

Norway's Attitudes to European Integration Within Foreign Policy: Dilemmas of Non-EU European States in the Light of Developing the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy

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Taking Norway as an example and a point of departure, this article looks at the ways in which the EFTA countries tackled dilemmas connected with the necessity to safeguard their interests in foreign policy against the background of the developing integration in foreign policy between the EC and, later, the EU members. The author argues that Norway, as a non-EU European country, consistently pursued a strategy typical for a 'small country' of the Nordic region vis-à-vis the ongoing integration of the EC/EU in the area of foreign affairs. After the end of the Cold War, Norway faced a potential threat of declining interest of the transatlantic community and the NATO in the Northern area. The EU enlargement in 1995 considerably limited the possibilities for Norway to coordinate foreign policy with other Nordic countries. For these reasons, Norway supported the development of the EU's CFSP/CSDP as a tool complementary to the NATO in order to enhance its security. Institutionally, it chose a pragmatic model of selected approximation to the EU's foreign and defence policy, especially for political dialogue, declarations, sanctions, as well as the CDSP's civilian and military operations.

Keywords: Norway, the European Union, Common Foreign and Security Policy, European Free Trade Association, the Nordics, foreign policy, small states.

Dilemmas surrounding the United Kingdom (UK) leaving the European Union (EU) in January 2020 and, in particular, the ongoing discussions on the model of future cooperation between the United Kingdom and the European Union in the domain of foreign policy¹ direct attention to an interesting but not so frequently analysed aspect of the external dimension of European integration, namely the attitudes adopted by the states which remained outside the main integration processes in Europe towards the recurrent attempts made by the European Communities' (EC) members to coordinate their foreign policies. Such attempts, visible within the EC at least since the 1970s, were

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¹ *Alternatives to Membership: Possible Models for the United Kingdom Outside the European Union*, HM Government, March 2016.

later transformed into the Common Foreign and Security Policy/Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union (the EU's CFSP/CSDP). In contrast to the EC, the countries which participated in the parallel and at times competing European integration project, i.e. the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), had no intention of extending their cooperation to foreign policy issues. Nevertheless, the EFTA countries could not turn a blind eye to this feature of the EC as it developed substantially over the years, the more so as the consecutive waves of EC/EU enlargement began to absorb also EFTA members, i.e. United Kingdom, Denmark, and other Nordic countries. In particular, the EFTA being left in 1973 by its largest and most influential member, the United Kingdom, and the development of the European Political Cooperation (EPC) within the EC following the Copenhagen conclusions² posed a question for the remaining EFTA members on how to properly address these political facts. The emergence of the EU's CFSP in 1993 was another sign of the EU's growing potential to coordinate its foreign affairs. These dilemmas of the EFTA countries were further deepened after the 'Nordic' EU enlargement in 1995, which included two more EFTA members from Northern Europe, namely Finland and Sweden.

The purpose of this article is to look at the ways in which the EFTA countries typically tackled dilemmas connected with the necessity to safeguard their interests in foreign policy in the new European political and security environment following the Cold War, especially through building a community of aims with the EC member states. This analysis will mostly concentrate on Norway, since this country was historically closest to obtaining formal membership in the EC and, due to its geographical location, was also closest to the EC in terms of its foreign policy. Analytically, this article is based on the presumption that Norway as a 'small state' of Northern Europe pursued foreign policy strategies typical of this type of state in order to maximise its interests. As is known from extensive research on small states' foreign policies in the Nordic context,³ the predominant factors of their foreign policies were usually about the feeling of regional specificity and strong adherence to independence, combined with the awareness of their relatively small political and economic potential, which was to be remedied by regional and international alliances, and reinforced by 'status-building' efforts. In the post-Cold-War realities, the main partnerships available stemmed from the transatlantic and the European axes. As Bailes and Thorhallsson observed, the EU's security policy was perceived as offering especially attractive, soft

² "Second report on European political cooperation in foreign policy matters", Copenhagen, 23 July 1973, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, September 1973, no. 9, 14.

³ See, e.g., Clive Archer, Alyson J.K. Bailes and Anders Wivel (eds.), *Small States and International Security. Europe and Beyond* (London: Routledge, 2014); Baldur Thorhallsson and Alyson J. K. Bailes, "Do Small States Need 'Alliance Shelter'? Scotland and the Nordic Nations," in *Security in a Small Nation: Scotland, Democracy, Politics*, ed. Andrew W. Neal (Edinburgh: Open Book Publishers, 2017). For background reading, see, e.g.,: Werner Bauwens, Armand Clesse and Olav F. Knudsen (eds.) *Small States and the Security Challenge in the New Europe* (London: Potomac Books, 1996) as well as the literature cited there.

options that were unavailable in other international formats.⁴ Norway fits into this general picture in that it pursued a close relationship with the EU in its foreign and security policy predominantly in order to maximise its security interests and develop additional assurances beyond the North Atlantic Treaty. Similarly, pursuing a 'status-seeking strategy', Norway aimed at strengthening its international reputation and thus extending the country's foreign policy options.⁵ Institutionally, since the perspective of full membership in the EC/EU was not realistic for Norway due to the persistent scepticism of most Norwegians and the two lost accession referenda, the maximal goal could only be to create and maintain mechanisms of close cooperation with the EU in that domain. Such mechanisms were supposed to be based on flexibility and a lack of automatism. Looking at the process in broader terms, mechanisms of cooperation on foreign policy constituted an element of the Norwegian strategy of participation in the European integration without any formal membership being gained, which was referred to by former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland as "European integration through a backdoor".⁶ Rieker called this phenomenon "an adaptive EU membership".⁷

The amplification of Norway's foreign policy aims through cooperation with the EC

Historically, the EFTA member states remaining in the organisation after 1995 – especially Norway and Iceland, and to some extent also Lichtenstein – pursued foreign policies which in general terms were concurrent with the EC/EU members regarding the basic values, aims, and main vectors of interest. Therefore, it was in the interest of these countries to multiply their own potential through close cooperation with other European states in the field of foreign policy. That is why, over the years, they developed various mechanisms of consultation and coordination in selected areas of foreign and defence policy. Among the EFTA countries, undoubtedly the most advanced one in this respect was Norway. Its geographical location, often described as peripheral, as well as its relatively small power of influence on the neighbours, combined with practical challenges that would guarantee credible defence to its elongated territory, its dependence on the United States and the NATO with respect to security (dating since the end of the Second World War), its geographical proximity to the USSR/Russia (treated as a factor of instability or even as a security concern), and its

⁴ Alyson J.K. Bailes, Baldur Thorhallsson, "Instrumentalizing the European Union in Small State Strategies," *Journal of European Integration* 35, no. 2 (2013).

⁵ Rasmus Brun Pedersen, "Bandwagon for Status: Changing Patterns in the Nordic States Status-Seeking Strategies?," *International Peacekeeping* 25, no. 2 (2018).

⁶ Cf. Kristin Haugevik, "Diplomacy Through the Back Door: Norway and the Bilateral Route to EU Decision-Making," *Global Affairs* 3, no. 3 (2017), 278.

⁷ Pernille Rieker, *Europeanization of National Security Identity: The EU and the Changing Security Identities of the Nordic States*, (London: Routledge, 2006), 151 et seq.

institutional separation from the main currents of European integration all constituted main factors shaping the Norwegian foreign and security policy in the post-war times. In particular, the feeling of necessity to reduce costs of political isolation – or even at times marginalisation – in Europe was a recurrent preoccupation of Norwegian policy-makers.⁸ The close political and economic partnership with the United Kingdom – in place since long before the reunification of Europe in the 1990s – paired with scepticism towards closer relations with West Germany, meant that Norway was inclined to follow intuitively the British path in European and Euro-Atlantic integration.⁹

This is why – among the Nordic countries – Norway, along with Denmark, was perhaps the closest one to the process of the Euro-Atlantic cooperation on terms similar to those of other Western European countries. As a NATO founding member, an active participant in the original ‘big’ EFTA – and as a country pursuing an increasingly active foreign policy since the 1970s, one reaching beyond the European continent, especially in selected areas of multilateral diplomacy such as peacekeeping and development aid – Norway naturally took some interest in the emerging methods of the EC member states’ foreign policy coordination and, in particular, in the perspectives of the European Political Cooperation established in 1970, even though this was not perhaps the most direct preoccupation from the Norwegian European policy viewpoint in the early 1970s. At that time, the Norwegian political circles were more engaged in general discussions on the future model of Norwegian membership in the EC, which seemed to be likely and even imminent, especially after the country submitted a formal application for EC membership in 1962 and then again in 1967. To give an example, the recommendations of the Davignon Report on future cooperation in foreign policy between the EC states, adopted by the EC foreign ministers in October 1970,¹⁰ received only a lukewarm response in Oslo (as opposed to a visible interest shown by Copenhagen). The Norwegian foreign ministry even concluded that the implementation of the institutional recommendations of the report would be difficult and would not happen overnight, and that such a mechanism would not offer much more than the regularisation of consultations between the EC member states on foreign policy, which were taking place anyway. Likewise, the debates in Storting dedicated to the conditions of the future EC membership for Norway showed only a limited interest in the question of institutional alignment on foreign policy with the EC countries, even though the parliamentary majority seemed to share the government’s view that such

⁸ See, e.g., Alyson J.K. Bailes and Baldur Thorhallsson, “Iceland and the European Security and Defence Policy,” in *The Nordic Countries and the European Security and Defence Policy*, eds. Alyson J.K. Bailes, Gunilla Herolf, Bengt Sundelius (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁹ See: Stefan Gänzle and Thomas Henökl, “From ‘Awkward Partner’ to ‘Awkward Partnership’? Explaining Norway’s Paradoxical Relations with the European Union,” in *Nordic States and European Integration: Awkward Partners in the North?*, eds. Malin Stegmann McCallion and Alex Brianson (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

¹⁰ “Report by the Foreign Ministers of the Member States on the Problems of Political Unification,” *Bulletin of the European Communities*, no. 11 (1970).

a cooperation could in principle prove to be of some value for sure, provided that Norway successfully joined the EC.¹¹ However, the failure of the 1972 Norwegian accession referendum meant that detailed issues – such as the mechanisms of foreign policy approximation – were understandably off the table. Instead, Norway used individual channels to promote its viewpoints on foreign policy in selected European capitals and in Brussels. One of the most important preoccupations was guaranteeing that Norwegian interests would be taken under consideration in the transatlantic context. Transatlantic unity was even treated as a precondition to convincing the Norwegian society that EC membership would not be detrimental to the country. Symptomatically, Johan Jørgen Holst, a prominent member of the Norwegian Labour Party, predicted in 1973 that the next Norwegian application for the EC membership would only be possible following institutional convergence between the EC and the United States as well as following a necessary progress in relations between the West and the East.¹² This showed that the development of the European identity in foreign policy was important to Norway, provided that it was to be achieved in close connection with the United States.

The end of the Cold War brought about three major strategic and institutional challenges for Norwegian foreign policy. The first one was the demise of the Soviet Union and the launching of a new stage of cooperation between the NATO and Russia in the 1990s, which was interpreted in Norway as a process which could potentially give rise to new challenges for its foreign and security policy. On the one hand, the stabilisation of the big Eastern neighbour was in the interest of Norway, but on the other, Norwegians feared that a thaw in relations between the West and Russia might result in the lowering of the importance of defending Northern Europe among NATO priorities.¹³ Secondly, the interest of Sweden and Finland – the two Nordic neighbours of Norway – in full EU membership, which finally materialised in 1995, meant that Norway, after another negative accession referendum in 1994, had to face the situation in which its closest Nordic partners were able to participate in creating an important pillar of the EU integration, its foreign and defence policy, whereas Norway was not. Thirdly, from the institutional point of view, building the EU security dimension had a mixed effect on Norwegian interests. Norway had been aware of the potential connected with re-launching the Western European Union (WEU) long before the end of the Cold War. It welcomed the reactivation of this policy following

¹¹ Knut Erling, *En rapport til besvær? Norske, danske og svenske reaksjoner på Davignon-rapporten, Landet Masteroppgave i historie, Institutt for arkeologi, konservering og historie, Universitetet i Oslo*, unpublished Master Thesis (Oslo, 2011), 113, <https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/23394/Landet-master.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

¹² See: Nils A. Røhne, "De førsteskrittinn i Europa, Norsk Europa-politikkfra 1950," *Forsvarsstudier* 5 (1989), 114.

¹³ See: Ingemar Dörfer, *The Nordic Nations in the New Western Security Regime* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1997).

the Rome Declaration of October 1984.¹⁴ Also in 1984, on the initiative of the German Presidency of the EC Council, the government of Norway was invited to start cyclical informal consultations with the WEU on security issues. Finally, in 1992, Norway became an associated member of the WEU. All those steps were motivated by the need to obtain additional influence on the strategic direction of European security as well as to open a channel of communication with Europeans on security issues parallel to the NATO. Norway formally welcomed the emergence of the European Security and Defence Policy in 1999 in a positive tone. It also declared its willingness to participate in the EU's crisis management missions. The status which was offered to Norway – that of a third country – was certainly less favourable than the one Norway had enjoyed until 1999 in the WEU, since, as an associated member, Norway had had the right to participate basically in works of all main bodies of this organisation, i.e. the Ministerial Council, the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the Military Committee, and the Parliamentary Assembly. These privileges were not available to Norway as a third country in the framework of the EU's CSDP. Norwegian policy-makers were acutely aware of this unfavourable course of events.¹⁵ In spite of that, Norway generally perceived the development of the EU security dimension as a positive phenomenon which also helped advance Norwegian interests; in the spirit of pragmatism, the country accepted (unlike e.g. Turkey) new conditions of participation in the preparation for European peacekeeping missions. It also considered its participation in the developing European defence as yet another insurance against the odds that the attention and the capabilities of the NATO would be at some point redirected from the North towards other regions. The EU was perceived as the only organisation potentially able to fill this gap.

There was also another factor in the Norwegian foreign policy which potentially had a mitigating effect on the country's perception of European defence, namely the traditional concern with refraining from any steps which could damage the security bond with the United States. Indeed, in the period of 1999–2005, the dominating view in the Norwegian government was that the development of the security dimension of European integration could be potentially unfavourable to transatlantic cohesion. This perception gradually changed after a new government had taken office in Oslo in 2006 under Prime Minister Stoltenberg (the red–green coalition). The European Union began to be perceived more as a part of the transatlantic security community and less as its counterweight. From this perspective, membership in the European Economic Area was also a part of the process of anchoring Norway in the transatlantic context. At the beginning of the red–green coalition rule, in 2006, the foreign minister Jonas Gahr Støre defined the interests of Norway and those of the EU as 'concurrent'

¹⁴ *Declaration by the WEU Foreign and Defence Ministers*, Rome, 27 October 1984.

¹⁵ See: Clive Archer, *Norway Outside the European Union: Norway and European Integration from 1994 to 2004* (London: Routledge, 2005), 193.

in selected areas of foreign policy, such as human rights, codification of international law, and climate and environmental policy. Some reservations on the part of Støre with regard to these issues, e.g. the security policy, stemmed undoubtedly from caution, but perhaps also from the fact that the EU member states differed as to the desirable direction in which the EU security dimension should develop. In the years that followed, Norwegian ministers – such as Espen Barth Eide, who succeeded Støre as the foreign minister – openly pointed to close relations with the EU in the context of Euro-Atlantic relations. A generally favourable approach of Norway towards European integration in the field of foreign and security policy did not change after 2013, when the centre-right government of Erna Solberg took office. In 2013, Vidar Helgesen, the minister on Europe in that government, underlined that the convergence between Norway and the EU in the field of foreign policy issues was significant.¹⁶ Norway was keen to welcome further development in that area, concluding that the EU's role was inevitably bound to intensify. Nevertheless, it remained strategically important for Norway that such a development should be fostered without detriment to the transatlantic relations in the spirit of a division of labour between the EU and the NATO. Norway also welcomed the common declaration on the EU–NATO relations adopted in 2016 at the Warsaw NATO Summit.¹⁷

The institutional dimension of the EU–Norway cooperation in the area of foreign and security policy

Norwegian researchers Svendsen and Rieker once described the foreign policy cooperation between the EU and Norway as a spin-off of the integration in the framework of the European Economic Area (EEA).¹⁸ This is a somewhat far-fetched perception, since, as stated above, Norway's interest in the EC/EU's external dimension predated the entry-into-force of the EEA Agreement. The first agreement on establishing a mechanism of informal consultations between Norway and the rotating presidency of the European Political Cooperation was signed in 1988.¹⁹ No doubt, the EEA was also established with the intention to introduce cooperation on foreign policy onto the EU–Norway (and other EFTA countries') agenda. This intention was even formalised in a short declaration on political dialogue that was annexed to the EEA

¹⁶ See: Ingrid Ulberg Sommer, *Definerer EU norsk sikkerhetspolitikk? En analyse av EUs betydning for norsk sikkerhetspolitikk i perioden 1999–2015*, Masteroppgave i Europastudier, Trondheim, May 2016, 29.

¹⁷ *Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, Warsaw, 8 July 2016.

¹⁸ Øyvind Svendsen and Pernille Rieker, "Spin-off av EØS? Norge ogeuropeiskutenriks-, sikkerhets- og forsvarssamarbeid," *Internasjonal Politikk* 77, no. 4 (2019).

¹⁹ Helene Sjørven, "Reinforcing Executive Dominance: Norway and the EU's Foreign and Security Policy," in *The European Union Non-Members: Independence Under Hegemony?*, eds. Erik O. Eriksen and John Erik Fossum (London–New York: Routledge, 2015), 194.

Agreement.²⁰ The document provided for an informal exchange of views on foreign policy between both parties at the ministerial level, i.e. during the meetings of the EEA Council. Both parties further agreed to cooperate informally within the framework of international organisations and conferences, using diplomatic channels, including through diplomatic representations of the EU presidency in third countries. This declaration was purposefully formulated in general terms and as such constituted a broad and flexible basis for cooperation with the EU on issues of common interest.

From the standpoint of the EU's legal system, the framework of cooperation on foreign policy established in the EEA Agreement and in the 1994 Declaration was rather loose and offered considerable flexibility, without *per se* paving the way for any further commitments. In spite of the existing EU's *acquis* setting a model for the institutional cooperation of the EU with third countries in the domain of the EU's CFSP, both parties visibly refrained from applying any further-reaching solutions, such as those known from, e.g., the Association Agreements between the EU and the Eastern European countries, or from the Stabilisation and Association Agreements between the EU and the Western Balkans, which, among other things, provided for the gradual convergence with the EU in the field of foreign policy. It seems that it was Norway's intention to avoid any further-reaching formalisation of cooperation with the EU in foreign policy in order to maintain flexibility in choosing issues and joining EU positions in areas of special interest to Norway. On the other hand, any further-reaching commitment to, e.g., the gradual convergence of the Norwegian foreign policy with the EU's view could be assessed in Norway as a relationship of an unequal nature, one close to the model of the European Neighbourhood Policy or even the EU accession policy. The EU seemed to accept this approach and not to pressure Norway to adopt solutions it did not desire.

From the institutional point of view, Norway chose a model of partial agreements, which covered selected elements of cooperation. Generally, the EU–Norway cooperation on foreign and security policy encompassed five areas: 1) political dialogue on general issues relating to foreign policy; 2) Norway's adherence to selected EU/CSFP political declarations; 3) cooperation on international sanctions (the EU's restrictive measures) and classified information; 4) collaboration on international development cooperation; 5) cooperation on security and defence issues, including with the European Defence Agency. In this regard, Norway signed a number of sectorial agreements with the EU, such as the agreements on establishing the EU Satellite Centre (2001),²¹ on exchange of classified information (2004),²² on participation in EU's crisis management

²⁰ "Declaration by the Governments of the Member States of the EC and the EFTA States on Political Dialogue," *Official Journal of the European Communities*, 3.1.1994, no. L 1/545.

²¹ *Agreement between Norway and the European Union on Norway's accession to the Council's joint action of 20-07-2001 establishing an EU satellite center*, Brussels, 19.12.2001, https://lovdata.no/dokument/TRAKTATEN/traktat/2001-12-19-1/ARTIKKEL_3#ARTIKKEL_3.

²² "Agreement Between the Kingdom of Norway and the European Union on Security Procedures for the Exchange of Classified Information," *Official Journal of the European Union*, 9.12.2004, L 362.

operations (2004),²³ on participation in the EU's battle groups (2005), or on cooperation with the European Defence Agency (2006).²⁴

With regard to the political dialogue between the EU and Norway on foreign and defence policy, it must be remembered that the tradition of organising meetings between the Norwegian foreign minister and representatives of the EU's rotating presidency – and later the EU's High Representative (*ad hoc* meetings) – dated back to 1995. Additionally, in 2000 it was decided that biannual meetings between the EU and the European NATO's member states should be held, including at least one on the ministerial level. The entry into force of the EEA Agreement in 2005 led to the establishing of yet another format of dialogue on foreign policy issues at the margin of the EEA Council (as stipulated in the above-mentioned declaration). Concurrently, the parties organised informal meetings between the EU Council's working groups – and later the staff members of the European External Action Service – and Norwegian experts, which concerned selected geographical and thematic issues, such as the Middle East, the Western Balkans, Russia, Central Asia, Africa, and the OSCE.

Another tool of cooperation on foreign policy was Norway's adherence to selected EU common positions and declarations relating to international issues. As K. Traavik – the secretary of state for Europe in the Bondevik government – once observed, even though Norway did not choose to become a European Union member state, the country shared the view that – similarly to Europeans – Norwegians were obliged to bear their share of responsibility for keeping peace and stability on the continent. In that spirit, in 2002 the EU offered the EFTA countries, including Norway, a possibility to join EU declarations issued in the framework of the CFSP – originally, declarations made by the EU rotating presidency on behalf of the EU, and later, declarations made by the EU High Representative on foreign and security policy. On a side note, such a possibility was extended over time to the Western Balkans and the selected countries participating in the Eastern Partnership (primarily Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia). In parallel with other EFTA countries, Norway took advantage of this possibility in most cases. Norway's annual convergence rate with declarations issued by the EU for the last five years oscillated between 80% and 90%. This demonstrates a clear convergence in terms of the perception of challenges faced by the European continent.

Table 1 below shows the number of the EU High Representative's declarations on the CFSP, joined by Norway between 2015–2019.

²³ "Agreement Between the European Union and the Kingdom of Norway Establishing a Framework for the Participation of the Kingdom of Norway in the European Union Crisis Management Operations," *Official Journal of the European Union*, 14.3.2005, L 67.

²⁴ *Administrative Arrangement to govern the relationship between the European Defence Agency (EDA) and the Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Norway (MoD Norway)*, (exchange of letters), Innsbrück-Oslo, 7 March 2006.

Table 1. Declarations of the rotating EU presidency and the EU High Representative (2015–2019) on the CFSP, joined by Norway

Year	Number of EU declarations	Number of EU declarations adhered to by Norway	Percentage of EU declarations adhered to by Norway	Exceptions
2019	79	67	84%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • counterterrorism, Daesh • the internal conflict in Venezuela
2018	58	52	89%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU sanctions imposed on Congo • counterterrorism, Daesh • EU–Tanzania relations – expulsion of the EU ambassador
2017	41	32	78%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU sanctions on Bosnia–Herzegovina • the internal situation in Congo • the internal situation in Ethiopia • Sudan – visit of President Bashir to other countries despite the arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court
2016	26	24	92%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the situation in the South China Sea • the declaration on Human Rights Day
2015	22	20	90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palestinian camps in Syria • the declaration on Human Rights Day

Source: own calculations based on data from the Website of the EU Council: consilium.europa.eu.

It is evident that Norway – while deciding whether to join or not to join the EU’s CFSP declarations – tried to align its position in most cases, but every now and then followed its own preferences and subtleties stemming from specific aims of its foreign policy. For instance, there was a considerable level of convergence of the Norwegian foreign policy with the EU’s aims within its Eastern policy, especially concerning sanctions imposed in relation to the activities of Russia towards the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine. Norway joined both the EU’s sanctions imposed after the annexation of Crimea and the ones following the Donbass crisis. It was also a partner for the EU in sanctions imposed on representatives of Belarus. Out of the three EFTA countries, it showed the highest level of convergence with the EU’s sanctions policy in general

and the EU's Eastern policy in particular. As for the geographical and thematic areas relating to other continents, some restrictions on the part of Norway were visible as to the EU's declarations concerning the internal situation in selected countries. In most cases, it stemmed from Norwegian attempts to secure the country's status of a mediator or a peace broker in peace processes, or of an important donor of foreign aid. On occasion, Norway did not join certain sanction regimes or more robust EU's declarations on internal situations in some African countries, such as Congo and Sudan. These decisions could have stemmed also from the need to keep a broader field of manoeuvre for Norway as a political actor and a foreign aid donor in this region. Similar motivations might have played a role with regard to the internal conflict in Venezuela, i.e. while Norway agreed with the EU on facts, it chose not to articulate its stance openly in view of its mediation efforts undertaken within the framework of the Oslo Process in 2019.²⁵

Norway's cooperation with the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy

One of the specialisations of Norway within the EU's CFSP was its participation in crisis management missions and in projects financed by the European Defence Agency. Since the 1990s, Norway has been one of the most active non-EU contributors to civilian and military EU missions carried out in the framework of the EU's CSDP. The acceleration of Norwegian participation in the defence dimension of the European integration was visible especially after the Labour Party had taken power in 2000. The Stoltenberg government decided to reorient the role of Norway in cooperation with the EU in various fields – and especially in security – and Norway became an important contributor to the EU's missions abroad.²⁶ After 2003, Norway participated in twelve EU missions: EUFOR Althea, EULEX Kosovo, EUPM BH, EUPOL Afghanistan, EUNAVFOR Atalanta, EUPOL COPPS, EUPOL Proxima, Concordia, AMM Aceh, EUJUST LEX, EUCAP Nestor, EUCAP Sahel Mali. Norway also offered 3500 soldiers for the EU's Rapid Reaction Force in 1999. Since 2005, it has participated in the Nordic Battle group, in readiness in 2008, 2011, and 2015 (though was never actually used in combat). From the legal point of view, the participation of Norway in civilian and military CSDP missions was formalised in a standard framework agreement signed between the EU and Norway in 2004. Politically, Norwegian participation was intended as an acknowledgement of the EU's predominant role in coordinating efforts of European countries in crisis management, and was also aimed at demonstrating the solidarity between members of the Euro-Atlantic security community in bearing the burdens

²⁵ See: *Announcement about Venezuela*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, 'Press release', 28.09.2019.

²⁶ Nina Graeger, "Norway Between Europe and the US," in *New Security Issues in Northern Europe: The Nordic and Baltic States and the ESDP*, ed. Clive Archer (London–New York: Routledge, 2008), 97.

of peacekeeping in unstable regions.²⁷ On the other hand, the way of commanding the missions, and especially the way their mandate was formulated, was perceived by Norway as far from perfect, and this concern was even raised publicly by the Norwegian Ministry of Defence in 2004.²⁸ The problem was that, in spite of the efforts made in the 1990s, the EU's norms and regulations excluded Norway, along with other third countries, from decision-making when formulating mandates of CSDP missions. Thus, Norway, as a third country, was barred from the process of conceptualising the shape of the ESDP/CSDP, in which other Nordic countries effectively participated.²⁹ This problem was, however, of a broader nature, as it was related to the status of third countries in planning the EU's CSDP missions.

Another area perceived in Norway as important for its cooperation with the EU's CSDP was participation in developing common European scientific and technical capabilities that would aid crisis management operations. Such a cooperation had already been in place under the Western European Union. Since 1996, Norway, as a WEU associated member, participated, practically on equal terms, in the Western European Armament Group, which was an institution established as the WEU's armament agency (albeit, in fact, it never fully achieved this status).³⁰ Again, the position of Norway as a third country within the CSDP meant that this country was not allowed to participate automatically in the European Defence Agency, created in 2005, as a founding member, even though Norway had actually signed a cooperation agreement with that agency as the first non-EU country relatively quickly, i.e. in March 2006. The agreement reopened the way for Norway to participate in programmes and projects carried out under the EDA, especially in research. However, the competences of Norway did not encompass strategic planning of the EDA's activities. The EEA membership created another legal basis for cooperation of Norway with the EDA, which was formalised in Protocol 31 to the EEA Agreement.³¹ Other EFTA member states, Iceland and Lichtenstein, did not express any interest in participating in that form of cooperation.

²⁷ Thierry Tardy, "CSDP: Getting Third States on Board," *EUISS Issue Brief*, no. 6 (March 2014).

²⁸ Nina Graeger, "Veivalg og spenninger i norsk sikkerhets politikk: Norges forhold til NATO og EU," *Internasjonal Politikk* 77, no. 1 (2019). See also: Graeger, "Norway Between Europe...", 99.

²⁹ Peter Viggo Jakobsen, "Small States, Big Influence: The Overlooked Nordic Influence on the Civilian ESDP," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 47, no. 1 (2009).

³⁰ See: Burkard Schmitt, "The European Union and Armaments: Getting a Bigger Bang for the Euro," *Chaillot Paper* 63 (August 2003).

³¹ *Decision of the EEA Joint Committee No 208/2017 of 27 October 2017 amending Protocol 31 to the EEA Agreement, on cooperation in specific fields outside the four freedoms*, Art. 1.

Concluding remarks: Dilemmas about the future institutionalisation of cooperation between Norway and the European Union on foreign and security policy

The cooperation between the EU and Norway on foreign and security policy has had an intensive but fragmented character. As Norwegian scholar Nina Graeger duly observed, progress in creating the European security pillar made Norway feel obliged to take into consideration the possibilities that the EU created in the field of international security and, thus, Norway's security. In this context, one can talk about the inevitable 'Europeanisation' of the Norwegian discourse on security and also, to a lesser extent, of Norwegian foreign policy.³² This 'Europeanisation' was, however, rather cautious, as Norway attempted to maintain its cooperation on a case-by-case basis in areas identified as potentially advantageous. The country also pragmatically avoided making further-reaching declarations as to any future cooperation with the EU on foreign policy. This approach, one needs to observe, is also characteristic, *toutes proportions gardées*, of the British line of thinking with regard to cooperation with the EU in that area after Brexit.³³

It would seem that for Norway, the main advantage of its sectorial approach to participation in elements of the EU's CFSP/CSDP was the possibility of keeping up to date with the development of these EU policies, and also of building a positive image of Norway as a trusted partner within the so-called 'Western system'. From the EU's perspective, it was of value to be able to cooperate with Norway on the CSDP missions and the EU's sanctions policy. In spite of Norway having only a limited possibility of influencing the final shape of sanction regimes adopted in the EU Council, this subject was raised in bilateral political dialogue. In view of the Norwegian membership in the EEA, its participation in the EU's sanction regimes concerning, e.g., financial restrictions was of importance and of value, and prevented the possibility of the Norwegian financial institutions being used as a channel for redirecting operations forbidden in the EU's internal market.³⁴ This shows a mutual interception of various aspects of European integration between the EU and the EFTA/EEA member states, concerning in particular the single market, industrial policy, and the CFSP/CSDP. Norwegian participation in the European Defence Agency's projects also reveals how the deepening of cooperation in the CSDP is starting to encompass areas connected purely with community policies, which are, in turn, subject to the EEA Agreement. This is tantamount to saying that for countries such as Norway, European integration and European legislation usually comes in clusters, as it is not so easy or desirable to cherry-pick some elements of the European *acquis* while leaving others aside.

³² Graeger, "Norway Between Europe...", 100.

³³ Charlie Duxbury, "Norway's Brexit Rethink," *Politico* (28 March 2019).

³⁴ Christophe Hillion, *Norway and the Changing Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union*, NUPI Report, no. 1 (2019).

