for increased operational capabilities and European autonomy, and for maintaining national sovereignty and preserving the member states control to act alone. Ireland, like France, is willing to allocate some capabilities to the EU, but specifically point that these capabilities should be intergovernmental and to enhance crisis management and peacekeeping. The French and Irish view on EU capabilities do not seem to be allocating more defence capabilities to the EU, but rather increasing member state cooperation and creating initiatives and projects which are member state driven.

In summary, per the European integration theories, the EU member states are reluctant to allocate the EU institutions defence capabilities. Despite both the French and Irish governments acknowledgement of the need for stronger capabilities and more binding agreements, they both stress that these capabilities cannot be at the expense of member state sovereignty. This stance suggests that the Irish and French governments want member state driven initiatives, in which they remain in full control. Poland, by contrast, does neither underline nor stresses national sovereignty, which could be a result of the Polish indifference to PESCO if the initiative does not impact or compete with NATO. Neither of the three EU member states address or discuss pooling of resources, which could imply that this competence is not something they are willing to allocate. Therefore, there is an absence of actorness in the capacity criterion as neither member state is willing to allocate more capabilities to the EU institutions. Instead, the member states are more concerned about maintaining status quo but with increased intergovernmental cooperation.

5.3. Cohesion

The EU member states can achieve cohesion in four different ways: value cohesion, agreeing on common basic goals; tactical cohesion, the ability to agree on diverging goals; procedural cohesion, consensus on how to deal with conflicting issues; and output cohesion, the success of formulating common policies (Sus, 2019:414). The focus for this section is whether EU member state narratives and arguments for PESCO are similar and whether their views on the future of European defence integration parallel.

Based on the analysis of initiative and capacity, France, Poland, and Ireland all support PESCO and view it as an important step to meet the challenges of today and to pursue common European interests. The three different governments emphasise that participation in PESCO constitutes an opportunity for the EU to coordinate interests and capabilities. Macron, for example, believes that European security interests should be defined together as many of the perceived threats are shared, and stresses the importance of all member states agreeing on what is good for Europe (France Diplomacy, 2020). However, the EU member states differ in their level of enthusiasm for PESCO, with France supporting the initiative strongly and Poland being close to indifferent to it.

The three EU member states differ considerably in their visions for PESCO and the narrative of why PESCO is needed. The French government views PESCO as an opportunity to enhance European defence cooperation and to become more independent from the US. Macron also emphasises changes in the transatlantic relationship and the need to rebalance the partnership. While he does not explicitly argue that PESCO and other defence initiatives are a response to US foreign policy, implicitly his statements indicate that the uncertainty in the relationship is a reason for more European defence cooperation. By contrast, the Poles view PESCO as a way to strengthen European capabilities within NATO and to help “EU member states to cooperate more closely in the field of security and defence, joint development of defense potential, investing in the same projects and increasing the participation and operational readiness of the armed forces of the EU countries” (WRP, 2018b). The Irish view PESCO as a program to coordinate and participate in peacekeeping and crisis management missions and to address “shared areas of concern” (House of the Oireachtas, 2017) more effectively. Neither the Polish government nor the Irish government points to the US as the reason for launching PESCO. Instead, the Polish government emphasises the need to keep the US involved, which is particularly important for Poland due to the increased tensions on the Eastern flank. The narrative of the Irish government is focused on common challenges, such as wars, migration crises, climate change and terrorism, rather than relationships with external actors. The only external actor addressed is the UK and the relationship between the EU and the UK after Brexit.

The EU member states also differ in who they think should be able to participate in PESCO. Macron argues that “European countries willing and able to move forward” should be able to do so (République Française, 2017:15, 64). The Irish government also stresses the

importance of voluntary participation, stating that “participation in any PESCO project is entirely voluntary and it is a matter for each member state to decide for itself whether to participate on a case-by-case basis” (House of the Oireachtas, 2017). Unlike the French and Irish governments, Minister Blaszczak emphasises that more countries, outside the EU, should be allowed to participate in PESCO (WRP, 2018b).

The EU member states are more similar in their view on allocating capabilities to the EU. The French government argues that stronger commitments should address the operational need of European armed forces and create stronger operational capabilities (France Diplomacy, 2020). Ireland does to some extent support stronger operational capabilities, but these capabilities should be tools necessary for crisis management and peacekeeping. Despite the French and Irish support for stronger and more binding commitment, they also stress national sovereignty and member state abilities to decide (House of the Oireachtas, 2017; République Française, 2017:57). Poland neither addresses stronger commitments nor national sovereignty. The Polish government firmly believes that the EU does not have defence capabilities because NATO already is appointed as the defence alliance (WRP, 2018b).

In conclusion, the differences in the vision, the narrative, and the role of PESCO suggest that the EU and EU member states are not guided by a clear strategy with agreed objectives and aims for PESCO. The narrative and argument for PESCO are not parallel between the three member states. France does, to some extent, identify the changes in the US commitment to Europe as a reason for the EU to become more independent and integrate further. Poland, by contrast, does not acknowledge any changes in the US commitment to Europe and instead argue that stronger defence efforts in Europe should be made within the sphere of NATO. Ireland identifies global issues, such as climate change, migration crises, and human trafficking, among other things, as reasons for the EU member states to cooperate more but strongly emphasises that the cooperation is only in peacekeeping and crisis management. Moreover, the visions for PESCO also differ, with France advocating for more initiatives and stronger defence capabilities, and Poland and Ireland arguing that new initiatives do not mean that the EU will become a defence union. However, they do agree on the basic goals of PESCO and while they disagree on narrative and vision, they have established and launched several projects, which means that they have some cohesion. Therefore, there is some degree of actorness in the cohesion criterion, despite differences in vision and narrative.

6. Conclusions

By analysing EU member state reactions to US foreign policy during the second Obama and Trump administrations and how that policy impacted European defence integration, this thesis concludes that US foreign policy did not have a direct impact on European defence integration. Instead, the analysis of EU member state views on PESCO, and the impact of the external environment demonstrates that there is heterogeneity in arguments for PESCO and European defence integration. The thesis finds that France used the uncertainty in the US commitment to Europe as an opportunity to advocate for more defence integration, while Ireland and Poland emphasised other challenges in the external environment as reasons for defence cooperation through PESCO while not necessarily supporting defence integration. Therefore, EU member state narratives and reasons for participating in PESCO appear based on self-interest, which PESCO enables as it is a member state-driven initiative. As PESCO projects are led by the member states, who can pick which projects to be involved in, allowing member states to pursue projects that are in line with their national interests. The findings suggest strengthening of defence cooperation through intergovernmental exchange and cooperation, not through EU institutions.

In this thesis, I explored whether the Obama administrations ‘pivot to Asia’ and the election and presidency of Donald Trump increased the EU’s defence cooperation and contributed to the EU member state willingness to further integrate defence. Through an analysis of EU member state total defence expenditures, military personnel, and European collaborative defence procurement expenditures, the thesis did not find any support that the Obama administration ‘pivot to Asia’ impacted EU member state defence expenditures. The quantitative analysis found increased defence expenditure after 2017, which could be an impact of the Trump administration rhetoric and policies, but also a result and combination of other external factors, like the Russian aggression and Brexit. The qualitative analysis proceeded to investigate the impact of the Trump administration on PESCO and defence integration. The findings did not support that the Trump administration impacted EU member states to push for further defence integration.

The first hypothesis examined whether newly launched defence initiatives were a reaction to changes in US commitment to Europe. The quantitative analysis demonstrated there was an increase in both EU member state defence expenditures and in European collaborative

defence procurement expenditures in 2017, when Donald Trump's presidency started. However, since the expenditure started to increase after 2014, the substantial increase in 2017 could also be a delayed effect of the Russian annexation of Crimea and the tensions in the external environment. The qualitative analysis demonstrated clear no evidence that the new defence initiatives were a response to changes in the US commitment to Europe and the election of Donald Trump. The role of the US was only mentioned in the French case study, where Macron used the uncertainty in the transatlantic relationship to argue for a stronger Europe, responsible for its security, and the need for rebalancing the alliance. As there was a substantial increase after 2017, the strengthening of European defence cooperation and EU member state increased willingness to cooperate in defence could be an interaction of Russian aggression, Trump, and Brexit. However, there is no sufficient evidence supporting that strengthening of European defence cooperation and that the initiatives were a response to US foreign policy.

The second hypothesis studied whether the launch of PESCO made the EU member states more coordinated and aligned them around the same objectives more effectively, which is partly supported in the analysis. Despite great variety in EU member state narratives, objectives, and visions for PESCO, the design of PESCO enables closer cooperation and coordination. Through the selection of projects in which to participate in, member state can pursue their own agenda and objectives while maintaining national sovereignty, which member states highlight in their reasons for joining PESCO. While the member states are reluctant to allocate more defence capabilities to the EU institutions, PESCO allows for a wide range of national interests and this defence initiative could still provide an opportunity for further defence integration. By participating in projects together, the member states can start to formulate a shared culture and an increased habit of cooperating in defence matters, which might impact their willingness to allocate more defence capabilities to the EU institutions in the future. But that future remains a long way off.

As for the internal development of EU actorness, the findings show mixed results. In the initiative criterion, the EU member states differ both in their narrative for PESCO and their view on more defence integration which demonstrate a low degree of actorness. Only France showed a high level of support for PESCO with Ireland and Poland being more hesitant or indifferent. Neither of the three member states were willing to allocate more capabilities to the EU institutions, which means that there is a low degree of actorness in the capacity criterion. France and Ireland were to some extent willing to commit to more binding commitments and

suggested stronger operational capabilities. However, these capabilities would still be under the control of member states, which reinforces the conclusion that PESCO is a member-state driven initiative that does not require giving up parts of their sovereignty. France, Poland, and Ireland differ in argument, narrative, and vision for PESCO, and they are unwilling to allocate more capabilities to the EU institutions, which suggest that there is a low degree of actorness in the cohesion criterion. France hints at the changes in US as an opportunity for more defence integration, while Poland does not acknowledge the US as reason for defence integration and argues that defence efforts should be made within NATO. Ireland does to some extent believe in defence integration but only in peacekeeping and crisis management, to address global challenges. However, despite their differences, they agreed and implemented PESCO, which show some degree of cohesion. Consequently, there is some degree of actorness in the cohesion criterion. While some of the member states have a higher degree of actorness in some criteria, such as France in their support for PESCO, in most of the cases the degree of actorness is low. Therefore, the low degree of actorness shows that EU member states are unwilling to enhance EU actorness. Due to the lack of actorness, the EU's reaction is also constrained.

My thesis contributes to the scholarly literature by enhancing the understanding of what drives EU member states to integrate defence and what impact the external environment has on the development of European defence cooperation, particularly the impact of US foreign policy. The thesis finds limited support about US influence on European defence integration. However, the thesis finds that EU member state increased spending and cooperation after 2017, but within the context of member state control. While PESCO allows for some coordination, it falls short of European defence integration. The thesis also finds how EU member states have changed their defence capabilities, which includes increasing their defence expenditure and European collaborative defence procurement expenditure while simultaneously decreasing their military personnel.

The topic of European defence integration and the transatlantic relationship is highly pertinent and timely, especially with the new Biden administration. President Biden has expressed a desire for the US to work with its allies and he has reinforced the US commitment to both Europe and NATO (White House, 2021a). Pieper and Lak (2019) claimed that, historically, European defence integration has been stalled when the US is more involved and committed to European defence. Therefore, the Biden administration could potentially impact

the development toward integrating European defence and EU member state willingness, particularly member states that already hesitated to cooperate on defence.

Consequently, future research should focus on whether the promise of the Biden administration impacts and stalls European defence integration. This study could also be complemented with a study that conducts interviews with representatives for the government, as it could provide more depth and insight into the member state views. Further research on other EU member state views on defence integration would also be beneficial, as it could either confirm the result of this study or provide a different conclusion. Additional research on specific member states could also examine whether some member states are driving defence integration and whether there is a difference in member state willingness to cooperate depending on the defence initiative. As EDF is more centralized than PESCO, it would be interesting to study what member state views are on EDF and whether the centralized aspect impacts their willingness for defence cooperation.

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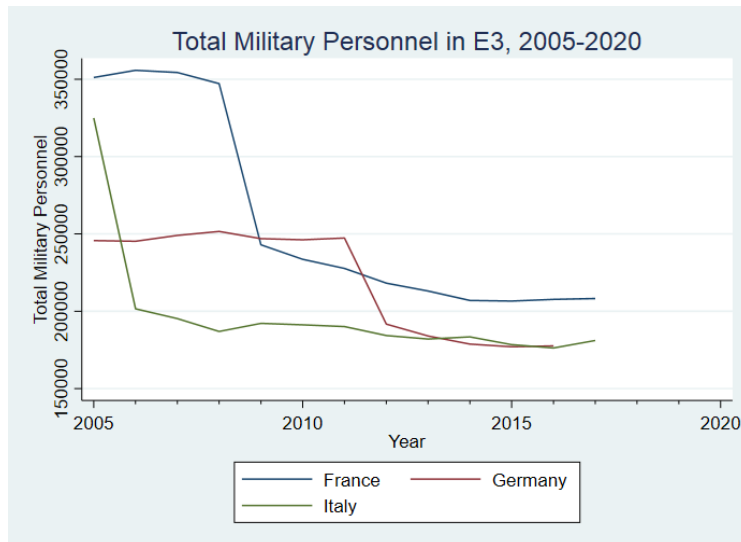
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Appendix

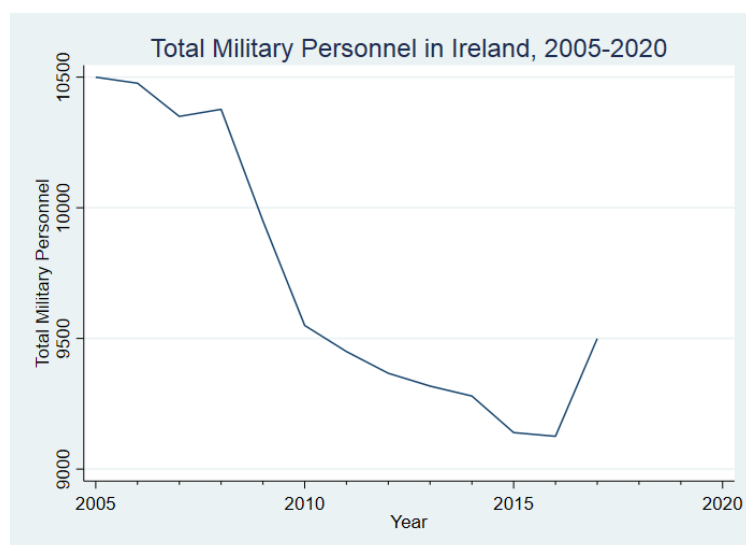
Appendix 1. Total Military Personnel, detailed table

	2015	2016	2017
The EU	1257177	1260586	1102424
France	206600	207685	208251
Poland	96248	98586	106500
Ireland	9140	9126	9500
Germany		177608	
Italy	178424	176257	181116
The UK	153730	150040	150040

Appendix 2. Total Military Personnel in E3, 2005-2020



Appendix 3. Total Military Personnel in Ireland, 2005-2020



Appendix 4. Total Military Personnel in Poland, 2005-2020



Appendix 5. Total Defence Expenditure in the EU, change 2015-2019

Total Defence Expenditure in Mln Euro				
	2015	2017	2019	Change 2015-19
EU	150630	164431	185947	23.4%
France	39199	40852	44361	13.2%
Germany	35899	40265	46936	30.7%
Italy	17692	21166	21143	19.5%
Poland	9546	8821	10559	10.6%
Spain	10000	10528	11281	12.8%

Appendix 6. % of EU Total Defence Expenditure

% of EU Total Defence Expenditure			
	2015	2017	2019
France	26.0%	24.8%	23.9%
Germany	23.8%	24.5%	25.2%
Italy	11.7%	12.9%	11.4%
Poland	6.3%	5.4%	5.7%
Spain	6.6%	6.4%	6.1%