De Europa
European and Global Studies Journal

Università degli Studi di Torino
De Europa | Special Issue - College of Europe 2023

Six selected Master's theses by College of Europe students

Guest Editor

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ISBN: 9788875902858

Special Issue - College of Europe 2023

De Europa
European and Global Studies Journal
www.deeuropa.unito.it

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Co-funded by the European Union

In cooperation whit: Centro Studi sull'Europa

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INTRODUCTION

THESES

Introduction

Unless otherwise indicated directly in each article, the date of last consultation of the websites and webpages is 28/11/2023

De Europa et le Collège d'Europe à Natolin se lancent pour la cinquième fois consécutive dans la publication des meilleurs mémoires de fin d'études réalisés par les étudiants, cette fois-ci de la promotion 2022-2023 ayant eu pour patron David Sassoli (1956-2022), président du Parlement Européen de 2019 à 2022.

À chaque fois, il s'agit d'un échantillon de travaux qui se distinguent par leur qualité intrinsèque et par la diversité de centres d'intérêt, avec un point en commun : celui d'être réalisés dans le cadre du programme interdisciplinaire d'études européennes de Natolin.

On bâtit ainsi ensemble un lien académique fort, une sorte de tradition d'échanges et de partage, contribuant ainsi à la consolidation de l'espace académique européen.

Le Collège d'Europe à Natolin fait partie d'un petit nombre d'institutions universitaires qui ont produit et continuent de produire un si grand nombre de spécialistes de l'Europe, et autant de cadres européens. Ses tâches principales sont d'enseigner l'UE, mais plus largement l'Europe dans le monde. Ses marques de fabrique et d'excellence sont :

- s'appuyer sur une riche interdisciplinarité destinée à développer tous les angles des études européennes ;
- créer une culture et un savoir sur l'Europe ;
- former les futurs cadres européens, citoyens imprégnés des valeurs fondatrices européennes et fins connaisseurs de l'histoire européenne et de sa civilisation.

Les mémoires de fin d'année, dont nous proposons ici une sélection, sont une forme de couronnement des efforts consacrés à l'obtention du Master avancé en Études européennes interdisciplinaires au Collège d'Europe à Natolin. Ces travaux ont une visée académique, mais aussi pratique, en ce qu'ils proposent des solutions et des recommandations, lorsque cela est possible. Ces travaux sont une claire manifestation de l'*ethos* citoyen européen. Les critères auxquels ils obéissent correspondent parfaitement à des normes de qualité communément admises, théoriques et empiriques. Ils se conforment aussi à une série d'exigences méthodologiques, déontologiques et épistémologiques. Ces exigences sont consignées dans une sorte de code de bonne conduite, mais aussi elles font partie d'un important bloc d'enseignement appelé « Séminaire de Recherche », où sont enseignées toutes les facettes de la bonne conduite déontologique (notamment en politique d'anti-plagiat) et de rigueur épistémologique (prévention devant des erreurs logiques et des évidences ou des idées fixes).

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Il est important de préciser ici le cadre de ces travaux et le format que ce cadre impose. Les cours, les ateliers thématiques, les *masterclass*, les jeux de simulation sont enseignés par plusieurs dizaine d'enseignants ou de praticiens de premier choix, réputés au plan international et venant du monde entier. Les abondantes activités extracurriculaires, comme des conférences internationales, les exposés par des personnalités invitées, les débats thématiques, les sorties de terrain, complètent le contenu du programme interdisciplinaire. Chaque année, ce programme est mis à jour et adapté aux dernières évolutions contemporaines. Deux voies se dessinent devant les diplômés du Collège d'Europe à Natolin : ce sont surtout des études professionnalisantes mais un petit nombre des meilleur(e)s étudiant(e)s choisiront de poursuivre leurs études supérieures en s'inscrivant dans des cycles de PhD. Ils poursuivront ainsi, pour la plupart, une carrière académique.

La structure du programme fait que le format du mémoire de fin d'année dépend du temps restreint dédié à l'exercice de la rédaction. Cependant, prévenus dès le début de l'année de ce défi, les étudiants choisissent leur sujet pratiquement dès le premier semestre, puis, pour les plus sages, commencent à définir leur objet de recherche, lisent les travaux se rapportant au sujet à traiter, puis passent à la phase empirique. Cette dernière, forcément, ne peut être trop complexe car le temps pour la recherche empirique est relativement court. Cela n'empêche un recours fréquent à des entretiens préparés selon les canons des règles méthodologiques. On ne s'étonnera pas de constater qu'il s'agit, dans la plupart de cas, des entretiens qualitatifs, semi-directifs. Le temps consacré à la vérification empirique des hypothèses de travail impose une méthodologie restreinte et bien contrôlée. Cela n'empêche pas l'excellence des résultats. L'écriture finale intervient pendant les deux à trois mois de la fin du deuxième semestre, souvent en parallèle avec les activités incessantes offertes à Natolin et les cours du deuxième semestre. Et pourtant, malgré ces contraintes, un grand nombre de mémoires comportent des thèses innovantes, originales et prenant part à des débats intellectuels en cours.

L'échantillon de meilleurs mémoires que nous avons sélectionné donne une très bonne mesure et une riche représentation de la diversité des sujets choisis par nos étudiants, des objectifs ambitieux poursuivis, de l'élégance de l'écriture, du respect des normes et des règles en vigueur dans le monde académique, mais surtout du foisonnement d'idées inspirées par la qualité de nos enseignements. C'est une vraie gageure de bâtir une recherche qui n'a rien à envier par sa qualité aux travaux des étudiants qui consacrent, dans le cadre de Master 2, bien plus de temps à leur mémoire. Le choix de ces mémoires n'est guidé que par leur excellence. Au lieu de constituer un corpus thématique lié par un thème commun, ou une problématique analogue, ce corpus montre la liberté de choix de sujets dans leur grande diversité thématique. Le kaléidoscope des thèmes choisis recouvre aussi la pluridisciplinarité du programme de Natolin, ainsi que son caractère interdisciplinaire.

Nous présentons ainsi aux lecteurs de De Europa le mémoire de **Coralie Angélique Ballieu**, dont le titre nous avertit déjà de l'ampleur de la problématique et de

ses ambitions théoriques : ***European Integration in Central and Eastern Europe : Stuck between liberalism, history and geopolitics***. L'axe central conceptuel de ce travail original est l'intégration européenne par les valeurs reflétées dans une approche légitimatrice cohérente. L'auteure s'en explique dans son introduction en arguant que le principe dominant du processus d'intégration européenne en termes de calcul « *rational cost-benefit* » est affaibli par les défaillances axiologiques et idéologiques, c'est en quoi l'auteure adhère à des critiques comme celles formulées par exemple par Krastev/Holmes et bien d'autres encore. La domination de l'idéologie libérale et le mécanisme de conditionnalité auraient mal préparé l'UE aux effets d'usure du modèle strictement occidental, et du partenariat ressenti comme inégalitaire, entre les anciens et les nouveaux membres. Ainsi le lit était fait pour le modèle « illibérale ».

Mais alors qu'est-ce qui fait que cela marche si mal ou presque pas ? D'où viennent les difficultés de l'« européanisation » des pays de l'Europe centrale et orientale ? Très logiquement, en historienne, l'auteure se tourne vers le déficit majeur du processus de légitimation, sa narration partagée. Elle a recours alors à des concepts majeurs en sociologie de la mémoire pour déconstruire la *storytelling* européenne en montrant le traitement asymétrique des passés de deux parties de l'UE, celle fondatrice de l'Ouest versus celle arrivée pour donner suite à l'effondrement du système de type soviétique à caractère totalitaire.

Les errements des processus d'élargissement et de l'intégration européenne tiendrait, pour partie au moins, à l'asymétrie entre différents *storytelling*, et les tensions mémorielles qui découlent de l'inadéquation entre le postulat d'une histoire transnationale européenne et les vécus mémoriels nationaux.

Le mémoire suivant a été rédigé par **Pablo Pastor Vidal** sous le titre ***The EU's good governance discourse in the southern neighbourhood: the case of Lebanon and Morocco***, analyse des hauts et des bas de la politique de voisinage de l'UE en direction des pays du pourtours méditerranéen. Mais ce travail est aussi à vocation théorique car l'auteur se penche sur la construction du discours de légitimation au sein de l'UE vis-à-vis des pays voisins les plus proches, et sur la part de ce discours dans le processus de légitimation de la politique étrangère de l'UE. L'encadrement théorique est très original, en ce qu'il se base notamment sur les auteurs comme Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida ou encore Chantal Mouffe et Ernesto Laclau. L'auteur postule une particularité de l'UE en tant qu'« acteur différent » dans le processus de construction identitaire. L'applicabilité des analyses des auteurs mentionnés est testée à travers la politique méditerranéenne de l'UE sur les exemples empiriques de deux pays : le Maroc et le Liban. Qu'est, dans ces cas, la relation entre l'axiologie et la bonne gouvernance ? Dans le contexte de la multiplication des tentatives autocratiques de la gouvernance, cette réflexion peut intriguer le lecteur de ce mémoire.

Zoltán Illés, *Economic policy debate in Kádár's Hungary*. L'auteur centre son travail sur la réinterprétation de la singularité hongroise dans le bloc soviétique autour des réformes économiques. L'histoire de l'insurrection de 1956, écrasée par l'Armée

Rouge, sera le point de départ, paradoxalement, d'un compromis singulier pour l'empire soviétique. C'est par l'économie qu'arrivera la déviance hongroise (Nouveau Mécanisme Économique, NME), tandis que les libertés politiques et citoyennes seront réduites à quasiment rien. Dans ce mémoire, l'auteur retrace l'évolution des débats et des réalisations des réformes économiques qui ont offert à la population hongroise un relatif bien-être matériel. C'est finalement l'analyse de contenu des textes accompagnant les réformes, d'importance et de provenance différentes, qui sera à la base de la reconstitution analytique de ces débats. Pour l'histoire et la sociologie politique, l'observation très fine des enjeux et des compétitions à l'intérieur du Parti Ouvrier Socialiste hongrois (MSZMP), ce mémoire offre de nouvelles perspectives pour comprendre et rendre intelligible la singularité hongroise.

Otto Barrow, a rédigé un mémoire intitulé ***Poland's Entry to NATO: the British Role***. Le titre désigne explicitement la marche de la Pologne d'après communisme vers l'OTAN. La thèse met en relation la politique étrangère de la Pologne démocratique concernant sa sécurité et la perception occidentale, et particulièrement de la Grande Bretagne, d'un pays membre du Pacte de Varsovie qui, avant la chute du communisme, paraissait sinon non fiable du moins imprévisible. "*A mysterious collective entity characterized by medieval castles, spicy sausages, and an insufficient supply of vowels*" comme le cite Otto Barrow. C'est donc un mémoire qui croise l'approche historique avec la science politique et les relations internationales. On observe comment évolue la perception de la Pologne par la Grande Bretagne, dans ses efforts à adhérer à l'OTAN. En conclusion, l'auteur s'interroge sur la période post-Brexit. Le lecteur trouvera dans ce mémoire un questionnement éclairant pour comprendre la transition postcommuniste vers une alliance de sécurité transatlantique dans le contexte de l'attitude évolutive de l'Ouest (nommément la Grande Bretagne).

Ruben Sansom, ***From black gold to a new dawn: a socio-economic comparison of the coal mine closures in the Dutch region of Zuid-Limburg and the German Ruhr Area***. Le mémoire de Ruben Samson montre qu'il est possible dans un laps de temps relativement limité au Collège d'Europe à Natolin, d'effectuer une vaste recherche comparative sur un sujet ardu, touchant à la fois les questions sociales liées au problème du déclin des régions minières et de politiques de l'aménagement du territoire. La comparaison de la région danoise de Zuid-Limburg et de la région de la Ruhr en Allemagne permet à l'auteur de dégager une réflexion sur les politiques publiques liées à la nécessité de la transition économique et culturelle. Comment gérer la fermeture des mines lorsque leur rentabilité est mise en cause par les coûts grandissants, la pression des industries des énergies renouvelables, la diminution des stocks exploitables. Les acteurs régionaux sont confrontés à d'immenses défis que l'auteur analyse finement, notamment la construction d'un consensus entre les différents acteurs aux intérêts parfois opposés. Il invite le lecteur à se plonger dans cette étude de deux régions dans deux pays européens touchés par le déclin de l'industrie minière, qui occupa durant plus d'un siècle une place centrale dans leurs économies respectives.

Eric Valdivia Villanueva, nous propose un mémoire intitulé ***Avoiding the dependency track: Towards a new European model for international energy and raw materials cooperation***. L'auteur annonce dès le début son objectif : chaque crise énergétique nous rappelle les peurs et les craintes liées au passé. De ce point de vue, l'invasion de l'Ukraine par la Russie rouvre les plaies mal cicatrisées laissées par les années soixante-dix dans le secteur énergétique en Europe. Cela induit que la sécurité énergétique redevient à nouveau un problème majeur pour les politiciens européens, avec une escalade des prix des produits énergétiques. L'auteur nous invite à analyser les effets de cette situation. Comment se libérer de la dépendance énergétique de la Russie, comment consolider la transition énergétique vers des énergies renouvelables, en d'autres termes comment obtenir l'« autonomie stratégique » dans le domaine énergétique. Enfin, quelles politiques employer pour assurer aux pays de l'UE les besoins en matières premières. Toutes ces questions font partie de la recherche entreprise par l'auteur, et la lecture de cette recherche, qui témoigne encore une fois du vaste éventail des sujets ambitieux, abordés par les étudiants de Natolin, est très instructive.

Voici donc un ensemble de six mémoires de fin d'études réalisés pour clore l'année académique 2022-2023, au Collège d'Europe à Natolin. Nous espérons, par leur publication, éveiller l'intérêt non seulement pour les sujets traités mais aussi pour le cadre académique stimulant où ces travaux ont pu se réaliser, à savoir au Collège d'Europe à Natolin.

Bonne lecture,
Professeur Dr. Georges Mink

Theses

De Europa
Special Issue - College of Europe 2022

European integration in Central and Eastern Europe: Stuck between liberalism, history and geopolitics?

Coralie Axelle Angélique Ballieu

Introduction

The end of socialist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and subsequent collapse of the USSR brought about the reshape of the power balance in Europe. In that sense, the European Union (EU) found itself the sole pole of economic and political attraction on the European continent in the 1990s. The abrupt end to the Cold War and its dual system, gave the West, the partisan of the capitalist system, a sense of victory which fuelled the belief that the liberal socio-economic system was superior and about to spread to the whole world, even to former Soviet States. In Central Europe, the idea of the 'Return to Europe' flourished among the post-communist elites. The denial of the "European" character of these nations during the second half of the 20th century was to be corrected by their prompt European integration. In the Western Balkans, the post-war stability was guaranteed by the promise of EU membership for all post-Yugoslav states in 2003. Finally, among the new States rising from the dissolution of the USSR, Moldova and Ukraine were among the first to set European integration as their main foreign policy objective, as early as 1994 and 1993 respectively.

This overwhelming demand for European integration was welcomed by the EU, who had just adopted the Maastricht Treaty and armed itself with new ambitions in Europe and neighbouring states. Among these ambitions are enlargement and development of new ties with the neighbouring countries. The conditionality model that allowed eight Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) to join the EU in 2004, soon became the reference model to govern the EU's new self-imposed goals in its neighbourhood. Today, almost twenty years after this first wave of enlargement towards the post-communist states of CEE, only three others have been able to join, Bulgaria and Romania in 2007 and Croatia in 2013. Moreover, tendencies of democratic backsliding were observed in some of the first post-communist states to have joined the EU. In addition to that, a series of crises of all types swept across Europe, from the 2007-2008 financial crisis, the 2010 Eurozone crisis, the 2015 migration crisis, the Brexit saga between 2016-2021 and the Covid pandemic in 2020-2022. European integration found itself falling in the back of priorities in the EU and each crisis brought more division and discontent in the Union.

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The aim of this thesis is to investigate the sources of the weaknesses of European integration in CEE, despite their initial willingness to join the EU at the end of the Cold War. If European integration must be seen as a voluntary process initiated by the States willing to integrate ever more with the EU, the decrease in attractiveness of European integration in CEE remains however alarming. Firstly, granted that now all countries of continental CEE are either Member States (MS) or candidate states to the EU (with the sole exception of Belarus), the EU must redouble its efforts to keep the momentum of European integration going. For MS because it is vital for the cohesion of the Union, and for candidates because time plays against the EU. Indeed for most of the candidate states, the dream of accession to the EU has been awaited for more than twenty years. Secondly, the demographic and economic decline of Europe makes all but most importantly smaller states more vulnerable to predatory behaviour, especially for candidate states as observed with China in the Western Balkans or Russia in Moldova and Ukraine. In that sense, Lithuania's ability to stand to China's economic sanctions in 2021 is doubtful if it hadn't been a EU MS already. Thirdly, the EU lacks the tools to promote European integration as desirable and counter any deviation from it. Recent challenges raised by countries such as Hungary and Poland as MS and Serbia as candidate in that case are illustrative of the loss of significance of the incentives to follow the EU's integration path.

Overall, we argue that if European integration is not completely in crisis in CEE, it is at least fluctuating in accordance with events that are not controlled by the EU itself. For instance, it is the end of the Cold War that made European integration desirable for CEE. Or more recently, it is the unprovoked and unjustified attack by Russia against Ukraine, rather than a conscious and deliberate promotion of the EU by itself, that gave a new support for European integration across the continent. To tackle that issue, there is a need to identify clearly what are the factors that impede European integration in the region. In the political science literature, more specifically in the field of European integration theories, most theories and concepts would focus on the economic interests of actors to pursue or slow down European integration. In the case of CEE, this approach does not stand, as the rules around the common market are the ones that are never challenged by illiberal actors in the region. However, post-functionalism presented a new way to interpret the European "des-integration" of CEE, especially during the migration crisis and to explain the rise of illiberal trends. Although, post-functionalism only observes how CEE reacted to the crises, the migration crisis triggered identity politics and the illiberal trend linked to nationalism and conservatism, but the theory fails to relate why it is so (Hooghe and Marks 2019: 1120–1128). In the history field, the rise of populism and illiberal tendency in the region has been put in a long-term perspective by the historian Roman Krakovsky. He contends that populism in CEE is a recuring response to transition challenges the region has had to go through, whether transition from Empires to States in the 19th century, transition to a Nation-State in the interwar period, the post Second World War transition with the necessity to rebuild a community, and finally the transition to the globalised world and liberalism in the 21st century. Hence, populism and the illiberal

form it takes in the 21st century CEE ought to be interpreted as a long-term anti-Western tradition (Krakovský 2019b). Finally, an attempt to explain the rise of illiberalism in CEE must be considered in the field of political psychology, as Ivan Krastev and Stephen Holmes invite us to consider illiberalism as the consequences of resentment towards the Western Liberal model imposed, or rather copied, in CEE after 1989 (Krastev and Holmes 2020).

While not completely rejecting these arguments, we argue that their limits rely on their monodisciplinary stance. The fact that the illiberal trend or European "disintegration" can be studied in different fields and through different lenses encourage us to take an interdisciplinary approach towards the issue. In an attempt to identify the factors impeding European integration in CEE, we argue that three main elements are of significance. Firstly, the strategy of the EU to foster European integration: conditionality. The conditionality strategy was and is still doomed to collapse for it fails to truly integrate CEE as an integral component of Europe and of the EU. It rather considers the area as a region to teach and model through Western systems, made without and sometimes against them (Kott 2020). Secondly, we argue that one of the essential shortcomings of the EU to foster European integration is the absence of a historical narrative that can sustain a unifying societal ideal. There are two aspects to consider when integrating history as a fundamental part of European integration: every political system needs to rely on historical grounds to build a certain legitimacy, and in the case of the EU the difficulty to make a European narrative, especially including CEE has only been recuring. In addition to that, the fact that history has become recently, not only a national stabilator and legitimator, but a tool of foreign policy is of significance, especially in CEE. Thirdly, we argue that consequences of such shortcomings can already be observed. Whether internally or externally, the shortcomings of the conditionality model and the lack of historical narrative have created a vacuum in which third countries can invest and fill the gap with their own alternative and anti-EU narrative. We will observe the case of the Russian Federation (hereafter Russia) as one of these, for its place in Europe is complex, its post-Cold war identity is evolving and it is the foreign state that is the most invested in meddling in European politics (Karlsen 2019).

Before answering the question on the shortcomings and their consequences of the EU's strategy to foster European integration in CEE, it is necessary to clarify some elements. Firstly, the term Central and Eastern Europe is a complex one, as CEE is often used to refer to post-communist states that have joined the EU whether in 2004, 2007 or 2013. Following from that, there are two other categories of European states, the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia), who are all (potential-)candidates to the EU, and the post-Soviet States (Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine). This tripartite division of CEE has been coined in academic work as well as in the policy realm. However, we argue that, especially now that both Moldova and Ukraine are also official candidate states to the EU, the tripartite division is not necessary anymore. Even that it may blur research in the field of European integration, since issues are common in the whole region (illiberal

tendencies, post-communist transition, interpretation of history as a sensible matter etc.) (Cianetti, Dawson and Hanley 2018: 252-253). Hence in this thesis, we will consider CEE as all post-communist countries that have showed recuring interest in European integration, including hence the eleven CEECS that joined the EU (EU-11), the Western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine but excluding Belarus. Secondly, the concept of European integration is a wide one, with many definitions, from a broad perspective where it is considered as closer cooperation between European states (UK in a changing Europe, 2020), to becoming synonymous of the process of accession to the EU and subsequent ever closer cooperation within the EU framework (Mannin and Flenley 2018). We understand European integration as the broad term that takes into consideration both the accession process and the closer cooperation within the EU framework. However, only European integration in the field of democratic development will be of interest for us, as this thesis will essentially focus on integration in terms of values related to liberal democracy. Finally, methodologically this thesis is based on the interdisciplinary articulation of an original corpus of literature, in order to raise and discuss a gap in the research about European integration.

1. European integration and conditionality: an inevitable couple?

Conditionality is a common term used when referring to European integration. It is both a way to describe the European Union's policies to foster European integration and EU membership, as well as a scientific model to evaluate the efficiency of said policies, also referred to as the External Incentive Model (EIM) in that second case. Conditionality in both its forms is perhaps best described as:

> a bargaining process, where actors exchange information, threats and promises in order to maximise their utility. The outcome of the bargaining process depends on the relative bargaining power of the actors. […] By using conditionality, the EU sets the adoption of democratic institutions and practices as conditions that the target countries have to fulfil in order to receive a reward from the EU – such as financial aid, technical assistance, trade agreements, association treaties and ultimately membership. States that fail to meet the conditions are not coerced to introduce democratic reforms but simply left behind in the 'regatta' to assistance and membership (Lavenex and Schimmelfennig 2017: 8–9).

Over the years, with the enlargement of the EU to CEE as well as to Malta and Cyprus, conditionality has started to be considered as the most popular strategy for European integration and remained the most explanatory model of European integration (Sedelmeier 2006), especially legitimised by the field of political science research focusing on institutions (Cianetti, Dawson and Hanley 2018: 252). In so far as conditionality almost became a synonym for European integration. On the one hand, the EU started to use conditionality on a more regular basis for new candidate states, such as the Western Balkans countries, for instance, but also in its relations with its neighbouring countries (in the Middle East and Northern Africa or the South Caucasus for instance). If the EU-11 that are now EU member states were subject to the

Copenhagen Criteria, an ad hoc protocol requiring the establishment of a functioning liberal democracy and functioning market economy for final membership in the EU, the Western Balkans are subjects to the Copenhagen Plus Criteria, pushing further these requirements on democratic standards notably. On the other hand, the EU uses conditionality as a foreign policy tool, it has been observed that since the Maastricht Treaty the EU's foreign policy changed from apolitical to recurring call for democratic reforms as a condition in its agreements with third countries, although with more or less success (Lavenex and Schimmelfennig 2017: 2-3).

What strikes us the most, is the EU's use of conditionality in a domain where Brussels has but no competences, namely: democratic standards. While the Maastricht Treaty indeed describes the EU as a community of democracies, the EU nonetheless holds no power over the democratic standards of its member states. This is also why, in the 1990s during the process of European integration of Central and Eastern Europe, Brussels came up with the ad hoc system of the Copenhagen Criteria, to insure the development of democratic standards in potential new member states. Moreover, conditionality in both forms, can only be challenged in the field of democratic standards (taken in the sense of free and fair elections, accountability, rule of law etc.), since in all other fields of European integration (*i.e.* legal approximation with EU law and economic integration), it has proven successful. In fact, new member states show a high level of compliance with EU law (Börzel and Sedelmeier 2017; Sedelmeier 2013; Toshkov 2012) and especially in the field of the single market norms and regulations (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2020).

Limits of conditionality have been identified in the literature: notably the changing geopolitical context between the 1990s and today (Ballieu 2022: 21), the focus of the EU on polity change rather than societal habits (Casier 2017), the shortcomings of the EU's legitimacy, the weakness of resonance of conditions in domestic narratives, the top-down approach leaving out civil society and the divisions within the EU itself about the conditions to be set out (Flenley 2018). If we do not reject these identified limitations, we however argue that two more need to be taken into consideration: the fact that conditionality is not sustainable in the short-run because it relies on a rational cost-benefit calculation, and the fact that conditionality relies on feeble assumptions, notably that the Western liberal system is the most desirable.

1.1. The limits of a rational cost-benefit calculation

Conditionality relies heavily on a rational cost-benefit calculation. The state that is targeted by EU conditionality calculates whether or not it is beneficial to comply with these conditions, whether the "reward" the EU is willing to offer for compliance is greater than the cost of non-compliance and if it is the case, it is rational to comply and get the reward. Conditionality linked with democratic standards in CEE however, represents a considerable gap in the rationale. The costs of setting democratic institutions, on a model acceptable by the EU, and to sustain it long enough to enter the EU represents high domestic costs for post-communist states that are not yet EU member

states and often embedded in corruption and state-capture. The costs of compliance, hence, become higher especially for their political elites, who would suffer if they were to pursue such self-harming reforms. Conditionality in that sense is not sustainable.

Moreover, if the 2004 Eastern enlargement was considered successful in terms of conditionality and European integration, it is reasonable to doubt that EU conditionality was the sole factor to foster integration and democratic reforms in terms of rational cost-benefit calculation. Pre-accession conditionality, at the moment when it was considered the most successful strategy, did not succeed thanks to the effectiveness of the EU's ad hoc criteria on democratic standards. It is rather arguable that it succeeded thanks to the combination of two elements. The attractiveness of EU membership (Lavenex and Schimmelfennig 2017: 3) in the context of the regime transition in the region. In addition to that, the willingness from these countries to pursue European integration, through for instance the local narrative of the 'Return to Europe' (Kazharski 2018; Kundera 1983), well before the EU set out conditions is also to be considered. Of course, it is also arguable that it was rational for these countries to join the EU for their own reasons; however, it is similarly arguable that these very reasons were not in the EIM's sense rational, as they were pursued through the lens of idealism rather than rationality (Palouš 2000). Likewise, some of the EU's conditions, no matter how rational, may come in direct contradiction with targeted countries' own national identity or cultural practices, in turn impeding the cost-benefit calculation (Dudley 2020: 528–529).

In addition to that, the post-accession compliance with conditionality is also to be discussed as a significant gap in the conditionality strategy and sustainability. The EIM rightly expects an end to the conditionality based on a reward post-accession, meaning that the EU in the case of post-accession can only rely on negative incentives to ensure compliance. In the field of democratic standards, these incentives are but rare, the famous "nuclear option", article 7 of the Treaty on the European Union has proven hard to trigger and the consequences of it (loss of voting right at the European Council) rather light. In the same spirit, as the EU has had to come up with ad hoc systems to make countries comply with democratic conditions, the respect of these conditions post-accession is also subject to ad hoc systems. In the case of the two states of the 2007 enlargement, Bulgaria and Romania, the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism was launched to assist both states to pursue necessary rule of law reforms and to remedy the EU's loss of leverage post-accession. Later on, democratic backsliding, as it has been coined in the literature, has been observed in new member states that were considered champions of European integration before, for which Hungary and Poland have been the most salient examples. The EU has in these later cases, found itself unarmed and unprepared to face a decrease in the democratic standard quality and challenges to the rule of law within its own MS. The most recent, and probably the most relevant example of another ad hoc system the EU has had to come up with to sustain compliance with its democratic standards is the Rule of Law Conditionality applied to the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027 and the Next Generation EU post-Covid recovery package.

Conditionality as just described is not sustainable for countries that have followed it the firsts and are now member states. We argue that conditionality is also not effective as a policy on which the EU to this day continues to rely on. In the case of the remaining (potential-)candidate states (including Moldova and Ukraine), they all showcase a lower level of fit with EU democratic standards than did the previous EU-11 at the beginning of their process of accession to the EU. If conditionality already fell short to sustain democratic standards in all EU-11, it is hard to imagine the model being more or at least as efficient in countries with lower levels of fit with EU's standards. In fact, even if the EU, aware of this issue, reinforced the conditions for the Western Balkans for instance, it has nonetheless proven to give opposite results as those expected. Firstly, harder conditions to meet (Cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, stronger emphasis on democratic standards and rule of law) with a lower level of fit necessarily leads to higher domestic costs of compliance, hence less chance of genuine and voluntary compliance (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2020: 825–826). Likewise, these higher costs of compliance often fall on the ruling elite that is less likely to engage in reforms that are going against their own interests. In that sense the EU has changed its priority in the Western Balkans and has been maintaining 'stabilitocracies' in the region, rather than actively promoting democratic reforms (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2020: 823–24).

In the same spirit, targeted countries adopt formal democratic reforms that are displayable but not necessarily sustainable (Casier 2017). As Tom Casier explains in its case study of the promotion of democracy in Ukraine by the EU:

> In order to create legitimacy with the EU, Ukrainian elites have been willing to adopt formal democratic reforms. Diplomats and policy-makers consider formal democracy the litmus test of Ukraine's trustworthiness as a potential candidate member state. They believe that visible reforms in this field will increase the chances of Ukraine to join the EU in the longer term and legitimise democratic reforms in these terms (Casier 2017: 86-87).

In other words, political elites refrain from engaging in far-reaching and deep democratic reforms because this may lead to loss of formal power in their hands, and instead engage in formal polity changes that are neither efficient nor sustainable to implement a democratic regime but can be easily showcased.

Overall, the tension between the lower level of fit, the harder conditions set by the EU, and the change of the EU's own interests in both the Western Balkans and Eastern Neighbours, displays more reasons to suggest that conditionality is neither a sustainable nor an efficient strategy to foster European integration. And, similarly to sustainability, the stagnation of democratic development in the Western Balkans has been explained by political scientists with rationality (Richter and Wunsch 2020), but an essential part of the shortcomings of European integration relies on a factor that falls off the rational cost-benefit calculation, namely identity politics. Clashes of EU conditions with identity can be an important factor bringing down the perceived benefits of compliance (Eriksen 2018). This shortcoming is even more present in Moldova and Ukraine, who despite having been granted candidate status to the EU only

in June 2022, have been treated under a conditionality regime as well through in their Association Agreements (AA) with the EU. Despite these AAs being the furthest-reaching agreements the EU has ever concluded with third countries, evidence shows that identity politics and geopolitical contexts weight more on the cost-benefit calculations than any of the factors provided for by the EIM (Ballieu 2022).

1.2. European attraction: the fading of the Western liberal hegemony

Leaving aside criticism of the policies and theories of conditionality, it appears necessary to challenge the core assumption on which they rely, something often left out in the research of the limits of conditionality, namely: the idea that the Western liberal system is the most desirable. This one assumption actually relies on a series of beliefs that sustain it. First and foremost, this idea comes from the abrupt end of the Cold War and the unpreparedness of thinking outside of a binary system (Krastev and Holmes 2020: 4–5). Hence, when the American political scientist Francis Fukuyama announces the ideological victory of Liberalism and democracy over Communism as the end of history in the early 1990s (Fukuyama and Canal 1993), it quickly, although potentially unconsciously, becomes the main narrative adopted in most of what constitutes the Western world. This (un)conscious narrative has itself led to the creation of a series of beliefs: the belief that voluntary transition towards a liberal democracy is the most rational choice, the belief that once a state adopts liberal democracy it cannot go back to some form of authoritarianism or illiberalism, all of these accompanied by the self-identification of the West as the sole judge of the quality of the liberal democratic regimes that non-Western countries were to adopt.

This end of history and victory of Liberalism was coined in Europe by, on the one hand, the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 and on the other hand the prospect of the European Union enlargement following the end of the Cold War and signature of a series of European Association Agreements with some CEE countries. On top of coining the EU as a community of democracies (Art. F §1) (Treaty on European Union 1992), the Maastricht treaty laid the foundations of an economic and monetary union on the basis of market economy (European Council 2023). In addition to that, the ambition of the Maastricht Treaty to develop a common foreign policy, gave with it the prerogative to foster integration of third countries in the world economy and the general objective of developing and consolidating democracy (Art. 130u) (Lavenex and Schimmelfennig 2017: 2). Consequently, and as already mentioned in the previous section, the European Association Agreements signed with the prospective future candidates to the EU in CEE, as well as the Copenhagen Criteria with its emphasis on functioning democracy and market economy, enter in line with the new objectives and competencies granted to the European Union. If the link between the 'end of history' and the EU advancing towards more integration and promotion of democracy and market economy can be discussed, as it may as well be linked to an older perspective on the EU's civilisational and imperialistic characteristics grounded in the Enlightenment (Zielonka 2013), it nonetheless had an impact on

the process of European integration in CEE and the assumption on which the EU's main strategies rely on.

Firstly, the belief that transition toward liberal democracy was the most rational choice for post-Communist countries of CEE. The increase in number of democracies or at least institutions that resemble democratic institutions was indeed on the rise in CEE in the 1990s, however, liberal-constitutionalism was not (Abrahám 2002). Hence, one could observe the adoption of electoral systems with authoritarian features (*e.g.* Slovakia until 1998, Ukraine periodically since its independence, Belarus since 1996 and so on). And the assumption that transition towards liberal democracy was as simple as following a guidebook, subsequent to the experiences of Latin America and Southern Europe also weighed on the way transition to democracy was thought about and promoted in CEE by the EU which heavily relied on these previous transition experiences internationality. While Latin America and Southern Europe had to go through economic and democratic transitions, most CEE countries had to face another (although sometimes argued two other) transition(s): nationality and stateness transitions (Kuzio 2001). While Taras Kuzio argued that stateness and nationality had to be taken separately, we argue that both factors are linked, and weight on CEE transitions but also European integration. Indeed, it is not a surprise if democratic transition and European integration are stagnating in the European countries that are the most struggling with statehood and also the least experienced in this field (Ballieu 2022: 20). These struggles with statehood and identity/nation-building are also very much linked with an attachment to a certain form of nation-state and a historical rejection of Western liberalism (Krakovský 2019b). However, this shows that transition and European integration in CEE was not only a matter of democratic and economic transition as the Copenhagen Criteria implies, but a much more complex process.

A second belief that arose from the feeling of victory of Liberalism was that, one way or another, and sooner or later, all countries would enter the path to liberal democracy. Another belief stemming from the Enlightenment and the idea of progress. As the EU coined itself as a community of democracies with the aim to promote and develop democracies in its foreign relations and, as a consequence, sets up ad hoc protocols to turn its future member states to functioning democracies, the idea that transition to democracy was not a linear process, and most importantly, that this process could be reversed was not considered. The simple fact that the EU identifies itself as a community of democracies, but that no formal competencies regarding democracy safeguarding is given to the EU is telling in this consideration of adoption of democracy as an irreversible process. In reality, the countries of CEE considered the most successful in their democratic transitions, namely: Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia (*i.e.* the Visegrád Group), have also been the ones showcasing the most dramatic democratic backsliding since their accession to the EU (Shekhovtsov 2016). While countries such as the Eastern neighbours or the Western Balkans have been lagging behind even more and struggling with keeping democratic standards high despite their far-reaching engagement with the EU to develop and sustain democracies (Ballieu 2022: 45–51).

Finally, alongside these two beliefs, the concrete translation of this assumption was showcased in the 1990s by the EU's, alongside Western-led international organisations, adoption of a position of supervisors and sole evaluators of the processes and results of transition in CEE. Here, we cross Krastev and Holmes' thesis on the copycat mind of CEE and their now rejection of liberalism (Krastev and Holmes 2020: 19–77). If transition was indeed a voluntary process for most CEE countries, especially those with the greatest chance and/or ambition of joining the EU (as illustrated by the unilateral adoption of EU law by the three Baltic States before even being granted potential candidate status in the 1990s), and that the economic help of international organisations such as the International Monetary Funds and the World Bank were conditioned to the introduction of formal democracy (Myant and Drahokoupil 2011: 106–108), the actual impact of the EU on democratic transition remains hard to attribute credit to. In fact, despite the EU's attempts to update and adapt its European integration strategies to the events and specifics of the regions or countries, its capacity to actually have an impact on the democratic transition and democratic institution-building process, keeps on lagging behind and eventually have but little impact, whether evaluated during the accession process or post-accession (Tomini 2017). This self-attributed position of judge of the quality of the democracies adopted in CEE, even post-accession for the EU-11 and in the process of European integration for the Western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine always pushes them in a position of countries to be taught, rather than equal partners worth joining the EU on equal footing.

To sum up, conditionality as a strategy to foster European integration has reached a dead-end. The pre-accession system that was thought to be efficient for Central European has showed its limits post-accession, revealing the non-sustainable character of the strategy. Moreover, it has proven to be not adaptable to the remaining candidate countries that all showcase a lower level of fit with EU democratic standards, making domestic costs and local resistance naturally higher for them. Finally, the basic assumption on which conditionality relies, that liberalism is the most attractive and desirable model is more and more challenged and costs the EU rise in Euroscepticism and illiberalism tendencies in CEE. While we draw a pessimistic conclusion on conditionality as a significant weakness in European integration, we argue that other shortcomings are to be taken into account in the EU's strategy. That is, if liberalism is a weakening foundation for the EU's power of attraction and transformation, it also lacks a fundamental element to sustain both of these elements, which is a historical narrative.

2. Europa in absentia or the weight of History in European integration

> Convinced that, while remaining proud of their own national identities and history, the peoples of Europe are determined to transcend their ancient divisions and, united ever more closely, to forge a common destiny,
> Convinced that, thus "united in its diversity", Europe offers them the best chance of pursuing, with due regard for the rights of each individual and in awareness of their responsibilities towards future generations and the Earth, the great venture which makes of it a special area of human hope,[1]

[1] Extract from the Preamble of the Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe.

In the first chapter, we have argued that conditionality was an outdated strategy to promote European integration, because it is neither sustainable nor relies on unchallengeable assumptions. This second chapter aims at identifying one of the shortcomings of the EU's strategy to foster European integration in CEE beyond the conditionality model. We argue that one of the main shortcomings is the lack of a European historical narrative capable of encompassing and unifying all parts of Europe under it.

The EU, as an integrational project, and a political union that does not want to say its name, of course coined itself in a historical narrative. However, we argue that this narrative is neither enough nor corresponds to the changing character of the EU after the enlargement to post-communist states after the end of the Cold War. As we have seen, built on the premises of liberalism and rationality, it is a core feature of the EU to assume that European states ought to or at least may attempt to move pass their historical tensions and divisions towards further integration, simply because it is rational to do so, and it is in their own interests. As it is illustrated and underlined in the extract from the preamble of the Constitution for Europe that introduces this second part. This chapter will challenge this vision by showing that reanimating historical debates to slow down or impede European integration is in the interests of some political forces in CEE.

This narrative loophole in European integration rises several issues: firstly, and the most general one, is the difficulty to define Europe as such. We will see that historians have struggled to fix Europe and its identity in a definite way through many lenses. From this point, we will see how the EU legitimised itself through coining a set of values and/or ambitions from its history, notably values such as peace, prosperity, reconciliation but also the uniqueness of the Holocaust experience, that now comes into tension with CEE and their own interpretation of these values and of their communist past. A second point is the increasing tendency of the use of history as both a domestic legitimator for political regimes and/or populist-nationalist political forces, as well as, as a foreign policy tool to impede European integration.

2.1. Lack of a European narrative and the difficulty of making one

Before creating a narrative and fixing and legitimising it through history, it is imperative to define what this narrative ought to refer to. In other words, to set a limit that excludes and/or includes people(s), values, or features in/from Europe. However, the definition of Europe, its identity, who and what is included and who and what is not included, has never been fixed in a way that triggered wide-spread acceptance and internalisation. The several attempts to create a European narrative are: a debated subject in the history field as how to really define Europe (Davies 2006a), criticised for being overly Northern-Western centred (von Borries 2002: 23) and for the crucial absence of Central and Eastern Europe in the history of the European integration and construction[2]. But it is also a process that, unlike national history, largely un-

[2] See for instance: Sylvain Schirmann, "Histoire de La Construction Européenne" (Introductory Course, College of Europe in Natolin, 2022), https://www2.coleurope.eu/course/2019-2020/schirmann-sylvain-lhistoire-de-la-construction-europeenne-10h.

interesting for the general public (Patel et al. 2018). Let's dive into the limitations of the definition of Europe as a single entity, to understand better the difficulty of such a process.

The British-Polish historian, specialised in the history of Europe, Norman Davies, identified limitations in all attempts to limit and fix European identity. The first assumption that comes to mind, is the geographical delimitation of Europe as the western peninsula of the Eurasian continent (Davies 2006b: 7). However, this comes to a debate as where to put the land delimitation. The Eastern limit of Europe has, across history been the subject of negotiation and exclusion, sometime brutal, of where Europe ends and how far east Europe goes. For instance, the limit between the West (*L'Occident*), the civilised and the East (*L'Orient*) the barbarians, was set only few kilometres after Vienna in the 16th century (Grataloup 2018). A second way to define Europe is the civilisational one, yet, this also triggers significant limitations, as the European civilisation encompasses a myriad of subvariants, and it does not take into account that the Europeans have spread across the world to the other continents (Davies 2006b: 7). In that sense, Americans and Australians, as Davies take for example, ought to argue that they are also part of the same civilisation, but would rather call it the 'Western civilisation' rather than the European one (Davies 2006b: 7). Another way to define Europe would be through the political prism, and the European Union as the concrete realisation of this utopia (Davies 2006b: 7). But here again, the significant limitation is that the EU does not encompasses all of Europe and it still lacks a unifying self-definition (Davies 2006b: 7). A controversial, yet still persistent attempt to define European identity is through race (Davies 2006b: 8). But this identifying feature lacks clear definition, as it is impossible to draw a single unique and common typical European feature, and most importantly is most often only used to define Europe when faced with migration (Davies 2006b: 8). Davies also underlines that Europe can also be identified negatively from the outside, as being the source of features that are considered foreign to other parts of the world (Davies 2006b: 8). However, it is complicated for Europeans to use this as a defining feature, as such features may include the identification of Europe as the home of colonialism and imperialism as in the case of Africa and Latin America (Davies 2006b: 8). Finally, many scholars would agree to fix the roots of European identity in the classical world, but such attempts also rise their own limitations. Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome both spread much further than the simple Eurasian peninsula, to Minor Asia for the first one, and to North Africa for the second one. And the attempt to fix Europe as Christendom hurts itself with the fact that the Judeo-Christian tradition is not from Europe but from the *Orient* (a negative defining feature of Europe (Grataloup 2018)), and that the division between the East and the West with Catholicism and Orthodoxy, the survival of paganism up until the 15th century in Europe, and later the reformation and subsequent religion wars that torn Europe, all impede the unifying power of such an identifying feature (Davies 2006b: 9–13).

Norman Davies shows how hard it is to find a single, large enough, encompassing and unifying feature to define Europe. Nevertheless, the EU, it can be ar-

gued, was nonetheless created on the basis of a single unique defining historical event, namely: the Second World War and the Holocaust. Can this event be the one defining feature of Europe, as a shared common trauma and push the common willingness to never let this happen again and thrive together towards prosperity, peace and reconciliation? While these defining features worked well during the Cold War period, it remains nonetheless a narrative that fit only the Western part of Europe. Said differently, the EU, or the Economic Coal and Steel Community and later the European Community, were thought and developed without and sometimes against CEE (Kott 2020), who at that moment were part of the Eastern Bloc (or non-aligned as in the case of Yugoslavia). The EU in that sense is the product of the context in which it was created: namely the EU is the product of the Cold War, and that is where the tensions with CEE arise, even if the Cold War has been over for more than thirty years now. We will come back to this point later. Norman Davies summed up the issue of the duality of the development of the European identity during the Cold War like this:

> For forty years, therefore, the European Movement grew exclusively in the West and in the inhibitive context of the Cold War. European identity could only be openly expressed in the West. Even so, the existence of the Soviet Bloc concealed the fact that in many ways the captive peoples of the east were more conscious of their European heritage than the Westerners were. To repeat an old truth, we are never so conscious of what is dear to us until we've lost it. It would be no accident that the most convincing declarations of attachment to Europe as a civilization were to be made by dissident intellectuals from the Soviet Bloc like Milan Kundera. The Westerners in contrast were pushed onto what has been called 'the economic trap'. All too often the EEC was seen as a rich man's club, a means of securing wealth and prosperity without due regard to the much bigger concerns for peace, culture and security which were the driving force of its founding fathers (Davies 2006b: 20).

Today, with the end of the Cold War, the fall of communist regimes in CEE, and the accession of many of these countries to the EU, as well as the fact that all except for Belarus, are candidate states to the EU, it is natural to imagine that this division has fallen. Moreover, since the event of the Second World War and the Holocaust have touched all parts of Europe, it was expected that post-communist states would naturally adopt this common system of remembrance and the politics of regrets cultivated by the EU (Dujisin 2015: 553). Not only this, but the EU pushed CEE to come to terms with their own Nazi past, as a test for their commitment to liberal democracy (Dujisin 2015: 560). Stuck in this conditionality system from the EU and focus on the goal to join Euro-Atlantic organisations, the countries of CEE's coming to term with their own history and using history as a strategy was initially made in order to comply as much as possible but most importantly as fast as possible with conditions (Mink and Neumayer 2007: 18) set by the EU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and other Western organisations (Dujisin 2015: 558). Despite this swift, conformity from some CEE in the early 1990s, today, we can observe a trend of revisionism after accession to the EU (Kopeček 2008).

When it comes to the EU values that we identified as linked to its own historical narrative: reconciliation, peace and prosperity, they also raise significant limitations. The first one, reconciliation, is very much linked with the trauma of the two world wars. Indeed, in the plan of Robert Schuman, the first step to build the Economic Coal and Steel Community was the French-German reconciliation (Panagoret 2013). In this plan, reconciliation was to be deeply linked with economic cooperation and stability, an idea that got embedded in the EU's core identity (Touquet and Miloševic 2018: 181). When the Iron Curtain fell and CEECs were asked to come to term with their past, the question of good neighbourly relations and reconciliation arose. But in these cases, the EU found itself more focus on technical aspects and preferred staying away from historical issues that appeared with the creation of the new liberal states of CEE. This is well illustrated by Laure Neumayer's case study of the historical disputes between Czechia and Germany regarding the Beneš Decrees, and the Hungarian law regarding Hungarians living outside the national territory (notably in Slovakia and Romania) where the EU preferred to derive the attention towards the *acquis communautaires* (Neumayer 2007). This caution and moderation in the involvement of European institutions in historical conflicts of this kind, Neumayer explains, is also symptomatic of the institutions' conception of European integration as synonymous with reconciliation (Neumayer 2007: 207). More specifically, the author defends that the EU has relied on vague notions and borrowed from other European institutions such as the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (Neumayer 2010). This rush, the focus on economic integration and the borrowing of terms from other European institutions, show that the idea of reconciliation embedded in the identity of the Union is an identity indeed strongly linked to economic integration more than anything else. Meaning that for the EU, such historical disputes are secondary and ought not to conflict with economic integration.

On the other hand, if the disputes and the need for reconciliation between Hungarians, Czechs, Germans, Poles, Slovaks etc. were about long past historical facts that could only resurface once the communist regimes had fallen, Europe had to face a devastating and vivid war in the Balkans in the 1990s. There, the EU's idea of reconciliation was to be tested for its robustness. If during the Yugoslav Wars, the EU's diplomatic attempt to reach peace were not fruitful, the Union nonetheless did as it is used to: exporting its model of regional economic integration and promised membership perspective to all the new post-Yugoslav States that rose after the wars as a guarantee for reconciliation, peace and prosperity for the region. If the Schuman idea of reconciliation via the economic interdependence of France and Germany was necessary, this reconciliation did not come from a bottom-up initiative, to the contrary it was to be a very top-down reconciliation, led by supranational regional institutions (Touquet and Miloševic, 2018: 181–182), in that sense the EU was to be that kind of institution in the post-war Western Balkans. But this obsession with the success of Franco-German reconciliation, and its presentation as an example to be followed in all situations, reached a limit. In the case of the Western Balkans, this focus of elite-led reconciliation only reinforced the nation-building process which drew on the histor-

ical and ethno-nationalistic narratives, that were already used in the Yugoslav wars (Claverie 2010), hence reinforcing tensions rather than getting countries closer to reconciliation (Touquet and Miloševic 2018).

The second value promoted by the EU, but challenged in CEE, is peace (Ghervas 2021). The EU has been and presents itself as a project of/and for peace, and for having prevented any new wars between its member states[3]. The limitation that we identify with this narrative, is that the EU may have prevented war between its member states, but it has not been able to prevent war for European states who have been willing to join the EU for decades, but were denied this perspective, in the very name of peace. Of course, the best illustration of this paradox is Ukraine. Speculation about whether if Ukraine had joined the EU (and/or NATO) earlier, the current war of aggression by the Russian Federation would have been avoided is sterile at this point. Nevertheless, granting Ukraine's longstanding demand to join the EU since 1993 (Ballieu 2022: 27–34), and the EU's self-proclaimed peace keeping identity, it is to be expected that once Ukraine joins the EU, such debate regarding this value would arise.

Finally, a last promise embedded in the Union's core value is prosperity[4]. In the context of the end of the Cold War, the transition of most post-communist CEECs to market economy, and the EU promoting the Single Market, it makes sense to see this idea of prosperity promoted. Nevertheless, this promised prosperity has turned sour in CEE. As the historian Roman Krakovsky explains in his book about the rise of populism in the region, the transition to liberal democracy and market economy has only brought more existential crises to countries of CEE (Krakovský 2019a). Whether the CEECs joined or not the EU, they all faced a demographic crisis, explained, among other factors, by the economic attraction of the EU. Educated youth prefer to leave their countries in CEE to build their career and family life in Western European countries (such as Germany or the United Kingdom). It is estimated that between 2017 and 2050, Bulgaria's population will decrease by 23%, Latvia 22%, Ukraine 17% and Serbia 15% (Krakovský 2019a: 241). But this demographic crisis is only one factor of many that converge to explain the sources of the fear for the existence of the nation. Krakovsky identifies several of them, among which: globalisation, geopolitical insecurity, the 2015 refugee crisis, which fuels the populist discourse about protecting the national before all because these nations have the painful memories of knowing that they could disappear from one day to another (Krakovský 2019a). The EU overall fails to respond to these insecurities in CEE by providing the promised prosperity and ends up being the scapegoat of such insecurities.

A last potentially unifying historical event that the EU could rely on is the uniqueness of the Holocaust. After all, the Holocaust and the atrocities of the Second World War on the European soil is a common trauma across Europe, that holds a defining potential. As already mentioned, the uniqueness of the Holocaust was already used as a basis for the creation of the ECSC. As the EU's conditioned CEECs accession to the EU to their coming to term with their Nazi past, 1989 appeared as a new "decisive im-

[3] European Union, "Achievements and Benefits | European Union", accessed 3 May 2023, https://european-union.europa.eu/priorities-and-actions/achievements_en.
[4] Ibid.

petus for the affirmation of the Holocaust as the central element of European 'collective memory'" (Dujisin 2015: 558). But by holding the Holocaust as the one and unique European narrative that cannot be discussed, it (re)opened a vivid wound in CEE: the lack of acknowledgement from the West of their communist past and sufferings (Dujisin 2015: 560). A double process appeared in CEE, firstly the externalisation of responsibility in the atrocities that happened on their territories (*e.g.* in the Baltic States, since they were under German occupation, all wrongs fall under German guilt) (Dujisin, 2015: 560). Secondly the lobby of Eastern leaders to elevate their communist past at the same level as the Holocaust in the ranking of European's darkest chapters in the European narrative (Dujisin 2015: 564-77). In this process, there is also an attempt to make the West come to term with its own history post-Second World War, and the abandon to the Red Army of the Eastern part of Europe and see European integration as a reparation of the treason of Yalta (Mink and Bonnard 2010: 10-25).

Through these examples, we have attempted to show that creating a unifying and common European narrative is difficult through values embedded in historical events. The lost opportunity of the EU to redefine itself with countries of CEE, and the imposition of its norms and values, including the historical narrative around the Holocaust, has only opened debates and some reservoirs of memory, *gisements mémoriels* (Mink 2010), against which the EU, behind its great values of peace, prosperity and reconciliation, finds itself powerless. The Hungarian researcher Zoltán Dujisin has rightly underlined: "The EU is still lacking a clear strategy as to how to absorb and accommodate the narratives coming from post-communist officialdom" (Dujisin 2015: 585). While these examples are far from being exhaustive, these historical debates between the EU and CEE have also gave a boost to the use of history as a policy tool, both domestically and in foreign relations, this is what we will see in the second part of this chapter.

2.2. History as a policy tool

The use of history as a policy tool is twofold: there is a use of history to legitimise the post-communist political regime, and in some cases domestic politics, and the use of history as a foreign policy tool. We will tackle both in light of their interference with European integration in CEE. For the purpose of this chapter, we will consider history as follows:

> History is an attempt to orientate one's own life in the experience of changes in time. Therefore, it is a mental construction, relating interpretation of the past, perception of the present and expectation of the future in a complicated manner […]. History […] is a constant public and private debate about different – partly exclusive – facts, interpretations and conclusions. History is 'interpretation of interpretations' or 'explanation of explanations' (von Borries 2002: 35).

In that sense, in this subchapter, we are trying to see how the different states of CEE chose and showcase their interpretation of their history and the European one to justify both domestic and foreign policies. A significant particularity to take into con-

sideration when studying the post-communist space is the weight of history and the path dependency created by the communist apparatus. Indeed, communism attached great importance to history and most importantly to the interpretation of history that spread across the communists states and was an essential element of the legitimation of the regime (Jedlicki 2010: 231). In that sense, 1989 represented a considerable upheaval in terms of memory markers, which may in turn explain the dramatic need to go back to a nationalistic interpretation of history (Mink 2010: 11). Such return to a past history to legitimise the post-communist regime has been observed in most CEE countries. In Hungary for instance, the fundamental post-socialist crises in cultural-political legitimacy was quickly compensated by the dramatic rehabilitation of nationalist historical narrative and nationalist hegemony (Renkin 2007: 17). Such a nationalist readjustment and use of historical nationalist tropes has been observed in all political parties of Hungary in the 1990s and in their campaigns for the first free and fair elections, as such narrative proved to be electorally profitable (Renkin 2007: 14–19). If in Hungary it was the reject of the communist past to embrace a nationalist narrative that helped legitimise the new regime, in other parts of CEE, this transition was more contested. The heritage of the communist past is sometimes more complex to negotiate especially in the period of transitions from communism to liberal democracy. This has been the case in Ukraine which proves to be a good illustration of such difficult historical readjustment and negotiation. Olha Ostriichouk shows this dual fight between the attempt to continue to interpret history through the Soviet/Communist prism and the growing tendency to interpret Ukrainian history through a nationalistic interpretation (Ostriitchouk 2010). This negotiation has proven fundamental in the way Ukrainians see themselves, but also how politicians legitimise themselves and certain of their policies (that might even touch upon the polity of the State), especially regarding symbols and historical events as fundamental as the interpretations of the national poet Taras Shevchenko, the Holodomor and the Second World War in the national narrative (Ostriitchouk 2010: 291–502). Other examples of such use of history to legitimise the post-communist regimes, and in the case of the Western Balkans, the post-war regimes, are Croatia and Serbia. Both countries have chosen very different path in the rebuilding of their nation and identity post-Yugoslav wars. While Croatia, adopted a very European-oriented path, with the goals of joining the EU, making its identity and institutions as EU compatible as possible, Serbia remained on an ethno-nationalistic path (Eriksen 2018). Croatia, on the other hand, has legitimised it new regime and identity by arguing and focusing on the fundamental differences between Croatia and Serbia. Consequently, Croatia built itself an image as to present itself as truly historically and culturally European, while Serbia was depicted as 'Eastern' and more related to the Turks and the Albanians than to the (Central-)Europeans than the Croatians are (Eriksen 2018: 120). Finally, a last example of how history played a role in the legitimacy of the post-communist regimes, is Poland. In the case of Poland, in the fight for democracy the history question has played a crucial role, as the fight was oriented towards the rejection of the monopolistic left-wing interpretation of history, which

naturally gave more space and legitimacy to a traditional right-wing nationalistic interpretation of history later in the transition from one regime to another (Mink and Bonnard 2010: 232).

Through this non-exhaustive list of examples, we can see how history has become a fundamental tool in the legitimacy of political regimes. This was understood quickly by CEE intellectuals and leaders, who have used their ability to develop and institutionalise the "memory-making" field (*i.e.* universities and research institutions), by using these institutions' reliance on the state to be financed, to promote a nationalist historical narrative rather than promote a pluralistic interpretation of history (Dujisin 2015: 566-65). This translates in the creation of state-sponsored memory institutions, usually consisting of museums and research centres, as it has been the case in Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Czechia, Slovenia and Estonia (Dujisin 2015: 565–570). Hence, everywhere, we found attempts to monopolise the interpretation of history to a single political force, as was the case in Poland under *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* (PiS -Law and Justice) and their concept of "historical policy", or in Ukraine with Viktor Yushchenko and the Holodomor, which helps these political forces to secure their positions as patriots and strengthen their geopolitical status (Mink 2010: 14). And this way of legitimising the state structure and exclusionary policies come in direct confrontation with European integration and the kind of democracy the EU tends to promote. The EU, while recognising the plurality of nationalities in Europe, tends to promote a civic inclusive identity rather than a national exclusive one (Keating 2004). In addition to that, the question arises on how can the EU, with its ambition of overcoming past divisions, can make do with increasing nationalistic exclusionary tendencies (Csergo and Goldgeier 2004)? And especially when this attempt from the EU to promote peaceful coexistence between former enemies gives rise to the multiplication and accentuation of memorial pressures that feed even more resentment (Mink 2010: 15).

Moreover, there is a trend of use of historical narratives not only within states to legitimise themselves, but also at the European and international level. The most illustrative examples of use of history in foreign politics that has an impact on European integration is probably the case of North Macedonia. From its independence from Yugoslavia, North Macedonia has been struggling to draw on historical nationalist elements to legitimise its new regime, as did other post-communist CEECs, because these historical claims are disputed by its neighbours Greece and Bulgaria (and to a certain extent by Albania). Indeed, for twenty-seven years, Greece had refused to recognise North Macedonia's name, due to their own region named similarly, and contested historical heritage, such as the one of Alexander the Great. The intensity of the dispute, that gave rise to violent protests in Athens in front of the Parliament, shows the sensitivity of the issue and the difficulty of settling it (Đukanović 2019; Kirby 2019) but also led Greece to pursue blocking policies in North Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic integration. Though, North Macedonia's dispute with Bulgaria is even more telling, as Sofia had publicly asked all EU member states to "stop the fake Macedonian identity" and proceeded to block any further negotiations in North

Macedonia's EU accession process until it recognised its historical, ethnic and linguistic ties with Bulgaria (Đukanović 2019; Georgievski 2020). Likewise, Hungary has been able to promote its own narrative and bind its neighbours to accept treaties that give a particular treatment to the Hungarian minorities in their countries. This policy has been a recurrent and stable foreign policy in Hungary no matter the governments (Varga 2000). This was used in Hungarian interests outside of the EU when it came to Ukraine and Serbia's European integration process, especially in Serbia's accession process, where Budapest was able to demand more in terms of protection of the Hungarian minority to Belgrade (Hettyey 2021: 133–134).

In conclusion, the lack and difficulty to define a European narrative, based and founded on historical grounds represents a significant loophole in the EU's European integration strategy. As we have seen, the EU's promotion of the necessity of good neighbourly relations and reconciliation through the idea to move passed and beyond historical disputes comes in direct contradiction with the need that appeared in post-communist CEE to rebuild and legitimise their new regime on historical nationalistic foundations. Moreover, this loophole is also exploited in foreign policies by CEE EU member states, that can constraint neighbouring candidate states to adopt and/or change some of their national attributes/narratives or minority policies as leverage in their EU accession process. But CEE is not the only region using historical narratives in their foreign relations to impede one way or another European integration. In the past two decades, several international actors have also been able to take advantage of these weaknesses in European integration, this is what we are going to discuss in the last chapter.

3. Competition in Historical narratives and new geopolitical context: Europe and Russia

> The liberal idea has become obsolete. It has come into conflict with the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population… Deep inside, there must be some fundamental human rules and moral values. In this sense, traditional values are more stable and more important for millions of people than this liberal idea, which, in my opinion, is really ceasing to exist.
> Vladimir Putin, interview with the Financial Time, June 2019. (Barber et al. 2019; Diesen 2020: 191)

As we have seen in the two previous chapters, the EU relies on a liberal foundation to foster its attractiveness and European integration. But we have also seen that a significant loophole in this strategy is that liberalism is losing its appeal, and that the EU does not have a strong and unified narrative relying on historical foundations to sustain European integration as liberalism is being challenged. Moreover, this loophole has led to opportunities for European States to use historical narratives to legitimate nationalist political regimes and used history as a foreign policy tool, both impeding further European integration. This final chapter aims at showing how, other international actors have in turn taken advantage of this loophole in European

integration, to slow it down and promote their own interests. While it is possible to identify several actors engaging in such actions, just like Türkiye or to some extent China, we will only focus on Russia in this chapter. First of all, because the length of this work does not permit to engage into a more exhaustive analysis of several countries. Secondly, because Russia represents a significant obstacle in the European narrative as its position in Europe has always been throughout history debated, as either a true European superpower, as a Global superpower, or as a unique and single entity between Europe and Asia. Thirdly, since the fall of the USSR, the way Russia perceives itself, perceives Europe but also the way it is perceived from Europe, is still in the process of being negotiated with regards to geopolitical change and especially Russia's behaviour. Lastly, Russia's history with Central and Eastern European states is such that its influence over the region is not to be downplayed.

It comes without saying that the way Russia engages in disruption of European integration does not only rely on the promotion and spread of its historical narrative and linked societal ideals. To the contrary, Russia has been engaging in many different ways in Europe to hinder European integration, from economic pressure, blackmail, disinformation, hybrid warfare, cyber threat to full-scale war (Conley et al. 2016; Karlsen 2019). If we choose to focus on historical narratives, it is because it has been an aspect underrated by the EU and more generally by European (mostly Western) states, at least up until the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. In addition to that, the Russian historical narrative has been a way for the Kremlin to justify the use of the different tools that we have listed, to defend their own interests or prevent CEE to engage in more European integration.

In order to better understand how Russia fills up the gap left by the lack of European historical narrative, we first need to understand how Russia's perception of itself has changed and evolved since the end of the Cold War as it appears relevant in the way it perceives Europe and the EU. Drawing on this, we will then discuss the Russian historical narrative, its sources and different branches, before explaining how it relates to CEE and how Russia directly capitalises on the region's historical anxieties and fuels scepticism towards European integration.

3.1. Russia's post-USSR self-perception

The abrupt collapse of the Soviet Union and the engagement of Russia (and most post-Soviet States that had declared independence) to transition to liberal democracy and market economy in the 1990s came with a great rapprochement with the former enemy, the United States (US). As CEE engaged in this transitions, the Russian hope was to see itself rise anew as an ally to the US and (re)become an extra-European power in the European scene (J. M. Newton 2003: 199). This hope was based on the idea that Russia was still a great power, and hence deserved an equal place next to the US, at least on the European stage. As Julie M. Newton explains, this assumption "was based on a sense of symbolic or politically earned equality (as well of course on Russia's past as the Soviet Superpower) [and that] Russia, even in dimin-

ished form, had earned its equality through its awe-inspiring withdrawal from Eastern Europe and its dramatic concessions to the West during the late Gorbachev period" (J. M. Newton, 2003, p. 199). Needless to say, that this position of equal was mostly a fantasy. A fantasy nourished by the Russians to cling on the idea that it was still a great power. A fantasy because facts were that the US's political and economic superiority, especially in Europe, could not be competed with (J. M. Newton 2003: 199). The realisation of such weakness led Russia to develop an inferiority complex towards the West, especially towards the US, who directly and indirectly (through international organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) adopted the role of the sole judge of the quality of the democratic and economic transition. Subsequently, this position came in direct confrontation with the idea that Russia is and should remain a great power (Neumann 2016: 1385).

In that paradoxical position, seeing the West embedded in Fukuyama's theories of the end of history and the victory of liberalism over the world, Russia, to maintain its position of great power, embedded itself in another theory: Samuel Huntington's clash of civilisations (Huntington 1998). Fukuyama and Huntington had two different and opposite interpretations of where the post-Cold War world's outlook was heading to. If the former had an optimistic vision of spread of democracy and peace, the latter prophesied that confrontation would not end and that the new sources of those confrontations would be cultural rather than ideological. For Russia, this vision of the post-Cold War world suits better its self-perception as a great power, as Huntington's theory makes Russia the centre of the Orthodox civilisation, and go as far as defining "the successor of tsarist and communist empires" as a "civilisational bloc" (Huntington 1998: 163). Moreover, it turned around the position repeatedly advanced by the West that Russia was to 'return to the European civilisation' and changed Russia's relation with Europe altogether (Neumann 2016: 1385).

In this spirit, Russia passed from the potential to be an ally to the US and keep on sharing Europe together, to a new confrontation with the US on the European soil, but this time on the basis of civilisational clash. It is noteworthy that, no matter which path Russia choses, the way Moscow perceives Europe is only as a continent to be shared and/or disputed with another great power (in that case the US). This translated in the total ignorance of the new CEE states that rose after the fall of communist regimes, as Russian diplomats were more preoccupied by Moscow's relations with Washington than with building new and lasting relations with former allies of the Eastern bloc (J. Newton 2021). This also defines the source of the way Russia perceives the EU. To this day, the EU has never been a subject of Russian policies or strategies, as for the Kremlin, Brussels is but a projection of the US's power and imposition of a liberal world order (Paikin 2021). Consequently, at the turn of the 2000s, Russia turned itself into an opponent of the liberal Europe it perceived as an expression of US power, and drew in the post-USSR Russian tradition of conservatism to redefine itself (Moss 2017: 195; Robinson 2020). This redefinition itself gets its legitimacy in a historical perspective of Tsarist Russia being the natural hub for European conservatists (Diesen 2020). Although Russian conservatism comes in many shapes and forms, it most of the time

builds itself in opposition with European liberalism (Robinson 2020). This way of perceiving itself, gives Russia on the international stage an identity and a mission: in a minimal perspective, as a balance of the surplus of liberalism in Europe, in a maximal perspective as the saviour of Europe from its own decay.

This geopolitical and civilisational mission imposed on Russia implies that this vision of the world must be exported but also needs to be supported and legitimised by a Historical narrative and societal ideal to be sustainable. This is what the next part will aim at discussing.

3.2. Russian narrative

The Russian narrative that serves to legitimate Russia's place as a civilisational great power is not a fixed and completed narrative, it is still in the making and remains flexible. Besides, this is this vagueness that allows the Kremlin to rely on different elements that draws in history to defend different actions on the international stage. We identify three of these aspects: the concept of *Russkiy Mir* (the 'Russian World'), historical revisionism notably when it comes to the Second World War and the influence over CEE in the Cold War, and finally Russia's position in the global conservative movement.

The concept of *Russkiy Mir* is, as many Russian attempts to identify itself, vague and plural and remains hard to conceptualise because of these features. At first, the *Russkiy Mir* was created to promote the Russian language and Russian culture abroad and create a sense of community for the Russian-speaking populations that have found themselves outside of the borders of Russian after the fall of the USSR (Rocca 2022). However, it quickly evolves into something bigger and more abstract, especially as its use came necessary to justify the annexation of Crimea in 2014 as the "aspiration of the Russian world, of historical Russia, to re-establish unity" (Rocca 2022). The website of the *Russkiy Mir* foundation displays the *Russkiy Mir* as an ideology (although only the French version of the website shows an 'Ideology' section). According to the same website, the *Russkiy Mir* is an all-encompassing idea of belonging to the Russian World that transcends confession, social position, ideologies, multiculturality and geography (Fondation « Russkyi Mir »).Later in the same section, we learn that '*Mir*' stands for community, conciliation and collectivism based on a determined social practice and that it is necessary as the last decades have shown that the main threat for Russia is individualism and the destruction of social links (Fondation « Russkyi Mir »). It is possible to extrapolate two things from this position: the attempt of Russia to bring back its population to this idea of civilisation that belongs together and have been wrongly separated, and secondly that the Western liberal system that promotes individualism is a threat to the Russian unity. Other interesting facts in the *Russkiy Mir* foundation website and definition of the concept, is the use of the term 'émigré' and the emphasis on the link with the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). The term 'émigré' in the Russian vocabulary refers directly to the Russian population who supported the Tsar and had to flee Russia as a result of the Bolshevik revolution and their victory in

the following civil war. This allows the Russian Federation to bring back these Russians, previously disgraced, to the civilisational bloc and to place Russia in a broader perspective than the succession of regimes (tsarist, communist and federal), but in a historical aspect that transcends them. The rehabilitation and regain in popularity of the ROC allows it to place itself in the same trajectory, although it serves a bigger purpose in the legitimacy of the ideology. Most importantly in the development of the ideology. The adoption of the *Russkiy Mir* by the ROC gives the concept a religious attribute that in turn feeds the Historical narrative of the civilisation, as the establishment of the ROC dates back to the 10th century conversion of the Prince of Kyiv and the Baptism of Rus (Rocca 2022). In turn, this allows Russia to promote and justify a vision of the world where Belarusians and Ukrainians are parts of the same nation with Russians and justify the full-scale war against Ukraine (Mink 2023: 187). In a nutshell, *Russkiy Mir* is "an obscurantist anti-Western mixture of Orthodox dogma, nationalism, conspiracy theory and security-state Stalinism" (The Economist 2022) that allows Russia to spread a Historical narrative that justify the protection of its 'sphere of influence' in what used to constitute the Russian empire and the Soviet Union, the protection of Russian-speaking populations outside of Russia, to place itself in a broader historical and civilisational context, as well as to reject the Western liberal system. Despite the many critics and lack of coherence the *Russkiy Mir* could be accused of, the promotion of such concept, comes in contrast with Europe's difficulty to find and settle for a single way to identify itself a historical narrative.

One of the main issues in the interpretation of European history is the place of the USSR side by side with the victors against Nazi Germany. The way the Second World War is interpreted across Europe varies considerably from London, Paris, to Warsaw or Moscow. The biggest cracks in the interpretation are the place of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, to which is linked the painful abandon of CEE to the Red Army that led to decades of Soviet domination over the region, and the maximisation of the role of the USSR, but mostly of Russians, in the victory over Nazi Germany. As for the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the consequences that followed, the tensions of the advocacy of CEE states pushing for the EU to recognise the communist regimes at the same level as the Nazi regime have been at the centre of memorial tension with Russia. When in 2009 the European Parliament adopted the European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Totalitarian Regimes on the day of the signature of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Russian response was as prompt, as President Medvedev "elevated history to the level of an attribute of national 'sovereignty'" (Mink 2022: 20). This refusal of denouncing the USSR's wrong doings in the dawn of the Second World War comes in line with the interpretation of this war in the Russian historiography that find its roots directly in Soviet historiography. The Soviet's foundational myth was based on the Great Patriotic War, that started in 1941, when Nazi Germany attacked the USSR. This myth maximises the USSR's role in the victory over Nazi Germany, and built a militaristic memory of the war, on which Putin's Russia could capitalise to form a military-patriotic narrative (Mink 2023: 188). This myth is so important for the Russian position on the international stage, that historical facts stopped to

matter for the Russian elites (Prus 2015: 2–3), and in May 2009, the special Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of the Russia's Interests was created by decree of the president. The dismissal of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact as an act of "personal power" (Putin 2020) is essential and in the Russian self-identification as the victors against fascism, as we can see in Putin's justification for the ongoing full-scale invasion of Ukraine (Mink 2022; Prus 2015: 7).

Ultimately, Russia promotes itself internationally as a defender of "traditional values", which encompasses issues such as Women rights and LGBT+ rights. This comes in line with what we had already discussed in the previous part, as Russia's self-identification with the pre-USSR period as a European conservative hub. Initially, this focus on traditional values happened in Russia in the turn of the 2000s (Bluhm and Varga 2019: 9–10), firstly a way to internally unify Russia and externally pose Russia in a position of saviour of Europe (Moss 2017: 195). Over the years, Russia has been able to position itself as a net contributor, both financially but more importantly ideologically, to global conservative movements and networks, such as the World Congress of Families, of which Russia is a co-founder alongside the US (Stoeckl 2020). Through these connections, Russia is able to spread and promote a narrative that relies on a conservative interpretation of history and most importantly of the future. This position was voiced several times by President Putin, as for instance at the Meeting of Valdai International Discussion Club in September 2013, where he clearly stated that the Western civilisation was "rejecting their roots, including the Christian values that constitute the basis of Western civilisation" and is "denying moral principles and all traditional identities: national, cultural, religious and even sexual" (Team of the Official Website of the President of Russia 2013). Then, Putin explains that this vision of the world stems from Russia's "own historical destiny" and that Moscow's position has "deep historical roots" (Team of the Official Website of the President of Russia 2013).

3.3. Russia and European integration

Relying on both Russian self-perception and narrative, Moscow is able to capitalise on this to export its Historical narrative and disrupt European integration in CEE using selected elements. Impeding European integration is not a hidden goal in Russian foreign policy objectives, as a study of fifteen different European intelligence services shows, "Russia is the foreign state that tries to influence European politics and decision-making the most" (Karlsen 2019). According to the same study, the Kremlin's main strategic objectives are to: ensure its regime's security, ensure its predominance in the post-Soviet space, and secure its place as a world-power (Karlsen 2019: 5). This is achieved mainly through the weakening of unity in both the EU and NATO. As we have mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the Kremlin uses different tools to reach this goal, in this last part we will focus on how the promotion of the Russian narrative in CEE happen. We argue that it relies essentially on a network of organisations and actors, as Karlsen explains:

> Russia has comprehensive resources and a complex set-up of organizations at its disposal. There is a federal agency, *Rossotrudnichestvo*, the organization Russian World, and various funds promoting their compatriot policy. Abroad, at the receiving end, there is an array of foundations, think tanks and NGOs supported by Russia. These front organizations promote various Russian narratives to subvert and create division, rewrite history, and use and abuse culture to legitimize the Russian view, and then propagate it through local Russian-supported media projects or mainstream media (Karlsen 2019: 7).

And these networks are then able to take advantage of windows of opportunities when presented to them, such as crises prone to foster disintegration and disunity in the EU.

First of all, the use of the *Russkiy Mir* in CEE touches principally the post-Soviet space, especially those countries that used to be part of the Russian Empire and the USSR, and that preserved a significant proportion of Russian-speakers on their territory after the fall of the USSR. This is the case notably of Estonia, Latvia, Moldova and Ukraine (also of Belarus that is not part of our analysis). This Russian speaking population, as we have seen, is a fundamental part of the *Russkiy Mir*, and the Kremlin has not shied away from using them "as tools of destabilisation" (Karlsen 2019: 7) in these regions. In the case of Ukraine, the examples are not rare with the annexation of Crimea under the justification that it was majorly populated by ethnic Russians, the war in Donbas to protect Russian-speakers from Ukrainian persecution, and finally the full-scale war to denazify Ukraine. In Moldova, the Russian network spread through the pro-Kremlin separatist region of Transnistria but also through the Gagauz minority, still majorly Russian-speaking, that both, although in different ways, represent obstacles in Moldova's European integration (Kosienkowski 2021). In the Baltic States, the Russian population is the most targeted by the Russian propaganda, through Russian speaking media (such as the Russian TV channel *Perviy Baltiyskiy Kanal*), and civil society organisations promoting the Russian narratives of history (Brauß and Rácz 2021: 16). For these populations the Russian narrative mostly relies on anti-EU and anti-Western stances and on the presentation of Russia as an alternative to European integration, an alternative both viable and grounded in history and traditions.

By extension, the ROC expands the reach of the Russian influence, even beyond its role as a fundamental pillar in the *Russkiy Mir*, by reaching out to Orthodox populations, such as in Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Moldova. The interactions between the ROC and the local Orthodox churches has permitted a penetration of the Russian narrative through the civil society, notably the transnational conservative civil organisations (Stoeckl 2020: 180). Through this network, the Kremlin can disseminate a favourable public opinion towards Russia. In the Western Balkans and in Greece, these networks have capitalised not only on the Slavic Brotherhood narrative but also on local anti-Western sentiments and the financing of far-right groups (Stronski and Himes 2019). In Bulgaria and Moldova, the links between the local Church and the ROC have permitted the adoption of the Russian narrative about certain issues such as European

integration, but also how their post-communist identity was to be understood (Leustean 2021). More generally, these links have permitted Russia to enjoy relatively high level of trust and a perception of a necessary balance with the West. For instance, between 52% in Romania to 80% in Serbia of the population consider that a strong Russia is necessary to balance the influence of the West (Diamant 2017).

Finally, and in spite of historical grievances, the Russian narrative has found its way in other parts of CEE, notably in Central Europe, through its position as a defender of traditional values (Diesen 2020: 193). There, Russia can rely on the countries' national anxieties (Krakovský 2019a) and attraction to conservative-illiberal forces (Buzogány and Varga 2018; Diesen 2020: 193). The conservative network Russia has deployed, not only in CEE, but across the Western world, has been thoroughly analysed (Datta 2021). One of the most illustrative examples of this, is the World Congress of Families that we already mentioned, co-founded by Russian and US conservative circles. Its conferences have attracted representatives from Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Greece, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia among others, and serves as a source not only financially to these movements, but also as ideological inspirations (Moss 2017: 204). Relying on this wide range of network, the Kremlin can then take advantage of windows of opportunities. Such windows of opportunities are, among others: the migration crisis, where Russia played on European identity insecurities and divides regarding further integration to tackle the issue (Hooghe and Marks 2019; Karlsen 2019: 7; Leustean 2021) or on the possibility to capitalise on ethnic tensions and European integration frustration in the Western Balkans (Stronski and Himes 2019). Overall, reaching out and financing far-right political parties that spread a directly or indirectly Russia-friendly narrative, in CEE and Western Europe as well (Conley et al. 2016; Diesen 2020: 193; Karlsen 2019: 7–8; Shekhovtsov 2018).

In a nutshell, Russia, after a period of rapprochement with the West, has redefined itself, drawing on some of its historical features from both its tsarist and soviet pasts, as a conservative balance to the power of the liberal EU. Through this newly found Historical narrative, Russia has been able to impede European integration through different means by spreading its own narrative as an alternative to European integration.

Conclusion

This thesis contributes to the interdisciplinary research in the field of European integration in the particular case of Central and Eastern Europe. The main question this analysis aimed at answering was: what are the shortcomings and their consequences of the EU's European integration strategy in CEE? In order to answer to this question, we have reviewed the relevant literature and took an interdisciplinary approach, through political science and history and proposed three hypotheses:

1. That conditionality as a strategy to promote European integration was neither sustainable nor efficient because it relies on the attractiveness of liberalism which is fading.

2. That the EU lacks a unifying historical narrative.
3. That both internal and external actors to the EU takes advantage of this loophole to impede European integration in CEE.

In the first chapter, we have raised the limits relating to the EU's reliance on conditionality as a successful policy strategy through a critic of the literature on conditionality and the narrow mindedness of political science theories of integration. We have found that conditionality both pre- and post-accession have proven to be unsustainable and inefficient. Furthermore, the EU's overreliance on the attractiveness of liberalism to sustain the legitimacy of conditionality is suffering the slow loss of appeal of the West and its liberal system in general.

Following from that, in the second chapter we argued that one of the main missing links in the research and in the EU's strategy is the lack of historical narrative that can sustain and legitimise European integration, aside than through the coercion of conditionality. Despite this critic, the analysis acknowledges the difficulty to produce an interpretation of European history that triggers wide-spread acceptation and identification across the continent. Moreover, in CEE, states have themselves made use of historical narratives, both to legitimise their post-communist regimes, most generally based on a historical nationalist narrative and some foreign policy choices. Stemming from that, some CEECs that have already joined the EU use their bargaining position to impose revision and/or particular conditions regarding candidate countries' own historical narratives.

Beyond CEE states, Russia has also proven to take advantage of this loophole in European integration to promote its own narrative in the absence of a European one. We have found that Russia's new identity is still in the making and remain flexible, but mostly in opposition to the EU liberal identity. Mobilising different and diverse elements, Russia poses itself as a defender of the Russian-speaking population in the post-soviet space, defender of Orthodox/Slavic brotherhood in the Balkan, and as a saviour of Christian Europe and defender of traditional values in Central Europe. Capitalising on the region's existential and national anxieties, Russia manages to impede European integration in a sphere where the EU, as we have shown in the previous chapter, has found itself unarmed.

Our goal was to demonstrate that having a single approach to the issue of European integration in CEE is not relevant anymore to draw a comprehensive and complete picture of the matter. The history factor has long been an underrated factor by the EU, and the war in Ukraine, almost entirely justified by the Kremlin's revisionist and mythological historical narrative, is a brutal wake-up call. As Europe comes to term with itself and the way to incorporate Russia into its own narrative, the place Russia will play in this narrative remains to be negotiated. Will Russia be considered as the conservative balance to the liberalism promoted by the EU, in the same way as some countries or group of countries are considered as frugal and less prone to support more integration within the EU?

The EU remains more than able to be an unmatched economic power in CEE, however, as this thesis has been trying to display, the rational economic cost-benefit

calculation is not enough to sustain integration at the level of values. As long as the EU cannot propose a unifying historical narrative, there will be loopholes on which internal and external forces can invest to undermine European integration and unity. This is what we have seen with nationalistic legitimation of post-communist regimes, the use of memory and historical debates in foreign policy, or the engagement of Russia in the proposal of an alternative narrative to the liberal-western one. The difficulty to accept a nuanced interpretation of history, notably of the Second World War, rather than a Manichean one is going to haunt Europe for a long time. The myth of the victory over Nazism but nuanced by the abandon of CEE to the USSR or the collaboration with a totalitarian state to win over Nazi Germany, are necessary but painful debates to have at the European level and debates to settle once and for all to avoid further loopholes and potential disintegration.

List of abbreviations

AA – Association Agreement
CEE – Central and Eastern Europe(an)
CEECs- Central and Eastern European Countries
EIM – External Incentive Model
EU – European Union
MS – Member States
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
US – United States of America

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De Europa
Special Issue - College of Europe 2023

The EU's good governance discourse in the southern neighbourhood: the case of Lebanon and Morocco

Pablo Pastor Vidal

Introduction

When a man meets an obstacle he can't destroy, he destroys himself
Ryszard Kapuściński, *The Other*

Mediterranean countries have long considered themselves to be the base of civilization. From the Greek origins of democracy or the Egyptians, to the Roman Empire and the Islamic Empire many countries and civilizations that governed in both shores of the Mare Nostrum claimed to be the most advanced and to have the most poignant societies and the brightest philosophers. But some events in history relegated the Mediterranean from the central position that it once had: after the fall of the Roman Empire, the Germanic tribes conquered what today we know as Europe, not being able to reach the Byzantine Empire, that lasted until the Ottoman conquest in 1453. In 1492, Columbus reached the Americas. Just a couple of months after he reached Guanahani island, the Catholic Kings of Spain conquered the Emirate of Granada in south Spain, ending with what up until then was known as Al-Andalus, the Islamic rule of the Iberian Peninsula. During the 16th century, the Portuguese and Spanish Empires created navigation routes to bring resources and products from America and from Africa, establishing colonialism and dividing foreign lands with the Treaties of Tordesillas or Madrid. Later on, from the 17th century, the Dutch and the French started their own colonial enterprises, as well as the British. Soon enough, most of the world was controlled by European empires that claimed territorial possessions and extracted unlimited resources, also in the Mediterranean, especially by the French Empire in North Africa. After the First World War, the British and the French divided the territories in the Middle East by the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916. All of these treaties and peace agreements were made without taking into account the tribes or population that lived in these areas.

In 1948, the Treaty of Brussels was signed, creating the Western Union, as well as the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation, that managed the Plan Marshall after the Second World War. In 1949, the College of Europe was also founded, as well as the Council of Europe, and the 5th of May, 1950, the Schuman Declaration was signed. In 1973 the "first enlargement" was granted to Denmark, Ireland and the

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United Kingdom. Later on, the Schengen Agreement paved the way to establish open borders without passport. And, in 1987, Morocco applied to become a member of the European Communities, which rejected the application on the base that it was not "European". During these years, the Mediterranean was again in the spotlight, not anymore as the civilizational centre, but as a place of conflict, as the Israeli occupation became more powerful after the Six-Day War in 1967. The EU, that saw its power decreasing as the US became a present actor in the region, especially during the Cold War, started developing its foreign response. Since then, it started issuing declarations and communications, portraying its power as a 'force for good' for the world defending a set of values guiding civilization: the rule of law, democracy, human rights, most of them encompassed under the umbrella of good governance (Hackenesch 2016). This is when the origins of Normative Power Europe (NPE) (Manners 2002), that describes how the EU diffuses its norms to the world as a unique model, can be placed.

This Thesis draws up from a critical approach in the field of EU-MENA studies. This approach draws many different theoretical accounts (poststructuralism, Foucauldian governmentality, postcolonial theory and critical constructivist perspectives), but can be summed up in their common objective to question "the very conceptualisation of the EU as an actor operating in the region" (Dionigi 2021: 97). The objective is to understand how the EU constructs itself as an actor and how it perceives the countries of the southern neighbourhood in the many declarations, speeches and policy documents that has issued during the years. The EU defends a set of civilizational values that claims for itself and even it places its origin the same civilizations that once ruled the Mediterranean. These values are enforced through the norms of "good governance" that require the recipient countries to reach certain standards and be subject of evaluations.

The EU has recurred to the metaphor of the 'neighbourhood' to talk about the immediate geographical countries in its foreign policy, giving birth to the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). ENP policies are articulated through a very diverse series of tools, but overall, a great part of the discourse is influenced by the ideals of good governance, that are aligned with European democracies. However, the EU good governance is presented in a sort of concentric circles, where the countries that are closer to the locus of power and richer are able to influence the policies more successfully (Schimmelfennig 2016). The 'southern neighbourhood' is made up of the south Mediterranean, Arab-speaking that have been subject to Orientalism by Western political thought, being the place "of Europe's greatest richest and oldest colonies" (Said 1979). The collaboration with these countries started with the Barcelona Process in 1995 as a way to promote the adoption of norms and build a "secure, stable and peaceful" region (Pace 2007). In the view of poststructuralism, foreign policy is highly dependent on the identity of an actor is made via discourse construction (Adler 2016), and some scholars have argued that even by differentiation with other actors or groups of actors. The southern neighbourhood is also defined, approached and constructed by the EU.

Drawing from these remarks, this thesis examines EU's good governance discourse towards the southern neighbourhood, and has the following research question: "How do these logics and rationalities produce a set of norms under the European Neighbourhood Policy tools to govern the southern neighbourhood?" This question adds the governmentality approach, that explains how certain norms and values are presented as desired (Derous and De Roeck 2019). As case studies, I take Lebanon and Morocco, which present different contexts and different expectations of the EU. They show how the migration agenda in foreign policy for the EU is especially important, and they present different political systems as well a different history of engagement with the EU, despite their common French colonization.

The methodology used to answer the question is critical discourse analysis (CDA), in the version of discourse historical approach (DHA). DHA conceives identity to be constructed by language, placing the historical context in a central position (Reisigl and Wodak 2001). By using a set of strategies to uncover arguments and representations, DHA shows how identities are differentiated from each other and what is naturalised. The discourses, although recent, are analysed taking into account Moroccan and Lebanese contexts. In this way, this thesis tries to fill the scholarly gap in the literature about good governance seen through critical theories and postcolonialism applied to the neighbourhood.

I structure the thesis as following. In the first chapter, poststructuralism, Normative Power Europe and Foucauldian governmentality are explained, as well as good governance from the approach of postcolonialism. In the second chapter, I establish the research questions, the critical discourse analysis methodological foundations, and the reasons for the choice of the case studies and the data and documents selected. In the third chapter, I analyse both case studies, connecting the theories with an empirical assessment. Lastly, I offer a conclusion of my findings.

1. Literature review

1.1.1. Poststructuralism and the European Foreign Policy: EU's identity and the othering

In this part, the links between foreign policy and identity will be explored as established by poststructuralist approaches. I will explain the origins of poststructuralism as a theory in international relations. Second, I will study how poststructuralism has been applied in EU foreign policy, building on the critique to Manner's conception of Normative Power Europe (NPE). Third, I will draw on one of the implications of EU's identity building: the creation of an 'Other' through the European neighbourhood policy.

1.1.2. Poststructuralism: creating an identity in Foreign Policy

Many scholars refuse to locate the EU within a clear category. Many scholars have tried to understand the nature of the European Union and settle it in a specific "actorness" (Ginsberg 1999). Some say that the EU is a "supranational organisation", a brand-

new model of actor, while others think there is not much difference between the EU and other international organisations (Wright 2011). What it is true, however, is that the EU holds a discourse about itself and identifies with specific values and norms seeing itself as a "positive force" (Cebeci 2016). This is seen in many policies and plans that the European Commission puts forward, looking to create, for example, a more "green, digital and resilient" Europe (European Commission 2022). One of the main objectives of the EU is, therefore, to surpass its own borders and become a global actor in many fields, be it with or without success (Bretherton and Vogler 2013).

Poststructuralism and constructivism, meanwhile, are both critical approaches to the study of EU foreign policy and are highly intertwined but not identical. Firstly, constructivism did not originate in the realm of international relations and its authors argue that ideas and interests are unstable and 'constructed' (Carta and Morin 2014: 301), it holds a "dynamic normative and epistemic interpretations of the material world" (Adler 2016: 322). According to Adler, it shows "that even our most enduring institutions are based on collective understandings; that they are reified structures that were once upon a time conceived *ex nihilo* by human consciousness; and that these understandings were subsequently diffused and consolidated until they were taken for granted" (Adler 2016).

Poststructuralism in international relations emergence as a reaction to the realist approaches, that maintained that the actors in the international scene acted with behavioural responses to their material environment; for instance, if an actor had more resources than another, it would have more power and therefore would strive to keep its *status quo*, the balance of power. Instead, poststructuralism relied on the realm of ideas and a relativist reading of science. Summed up in Derrida's phrase 'there is nothing outside the text' explains how social reality cannot be accessed outside human language and therefore the discourse is 'constitutive', creating reality by itself (Adler 2016: 344). Materiality of the world, here, is undermined, to explain how the structures constitute the ideas and interests of agents. For instance, poststructuralism has linked the creation of foreign policy and the identity of an actor. Here, foreign policy "refers to the set of discourses and practices (institutions, procedures, and processes" that constitute an actor's relations with its 'others'" (Adler 2016: 167).

More particularly, the main claims of poststructuralism can be summed up in Diez's "three moves" (Carta 2021: 50):

1) The Austinian move, how we do things with words, that describes how language can be performative, *i.e.*, it can change the reality, for example, positioning EU integration and its mythological foundation based on the role of liberalism and the free market as something positive and desirable.
2) The Foucauldian move, that locates action and power: how things are done by words. In this sense, discourses establish rules, borders or markers for the identity of individuals (see Rumelili's arguments below). For example, it is not the same to be 'European' than not to be.
3) The Derridean move, that portrays the instability and the potential for change of all discourses (the "impossibility of closure" of social facts), built up on the work

of Laclau and Mouffe and the concept of dialectic "articulation" of the discourses in the social sphere. It is as a response to the classical Marxist explanations that relied on economic essentialism.

1.1.3. Europe as a normative power: the creation of moral legitimation in foreign policy

In 2002, Ian Manners published an article arguing that Europe played an especially important role in the globalization of universal norms: what he called then 'Normative Power Europe' (NPE) (Manners 2002). This explanation offered an alternative to more realist explanations that argued that Europe did not play any geopolitical power in world politics (Toje 2011).

The NPE notion built upon the previous concept of "EU as a civilian actor" and can be seen throughout the literature with synonyms such as Europe as a "norms entrepreneur" (Pace 2007), a "norms diffusor" or a "normative empire" (Del Sarto 2021). The term 'normative empire' originated from François Duchêne, who portrayed the paradigmatic role of Europe in creating a harmonious and peaceful community with "civilian forms of influence and action" (Duchêne 1973: 19). Nonetheless, for Manners, these and other theories prioritised an analysis of the material and economic forms of power, and disregarded the potential of norms and values. Instead, for Manners, EU's power came from its ability to shape conceptions of what is "normal" in world politics (Manners 2002: 236) and pushing for the adoption of peace, democracy and human rights and therefore not a self-interested, but rather a solidarity approach.

Some scholars, such as Diez or Sjursen (Sjursen 2006), have challenged the positive conception of NPE. Thomas Diez put forward a very important critique for NPE comparing the EU to the US. He notes that NPE is "not an objective category" but rather a "practice of discourse representation" (Diez 2005: 626), that creates both the 'Self' as a desired utopia and 'Others' as failed versions, therefore disregarding "their own shortcomings unless a degree of self-reflexivity is inserted" (Diez 2005: 627). He poses the example of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (1995) as a case in the creation of 'others' that violate a series of standards, which legitimizes the EU to exert civilian power.

Additionally, it will be useful to mention other concepts that have nurtured EU's influence of its foreign policy. For instance, Ethical Power Europe (Hyde-Price 2008), Market Power Europe (Damro 2012) or Liberal Power Europe (Wagner 2017). All of them depart from the same idea that Europe acts as a 'force for good' and all reject the realist accounts that see the EU as an incapable actor to influence in the international arena, but understand them in different fields. For instance, Ethical Power Europe is based on the appraisal that the EU has become the "institutional repository of the second-order normative concerns of EU member states. These include human rights, abolition of the death penalty, democracy promotion, environmental protection and tackling poverty in the Global South" (Hyde-Price 2008: 31).

Market Power Europe and Liberal Power Europe grasp the economic side of the equation. The first of them holds the idea that the EU is "fundamentally a large single

market with significant institutional features and competing interest groups" (Damro 2012), which consequently argues that Europe exercises power by externalising economic and social-market related policies and regulatory measures in coercive ways. Economic liberalism is then exported as part of the European foreign policy in other countries and creates the identity of Europe as one of the most successful economies in the planet that is able to sell its model elsewhere. Lastly, Liberal Power Europe makes a reference to the ideological core of the Western thought and conceptualizes the EU as a successor of the ideas of Enlightenment, such as democracy. For Wagner, the EU "is a quintessentially liberal-democratic organization" (Wagner 2017: 1402).

However, what can be understood as 'civilian power' or 'normative power'? According to Merlingen, it is not clear what is the "dominative dimension of European foreign policy that arises from the EU's exercise of post-sovereign normative power" (Merlingen 2007: 438). Furthermore, little attention is paid to the micro-level processes, whose work resolves with a Foucauldian approach to the NPE. I will discuss this (governmentality) approach in the next section, but the point made is that the notion of "power" in NPE until then remained "under the influence of a tradition of political theory at the core of which was the notion of sovereignty" (Merlingen 2007: 438), only being able to see the "visible" dominative dimension: conceptions of freedom against oppression, a model of "contract-power". In contrast, a governmentality approach tells us that a lot of the external governance is made in a lower level of administrative dimension, what is called the "normalization of life", as well as the arbitrariness of the decisions taken by the administrative powers.

Finally, Cebeci also uses a governmentality approach to reveal the securitisation of ENP and its depoliticization effects (Cebeci 2017). The EU sells itself as a postmodern/post-sovereign/post-Westphalian actor, that is, following Manners' conceptions, it is different from pre-existing political forms (the nation-state); henceforth, Europe is 'normatively different' (Manners 2002). Instead, it poses values and norms in the front, leading by 'virtuous example'. But, in practice, this does not result in less domination: Europe expects these countries to adopt a one-size-fits-all model, for instance creating documents that enforce 'best practices' in the ENP (Cebeci 2017: 62).

Precisely because of this policy framework, EU governance of the neighbourhood could approach the notion of an 'empire of sorts' (Del Sarto 2021), where relations with its borderlands follow a schema "sought to stabilize their peripheries and draw economic advantages from them", especially when the EU thinks itself as a "civilizing power". The reality of the EU relations with its borders is one of 'concentric circles of power' (Del Sarto 2021: 25-26). Despite this, the behaviour displayed by the EU in its relations with different countries is not identical: bilateral frameworks are fostered in a way that leaves southern Mediterranean countries divided, since they do not have a common voice in forums with the EU, whereas the EU always acts as a unitary actor. As a result, the current policy "seems to have been cleverly built as a dual mechanism that seeks simultaneously to close the borders of the Mediterranean to flows of people and to open it to flow of goods and capital" (what has been called a 'hub-and-spoke' structure to the Arab region) (Ferabolli 2021: 152).

After this analysis of the European foreign policy in the domain of NPE, I will elaborate now how the EU has tried to differentiate itself. This will add to the complexity of the EU foreign policy and will help us understand the different perceptions of governance that are displayed in the neighbourhood.

1.1.4. The EU as a 'different' actor: difference in the creation of identity

In this Thesis I will try to demonstrate that in the official discourses, EU member states are portrayed as superior in the fields of good governance, economic development or democratic performance in face of other states. The EU is always therefore an example that the world has to follow, and conducts a foreign policy designed to "promote" this kind of values, that are consecrated in article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union.

EU's actorness was originally defined with three parameters: the presence and influence that it had through a range of policy areas, as well as its opportunity and capability (Bretherton and Vogler 2013). Later on, Bahar Rumelili has provided a critical take, trying to overcome the traditional distinction between the EU and the 'other' in a binary: either the EU acts in a 'modern' way as a nation-state, creating explicit and clear boundaries; either it successfully constructs a postmodern community or 'post-Wesphalian actor' with blurred boundaries or 'zones of transition' (Rumelili 2004). The first one (liberal constructivist) would be explained by the feeling of threat to Europe's identity, while the second (critical constructivist) would be based in a "shared fear of disunity" (Rumelili 2004: 28). However, she finds that none of these tendencies is clearly followed in EU's foreign policy: taking the example of Morocco, she explains how there is no 'Other', because "despite several attempts, Morocco has so far not been able to successfully resist the construction of its identity as geographically non-European. The fact that Morocco's application is rarely mentioned in the narratives on European enlargement attests to that" (Rumelili 2004: 43).

In this way, Rumelili's work has been able to overcome the necessity to argue that all of Europe's interactions are solely constructed in an 'other/self' relationship, but they stand on a middle ground of differentiation. She creates a framework through which to depict EU's external differentiation:

- First, is unavoidable for EU external action, since "external action cannot be conducted in the absence of any references to or characterizations of other states" (Rumelili 2021: 200).
- Second, this 'othering' can take different forms; this is because the EU is a 'collective actor', expressing a pluralistic identity. However, the result is an asymmetrical account of the construction of the 'other' and the 'self', where the first is assessed as a 'worse' actor[1].
- Thirdly, different forms of 'othering' carry different implications. According to

[1] In this respect, it is useful to revise the arguments put forward by postcolonialist scholars. Please, see section 2.2 of this article: "Postcolonialism in EU's neighbourhood".

Rumelili, there are four types of identity interaction in EU external action: transactional cooperation, conflict, normative convergence and normative dissociation (Rumelili 2021: 203).

How do these interactions operate? They are organized along two variables: the reaction of the target state (either recognition or rejection) and the EU construction of target state (whether the EU decides there is an inherent or an acquired difference).

In the first place, transactional cooperation or conflict is played alongside the conditionality of the membership policy: European states, in this logic, are not different to external states because of values or norms deemed strictly as 'European'. Instead, concepts like democracy, human rights or the rule of law are considered as universal, "potentially acquirable by all actors concerned" (Rumelili 2021). Nonetheless, while this has no implications for states outside of the European geographical region, Rumelili argues that for Europe's neighbours, the consequences are much more different: they are directly called to comply with these criteria.

Concerning normative convergence and dissociation, the EU "naturalizes its authority to judge others' extent of compliance" (Rumelili 2021: 204), while in the process the target countries of EU external action accept that they lack the characteristics the EU enforces by conditionality (normative convergence). However, some countries and actors begin to challenge these discourses of acquired difference, especially when the benefits are not immediately forthcoming and thus the EU is viewed as a "self-righteous and hypocritical actor" (dissociation) (Rumelili 2021: 205). Overall, the EU constructs different discourses for different states.

1.2. The study of 'governmentality' of Foucault in EU external relations

As discussed earlier, Merlingen commented on the NPE elaborating on the study of the "invisible" by Foucault. This study of what is call 'governmentality' has been followed by other scholars such as İşleyen (2015), who has studied the empirical diffusion of norms under a neoliberal normative framework, the Twinning Instrument, in Tunisia and Egypt.

Governmentality is attributed to Foucault, whose arguments are based on the connection between social categories and the constitution of subjects. Originally, his argument was applied to the concept of mental insanity and the treatment of people with psychological disabilities, that made 'normal' a specific treatment and enforcement of what is "mental sanity". Henceforth, the "sovereign subject", the protagonist of Western thought since the Enlightenment, was discovered as nothing more than the "product of contingent normativizing practices" (İşleyen 2015: 440). While government is the attempt "to shape human conduct by calculated means" or the management of populations at large, governmentality alludes to the technique, the calculation and the need for tactics to get specific results (Li 2007).

Henceforth, two implications of Foucault's work on norms can be extracted: one, that norms are not neutral nor that they arise from a "free and open debate" (they are contingent and ambiguous): Orientalism can be interpreted through these lenses,

creating a "epistemological hierarchy that privileged the knowledge and morals of the former (the normal) over those of the latter (the deviant or the backward)" (Li 2007: 441). Second, the 'technologization' of life under the schemas of consumerism and, more interestingly, the expert-based implementation of seemingly apolitical norms of good governance.

De Roeck & Derous (2019) provide a framework on how to unravel the potential of the governmentality approach. They argue that, firstly, a governmentality analysis does not equal a study of a speech or rhetoric, but rather the bottom-up, micro and fluid relations of truth, power and agency. Second, that governmentality does not mean "neoliberal" (economic), there can be other forms of power being imposed. Thirdly, that it is based on the idea of an 'ascending analysis', from the singularity of a detailed case study to more generalizable forms of knowledge. This is done in the micro-level, "where actors are encouraged or restrained in their actions and decisions" (Derous and De Roeck 2019: 253).

According to Merlingen, the study of NPE is comprised under the umbrella of the study of norms and its close relation to 'legitimacy' and sovereignty, concluding that "the EU has a moral obligation to respect and defend" some qualities and ideas that are seen as universal (Merlingen 2007: 439). It is this way how the EU constructs itself as a positive force. With the cases of what is now North Macedonia and Bosnia, Merlingen shows in practice how police reform in both Balkan countries follows an expert implementation without taking into account local actors. Resultingly, EU experts impose a series of norms "while they themselves hailed from countries facing many of the same policing challenges as Macedonia" (Merlingen 2007: 447). The conclusion of Merlingen is not that the EU is then a "negative" power (as opposed to Manners' NPE), but instead that norms have two facets: on the one hand, they serve as means of control or limits; on the other, a means of emancipation from tyranny, insecurity, poverty and so forth.

Another example of governmentality in EU's foreign policy can be found in Muelenhoff's work, who has studied EU's efforts in promoting democracy through civil society in Turkey. She mainly argues, differently and in a more complex manner than other governmentality scholars, that: a) EU civil society funding is based on neoliberal and liberal rationalities, and that b) the depoliticising effects depend on the discursive context in which they intervene (Muehlenhoff 2019). She departs from the fact that the EU sees civil society as the 'good' other, as a positive changemaker and, thus, the EU provides financial funds for CSOs across the neighbourhood. The result of the EU financing CSOs is turning them into "service providers", depoliticising them, converting them in sort of 'lobbies' that mirror the values that the EU tells them to support (Kurki 2011).

After studying different contributions to governmentality, the common ground demonstrates that the EU is unable to follow the same prescriptions it defends in its foreign policy (as a provider of rule of law, human rights or stability/security, to name a few); in other words, the EU defend a set of standards that the EU cannot live up to. Yet, instead of extracting neorealist conclusions, such as Toje (2011), that are ill-

equipped to explain the persistence of the diffusion of European norms in the neighbourhood, the explanation for this failure could be found on the inconsistencies and in the fact that these standards act as means to other objectives (Pace 2009). In practice, this is driven by the different interests that EU states have (a clear conflict between southern and northern European states and their different postcolonial legacies and approaches to the southern Mediterranean countries) (Schumacher 2018) and its risk aversion to political change in the MENA region. Besides, central concepts such as the rule of law of human rights only obscure the real priorities of the EU when it comes to the ENP: securitisation (instead of democracy) and economic stability (instead of aid for development).

But why has the EU has placed security or economic stability as preferable objectives? And why they are not evident? I argue that this can be better understood if we turn now to a postcolonial study of EU foreign policy. Postcolonialism will provide a framework from which to look to the origins of governance in the neighbourhood. If governmentality is the way certain norms are inherently built into practices that promote a set of discourses or rationalities, postcolonialism guides us through the seeds of those rationalities.

1.3. Postcolonialism in EU's 'southern neighbourhood' and the origins of good governance

So far, I have argued that poststructuralism and constructivism are very valuable lenses from which to look to the actorness of the EU. The approach of constructivism was to understand that institutions are itself constructions of the human mind, and that EU or the 'neighbourhood' hold an immaterial element. Meanwhile, poststructuralism helped me explain that EU's actorness is not located solely on the military or material resources, but more notably, in concepts such as NPE, that give legitimacy and reinforce EU's discourses. Nevertheless, up until this point I have not touched upon the origins of EU values and EU interests and, more importantly, what is the relation that the EU holds with its southern 'neighbours'. Why is EU valued as the paradigm of civilisation or human rights?

For example, some people could argue that the expansion of EU norms is not only done from a top-down strategy, but rather, as a delegated power (Merlingen 2007: 442), *i.e.*, sometimes EU officials only create a series of prescriptions that are expressions of the conditionality of the EU to offer neighbourhood countries some privileges to access the European free market or other facilities. This explanation for EU-neighbourhood relations is not new, it can be traced back to postcolonialist readings. This means the narratives of good governance and corruption are not imposed out from the blue, they have historical and structural roots. To be more specific: good governance and corruption are 'cannot be isolated from the set of concepts and tools that are employed to analyse the relations between European states as former colonies (Angeles and Neanidis 2015). The theorists of postcolonialism demonstrate modernity is linked to colonialism.

1.3.1. The origins of anti-colonial thinking

What is called "coloniality" or the *patrón colonial de poder* (colonial matrix of power) was a concept introduced by the Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano in the beginning of the 1990s, and it is served to "name the underlying logic of the foundation and unfolding of Western civilization from the Renaissance to today" and "is not intended to be a totalitarian concept, but rather one that specifies a particular project: that of the idea of modernity and its constitutive darker side, coloniality" (Mignolo 2012: 2). Coloniality has theological origins and creates a specific system of (re)producing knowledge that fosters all the concepts that have their origin in the Enlightenment and the idea of the human as a rational agent and also creates a hierarchy: European/Western culture and forms of knowledge is always more legitimate, more 'seductive' than other cultures (Quijano 2007): the free market, democracy, ideas of freedom, progress and "scientific" knowledge are always created according to these rules and epistemology.

One of the most well-known theories from colonialism studies is Said's 'Orientalism', coined in the 70s, that refers to the images and mythologies about the 'Eastern', the exotic, compared to the Western world. In Hallaq account, however, Said is incapable of escaping the liberal conception where it comes from: Orientalism is not only the misrepresentation or misrecognition of the 'other', it interconnects knowledge with power and has a performative nature, meaning it is an epistemological tool for domination and differentiation (a compatible vision with those of the poststructuralist about ENP politics) (Hallaq 2018: 85). Moreover, colonialism creates a subject that reproduces these logics even in decolonised countries.

A last element of colonialism is that, even though it has roots in the Bible and Christian ideas, it has managed to secularize (even universalize) itself, allowing colonial powers to "govern from distance" by encoded rules in the international law system. These "universal" laws are the same that the EU strives to defend in formerly colonised countries (Anghie 2004). The key concept here is "sovereignty", which is promised as a liberation from the colonial power but in reality, is still enforced because the rules have not changed: both economic and legal systems recreate colonial ties.

1.3.2. Postcolonialism in the MENA region

Moreover, colonial legacies have managed to portray democracy and Islam as incompatible, as Massad claims, which is another example of how non-European cultures are downgraded (Massad 2015). Democracy is a very specific kind of democracy to the extent that the "security stability nexus is now privileged over the democracy-human rights nexus" (Lounnas 2021). In economic terms, a division of labour takes place under the language of 'development': as Samir Amin developed in his theory, the function awarded to the region is to be "a major supplier of oil" for the Gulf countries, a source of cheap labour for the rest, and a technological hub for Israel, never to become 'emergent' (Amin 2016). According to Amin the US, since the Second World War, is the main colonial power that dominates the scene, while EU trials for an 'Euro-

Mediterranean' partnership pale in comparison. This reading, however, fails to explain Europe's influence in the neighbourhood, as we explained in the previous pages.

According to Somdeep Sen, postcolonialism can be de defined as the "resilience of colonial structures, institutions and discourses", whose effects are the prioritization of an "European model of peace and democracy", that leaders such as Javier Solana or Josep Borrell have repeated during the years (Sen 2022). According to Fisher-Onar and Nicolaïdis, the term (post-) colonial has two dimensions: analytically, it refers to practices that reproduce hierarchical logics; normatively, it is how the transcendence of Eurocentrism should be challenged (Fisher-Onar and Nicolaïdis 2021: 289).

Under this theoretical umbrella, Pinar Bilgin has provided an alternative way to move forward, "postcolonial globality", which underscores the agency for the postcolonial subjects (Bilgin 2019: 97). Consequently, she is able to bring the subjectivity that "is shaped but not determined by colonialism", whereas she affirms that ISIS' narrative on the Middle East, as an "end of Sykes-Picot", "is conditioned by the very same colonial globality that it apparently seeks to resist" (Bilgin 2019: 94).

For Nora Fisher-Onar there are three analytical moves to be made to create a mutual constitution of Europe and the Middle East in the application of an agenda of postcolonialism: provincializing, engagement and reconstruction (Fisher-Onar 2022: 118–20). The "provincialization" of Europe owes its origin to Chakrabaty's foundational book "Provincializing Europe" (2008), where the Indian historian deeply links modernity with Europe and its discourse of capitalism and imperialism, and calls for giving voice to the "subaltern", those who have not been heard. The first step that Fisher-Onan advocates, to "provincialize", is to understand that European experiences and history is only one of the many sets of approaches to navigate global modernities. Second, it means "engaging" with new interlocutors other than liberal or realist to understand frameworks, namely "actors concerned with social and redistributive justice". Lastly, reconstruction refers to creation of alternative voices and to 'better understand, to generate insights, ideas and interlocutors for a "multilogical" conversation'.

Lastly, Huber and Paciello have criticised EU foreign policy in the Mediterranean among visions of EU's civil society (Huber and Paciello 2020), showing how European civil society is "increasingly resistant to EU presence and practices in the Mediterranean" and instead called for the EU to adopt a "new development model with a strong focus on socio-economic rights and social justice, rather than the liberal market approach with its focus on free trade" that would make the EU less neo-colonial.

1.3.3. The emergence of good governance in the southern neighbourhood

As mentioned earlier, the umbrella of 'good governance' is a modern concept that has roots in the European modernity and Enlightenment, as well as in historical episodes of European colonial experience. In this last part of the literature review I will link the concepts of good governance with the perspectives of poststructuralism and postcolonialism.

Governance is regarded as the "the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented" (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific 2009). According to Andersson and Heywood, anti-corruption and good governance have its origins in the 'post-Washington Consensus' in the end of the Cold War, suggesting the need for states to build a stronger regulatory capacity as a precondition for liberal markets, an approach "based on a particular understanding of politics that can serve to ground the economic reforms by multilateral agencies" (Andersson and Heywood 2009: 751). Today, good governance is used as the main pillar for interventions in partner countries. The problem is that it works in a way to legitimise these interventions that carry specific ideas and concepts. For mainstream scholars and European institutions, EU can play a role in topics such as the fight against corruption in the neighbourhood[2]. They find the reason to act in the finding that "the level of corruption (…) is strongly connected to the success of democratic and economic reforms" (Börzel, Stahn, and Pamuk 2010).

Moreover, this is not something the EU does alone: it obliges all its member countries to support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the United Nations. Therefore, good governance around the MENA region is done in connivence with other international organisations such as the UN, the Council of Europe, the Union for the Mediterranean or the OECD, just to name a few (Woods 1999). The different policies and framework legitimise themselves, creating networks of expertise and international governance and norms.

In the view of the move to a more pragmatic vision since the revised version of the ENP in 2015 where partner governments are able to 'pick and choose' certain reforms that evade real changes towards better governance, the EU rejects to play a clear political role in the southern Mediterranean sphere[3]. In the light of this evidence, the mainstream literature starts to recognize the failure of EU democracy promotion. They advert that if the 'membership carrot' cannot be provided, the "offer for deeper economic integration in return for better governance may not suffice" (Woods 1999). Therefore, the attempts for good governance are now restructured under the umbrella of democracy projection, a promising new framework arguing that it "draws attention to micro-level interactions between EU and domestic actors", meaning civil society. In the words of Börzel, for EU policymakers, it "offers a middle way between overly ambitious democracy promotion and overly pragmatic resilience-building" (Woods 1999: 560). Now, much of the policies focus on the idea of building a bottom-up approach and establishing ties with the civil society.

[2] "The EU is uniquely placed to promote good governance, given its own experiences of democratisation; its long history of engagement in this area; its commitment to support a broad range of rights, including in the most challenging contexts; and, of course, its potential weight to promote political reforms through its aid, trade and other relationships" (Hackenesch 2016)

[3] There is, I must say, some other literature that could argue the contrary, especially related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where the EU has taken, in many occasions, a clear stance for the Palestinians and recognizing their statehood. Nonetheless, for the purposes of this Master Thesis, I do not consider this as enough to play an impactful role in the regional dimension. For an example of an argument considering Europe's political implication in regional conflicts (Bouris 2012)

In this context, however, the concept of good governance remains contested. What is more: there is no real complete definition that states in the EU what is understood as good governance (Landman and Larizza 2010: 5), this task is often left out for other international organisations, such as the UN and its agencies. This is because countries that have a colonial past or exercise colonial rule resort to practices as "selectivity", where international donors require performance and the compliance with a set of indicators prior to the provision of funds to combat corruption. In reality, according to Nanda, there are "no objective standards for determining good governance" (Nanda 2006). Despite this, good governance and corruption are correlated with factors such as democracy, that in itself are not sufficient to create the conditions for transparency (Saha *et al.* 2014); what is more, democracies are not safe from corruption either, which seems to contradict EU's vision of itself as an example of best practices.

Arguably, indexes like the CPI fail to establish a clear explanatory factor in what causes corruption, in the first place (sometimes it is argued is the democratic character of nations, sometimes are the development factors). In any case, development seems to be hindered in the case of countries with a colonial past (Angeles and Neanidis 2015: 320). A study of Angeles and Neanidis provides an empirical proof that settler European colonialism has led to higher levels of corruption in those countries were there was more colonial presence, leading to the perpetuation of elites (Angeles and Neanidis 2015: 346). In other words, the consolidation of elites after the decolonization and sovereignty of these countries perpetuates corrupted practices. In particular, postcolonialism has questioned CPI in the light of the African reality. They are said to have a Westernized approach only focusing on the market and legitimising foreign intervention. In revenge, de Maria defends a 'socio-centric approach' to anti-corruption, where 'no particular subjective understanding of "corruption" is assumed to be correct or privileged' (de Maria 2008: 196). For Apata, the main problem when tackling corruption in Africa is the discourse that is displayed, that serves like one of the parts of the postcolonial architecture: corruption is described as essential to Africa (Apata 2019), but in reality, corruption plays an important role perpetuating the economic extractive benefits that the EU or the US have.

As Talad Asad writes: "Within the modern world which has come into being, changes have taken place as the effect of dominant political power by which new possibilities are constructed and old ones destroyed. The changes do not reflect a simple expansion of the range of individual choice, but the creation of conditions in which only new (*i.e.*, modern) choices" (Asad 1992: 337). This quote can also be applied to good governance: nowadays, good governance is a diluted concept, serving the techniques of international organisations and a European vision of how the 'neighbourhood' needs to be governed. As Scott writes, "what interests me about the problem of colonialism in relation to the political forms of modernity is the emergence at a moment in colonialism's history of a form of power — that is, therefore, a form of power not merely coincident with colonialism — which was concerned above all with disabling old forms of life by systematically breaking down their con-

ditions, and with constructing in their place new conditions so as to enable — indeed, so as to oblige — new forms of life to come into being" (Scott 1995).

Using postcolonialist literature, many problems seem to arise with good governance. For instance: first, good governance as an innocuous concept that is inapplicable to non-Western contexts (Plumptre and Graham 1999); second, good governance as a "catch-all" concept that is even started to be rejected by development literature (not inherently a postcolonialist critique) (Gisselquist 2012); third, the origins of good governance outside of Western productions of knowledge (Mkandawire 2007); fourth, good governance as a paradigm impossible to apply in postcolonial public administrations (Rahman and Alauddin 2016).

Overall, this literature review has focused on different theoretical concepts that help to grasp the object of study of this Thesis. Having provided a revision of the literature, in the following pages we will turn to explain the research design and the choice of our cases of study. We will later undertake an empirical analysis on our case studies and finally we will draw some conclusions in the light of the literature and theories exposed above.

2. Research design

2.1. Research question

As stated in the previous section, identity is formed opposing it with an 'Other', which in this case is the southern neighbourhood, and some practices of the European Union feed this differentiation. As I demonstrated, this differentiation has its origins in colonial practices and history. Lastly, I connected postcolonial dependencies with the concept of corruption, that acts as one of the elements constructing the difference between the EU and the southern neighbourhood.

In this thesis, I will adopt a merge between constructivism and poststructuralism approach, subscribing the Foucauldian move that the EU establishes rules for differentiation, being one of them all the discourse related to good governance. While liberal constructivists have argued that "the European identity is defined through a differentiation from its past rather than other states or actors in international relations" (Rumelili 2021: 198), I will follow the stance that European identity is constituted in relation to an 'Other'. Constructivism will also help me challenge the notions of good governance that are used to differentiate the EU with its southern neighbourhood.

Reaching this point, I must warn that during the Thesis I will use the concepts 'Middle East' and/or 'North Africa' (MENA), 'Arab countries', 'southern Mediterranean countries' and 'southern neighbourhood' to name different and multiple states relating to the object of what is the EU otherness. This is to say, all these concepts are constructed and display specific views of the region coming from the 'West', but as Mamadouh says, there is an entrenched asymmetrical relation: while the EU refers to a political organization, the Middle East, etc., is a geographical area (Mamadouh 2021). Needless to say, every concept arises from a specific space and time (for example, 'southern Mediterranean' was more used during the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

of 1995, whereas now 'southern neighbourhood' prevails). However, as explained in the section dedicated to postcolonial thinking, although these concepts are problematic, it is very difficult to detach from them, meaning that regionalisation is an "ongoing and irreversible process" (Mamadouh 2021).

I derive the following research questions: first, as Diez argued, what it is interesting to study about the EU's constitution of its foreign policy is its construction, *i.e.*, "what the use of the term 'normative power' does" (Diez 2005: 626). Therefore, the question would be: "How do these logics and rationalities produce a set of norms under the European Neighbourhood Policy tools to govern the southern neighbourhood?" This question is answered by using the technique of critical discourse analysis (CDA) using different sources: EU policy documents, press releases, webpage entries and speeches from EU officials. Second, it will be useful to ask another prepositive question: "How are good governance norms challenged from the point of view of postcolonialism?"

2.2. The critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach "establishes a dialectic relation between the role of discourse and the real world", meaning that discourses "vehicles that reproduce the social domination of one group over another, although power does not necessarily refer to capitalism" (Carta and Morin 2014: 302). CDA regards 'language as a social practice', taking discourse, as a broader unit of text, as a basic unit of communication (Wodak, Meyer, and Wodak 2001: 2). This section explains what CDA is and, later on, why it is, for the purposes of the present Master Thesis, the more appropriate tool to examine EU's discourse towards good governance in MENA countries.

One of the main pillars of CDA is the conception of discourse. Discourse, for CDA scholars, is not only the compilation of words in different sentences (what we would call 'text', a specific realisation of the discourse). Instead, discourse in their view is the notion of 'big-D-discourse' in Gee's taxonomy (Gee 2015: 30), that is, the knowledge that is produced and circulates in the talking, the general ways of viewing situations and phenomena and the assumptions that come with it (all in all, what he calls: "utterances"). This notion of discourse goes beyond language. Gee puts the example of who can consider themselves as "real Indians": it is not only something that someone "is", but the 'doing' of it, the performance. To get into this "game", as he says, depends on having certain kinship ties, first, and second, it is a participatory phenomenon: one 'cannot be a "real Indian" unless one appropriately recognizes other "real Indians" and gets recognized by others as a "real Indian"' (Gee 2015: 32). Similarly, as I argue in this Thesis, governments recognize each other as having or not 'good government' (what CDA scholars call "predicational strategies"). They do these in many different ways as relying on criteria that they create or other indicators, but ultimately this is a recognition act.

For CDA, discourse analysis is also "critical". Therefore, its intellectual origins can be traced back to Critical Theory studies, a paradigm developed by the Frankfurt School in Germany during the interwar period (1918-39). One of its main thinkers,

Horkheimer, saw the role of the theorist as of articulating social change and improve the understanding of how social phenomena are interconnected with the goal of emancipation of social actors by unveiling the asymmetries of power. In the words of Wodak (2001: 9), critical is "to be understood as having distance to the data, embedding the data in the social (…) and a focus on self-reflection as scholars doing research".

This latter notion of discourse that is inherited by poststructuralists owes much to the work of Michel Foucault, for whom discourse is based on the mediation between a subject and an object. In this sense, discourses "can be defined by the activities participants engage in, and the power enacted and reproduced through them; thus, we can speak about feminist or nationalist discourse (…) the discourse of pity, whiteness or science, or hegemonic and resistant discourses" (Hidalgo Tenorio 2011: 187). Discourse is therefore not only the utterance and/or linguistic performance, but the rules, the divisions and the systems that create an object of study, a discipline or an area. Consequently, and as another main contribution, we can say two things: in relation to the subjects, the discourse constructs their identities, it tells them how to behave. This behaviour is presented in relation to an object that is also built in the process. In the case of good governance, this area of 'expertise' becomes a way to discipline the behaviour of the subjects, the countries of the southern neighbourhood.

CDA has several strengths. First, context is at the heart: it is of upmost importance the time, the location, the social and the cultural framework of a text, that needs to be taken into account when identifying the meanings inside of it. Secondly, the use of a wide variety of sources, from speeches, to images, symbols or technical documents. Thirdly, the theoretical realization, already stated, that society is socially constructed. Lastly, an aim to look beyond the surface of meanings (which would stay on a general discourse readings) and the examination of the social functions of the discourse.

2.2.1. Different trends and critiques to CDA

CDA is often described as a very heterogenous 'approach', not even regarded as a discipline. Methodologically, this poses many questions on how to conduct CDA research, despite its similarities. Differences across CDA research vary along deduction or induction, and between the collection of large amounts of data or the reliance on case studies. Moreover, the research can be conducted bottom-up, starting from the linguistic details; or top-down, where the context takes the stage first. Hidalgo Tenorio notes some of the differences between different authors that I sum up here (Hidalgo Tenorio 2011: 190–94).

On the one hand, some of the most relevant developments of CDA include the Marxist approach of Fairclough, forming a dialectal-relational CDA, highlighting the semiotic reflection of social conflict in discourses and an interest in social processes. Similarly, van Dijk follows a Socio-Cognitive analysis, where frames, taken from cognitive science, acquire a central role. A great deal of his work deals with stereotypes, the reproduction of ethnic prejudice and power abuse by elites and resistance by dominated groups.

The approach that I will engage with is the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) developed by Wodak. It describes "those cases where language and other semiotic practices are used by those in power to maintain domination" (Reisigl and Wodak 2001). At the beginning, DHA focused on anti-Semitic discourse analysis, but more recent research includes the construction of discursive construction of national sameness and social exclusion of out-groups through discourses of difference and the reconstruction of the past through narratives.

On the other hand, the critiques of CDA are centred around four main areas: context, cognition, partiality, and linguistic models. These criticisms do not question the existence or epistemological relevance of CDA, except for a few exceptions like Widdowson and Chilton. However, critics acknowledge the tangled theoretical foundations of CDA and the inconsistent use of concepts and categories, which hinder the production of a systematic theory.

For example, Widdowson (2004) argues that there is a gap between the addresser's meaning and the addressee's interpretation of this meaning, and the perlocutionary effect is not a feature of texts but a function of discourse. He further criticizes CDA's focus on isolated sentences instead of utterances and the indeterminate nature of the concept of context. He regards some CDA approaches as examples of the functional fallacy, which produces simplistic findings, closer to impressionistic commentary. Billig (2003) acknowledges that a critical approach may itself become a dominant discourse, with the shortcomings of the approaches it criticizes. Martin (1992) argues that scholars should analyze not only texts they find objectionable but also texts they find admirable and motivating. Blommaert (2005) criticizes CDA for generally paying attention to texts of relevance in the West and not applying CDA to societies other than the First World. He argues for the need for self-critique in CDA and the discursive production of inequality.

2.2.2. The analysis: Wodak and Reisigl's model for the analysis of discourse

Drawing up from the different CDA options, I will follow Wodak and Reisigl's 4-step strategy of analysis (Meyer 2001: 27), that comes from the Discourse Historical Analysis (DHA) approach, that proceeds in the following way:

1. Establishment of specific contents or topics of a specific discourse.
2. Identification of discursive strategies. Some of them include:

- Referential or nomination strategies: the linguistic devices of interest are the membership categorization, metaphors, metonymies and synecdoche. Their objective is the construction of in-groups and out-groups.
- Predication strategies: they reflect stereotypical, evaluative attributions and traits that are seen as implicit or explicit. They do this by fostering stereotypical, evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits.
- Argumentation strategies: they reflect certain 'topoi'[4] used to justify political inclusion or exclusion, discrimination or preferential treatment.

[4] The *topoi* are "parts of argumentation which belong to the obligatory, either explicit or inferable premises. They are the content-related warrants or 'conclusion rules' which connect the argument or arguments with the conclusion the claim. As such, they justify the transition from the argument or arguments to the conclusion" (Reisigl and Wodak 2001: 74)

- Strategies of perspectivation or framing: they use the means of reporting, description, narration or quotation of events and utterances. This can be done by reporting, describing, narrating or quoting events and utterances.
- Intensification and mitigation strategies: used to intensify or mitigate the force of utterances. This means that a certain proposition previously issued is modified.

3. Thirdly, the linguistic means, that is, the words, phrases and any kind of language creation that is used to reiterate these strategies.

This is the schema for the discourse analysis that will be followed for Chapter 4 (empirical analysis). Meanwhile, it is useful to prepare some questions that will help us operationalise the analysis of the discursive strategies:

Discursive strategies	Answered with the question
Referential strategies	How are EU and Lebanon/Morocco referred to linguistically?
Predicational strategies	What traits, characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to them?
Argumentation strategies	By means of what arguments are certain representations of the subjects justified, legitimised and naturalised in discourse?
Perspectivation or framing strategies	From what perspective are these nominations, attributions and arguments expressed?
Intensification/mitigation strategies	Are these utterances articulated overtly? Are they intensified or mitigated?

Table 1. Discursive strategies, adapted from Reisigl & Wodak

2.3. Selection of the case studies

For the study of political corruption, but also of good governance, as Amundsen said, there is much more to gain from individual case studies, that "can reveal much information in the scope and characteristics of specific instances of corruption", compared to a more traditional approach relying on indexes that are not statistical 'hard data' (Amundsen 1999: 27). This is why in this Master Thesis I choose two case studies that I find especially interesting to study regarding good governance: Morocco and Lebanon. In this section I provide a few words on the rationale behind the selection of both case studies.

I will not yet delve into the methodological strengths of the selection of two case studies contrary to one case study or the selection of more case studies. Instead, my interest here is to explain why I choose Morocco and Lebanon as such as the two countries representing what the EU calls the 'southern neighbourhood'. In this sense, I will employ geographical, historical and institutional arguments that also create a differential governance framework for both countries.

In geographical terms, Morocco and Lebanon form part of two geographies of the Arab world, what is called the *maghreb*, that gives the Arabic name for Morocco; and the *mashreq* for Lebanon. This means that Morocco and Lebanon are situated in different contexts with the surrounding countries: Lebanon is regarded to be in the centre of the 'Middle East', a region where the EU has had limited influence but nonetheless has tried to intervene in some occasions when it comes to the peace process between Israel and Palestine (Soetendorp 2002). The EU, in its different institutions and sometimes without a coherent stance between its member states, has issued communications and other political documents that envisaged the recognition of the Palestinians, such as the Venice Declaration[5].

Contrary to this, Morocco's entourage comprises a competition with Algeria for the influence in Africa, and with a very important concept as the one in Western Sahara. Europe's position regarding this conflict is a timider one, that has not conducted to solving it, despite its proximity to countries such as France and Spain, with big stakes in the issue (Benabdallah 2009). Despite this fact, Morocco is normally portrayed as a "good student" for the EU: their relations date back to the 1950s, when the Rome Treaty recognized them as part of France as well as Algeria. In 2008, Morocco obtained the 'advanced status', giving a great deal of external legitimacy despite the preoccupation about human rights abuses. Since then, political dialogue has intensified, with more and more integration of Morocco in the elements of the single market. Despite this, the relationship is marked by Morocco trying to join the European Economic Union back in 1968 without being successful. Lastly, two other elements play a central role in the position of Morocco. First, the centrality of the Moroccan monarchy and the established technocracy of the political parties (Maghraoui 2020); second, the great deal of importance that immigration coming from Morocco has in the EU, that can be studied from many different angles, but that can be reduced to the vast quantities of aid that the EU gives to Morocco for this policy field (Peña 2022). It is true that Morocco is, then, a big partner of the EU, but at the same time some scholars warn that it may start to disengage from the EU (Fernández-Molina 2019).

Meanwhile, Lebanon has never and probably will never think of itself as 'European', despite the characterisation of the country as a door between the East and the West. The EU is one of Lebanon's main trading partners and Lebanon has free access to the European market. Nevertheless, the political situation is marked by high political corruption and a very critical economic situation (Pastor Vidal 2023), with respect to which the EU has responded by issuing communications and organizing conferences such as the CEDRE conference to raise funds to provide economic help to the country, especially in humanitarian needs after the start of Syria's civil war, that multiplied the population after the big influx of refugees coming from the neighbouring country (Dandashly 2021). In the last few years, it seems that EU-Lebanon

[5] The Venice Declaration of 13th June 1980 is considered as one of the most important declarations in favour of Palestinians. It considered their right to self-determination in a resolution and declared all the Israeli settlements illegal under international law as established binding principles on the parties. Lastly, it included the Palestinians Liberation Organization (PLO) to be associated in the negotiations.

relations have settled on the security-stability nexus marked by the threat raised by the Syrian crisis. Moreover, the relationship seems more paralyzed than ever, given the lack of reforms and the worsening economy.

2.4. Description of selected data and sources

In order to minimise the selection bias, CDA scholars are guided by the principle of triangulation, that requires the use of different data genres. Foreign policy discourses, in any case, do not fall under the umbrella of only one type of source. Triangulation is accomplished through the theory of the four-level context. Context can be articulated in four levels (Reisigl and Wodak 2001: 29): the immediate language or text internal context, the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances, texts, genres and discourses, the 'middle range' theories context and the 'grand' theories context. During our analysis, we will use the different levels of context.

The data has been collected from online open sources and from three main types of data: policy documents, press releases and speeches. Each genre of document constitutes a different kind of source. In this sense, official policy documents hold a high formal authority, but they are also the result of a dialogue between different parties (Aydın-Düzgit 2014: 360). Meanwhile, press releases and webpage entries are issued only by one of the actors, the EU in this case, and are designed to give rapid information and allow for quick replies. Lastly, speeches are also a source of high political authority, and entail a very important charge of identity construction and audience reach (Aydın-Düzgit 2014). The authors of the speeches that I will analyse are: Federica Mogherini (EU High Representative from 2014 to 2019), Josep Borrell (High Representative/Vice-President since December 2019), Ralph Tarraf (EU Ambassador to Lebanon since September 2019), Patricia Llombart Cussac (EU Ambassador to Morocco since November 2021) and Olivér Várhelyi (Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement since December 2019). These people hold high authority positions in their respective areas of competence inside EU's administrative structure and show the different levels of engagement that the EU has had with Morocco and Lebanon.

The timeframe that this research covers is from 2015 until 2023. The reason for using DHA in such a recent period of time is that many elements in the discourses are also grounded in historical narratives of what the southern neighbourhood is; in other words, the timeframe does not remove the historical elements. Moreover, in 2015 the ENP was reviewed as a response of the policymakers to the perceived crises and the backdrop of the 'ring of friends' to a 'ring of fire', *i.e.*, the neighbourhood as a source of conflict and instability (the Russian invasion of Crimea, and the crude civil wars in Libya and Syria) (Furness, Henökl, and Schumacher 2019). It is also interesting to note that the first revision was done in 2011, after the Arab Spring. Yet, in real terms, the Arab Spring was an important factor for the ENP in 2015, not in 2011, since the first revision was mostly focused on the compliance with the changes that the Lisbon Treaty had brought. In any case, the 2015 revision installed a 'pick-and-choose approach', where human rights and the rule of law, despite its presence, started to

have a secondary role. Rather, notions such as security, stability or resilience took the lead, in a more realistic turn (Furness, Henökl, and Schumacher 2019: 465).

Overall, I gathered 25 documents: 13 referring to Lebanon and 12 to Morocco. In the case of Morocco, some of them have been translated by web services from French to English to provide homogenous research.

2.5. Strengths and limitations of the research

In the first place, in relation to the methodological framework, DHA and CDA are approaches emanating from social constructivism. However, if we apply them to poststructuralism, we see that CDA involves a differentiation between discourse and reality, which poststructuralists do not envisage, since for them discourse constitutes social reality. Therefore, we will not be able to evaluate the aims and interests of the articulating actor (the EU). EU's interests are not taken into account because they form part of the discourse construction.

Secondly, there can be limitations regarding the selection of case studies. Selecting two case studies instead of one gives less space to research one topic deeply in the chosen case study, but it gives us the possibility to compare both cases and extract some questions on the similarities and discontinuities of the cases compared. In comparison with a broader research of case studies, our research is less generalizable, but some sort of generalization can come in connection to the framework of postcolonialism. This means that instead of following the unifying programmes of good governance, we explore the specificities of the case studies.

Thirdly, regarding the subject of study, the role of the 'Other' in EU external action "has been mostly studied from the standpoint of the EU and rarely from the standpoint of states that are targets of EU foreign policy" (Rumelili 2021: 202). In this Thesis I am choosing to study the discourse of the EU, which is part of the study of an agenda of decentralizing practices, but I recognize that further research needs go further than the box of 'good governance' and instead explore which other alternatives have arisen. In this sense, much work is being done today to study authoritarian practices of government in the MENA region (Schlumberger 2017).

All in all, the poststructuralist approach conducts me to offer alternative theories criticising what is taken as natural, but as part of this body of research I will not be in the position to offer recommendations or evaluations of the relationship of good governance between the EU and the states of the southern neighbourhood, not even Morocco and Lebanon.

3. Empirical analysis of the case studies

In order to conduct my empirical research, I firstly chose to divide the information in different topics regarding good governance for each case study. Secondly, I will analyse each theme, taking into account the predicational, argumentative or perspective constructions. Lastly, I will extract a set of conclusions in the next chapter.

3.1. Morocco

3.1.1. The promotion of human rights

All through the texts, one of the main pillars for the collaboration of Morocco with the EU is the migration agenda. Through migration, a lot of pressure is put onto southern European countries, especially Spain. The EU leaders, such as Josep Borrel recognize this and emphasize greatly the collaboration with Morocco in the field of migration:

> We remain, therefore, confident that similar situations will not happen again and that a close cooperation with Morocco, respectful of human rights and shared commitments and values, will be preserved (Borrell 2021).

In this excerpt, it is possible to understand how NPE, promoted through the argument of 'human rights', is used by the EU only when it favours its position releasing some pressure, *i.e.*, returning migrants to their country of origin before reaching Europe. Moreover, another layer of the discourse is the adjective "shared", meaning that a set of values, despite coming from European origin, are presented as common values. Consequently, we can categorize this instrumentalization as a 'normative convergence' that, rather than approaching Morocco to EU, serves to create differentiation (Rumelili 2004). The problem here is not whether the values are good or bad, but their instrumentalization and how their origin is inherently connected to the EU.

Emotionally, there is even some level of anxiety that can be felt in the way that Borrell uses certain expressions, such as the "many concerns", but also in how the EU wishes for a "fresh start in the European migration policies". All in all, what we see is that the policies on migration are an important revulsive that the Kingdom of Morocco can use to negotiate with the EU. Here, following governmentality explanations, international norms of migration are used as means of control, one party against another (Merlingen 2007). On the one hand, EU pushes for certain standards of what is considered acceptable in human rights that favour its position. Morocco, as a big receiver of migrants does not reject these norms, but accepts them. This is what Cebeci refers to as the securitisation and depoliticization in NPE (Cebeci 2017): the EU tries to enforce a set of values that deems as common for all southern Mediterranean countries and bases the collaboration mainly in them. The result, nevertheless, is not a convergence of values, is only a superficial promotion of values that in reality do not permeate, but rather create mechanisms against migration in the name of "human rights".

3.1.2. A partnership of equals amid security challenges

Why it is so important to control migration? There is a paradigm of "security challenges" or the context regarded as "difficult". For example, in the Joint Declaration after the 14th meeting of the Association Council, one of the main areas of the structure of the relationship is one of "political consultation and enhanced cooperation on security", that

> should make it possible to strengthen the strategic dialogue, political consultation and operational cooperation on common internal security challenges. These include combating organised crime networks, terrorism, and in particular the financing of terrorism, violent radicalisation and the return of foreign fighters, illicit trafficking in drugs and arms, as well as police cooperation, the training of security forces and judicial cooperation, all in compliance with international law, including human rights and the rule of law. In this regard, priority will be given to the sharing of information and experiences. In the same vein, both parties intend to develop common approaches in the area of external security, in particular vis-à-vis the Sahel, West Africa and other regions of interest, including the possibility for Morocco to take part in European Union civilian or military peace-keeping operations. (Council of the EU 2019)

This shows that the EU is scared of migration by the perception of danger and risks. It is not trivial that security challenges are linked in the same paragraph with specific geographical areas, the Sahel or West Africa, that are considered the 'neighbours of neighbours' (Del Sarto 2021: 76). In this sense, the EU regards Morocco as a 'buffer zone' recalling del Sarto's construction of Europe as an 'empire'. This is why in 2017 the EU also welcomed Morocco joining the African Union.

In another speech delivered in Morocco in late 2022 by Josep Borrell, the HR/VP argues that "times are difficult and we face many problems", repeating this 'topos' of perilousness. The solution to this "jungle", as Borrell sees it, is to talk "between friends". Here, Borrell uses series of argumentation strategies: "tell each other what their positions are in a partnership", EU as the "largest trading partner of Morocco, which resonates the echoes of Market Power Europe, "based on common and concrete actions, not only on rhetoric and nice words, but on things that matter" (framing the actions as something effective and pertinent), and Morocco being the "most important beneficiary of EU cooperation in the region" ('topos' of development) (Borrell 2023).

But all EU aid is not directed to the same beneficiaries in a given country: for example, some of that funding is only directed to CSOs, that are perceived by the EU as one of the main pillars in the promotion of good governance (Muehlenhoff 2019). In a document on the priorities of engagement with the civil society, certainly, EU perceives the context as "fragile and constraining", even if in the main speeches it is not portrayed as such (Delegation of the EU to Morocco 2022).

In fact, despite in most of the speeches the European Commission presents a horizontal relationship, there are also some documents that show the imbalances and disagreements inside the EU. For example, in 2016, Morocco severed ties over a fisheries agreement that was considered illegal by the European Court of Justice that had ruled that the inclusion of the territory of Western Sahara in the agreement did not respect international law. In order to mitigate the problems, Mogherini visited Morocco, noting that

> The EU remains convinced that the agreements between Morocco and the European Union are not a violation of international law and as such an appeal has been filed, the agricultural agreement otherwise remains in force.

3.1.3. Solutions: EU as a benchmark in good governance and the promotion of values

A common argument is that Morocco and Lebanon have to follow the EU because it is their largest trading partner or a great provider of financial aid. Nevertheless, this argument the main argument is always that EU values are always at the forefront:

> (…) based on the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the Moroccan constitution and the international commitments of the two parties. The aim of this area will be to facilitate an alignment around the partnership's founding and guiding principles, namely democracy, the rule of law, good governance, justice, efficiency, responsibility and transparency of institutions, human rights and fundamental freedoms (…) The two partners will work to ensure the development of a resilient, inclusive, dynamic and open society, in which civil society plays its role to the full. (Council of the EU 2019)

Note that the values converge asymmetrically, from the recipient country to the EU, despite the Moroccan constitution is present, and despite Morocco does not form part of the EU nor it has agreed to be legally bind to the EU. As studied by Foucauldian governmentality, norms are not neutral, they are ambiguous and are forms of delegated power: concepts such as having a "resilient, inclusive, dynamic and open society" are a way to create differentiation or at least to show the lack of this kind of society in Morocco.

The same thing happens for the application of the Association Agreement, that serves as the major guiding line, or the "exchanges of good practices" than run unilaterally. Even in climate governance, the EU gives it a major importance even if Morocco's emissions are notable lower and the industrial contexts largely differ. The EU, in this sense, treats Morocco as a very close partner with which to work "together on a number of large-scale endeavours including world peace, social inclusion, economic recovery" as said Patricia Llombart Cussac, EU Ambassador to Morocco. The transformation of the interests of the EU as a priority for Morocco is another way to exercise domination by values.

But, although Morocco is a partner, the discourse puts the EU puts in the position to assess and evaluate Morocco's efforts in good governance. For instance, in some of the technical reports for the execution of Commission financial aid:

> (…) the opening and gradual liberalization of the Moroccan economy, combined with the strengthening of public governance and the rule of law, have resulted in an acceleration of economic growth,a significant increase in the level average life of Moroccans (…) despite these advances, the growth potential of the Moroccan economy remains insufficient to reduce the unemployment rate (European Commission 2021).

To this, the Commission adds other problems in Morocco: excessive centralization of Moroccan administration, low decentralization and low level of digitalization, and especially the Moroccan "changing traditional society", which is an oxymoron

(how can one society be conservative and changing and the same time?). For this, the recipe offered is EU's help, complementing the work of other international organisations: a form of externalisation of the public services. All of these elements of evaluation reinforce a certain mode of governance, where market liberalisation and economic growth is the norm.

An example of this is the speech delivered on the European Parliament in behalf of Borrell at the beginning of 2023, where the chief of the EEAS reiterates the partnership "based on values" and the critical role of NGOs in Morocco, calling for the partner to stay

> in compliance with international human rights obligations.
> We will continue our efforts to ensure that all citizens can benefit from the rights guaranteed by their Constitution and the full respect and implementation of the laws.

Even though the partnership is defined as one of "equals", is the EU the one who uses a certain set of predicational strategies: supporting, congratulating, or establishing or not impunity. The way these verbs are used is not neutral, since they carry a connotation to assess what is wrong a what is acceptable. This is in line with the explanations of Orientalism as having a performative nature, defining one of the sides (the EU) as an active part, whereas Morocco not respecting 'international human rights obligations'.

3.2. Lebanon

Similar to the case of Morocco, in Lebanon the Syrian migration crisis is presented as one of its most important problems in terms of a governance crisis. However, in relation to EU's perception of good governance in Lebanon, I propose a division before and after the Beirut port explosion of August 2020. In August 2020, an explosion in one of the hangars of the Beirut port created a massive social and international alarm. From that moment onwards the economic situation of Lebanon worsened, as well as the perception on the progress of the political situation. This is also reflected on the many statements that the EU issued since then and also in the hopes put in Lebanese government.

3.2.1. Lebanon before 2020

The documents since 2015 show a stable process on the relations EU-Lebanon. During these years, the dynamics present the EU also having an active role in the governance of Lebanon, proposing and promoting reforms and acting as a 'watchdog'. These years are characterized by the production of many technical documents that evaluate and define the situation of Lebanon:

> Despite its own sectarian fragility, Lebanon continued to exercise a high degree of resilience against the challenges and threats that emerged from the turbulence in the region. (European Commission 2015)

Amid the framing of resilience, The EU reminds its role as a provider of economic help. The economic help is connected to the big issue for the EU as this time, which is migration.

> EU assistance for Lebanon takes into account the big challenge Lebanon faces in hosting refugees. (…) one of the key objectives of the Lebanese Government, as presented at the Brussels Conference, is to restore economic growth as an anchor for stability and social cohesion and to generate employment. Apart from traditional assistance through grants under the Single Support Framework (SSF), the EU will also make use of more innovative financial vehicles (…) (European Commission 2017)

This discourse is aligned with the findings of Badarin and Wildeman: "in spite of its rhetorical position of aid in normative and liberal discourse, contemporary EU development policy towards the MENA region is centred on the short-term aim of deterring migration and promoting security along with the long-term structural aim of exporting EU-styled governance and reforms" (Badarin and Wildeman 2021: 401). At this moment in time, EU still puts the focus on the limited progress on democracy, insufficient participation of the civil society, weakened institutions and the lack of developments in anti-corruption legislation.

There is a craft of the migration-security nexus highly linked to the terrorist threat (İşleyen and Fakhoury 2021). For example, in the 8th meeting of the Association Council, a document produced jointly between the EU and Lebanon, the EU uses the migration crisis to show off its role as a humanitarian actor, showing how much it has provided economic help to Syria, but immediately after,

> commends the increased commitment of the security agencies to work in a co-operative way in managing the land border with Syria and the progress that has been achieved in the field of integrated border management with EU support.

Contrary to this, in a normative frame, the association with the EU is presented as "an embodiment of shared values and an acknowledgment of mutual interests (…) a common area of peace, prosperity and stability" (Decision No 1/2016 of the EU-Lebanon Association Council agreeing on EU-Lebanon Partnership Priorities 2016). All these statements echo a bipolar conception of the world, where in countries of the Middle East, security, especially against threats to the Western model of values, is the priority, without taking into consideration that much of Europe's stability comes at the expense of stability and order in the neighbourhood (Ayoob 1995). Whereas the EU thanks Lebanon for taking such an important share of migrants, the EU had a really bad time convincing some its member states to welcome Syrian refugees.

In the economic domain, the documents create a link between private investment, market-driven policies as a preferable model of economic growth. In this way, neoliberalism is supported in Lebanon, despite it has already been the model for many decades in the Levantine country that has favoured many oligarchs. This creates a model, as İşleyen argues, where the governments implement technical and administrative capacities to implement ENP objectives aligned with a neoliberal governmentality (İşleyen 2015). Furthermore, the EU offers Lebanon the integration in the European

market and poses its primary goals (fight against terrorism and climate change) as the goals of Lebanon. Following Diez, securitisation, posing the other actor as inferior and representing the Other as violating universal principles are different forms of Othering, to which here I add the imposition of asymmetric goals: certainly, the fight against climate change or terrorism is not the same in the EU and in Lebanon.

Lastly, the EU "congratulates", "recalls", "reiterates", "commends", acting in a sort of guiding manner to the Lebanese state. As in the case of Morocco, the EU also presents itself as a "decentralizing" actor, recalling the role of the municipalities responding to the Syrian crisis. The decentralization of government shows how some policies are enforced disregarding Lebanon's past, where centralisation has been part of the Lebanese political life since the Ottomans, "effective to a great extent in precluding European influence" (Ough 2022).

3.2.2. EU's discourse after 2020

From the statement of HR/VP in 8th March 2021 (Delegation of the EU to Lebanon 2021b), for the first time there is a separation between the "Lebanese authorities" against the families of the victims and the "Lebanese people", represented in a binary. This is also stressed by the changing perception of the EU of the economic situation:

> We are very concerned by the rapid deterioration of the economic, financial, security and social crisis. The Authorities are struggling to uphold the delivery of essential services and supplies. Lebanese are suffering.

The Ambassador of the EU to Lebanon, Ralph Tarraf presents a very personal discourse: the "I stand before you" or "They can count on us at this difficult juncture", framing the European position in the binary. However, some form of conditionality is also stressed:

> Lebanon's problems can only be solved by the Lebanese people, by the Lebanese government and by the Lebanese political classes, which has been, for many times – too many times - not fulfilling their commitments to their population. (Delegation of the EU to Lebanon 2021a)

Or in other words, that Europe can only help Lebanon, if Lebanon helps itself first. But how can Europe help a country whose institutions have been recognised to have collapsed? As Samir Amin argues, the role of the region is relegated to be in a permanent economic crisis, where the European model is expected to be followed (Amin 2016). This is accompanied by a form of ultimatum that has been repeated in the last years: "The moment to act is now", "This is what the new government must now focus on" (Delegation of the EU to Lebanon 2021c), creating an extreme sense of urgency to undertake good governance reforms.

What is shocking, nonetheless, is that until some extent this sense of urgency was ignored before the explosion. What changed then in EU's perspective? I argue, following Sen's argument about the resilience of postcolonial structures, that it can be read as a decay of institutions where EU had some form of control (Sen 2022). This

is why there is a sense that the model is broken. At the same time, there is a preoccupation that violence sparks in the country, even if the violence is caused by the extreme economic situation.

Meanwhile, in most of the statements the EU shows its "significant financial, technical and political support" for the preparation of the Lebanese elections of March 2022, whose monitoring concludes in "irregularities and vote-buying resulted in a lack of level playing field" (EEAS Press Team 2022). The discourse revolves around the EU predicating the Lebanese authorities to implement reforms in a whole range of areas, and using it as a conditionality to provide for a package of financial assistance. Another important element of this change of discourse is how Lebanon is defined as

> a place which has hardly ever known internal stability and social cohesion in its history (…) a crisis which has collapsed the business model on which this country has relied on for decades. (Delegation of the EU to Lebanon 2022)

In a speech by Josep Borrell, the HR/VP goes as far as to argue that "Macron has said many times, the Lebanese model is broken" (Delegation of the EU to Lebanon 2021a), judging the situation of the country by a postcolonial actor as France.

> The EU is "far from being perfect" but still encompasses security and safeness that predicates in Lebanon, always promising that "is fully determined to continue encouraging and supporting Lebanon to take the necessary measures to exit this crisis" (Council of the EU 2022).
> This place and this flag are the symbol of a unique model in today's world. A model that grew from an economic union between six countries to a strong partnership between 27 states, spanning many areas, from personal freedoms, justice and security to climate and health. (Delegation of the EU to Lebanon 2023)

In another communiqué, the EU argues that the situation is not satisfactory "in the eyes of its highly educated and sophisticated population" and that the final goal is to recover Lebanon as "an attractive destination for international trade and investment". The first of the arguments creates a character of the Lebanese population that takes only part of the totality as judges of the situation (an example of synecdoche); the second of them shows the governmentality of the norms created by the EU in the neighbourhood: to push for the market as the unique solution of the improvement of the situation. This is done with the alliance with other international institutions.

Lastly, in March 2023 the EU promises a package of 60 million euros in humanitarian assistance, but only after stressing that is not "a sustainable long-term solution", that rather it is reaching a deal with the IMF. This shows the persistence in the dependence on EU aid of Lebanon.

4. Conclusions

> Never hesitate to go far away, beyond all seas, all frontiers, all countries, all beliefs
> Amin Maalouf, *Leo Africanus*

This thesis has analysed EU's good governance discourse towards Morocco and Lebanon, using documents that ranged from 2015 to 2023 with the methodology of

discourse historical analysis (DHA). Based on the analysis, I argue that the discourses construct the identity of the EU and characterize the neighbourhood as the 'Other', which is in line with the arguments of the poststructuralists (Cebeci 2016). The EU creates an identity based in the primacy of EU's model of human rights, good governance and democracy, and presents itself as having an active role in both countries. A postcolonialist reading can also be extracted with the following logic: first, the EU has set the goal to become a global actor, including the presence in a region where it once had a major colonial power. This is done in line with the development agenda subscribed by international organisations, and in the form of NPE, Market Power Europe and other forms of narrative-building, presents its norms as a 'force for good' and as a norms' diffusor (Dandashly and Noutcheva 2022). However, as Merlingen points out, the hidden face of NPE is one where humanitarian intervention carries "epistemic violence, the technologization of politics and administrative arbitrariness" (Merlingen 2007).

Nevertheless, despite this normative discourse, a second layer shows how securitisation is the primary objective that drives EU policies in the southern neighbourhood. This is shown by the omnipresent characterization of migration as a threat in both countries. In the case of Morocco, it is the arrival of Sub-Saharan migrants, and in Lebanon, it is the Syrian war. In many documents, shows its presence as a provider of humanitarian or development aid. Postcolonialist literature has analysed this phenomenon and has discussed EU's role as a security actor, where aid is used to deter migration (Badarin and Wildeman 2021).

Coming back to the research question, these are some of the logics and rationalities in the governance of the neighbourhood. During this thesis, Foucauldian governmentality has allowed to overcome the dichotomy between realist and normative conceptions of the EU and see the government as a "plurality of activities aimed at shaping, directing and 'improving' the conduct of others" (Derous and De Roeck 2019: 247). Additionally, the concept of 'Otherness' in the MENA region is not trivial: European values are portrayed as "shared" in the "partnership" but in reality, they are used as dispositive of control. As Rumelili described, EU's foreign policy necessitates 'otherness' as a way of survival, but this 'Otherness' also allowed for the EU to tell the Lebanese that the economic situation was 'their problem, not ours'. In fact, Said's Orientalism has explained how the images and perceptions of the Middle East societies have been constructed in the West during the years, linking them to corruption and bad governance (Said 1979).

Where does this leave the agenda of good governance? In this thesis, I have provided a critical view of the concept. Good governance can be seen as a product of the international liberal order that reigned after the Cold War and the development policies that expanded in the Global South. In the last few years, however, where the role of EU's global actorness seems to decrease, good governance still runs an important industry but shows signs of exhaustion. Actors such as China provide a more appealing alternative to EU in the MENA: they do not challenge authoritarian governments, neither they ask for governance reforms or human rights improvements in ex-

change of funds. For example, during the covid, China was studied as a case of soft power for its 'medical diplomacy' (Husain and Sahide 2023). In an agenda for future discussion, many things can still be studied.

These developments in the international global order show that good governance may be a thing of the past and that countries in the southern neighbourhood turn the look to new actors. In this context, othering becomes void, because all the normative dimension of EU's norm diffusion becomes auto-referential and appears as a hypocritical discourse. The norms and values of the EU are only useful as they reflect a very limited understanding of the realities outside Europe. This does not mean that democracy or human rights are not worth fighting for. It may mean that they will be reconfigured, and that Europe will have to 'provincialize' (Chakrabarty 2008). Also, it will have to accept the 'colonial globality', the creation of new forms of knowledge that do not necessarily put Europe at the centre (Bilgin 2019). But in order to not fall short, the EU should not forget to engage with the new rationalities and be open to alternative voices, only in this way self-reflection will guide new global futures. The alternative is a world of growing autocratization, privatization and climate emergence in a lost sense of what Europe can do.

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De Europa
Special Issue - College of Europe 2023

Economic policy debate in Kádár's Hungary

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1. Introduction

In May 1966, just before opening discussions on the next five-year plan, newly elected *Politburo* member and Party Secretary for Economic Policy Rezső Nyers stood on the podium and gave his presentation on the "principles of the reform of the economic mechanism" to the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP)[1]. Merely a decade after the violent suppression of the 1956 Revolution, which sought radical change in Hungary, there was an intent once again to reform the system – albeit in somewhat less of an earthshattering way. This time, the initiative came from within the Party, employed peaceful means of policy reform, and intended to focus solely on the economy while leaving the political system untouched. Nevertheless, the impact of the ideas presented by Nyers – and later approved by the Party leadership – are not to be underrated. If fully realized, these reforms would have created a highly decentralized economy quite different from the rest of the Eastern Bloc. Nothing illustrates better just how far Hungary was shifting from János Kornai's prototype of the "classical Socialist system" than the declaration of the Central Committee of the Party, according to which "in the new economic mechanism the price system must be flexible" and "the driving force of the economy must become the competition […] of sellers for the buyers" (Kornai 1992, Hoch 1994: 147-156). Eventually, the New Economic Mechanism (NEM), as this reform package came to be known, was approved by the MSZMP Central Committee in November 1966 and came into effect in January 1968 (Rainer 2000: 41-42). However, what makes this radical development truly fascinating is the way in which the entire Party elite lined up in full agreement behind the NEM. Reformists, Centrists, and Hardliners alike were among the supporters of the reforms (Adair 2003: 112). This is especially interesting given that many of the people who initially endorsed the reforms would turn against them and force their eventual reversal just five years later. The aim of this research project is to explain some of the driving forces behind these events.

Much of the existing literature on the New Economic Mechanism tends to discuss either its general content or the reasons why it did not fulfil its initial expectations. The first scholarly publications that entertained the mysteries surrounding the NEM were produced in the repressive environment of single-party rule. They mostly relied on textual analysis of the relatively few publicly available documents published either

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[1] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, Budapest, Hungary, "*A gazdasági mechanizmus reformjának irányelvei*" [Principles of the reform of the economic mechanism], Fond 288, Archival Unit 4/80-81, 3-30.

by the Party or the government. Nevertheless, despite their obvious limitations, these early studies can still provide readers with some valuable insight. One important example of these works is a rather substantial 1982 analysis by prominent economist Gábor Halmai. In this study, Halmai identifies the lack of structural reform as the biggest shortcoming of the NEM. According to him, this was most likely a compromise made in order to avoid conflict between different societal groups as well as different factions of the political and economic elite. According to his analysis, due to this negligence of structural reform, the economic system remained over-centralized, which Halmai claims was "the main obstacle to intensive development of the economy". Furthermore, he argues that there was no general and coherent vision of economic policy behind the reforms and that the relationship between the plan and the market was never clarified. In fact, the political leadership did recognize many of these shortcomings in a report that was published in 1973. However, instead of trying to correct them, Halmai argues that these deficiencies of the reform were showcased to prove that the sort of economic liberalization that the NEM intended to achieve was not a walkable path for Hungary. Thus, many of its most impactful components were gradually rolled back and the economy was eventually re-centralized. The nail in the coffin for the New Economic Mechanism was a collection of highly counter-reformatory measures that were adapted as a reaction to the worsening global economic outlook (Halmai 1982: 105-109). What is clear about this line of thinking is that it builds on the communication of the very political elite that first launched and then halted the reforms – albeit with a fair amount of critical analysis and commentary. Overall, probably the biggest weakness of early scholarly publications such as the work produced by Halmai is that the materials they could possibly rely upon were highly limited and thus they could say little about the underlying tendencies behind the making of the reforms.

The debate about the failure of the reform movement of the 1960s became livelier and more fruitful once the MSZMP regime fell. This might be attributed on the one hand to the emergence of a more democratic environment in which free speech was tolerated and on the other hand to the passage of time and the wisdom of hindsight. The debate between János Kornai and Róbert Hoch is a good example for this intensified discourse. The argument presented by Kornai can be summarized by the following quote from his 1992 book: "The reform led to little success because the blueprint was carried out. However, the blueprint was already full of internal self-contradictions" (Kornai 1992: 45). Therefore, he believed, the economic reforms approved by the MSZMP leadership were highly inconsistent, which prevented them from producing significant economic gains. This in turn prompted the Party leadership to reverse these reforms. Hoch addressed this claim directly in his 1994 publication. He argued that the proposed reform agenda was not self-contradictory – quite the opposite. It was economically consistent. However, it was never meant to be carried out to its full extent due to political opposition. According to Hoch, for economic reforms to succeed, political reforms would have been needed first (Hoch 1994).

Arguably, Hoch provides a more coherent narrative for the creation of the NEM than most other scholars of his times. He refers to cross-border discussions of the fun-

damental redesign of the economy of Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe: the idea of a so-called "Little Comecon". These aspirations were, however, killed by the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact military forces in 1968. Hoch does argue that there was substantial support within the Hungarian political elite to revise the general approach to economic management, commonly referred to as "economic mechanisms". However, this was not the case for "economic policy" – the general principle of Soviet-style central planning[2]. That remained a taboo. The key argument of Hoch's thesis follows up on this observation. He claims that the day-to-day operation of the economy within the setting of Hungarian central planning could not be decentralized without affecting the general economic policy, which in turn would even have an effect on politics. This is because weakening plan control over firms would have resulted in less political control over them as well. When this became apparent, reforms were reversed (Hoch 1991: 979-985).

While the aforementioned studies are arguably the most relevant early works on the NEM, later scholarly publications can help acquire a more nuanced understanding of the underlying causes of its emergence and eventual fall. A 2003 publication by Bianca L. Adair employes dynamic network analysis to explain power relations within the Hungarian political and economic elite in the 1960s and '70s. Adair credits the increasingly technocratic Party apparatus for launching the reforms. However, according to her explanation, the Hardliner wing of the *Politburo* soon succeeded in capitalizing on the dissatisfaction of economic losers of the reforms (most notably managers of large state-owned firms) and on the disapproval of Moscow. As such, they forced the political leadership to promptly reverse the reforms (Adair 2003: 105-118). Another explanation provided by István Polónyi focuses on the academic background of the times. He refers to the 1960s as the "decade of economists" in Hungary and highlights the role scholarly economists played in the reform movement (Polónyi 2018: 48)[3]. Similarly to Polónyi's analysis, György Péteri also explores how social scientists – in his case economists and sociologists – affected and were affected by the reforms and their reversal (Péteri 2016: 249-266). The final piece of recent literature that needs to be mentioned is Zsuzsanna Varga's 2018 publication. This study focuses on the agricultural aspects of the NEM and discusses how agricultural reforms differed from and proved to be more successful than other elements of the reform package (Varga 2018).

The multitude of the different aspects from which these studies have approached the question of the Hungarian economic reforms of the 1960s and '70s shows just what a complex topic it truly is. While early scholarly publications from the 1980s and '90s intended to give a general description of the reforms and of their downfall, more recent works tended to focus more on nuances and various specificities of the New Economic Mechanism. However, few of these studies addressed the

[2] One important disclaimer that must be made here is that while the language of the time did not consider the reforms of the NEM as changes in policy, it will often be referred to as such in this study in accordance with contemporary language use.

[3] This is reminiscent of how the Chinese economic reforms in the 1980s and '90s were directly influenced by economists in academia – sometimes the very same ones as in Hungary. An in-depth overview of these events is portrayed by Julian Gewirtz's 2017 book *Unlikely Partners: Chinese reformers, Western economists, and the making of global China* (Gewirtz 2017).

question of how and under what conditions could these reforms emerge in the first place. In those instances, in which this question was entertained, the answers often contradicted one another. This paper will aim to clarify this confusing situation.

The main objective of this research project is to explain the driving forces behind the surprising consensus that emerged in the mid-1960s in the MSZMP leadership in favor of the reforms of the New Economic Mechanism. It will rely on declassified records of Party leadership meetings and qualitative methods such as content analysis and discourse analysis to study the reasoning and motivation of Party leaders. It will pay special attention to the argumentation of those political leaders who first supported but then just a few years later would turn against the reforms. It will conclude that it was likely not a principled opposition to partial economic liberalization that made certain MSZMP leaders change their opinion on the matter but rather their deeply precautious and risk-averse outlook, which resulted in different stances towards the reforms under different circumstances.

The paper will be structured in the following way: After this brief introduction, the paper will proceed with explaining the historical background of the reform debates. Then, the next chapter will be dedicated to the key institutions and actors, which are relevant to this scholarly investigation. This chapter will also serve as a "guidebook" which the reader may consult should there be any confusion regarding specific names or terms used in this paper. The next chapter will elaborate on the sources and methodology employed by this study. This will be followed by an analysis of these sources, and then a more in-depth discussion about the implication of the findings of this analysis, its validity and limitations, and suggestions for future research. The paper will end with a brief conclusion.

2. Historical background

The two sections of this chapter are meant to provide the reader with an adequate understanding of the historical context of this study. The first section will discuss how the Soviet-backed regime of János Kádár used political and economic means to consolidate its power in the aftermath of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the subsequent Soviet military intervention. It will describe the specific environment within which the debates about economic decentralization emerged in the early 1960s. Building on this discussion and on the reform-vs-counter-reform dichotomy suggested by Róbert Hoch, the second section will briefly describe the direct implications of the reforms of 1968 and the counter-reforms of 1973. It is essential to clarify these developments before the study can proceed with a more in-depth analysis of the reform debate.

2.1. Consolidation of the Kádár regime

The Soviet Red Army entered Budapest on 4 November 1956. It suppressed the anti-Stalinist revolution in a matter of days and toppled the multi-party but still Com-

munist-led government of Imre Nagy. A new pro-Soviet government was installed under the leadership of János Kádár. The "Kádár regime", as it came to be known, was built on the political structures of the Stalinist dictatorship of Mátyás Rákosi (1949-1956) but it also incorporated many of the newly created institutions of the Revolution. The 1949 constitution remained in place ensuring the legal continuity of the People's Republic of Hungary as a Socialist single-party state. However, Rákosi's Hungarian Working People's Party (*Magyar Dolgozók Pártja*, MDP) was never resurrected. Instead, Imre Nagy's Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (*Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt*, MSZMP) was kept in charge of governing the country but this time with János Kádár as its First Secretary. All other political parties were outlawed. The Patriotic People's Front, which was originally created as an umbrella organization for all revolutionary parties, became an empty shell subordinate to the MSZMP. There was no room for plurality outside party politics either. The local workers' councils, which assumed control over industrial facilities across Hungary during the Revolution and thus decentralized industrial control, were all dissolved. Similarly, independent civilian organizations such as the highly influential Writers' Association were banned. In order to crack down on any opposition to the new political order, the infamously violent Hungarian Revolutionary Home Guard Militia (generally referred to by the derogatory term *pufalykások*) was established[4]. Shortly afterwards, the Workers' Guard was set up as the armed wing of the Party, and it served similar purposes to those of the Home Guard Militia. The organized persecution of participants of the Revolution quickly unfolded. Some 22,000 people received jail sentences and 350 were executed, including Nagy himself. Fearing retribution, 211,000 people fled the country, between 166,000 and 175,000 of whom never returned (Romsics 1999: 315-320).

The restoration of single-party rule did not mean the complete restoration of the old Stalinist system. While the violent crackdowns in the years after the Revolution certainly destroyed the lives of many thousands of people, it is important to note that these actions differed greatly from persecutions under Mátyás Rákosi. The harsh measures employed by Kádár were targeted explicitly against those who were deemed enemies of the new political system. Unlike under the previous regime, the majority of the population was not meant to be terrorized. Popular acceptance was of high importance for Kádár. As he famously noted, "anyone who is not against us, is with us" (Romsics 1999: 333). This statement became even more true at the beginning of the 1960s when the regime felt confident enough to end the systematic persecution of dissidents and declared general amnesty. The final and complete consolidation of power by Kádár and his allies arrived in 1962 when they purged the Stalinist wing of the Party. Just like Khrushchev condemned Stalin's crimes and cult of personality in the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Kádár also spoke up against these attributes of the dictatorship of Mátyás Rákosi – who himself fled to the USSR during the Revolution and was never allowed to return to his homeland (Gouch 2006: 136-137).

[4] The word "revolutionary" in the name of the Hungarian Revolutionary Home Guard Militia does not refer to the 1956 Revolution, which was claimed by the Kádár regime to be a "counter-revolution". Instead, it refers to the establishment of the Socialist system in Hungary in the 1940s as a revolutionary act.

In order to appease as large of a part of the Hungarian population as possible and to prevent another anti-government uprising from ever breaking out, raising living standards became a key concern for the regime. This mirrored a general trend in the Eastern Bloc: Communist regimes were increasingly turning to stimulating consumption as a means of legitimation. Even the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was no exception. In 1959, they officially adopted the policy of "Catch up and overtake" (*догнать и перегнать*) and reinforced it in 1961. The intent of this policy was to overcompete Western countries in the material wellbeing of the average citizen. The Hungarian regime opted for a similarly (or arguably even more) consumption-focused approach (Dombos, Pellandini-Simanyi 2012: 326).

This shift in attitude is clearly demonstrated by changes in priorities of production and economic development. From the early 1960s onward, resources were channeled away from the previously highly valued heavy industry into the manufacturing of consumer goods. Hungary became one of the main Eastern European producers of such highly demanded items as vacuum cleaners and refrigerators. Regarding economic development, investment in sectors that had a tangible impact on people's standards of living became the priority. This is especially clearly exemplified by developments in transportation and telecommunication infrastructure. Prior to 1956, car ownership was considered to be a rare luxury unavailable for the average citizen. Under Kádár, this was no longer the case. By 1965, there was a total number of 100,000 cars on the roads and by 1970 this number had increased to 240,000 (in a country of about 10 million). The network of asphalted roads grew from a mere 700 km in 1955 to 2,757 km in 1965 and that of paved roads from 1,351 km to 24,200 km in the same years. There were also significant improvements in the telecommunication sector. The number of phones per 1,000 inhabitants rose from 12 in 1950 to 33 in 1967 (Romsics 1999: 340-345). Another example for efforts to fuel consumption is the significant increase in government spending on commercial advertisement, which by 1973 had reached a staggering 3% of all national expenditures (Dombos, Pellandini-Simanyi 2012: 326).

However, the kind of "welfare socialism" envisioned by Kádár was in many ways unreconcilable with the economic policy that the regime inherited from the Rákosi era. The extreme accumulation of capital and forced industrialization, which were the uttermost priorities under Rákosi, necessarily required reallocating resources from consumption to savings and investment. Furthermore, these evidently unpopular sacrifices of material wealth had never truly met their intended goal. Due to internal inconsistencies in policies and the over-bureaucratization of the system, the rapid economic growth highly anticipated by the regime never materialized (Muraközy 2004: 23). Kádár and his comrades not blind to these problems set up a committee in 1957 under the direction of well-respected (non-Marxist) economist István Varga to revise the state of the economy and to make policy recommendations on how to sustain relatively high economic growth over a long period of time. The report issued by this committee called for the replacement of the "centrally planned economy" with a "real planned economy". In their vision, enterprise-level central planning would end, and planning agencies would then serve merely as information-providers ensuring free and smooth competition in relatively free markets (Szamuely 1982: 20).

While not very surprisingly the Varga Report was promptly rejected by the MSZMP leadership, certain modest reforms were nevertheless implemented. The share of GDP channeled into investment was reduced from above 30% to below 20%. It was also more equally distributed between the different sectors of the economy than during the early 1950s, when heavy industry alone accounted for almost half of all government investment. The wasteful practice of providing manufacturers with domestically extracted raw materials, known as "dotation", was ended. The number of state-owned industrial firms was reduced by about 40% easing the over-bureaucratization of the economy. The attitude of the regime towards agriculture changed quite drastically as well. Even though forced collectivization continued to be the norm, peasants were now allowed to keep much of what they produced on their own individually assigned plots within collectively owned farms. Furthermore, agriculture was made more productive by increased mechanization and more rational approaches to soil management. As a result, in the 1960s agricultural production increased by an average of 2.5% per year despite the relocation of a significant part of the labor force away from the countryside into the cities. Animal husbandry drastically increased as well: by 3.4% per year (Romsics 1999: 336-343).

Even though these relatively small-scale reforms were already sufficient to cause tangible improvements in the economic performance of the country, they were still not enough to meet the unrealistically high expectations of the regime. Most problematically, these modest reforms did little to improve the international trading positions of Hungary vis-à-vis more high-performing and more resource-rich countries. Kádár's initial trade policy of balancing the import of raw materials by exporting manufactured consumer goods was unrealistic. Hungary lacked the technology to produce goods of desirable quality and thus it could not cover the costs of its imports. Consequently, the country had to become seriously indebted to foreign lenders (Muraközy 2004: 26-28).

Amidst these difficulties, more and more people within the MSZMP leadership started to push for economic reforms. Some of their proposals were even comparable in their radicalism to that of the previously rejected Varga report. Using the jargony of the times, these Party leaders argued that "extensive" growth based on capital expansion needed to be replaced with "intensive" growth based on productivity increase. In 1962, young reform-minded Rezső Nyers became Party Secretary for Economic Policy, and two years later he initiated a fascinating debate within the *Politburo* about the complete restructuring of the Hungarian economy. This debate would lead directly to the approval and implementation of an ambitious economic reform package in 1968 commonly referred to as the New Economic Mechanism (NEM) (Muraközy 2004: 28, Gouch 2006: 150-151).

2.2. Reform and counter-reform

Prominent Hungarian economist Róbert Hoch uses a reform-counter-reform narrative to describe the economic policy changes in Hungary in the 1960s and '70s. In his 1994 article, Hoch makes the argument that the reforms of 1968 were almost en-

tirely reversed by the counter-reforms of 1973 (Hoch 1994: 147-156)[5]. While some economists, notably János Kornai, initially disputed Hoch's claims, now there is a general consensus in academia that these claims are historically accurate (Kornai 1993: 89-100, Polónyi 2018: 46-63). Therefore, this study will utilize Hoch's reform-counter-reform dichotomy to describe both the policy changes and the debates that led up to them. Consequently, a similar terminology will be used from here onwards to describe the time periods of these debates. As such, the period between Rezső Nyers's elevation to the Party Secretariat in November 1962 and the launching of the New Economic Mechanism in January 1968 will be referred to by this paper as the "Reform period". In the same vein, the period between January 1968 and the January 1973 reversal of the reforms will be referred to as the "Counter-reform period". A detailed analysis of the debates during these periods will be the subject of later chapters of this paper. This section will instead cover the specific policy changes that were implemented in 1968 and in 1973.

The New Economic Mechanism was approved by the Party leadership in May 1966 and was implemented a year and a half later in January 1968. It was a collective of policy changes targeting three main areas (Muraközy 2004: 29). The first one of these areas was the organization of firms. The ambition of the policymakers was to decentralize the Hungarian command economy and make firms self-managing. It is important to note that central planning did not cease to exist in its entirety and the plan continued to play an important role in setting economic goals on the macro-level. Nevertheless, it no longer interfered with the functioning of companies on the micro-level. Instead, firms had to operate according to the principle of the "socialist market". In practice, this meant that they had to be guided by both market forces and indirect policy tools of the government such as taxes and subsidies. Managers were now responsible for both the success and failure of their firms, and they had to bear the consequences of their decisions. (This would later lead to some unforeseen socio-political tensions.) A certain degree of private enterprise came to be accepted, especially in the agricultural sector, and competition between different firms – regardless of whether publicly or privately owned – was now even encouraged. In order to stimulate this competition, row materials were no longer provided centrally. Firms, if they met certain criteria, were even given the right to trade cross-border both with Comecon and non-Comecon countries such as West Germany, without direct ministerial oversite (Rainer 2000: 42).

The second main policy area targeted by the reforms was wage relations. Here, the goal was to make the system more meritocratic and to create incentives for higher-value-added production. While before the reforms, wages were centrally and uniformly set by the government, in this new system managers of firms became responsible for setting the wages of their employees. This naturally drove up the renumeration of those with higher levels of education or with valuable skills and competences. The less educated and less skilled were the relative losers of this policy change (Rainer 2000: 43).

[5] To refer not just to the policies themselves but to the overarching processes of policymaking in these two cases, Hoch creatively readopts the historical terms of "Reformation" and "Counterreformation" (Hoch 1994: 147-156).

The third area was the price system. In pre-NEM Hungary, virtually all prices both on the producers' and the consumers' sides were set by state authorities. This meant that prices could not serve as signals of demand. Furthermore, by the mid-1960s, there had emerged a significant discrepancy between the official prices (referred to as "internal prices") and the natural market prices of global commerce (referred to as "external prices"). This discrepancy had further increased the international isolation of the Hungarian economy. To fix these problems, a certain degree of price liberalization was implemented. A three-tier system was created with prices either remaining fixed, allowed to fluctuate within certain thresholds, or were made entirely free-floating. Government agencies kept pricing fixed for those goods and services that were deemed essential for the health of the economy or for socio-political stability. This affected the pricing of most services, basic amenities, and energy. Partial free pricing (with limited fluctuation) was introduced for some basic goods for which the lack of perfect substitutes constrained the prospect of true competition. Lastly, pricing was allowed to fluctuate without limitations in accordance with market forces for most non-essential goods and services (Hare 1976: 370-375, Muraközy 2004: 30, Rainer 2000: 44).

Nyers did not view the 1968 policy changes as an endpoint to the reforms – quite the opposite. He hoped that they would be just the beginning of a larger reform wave. However, due to a number of reasons that will be covered in latter chapters, the MSZMP leadership eventually abandoned the reform agenda, and a 1972 Central Committee decision effectually reversed most of the policy changes of the NEM. As a first step, the industrial organization of firms was recentralized. State owned companies were merged into 325 large firms, which by the end of the 1970s accounted for 97% of all exports to fellow Eastern Bloc countries and 98% of all exports to outside the Eastern Bloc. Then, the 50 largest of these companies became entirely exempt from the wage and price reforms of 1968. Centrally determined production quotas were also reintroduced for these companies leading to further recentralization. Furthermore, due to their high importance to the national economy, some of these state-run enterprises received "special attention" and "special central aid" in the form of subsidies from the government killing the possibility of any resemblance of fair competition. While smaller firms could opt to retain some elements of the NEM policies, by this point, the New Economic Mechanism was dead in all but name (Adair 2003: 118-119, Halmai 1982: 108-110). Hungarian economist István Polónyi referred to this chain of events as the "silent fall" of reforms as official communication did not change in any noticeable way. 1973 was talked about as a linear continuation of 1968. The state media kept praising the reform agenda of the regime even when the reforms in effect had already been transformed into counter-reforms (Polónyi 2018: 50).

3. Key institutions and actors

To better explain the Hungarian reform debates of the 1960s and '70s, their key participants must first be introduced. As the previous chapter has already alluded to, virtually all key actors involved in these debates were associated with the ruling Hun-

garian Socialist Workers' Party. It was also the leadership of the Party that first approved the economic reforms and then reversed them just five years later. However, can we say that these Party leaders possessed real agency over economic policies in the country that they were at least nominally in charge of governing? In a Soviet satellite state, such as Cold-War-era Hungary, it is not at all self-evident that the national political elite had the ability to set its own economic policy agenda independently from Moscow. This rather peculiar situation raises the interesting and highly relevant question of agency. Therefore, this chapter will begin with demonstrating that the Hungarian political leadership, albeit certain limitations, did in fact possess real agency over economic policymaking. Once this is convincingly done, the chapter will proceed with an attempt to familiarize the reader with the structure of the Party and its leaders at the time of the reform debates.

3.1. The question of agency

The Hungarian reform debate of the 1960s only truly matters from a policymaking perspective if its key actors had real agency over the economic policy of the country. This is not at all self-evident given the subordinate political status of Hungary to the Soviet Union best demonstrated by the 1956 military intervention of the Red Army. Therefore, before this study can proceed, the question of agency must be convincingly answered.

Cold-War-era Hungary and in the same fashion Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Poland, and Romania were rightfully described as satellite states orbiting around the Soviet Union. By the end of the 1940s, politics, economics, and society at large in these countries had been redesigned on the basis of the Soviet model. As Brzezinski explains, under Stalin, institutional and ideological uniformity was the goal. This uniformity extended to policy decisions as well commanding the satellite countries to follow Moscow's lead in every important policy area. Forceful interference by Soviet authorities in the internal affairs of these nominally sovereign states was commonplace, and there was no room for independent national policymaking. In the Stalinist system, neither the official central government nor the national communist parties possessed real agency over national policies of importance (Brzezinski 1967).

This all changed after Stalin's death in 1953. Instead of the Stalinist model of direct management of the satellite states, the indirect support for the pro-USSR political leadership became the preferred course of action. The rationale behind this change was driven by two major factors. First, direct military intervention or even the presence of substantial number of Red Army troops in these countries was costly. Without such coercive force, however, it became more difficult for Moscow to force its will on its satellites to the same extent as it did before. Second, there was an expectation within the Soviet leadership that by allowing a certain degree of divergence along specific national characteristics and interests, the Communist leaders of the satellite states could gain a greater degree of legitimacy and support from the local citizenry. This change of Soviet attitude resulted in a situation in which the political leadership

of the satellite states would acquire a relatively high degree of agency over policy decisions concerning domestic and economic affairs. However, this agency was never limitless. Continuous consultation with the Kremlin was still required in order to ensure that no policy of satellite government would ever significantly harm the interests of the Soviet Union. The threat of military intervention did not completely disappear either as demonstrated by the events of 1956 in Hungary and 1968 in Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, it remained a measure of last resort applied only when deemed absolutely necessary (Krasner 1999: 214-215, Shafir 1987: 164-170).

It is also important to note that the Soviet Union did not treat all of its satellites the same way. In most policy areas, the Hungarian regime enjoyed a greater degree of independence than the other Eastern Bloc regimes. This was to a large extent due to MSZMP First Secretary János Kádár, who was considered to be undoubtably loyal and predictable by Khrushchev and by Brezhnev alike. This exceptional Soviet trust in the Hungarian leadership served as a prerequisite for the principle of "constructive loyalty". This idea implied that Hungary would be unambiguously loyal to the Soviet Union in every matter of clear Soviet interest and free to act independently where such interests were not present or at least were not clearly articulated. This already relatively high degree of agency only grew with time (Békés 2016: 95-96). One particularly clear example of the extended room of maneuver that the Kádár regime enjoyed relative to that of its regional counterparts was its ability to considerably improve diplomatic relations with the United States in the 1960s. This is especially remarkable given the sensibility of the issue and its foreign-policy dimension. It serves as proof of just how much agency Hungarian policymakers truly possessed (Borhi 2004).

As demonstrated by a large volume of historical evidence, one might confidently state that the political leadership of Hungary under the direction of János Kádár had real agency over the economic policy of the country. When the leaders of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party began debating the possibility of substantial economic reform in the 1960s, they did not merely engage in a curious intellectual discussion but in an actual decision-making process. Their views and actions had real-life consequences and the opinion of the Kremlin was of secondary importance. Soviet interests were not entirely negligible as MSZMP *Politburo* discussions regarding the reversal of the reforms in the early 1970s would eventually unveil but it is not where the focus should be placed. Most of the attention must be centered around the Hungarian political leadership and the *Politburo* documents which serve as their testimony. Thus, studying these documents will form the core of the scientific inquiry of this project.

3.2. Key institutions: Organs of the Party

As already explained in the *Historical background* chapter of this paper, The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (*Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt*, MSZMP) was the sole legal political party and thus permanent ruling party of the People's Republic of Hungary from the 1956 until 1989. The Party had a hierarchical organizational structure. At the lowest level, there were the local party organizations. In theory, these local

party cells formed the bedrock of the MSZMP, which elected members higher-up in the hierarchy and thus provided the Party with a certain degree of democratic legitimacy. In reality, these local organizations were subordinate to the central leadership of the Party (O'Neil 1994: xii-xv). Representatives from the local party cells gathered during the regular Party Congresses, which were legally identified as the "highest-level organs" of the Party. Prior to 1962, the Congress met once every three years, once every four years prior to 1970, and once every five years afterwards. Even though it had the legal power even to change the Party constitution when deemed necessary, in reality it possessed no ability to make decisions of any significance on its own (Németh 1995: 17). The Central Committee occupied a position in the middle of the Party hierarchy. It was tasked with ruling on major political, ideological, and organizational issues in between two Congresses. It was summoned at least once every three months. While it had often been described as "the parliament of the Party", in practice the Central Committee rarely gave place to any real debate or contention, it tended to make decisions with unanimity, and issued its decisions without providing any public justification. In fact, it tended to merely rubber-stamp major decisions made by the two most important organs of the Party leadership: the Political Committee and its Secretariat (Lewis 1996: 20-21, Németh 1995: 19-20). Therefore, this study will focus mainly on these two bodies.

Just like in any Sovietized state of the Eastern Bloc, the top Party leadership was represented by the Political Committee – generally referred to in the English academic literature as the *Politburo* or in Hungarian sources and in colloquial speech as the PB. It was a collective decision-making body based on the Marxist-Leninist principle of democratic centralism. The essence of this idea was that free and critical discussion within the Party was tolerated as long as it did not escalate into factionalism and did not threaten the unity and the interest of the Party (Waller 1993: 56-58). As archival evidence suggests, critical opinions within closed-door *Politburo* meetings were in fact regularly voiced. In theory, all of its members (their number varied between 9 and 13) were equal, and all decisions had to be made by simple-majority voting with each *Politburo* member having one single vote. In reality, informal influence played a significant role in decision making. This meant that different *Politburo* members with personal networks of different sizes and of different degrees of influence yielded different amounts of power. First Secretary János Kádár was always *primus inter pares*. Nevertheless, this did not mean that he could make decisions alone without the formal approval of the *Politburo* (Gouch 2006: 119-133). For all these reasons, this study will be based first and foremost on the information shared by *Politburo* members during their official meetings.

The Secretariat of the *Politburo* was the *de facto* government of the party tasked with executing the decisions made by the *Politburo*. This body was made up of the First Secretary as well as 3 to 8 other secretaries, each responsible for one specific policy area. While discussions within the Secretariat were important both in the early stages of the policymaking process as well as during the implementation of already agreed-upon policies, the Secretariat was never the place where the most important

policy debates would take place nor was it the place where the final decisions about such policies would be made. Those were the prerogatives of the *Politburo*. Furthermore, almost all members of the Secretariat were simultaneously also members of the *Politburo*. Therefore, while the political importance of the Secretariat should not be understated, it will only be treated by this study as of secondary importance behind the *Politburo*.

The Council of Ministers, as the central government of the People's Republic of Hungary used to be called, is the only political entity discussed in this section that was not an integral part of the Party. Unlike in most Western countries, in Sovietized Eastern Europe, national governments did not play a key role in political decision making. While legally speaking still the executive arm of the state, the Hungarian government had no capability to draft policy independently. In fact, it was functionally subordinate to the Party (Kornai 1992: 36-39). The First Secretary was in every regard higher up in the informal political hierarchy than the Chairman of the Council of Ministers (the *de jure* head of government). In a similar fashion, the Secretary for Economic Policy also had more of a say in drafting economic policy than the Minister of Finance or any of the several sectoral ministers who were formally in charge of governing the Hungarian economy. Therefore, no attention will be given to the Council of Ministers within the analytical framework of this study.

3.3. Key actors: Reformists and Hardliners

The next couple of paragraphs will introduce those figures of the MSZMP leadership that arguably played the most important role in the economic reform debates of the 1960s and '70s. There will also be an illustration provided about the relative positions of these actors in terms of ideology and intra-party influence. For the sake of simplicity, those Party leaders who were leading the charge against the New Economic Mechanism in the early 1970s will be referred to as "Hardliners" while those who kept vocally supporting the reforms will be referred to as "Reformists". There is also a distinct third "Centrist" group of those MSZMP leaders who cannot be unambiguously assigned to either of these two factions. This middle group has sometimes been referred to as the "Kádárist Center" (*kádári közép*) as it most notably included the First Secretary of the Party and several other people who often aligned with his centrist position. Due to reasons explained above, this project will take 1962 as the starting point of the Reform period. Therefore, this inquiry into the main political actors of the MSZMP leadership will only include people who held positions of power after this date. There will be some occasional references to positions held by people prior to 1962 but only in those cases when the respective political figures remained relevant even after this year. (For the full composition of the *Politburo* and the Secretariat between 1957 and 1975, see Table 4 in the Annex.)

Undoubtedly, the most important decision-maker not just concerning economic policy but any development in Hungarian politics of this time was János Kádár. He acted as First Secretary (later renamed Secretary General) and was member of the

Politburo of the MSZMP from the suppression of the Revolution in 1956 until his removal from office in 1988. As such, he was the formal head of the Secretariat and informally first among equals in the *Politburo*. While his power was not absolute, every decision of major importance had to be approved by him. Regarding his ideological stances, he opposed orthodox Stalinism as demonstrated by his opposition to the cult of personality, his commitment to formalized institutional arrangements, and the 1962 purge of the Stalinist wing of the Party. However, he did not occupy a clear stance in the Hardliner-Reformist economic policy debate. He was first and foremost a pragmatic who was mainly concerned with his own position within the Party, the legitimation of the Party vis-à-vis the Hungarian public, and Hungarian foreign relations with the Soviet Union and the rest of the Eastern Bloc. All historical evidence suggests that he gave little importance to philosophical questions of Marxism or to economic theory (Gouch 2006: 119-150, Romsics 1999: 315-316).

1962 was a watershed year for the MSZMP leadership not only due to the aforementioned anti-Stalinist purges but also because a rift occurred this year between Kádár and his deputy György Marosán. Historical evidence suggests that this event had more to do with the conflicting personalities of the two and the difficulties for them to effectively work together rather than any sort of substantive disagreement over political or ideological matters. Nevertheless, it led to Marosán's ousting from both the *Politburo* and the Secretariat. The person who managed to benefit the most from these developments was Béla Biszku. He was already a member of the *Politburo* but not yet of the Secretariat. After being tasked with overseeing the anti-Stalinist purges, he was appointed to replace Marosán as Deputy First Secretary (Gouch 2006: 135-138). At various times, he also served as Secretary for Administration and Secretary for Party Organization, and he quickly emerged as the second most powerful actor within the MSZMP leadership. Biszku was highly ideological and unambiguously belonged to the conservative Hardliner wing of the Party (Simon *et al*. 2015)[6].

Arguably, the two most influential members of the Hardliner wing of the Party other than Biszku were Zoltán Komócsin and Árpád Pullai. Zoltán Komócsin was elevated to the *Politburo* after the 1962 purges, and in 1965 he was promoted to the position of Secretary for Foreign Affairs – one of the traditionally most influential positions within the Secretariat. With strong connections both in Budapest and Moscow, he played an essential role in organizing the resistance against the New Economic Mechanism. By the early 1970s, he was widely seen as the leader of Kádár's internal opposition. One of Komócsin's closest allies was fellow Hardliner Árpád Pullai, who served as Secretary for Ideology from 1966 to 1970 and then as Secretary for Party Organization jointly with Béla Biszku from 1970 until 1976. Due to his personal connections and his ability to influence decision making skillfully from his positions at the Secretariat, Pullai had arguably become the most influential MSZMP politician who never got elected to the *Politburo* (Simon *et al*. 2015).

[6] A comprehensive online catalogue of profiles of MSZMP leaders was compiled by the *Nemzeti Emlékezet Bizottság* [Committee of National Remembrance] in 2015, edited by István Simon and contributed to by Zsolt Horvát, István Simon, Róbert Szabó, and Norbert Szári. https://neb.hu/hu/partvezetok (accessed May 11, 2023).

The other extreme of the ideological spectrum within the Party leadership was occupied by Lajos Fehér. He was notable for being the only high-level Party leader who openly advocated for retaining much of the policy agenda of revolutionary Prime Minister Imre Nagy. He was especially sympathetic towards Nagy's agricultural policy. As such, Fehér opposed collectivization and called for less state intervention in agriculture. He was member of the *Politburo* from 1957 until 1975, Secretary for Agriculture from 1959 until 1962, and Secretary for Administration briefly in 1962. He became especially powerful after his biggest rivals were purged in 1962 (Gouch 2006: 123-127, Simon *et al*. 2015).

Given the subject of this study, the three consecutive Party Secretaries for Economic Policy must also be mentioned here regardless of whether they were also members of the *Politburo* at that time. First among them, Jenő Fock was an ally of Fehér and a similarly vocal proponent of economic restructuring. He remained member of the *Politburo* even after his 1961 retirement from the Secretariat, and between 1967 and 1975 he assisted to the economic reforms as Chairman of the Council of Ministers. Sándor Gáspár followed Jenő Fock as Secretary for Economic Policy in 1961. While he occupied this position only for about a year, upon his retirement from the Secretariat, he was compensated with a seat in the *Politburo*. He is generally viewed as the fourth leading figure of the Hardliner faction beside Biszku, Komócsin, and Pullai. In 1962, Gáspár was replaced by Rezső Nyers as Secretary for Economic Policy. Nyers used his newfound position to draft and gain approval for the economic reform package that came to be known as the New Economic Mechanism. He gained further influence in 1965, when still on the Secretariat, he joined the *Politburo* as well. He quickly became the leading voice of the Reformist wing of the MSZMP leadership (Simon *et al*. 2015).

Other notable Reformists included Secretary for Culture and *Politburo* member György Aczél, while Secretary for Administration Mihály Korom was one of the few other committed Hardliners. These two figures had clear political and ideological views on the reforms and actively participated in the policy debate surrounding them, which justifies their inclusion in the analysis. The rest of the *Politburo* and of the Secretariat membership can be regarded as non-factionalist or explicitly Kádárist-Centrist. There will be little discussion about these figures within the scope of this study as they did not take any strong stances either in favor or against economic restructuring (Ibid.).

4. Sources and methodology

As the previous two chapters have explained the historical setting and the key actors whose understanding is crucial for this research project, the study can now proceed with its main analytical framework. Chapter 4 will introduce the primary sources of this study and the methodology that it will rely upon.

4.1. Sources

The main sources used for this research project are a collection of declassified records of Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party *Politburo* meetings. Shortly after the fall

of the Kádár regime, in 1991, the new democratically elected National Assembly ordered that all records of meetings and voting procedures of its main decision-making bodies be transferred to the Hungarian National Archives. This was carried out in 1992, and by the early 2000s most of these documents became publicly available. In addition to that, the National Archives published four volumes of manuals that are meant to facilitate the studying of these primary source documents (Németh 1995: 5). This project will rely on these published records of *Politburo* meetings with the aid of the aforementioned archive manuals.

The specific historical period this study intends to focus on runs from November 1956 until December 1972. As it has already been alluded to in Chapter 2, within the contextual framework of this study, these roughly one and a half decades will be divided into three main time periods. The first period will be referred to as the "Consolidation period", which coincides with the events described in Section 2.1. This period begins in early November 1956 with the founding of the MSZMP, the suppression of the Revolution, and the inception of the Kádár regime. It ends in late November 1962 with the Eighth Congress of the MSZMP, which marked the endpoint of the consolidation process of the regime and simultaneously the joining of reform-minded Rezső Nyers to the Secretariat. The second period will be referred to as the "Reform period", which covers five years of intense debating leading up to the introduction of the New Economic Mechanism (NEM) on 1 January 1968. The third period is the "Counter-reform period", which covers an arguably less lively policy debate than that of the previous period[7]. This period, nevertheless, resulted in the effectual reversal of the NEM on 1 January 1973. In these three periods combined, there was a total number of 610 *Politburo* meetings taking place with 3,440 standalone items on their official agendas.

Table 1 summarizes all MSZMP *Politburo* meeting minutes between November 1956 and December 1972 highlighting the number of "relevant" meetings and agenda items. This research project considers every agenda item "relevant" that was scheduled explicitly with the purpose of discussing a subject matter that can help explain either the way *Politburo* members understood the general macroeconomic situation in the country or how they thought about reforming the system. It is important to note that the term "reform" in this context refers to any sort of substantial policy change and not necessarily a move towards economic liberalization. In exceptional cases, discussions about reforming merely one particular sector of the economy can also qualify an item to be "relevant" for the purpose of this study given that such reform would have significant ramifications for the rest of the economy. Furthermore, any discussion on the three and five-year plans should also be considered "relevant" as these debates can provide additional insight into the thinking of *Politburo* members about macroeconomic factors. As such, three subjects can deem a meeting or an agenda item "relevant": a general discussion of the state of the economy at large,

[7] The less lively nature of the policy debate in the Counter-reform period relative to that of the Reform period is well demonstrated by the low share of relevant items and particularly by the relatively low share of reform-related items on the agenda of the *Politburo*. See: Table 1.

reforms, and planning. For analytical purposes, the meetings and the items will be classified into one category depending on which of these three topics they focus on[8].

Table 1. MSZMP Politburo records (1956-1972) and their relevance to economic policy analysis

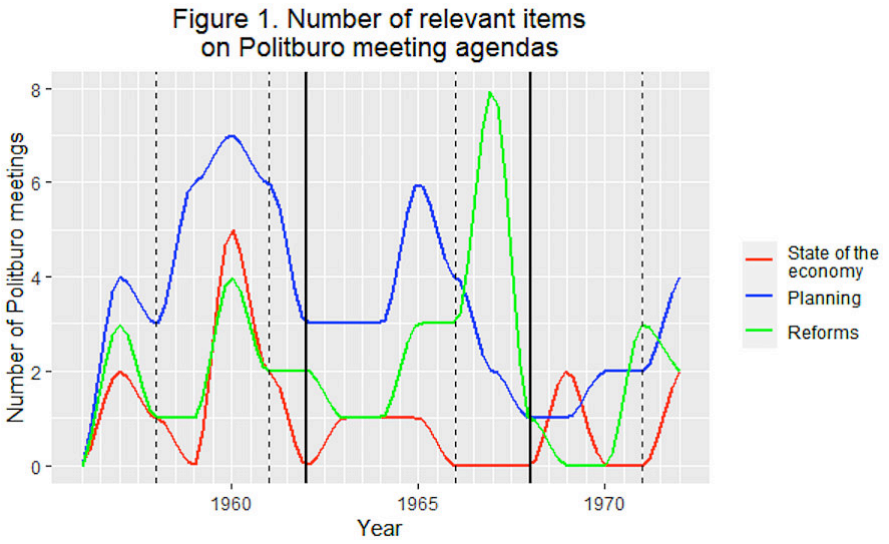
	All		Consolidation		Reform		Counter-reform	
	(Nov 1956-Dec 1972)		(Nov 1956-Nov 1962)		(Nov 1962-Dec 1967)		(Jan 1968-Dec 1972)	
	Meetings	Items	Meetings	Items	Meetings	Items	Meetings	Items
All	610	3.440	289	1.525	164	1.090	157	825
Relevant	97	117	45	55	32	41	20	21
Relevant (%)	15,90%	3,40%	15,60%	3,60%	19,50%	3,80%	12,70%	2,50%
State of Econ	17	18	10	11	3	3	4	4
State of Econ (%)	2,80%	0,50%	3,50%	0,70%	1,80%	0,30%	2,20%	0,50%
Planning	57	62	28	31	19	20	10	11
Planning (%)	9,30%	1,80%	9,70%	2,00%	11,60%	1,80%	5,60%	1,30%
Reform	35	37	13	13	16	18	6	6
Reform (%)	5,70%	1,10%	4,50%	0,90%	9,80%	1,70%	3,30%	0,70%

Source: Documents from the Hungarian National Archives, Budapest, Hungary, Fond 288, Archival Units from 5/1 to 5/600 and from 8/497 to 8/499.

As evident from Table 1, different topics appeared with different frequencies on the agenda of the *Politburo*. The overall state of the economy and planning enjoyed greater focus in the Consolidation period than in later periods. While the economic heritage of the Rákosi regime was being revisited within a larger de-Stalinization process, a relatively high 3.5% of all *Politburo* meetings discussed the general state of the economy while 9.7% discussed the matter of planning. Most discussions of economic reforms in this period (4.5%) were also related to the shift from Rákosiist to Kádárist policies. The Reform period saw increased interest in economic reforms demonstrated by a doubling of the share of meetings with reform-related items on their agenda (9.8%). The state of the economy was less frequently discussed (1.8%) but planning received revived attention the years immediately prior to beginning of the Third Five Year Plan in 1966 (11.6%). *Politburo* meetings during the Counter-reform period were characterized by less focus on economic matters overall, possibly due to the distraction of highly significant events such as the Prague Spring. While the state of the economy was discussed at a rate similar to that of the previous periods (2.2%), the two other relevant topics, planning and reforms, both appeared less frequently than before (5.6% and 3.3%, respectively). These changes in the share of *Politburo* meetings with "relevant" items on their agendas over the three periods (separated with solid vertical lines) are illustrated by Figures 1 and 2 below. These graphs also

[8] Each meeting and agenda item can only fall into one of these three categories. Therefore, to avoid overlaps, in those rare occasions when an item includes debate about both the state of the economy and planning, it will be classified as a discussion on planning, and if it includes both planning and reform or even all three of these topics, it will be classified as a discussion of reform.

clearly demonstrate the increased interest in planning around the beginning of three and five-year plans (marked with dotted vertical lines)[9].



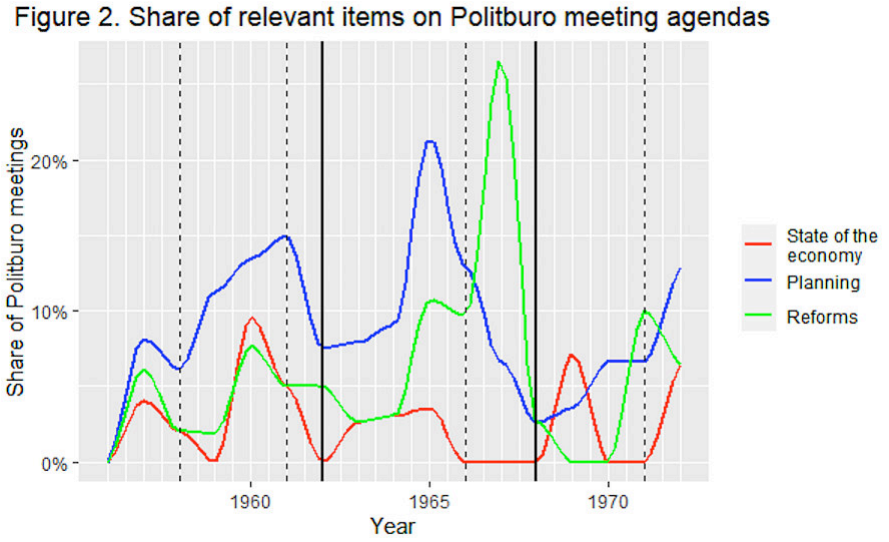


Figure 1 - 2: Source: Graph created using data from documents from the Hungarian National Archives, Budapest, Hungary, Fond 288, Archival Units from 5/1 to 5/600 and from 8/497 to 8/499 and the RStudio coding software.

In total, there were 117 "relevant" agenda items scheduled for 94 different *Politburo* meetings within these roughly one and a half decades. This is equivalent to 3.4% of all agenda items and 15.9% of all *Politburo* meetings for this time period. Out of these, 18 concerned the general state of the economy, 62 concerned planning, and 37 concerned economic reforms. The next section will explain how the data obtained from these sources will be utilized within the methodological framework of this scientific investigation.

4.2. Methodology

The methodology of this research paper is based on a combination of two different qualitative research methods: content analysis and discourse analysis. This hybrid analytical framework will be executed in two stages.

In the first stage, content analysis will be used to observe the frequency with which economic terminology versus Marxist ideological terminology occurred in *Politburo* meetings throughout the three aforementioned periods from the late 1950s all the way to the early 1970s. The main objective in this stage is to give a gen-

[9] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, Budapest, Hungary, Fond 288, Archival Units 5/1 to 5/600 and 8/497 to 8/499.

eral idea about the sort of language Party leaders belonging to different camps (Reformists, Hardliners, and Centrists) used during their debates. There is a narrative that Reformists, who have sometimes also been described as "technocrats", had a better understanding of the economy and the economic discipline in general and thus would be expected to primarily use economic jargony in their argumentation. According to this narrative, "non-technocratic" Hardliners, on the other hand, would rely primarily on highly ideological Marxist language. This notion appears in Bianca L. Adair's argument about the tension between "ideological loyalty to communism versus elements of capitalism" (Adair 2003: 125). Similarly, it can be derived from János Kornai's argument regarding the relationship between Marxist-Leninist ideology and the political economy of Socialist regimes (Kornai 1992: 49-61). To study how much truth there is behind this argument, all 117 agenda items from 1956 to 1972 which have been described in the previous section as "relevant" to the state of the economy, planning, or economic reforms will be examined. A coding scheme will be created, which will include both slightly technical economic terminology and terms that are typically associated with Marxist-Leninist discourse[10]. Applying this coding scheme to the relevant meeting items will make it possible to observe and compare how frequently economic and ideological terms appeared in discussions about the economy. This will allow for putting any further analysis of the economic discourse of Party leaders in perspective without either overstating or understating its importance relative to their overall political agenda.

Following the content analysis of the first stage, the second stage will proceed with a discourse analysis of the commentaries of Party leaders regarding economic reforms during their debates in the *Politburo*. This will be carried out using the 18 identified reform-related agenda items of *Politburo* meetings of the Reform period (1962-1967). The objective of this discourse analysis is to narrow the scope of this investigation from merely detecting the presence of economic talking points to identifying three important factors of discourse: the main arguments of the speaker, the supporting evidence that they used, and their choice of language. With the underly-

[10] The nine economic terms that will be used in this content analysis have been chosen following three criteria: 1) they describe relevant economic ideas; 2) they must not have been frequently used in everyday Hungarian speech outside economic circles; but nevertheless 3) they are not overly technical so that they could be expected to repeatedly appear in *Politburo* meeting transcripts as well. The following nine terms have been chosen with their Hungarian equivalent in parenthesis: productive/productivity (*termelékeny/termelékenység*), consumption/consumer (*fogyasztás/fogyasztó*), investment (*beruházás*), income/revenue (*jövedelem*), expenditure (*kiadás*), import (*import*), export (*export*), supply (*kínálat*), and demand (*kereslet*). Terms such as growth (*növekedés*) or deficit (*hiány*) are not included as they have a number of other, non-economics-related meanings in Hungarian, while terms like inflation (*infláció*) are also excluded as they were too infrequently used within the specific setting of this study. Similarly, the nine ideological terms have also been chosen following three parallel criteria: 1) they can describe economic ideas; 2) they were typical of the Marxist or Marxist-Leninist discourse of the regime; but 3) they would not normally be used within technical or scholarly economic discussions. The following nine ideological terms have been chosen: Marx/Marxism/Marxist (*Marx/marxizmus/marxista*), Communism/Communist (*kommunizmus/kommunista*), Socialism/Socialist (*szocializmus/szocialista*), Capitalism/Capitalist (*kapitalizmus/kapitalista*), working class (munkásosztály), bourgeoisie/bourgeois (*burzsázia/burzsoá*), exploitation (*kizsákmányolás*), struggle/fight (*harc*). While the latest term might not necessarily be associated with Marxism, it does carry a strong ideological and non-technical tone when it appears in discussions about the economy.

ing assumption that *Politburo* members were being honest about their opinions, that their primary goals during these debates were to communicate their ideas and to convince the other members of their truth, and that they understood that their words were not meant to be available to the wider public, analyzing these three factors of discourse can provide a good foundation for understanding the general attitude of Party leaders towards the reforms shortly prior to the 1968 introduction of the NEM.

The findings of the two stages of the analytical framework of this study will be presented in Chapter 5 and will be synthesized in Chapter 6 with the aim of providing a coherent explanation for the pro-reform political consensus of the 1960s.

5. Analysis

The Analysis chapter will present the findings of the methodological framework of this study as it has been outlined in the previous section. The first section of this chapter will summarize the results of the content analysis of the economic discussions among MSZMP leaders between 1956 and 1972. Following this, the second section will provide a more nuanced analysis of the discourse of the same Party leaders but focusing exclusively on the reform debates of the 1960s.

5.1. Content analysis of general economic discussions

As explained in the Methodology section, the first stage of the analytical framework of this study is the content analysis of all 117 economy-focused *Politburo* agenda items from the late 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s. All four key figures of the Reformist camp, György Aczél, Lajos Fehér, Jenő Fock, and Rezső Nyers, and four of the five leading Hardliners, Béla Biszku, Sándor Gáspár, Zoltán Komócsin, and Árpád Pullai actively participated in at least one of these meetings. Indeed, with the exception of Aczél from the Reformist camp and Pullai from the Hardliner camp, all of these politicians attended more than half of these 117 meetings. They were also regularly attended by MSZMP First Secretary János Kádár, thirteen other Centrist Party leaders[11], and a number of mid-ranking members of the Party. These mid-ranking Party members were invited to participate due to their expertise on specific issues. While not all of these invitees came from an economic background, those who participated the most frequently, such as István Friss and Árpád Kiss, in fact, did (Simon *et al*. 2015). Therefore, how much they used economic as opposed to Marxist ideological terminology during these Party leadership meetings can serve as a useful benchmark for Party leaders to be compared to.

Tables 2 and 3 show both the total number of times the selected economic and ideological terms have been mentioned by MSZMP leaders during these discussions as well as the ratio of the frequency of use of economic terminology to ideological terminology. The total number of terms used is a valuable metric because it can be understood as a proxy for just how comfortable a given Party leader was expressing their ideas in technical economic language when discussing matters of economic nature. For this

[11] For the sake of this analysis, the term "Party leader" is defined as a member of either the *Politburo*, the Secretariat, or both.

metric, it is irrelevant whether said Party leader used exclusively technical economic language or a combination of economic and ideological expressions. On the other hand, the ratio of economic terminology to ideological terminology also provides valuable information as it puts the total number of terms used in perspective. It shows whether a Party leader tended to stick entirely to an economic language, a combination of technical economic language combined with less technical Marxist terminology, or a completely Marxist ideological discourse. Furthermore, unlike the total number of terms used, this ratio is not so much distorted by the frequency of participation by a given Party leader in these debates. Thus, it provides a less biased indicator of their inclination to formulate economic arguments.

First of all, as demonstrated by Table 2, members of all three factions used economic jargony rather frequently. In fact, among the first five Party leaders in terms of total number of economic terms used, three belong to the Reformist camp, one is a Centrist, and one is a Hardliner. While Reformists are in fact overrepresented at the top of this ranking, nevertheless, the inclusion of such a key Hardliner as Biszku in fourth place seems to contradict the generalizing claim that Hardliner

Table 2. Total number of economic terms used by Party leaders in Politburo meetings (1956-1972)

Ranking	Party leader	Faction	Total number of terms used
1	János Kádár	Centrist	510
2	Jenő Fock	Reformist	336
3	Rezső Nyers	Reformist	309
4	Béla Biszku	Hardliner	180
5	Lajos Fehér	Reformist	151
6	Antal Apró	Centrist	117
7	Dezső Nemes	Centrist	106
8	Gyula Kállai	Centrist	85
9	Sándor Gáspár	Hardliner	44
10	Sándor Rónai	Centrist	42
11	Károly Németh	Centrist	38
12	Zoltán Komócsin	Hardliner	32
13	István Szirmai	Centrist	28
14	Károly Kiss	Centrist	25
= 15	György Marosán	Centrist	20
= 15	István Szurdi	Centrist	20
= 17	György Aczél	Reformist	14
= 17	Miklós Somogyi	Centrist	14
19	Árpád Pullai	Hardliner	7
20	Ferenc Münnich	Centrist	6
= 21	Valéria Benke	Centrist	1
= 21	Lajos Cseterki	Centrist	1

Source: Documents from the Hungarian National Archives, Budapest, Hungary, Fond 288, Archival Units from 5/1 to 5/600 and from 8/497 to 8/499.

Table 3. Economic and ideological terminology used by Party leaders and their respective factions in Politburo meetings (1958-1962)

	Reformists				Hardliners				Centrists		Invitees
	Aczél	Fehér	Fock	Nyers	Biszku	Gáspár	Komócsin	Pullai	Kádár	Others	
Economic terms (total)	14	151	336	309	180	44	32	7	510	503	
	810				263				1013		1404
Ideological terms (total)	2	16	30	74	37	24	12	0	254	184	
	16				45				284		192
Ratio	88:12	90:10	92:0	81:19	83:17	65:35	73:27	100:0	67:33	73:27	
	87:13				78:22				70:30		88:12

Source: Documents from the Hungarian National Archives, Budapest, Hungary, Fond 288, Archival Units from 5/1 to 5/600 and from 8/497 to 8/499.

Party leaders would not be comfortable using technical economic language when formulating their arguments about matters of economic importance. Second, Table 3 shows that all three of the Party factions as well as the invited guests prioritized economic terminology over traditional Marxist language. However, there is a substantial difference between the margins by which they did so. The 88-to-12 economic-to-ideological language ratio of the invitees can be interpreted as the discourse of economic experts within a highly politicized environment. Thus, it will serve as a useful benchmark for the rest of this analysis. Regarding the three camps of Party leaders, Reformists produced an 87-to-13 ratio – a figure that is nearly identical to that of the invitees. Among them, Party Secretary for Economic Policy (1957-1961) and later Chairman of the Council of Ministers (1967-1975) Jenő Fock came first with a ratio of 92 to 8 followed closely by Party Secretary for Agriculture (1959-1962) Lajos Fehér with a ratio of 90 to 10, then Secretary for Culture (1969-1974) György Aczél with 88 to 12, and finally long-serving Secretary for Economic Policy (1962-1974) Rezső Nyers with 81 to 19. There is more spread of these ratios within the Hardliner camp relative to the Reformist camp. While the 83-to-17 ratio of Deputy First Secretary (1962-1976) Béla Biszku exceeds even that of key Reformist Rezső Nyers, Foreign Policy Secretary (1965-1974) Zoltán Komócsin and Economic Policy Secretary (1961-1962) Sándor Gáspár underperform that with their ratios of 73 to 27 and 65 to 35, respectively. Secretary for Ideology (1966-1970) Árpád Pullai's 100-to-0 ratio can be understood as a highly inflated figure. It can be attributed to his sparce appearances in *Politburo* sessions, during which he happened to only use terms that have been identified for the sake of this research as economic rather than ideological. Among the three camps, Centrists relied the most heavily on Marxist language with an average ratio of 70 to 30. Within this faction, Fist Secretary János Kádár leans towards a more ideological direction with his ratio of 67 to 33 relative to the average ratio of 73 to 27 of the rest of the Centrist camp.

There are two main takeaways from the content analysis of the 1956-1972 *Politburo* meeting minutes. First, they show that Reformists in fact tended to rely more heavily on economic terminology relative to Hardliners when formulating their arguments. (However, both wings of the Party did better in this regard than the Kádárist Center.) Second, these findings do not support the generalization that Hardliners were not knowledgeable or comfortable with technical economic language as suggested by some of the existing academic literature. This preconceived notion seems particularly untrue for leading Hardliner Béla Biszku. As some basic understanding of argumentation within the MSZMP *Politburo* has been established, the study can now proceed with analyzing the discourse used during the reform debates immediately prior to the introduction of the New Economic Mechanism in 1968.

5.2. Discourse analysis of the reform debates

As it has already been alluded to, the second stage of the analytical framework of this study will be dedicated to the in-depth analysis of the discourse used by Party leaders when discussing the matter of economic reform between 1962 and 1967. It

will focus on the discourse of those nine Party leaders who are unambiguously classified as either Reformists or Hardliners. Centrists, Party leaders with ambiguous alignments, and invitees will not be included in this analysis. Out of the 41 economically relevant agenda items from this time period, 18 have been identified as concerning the question of reform. These 18 items will constitute the basis of this analysis. Specifically, three major questions will be asked when studying these documents. First, how did Reformists and Hardliners think about the necessity of reforms? Second, how did they envision the ideal scope of reforms? Third, were they in favor of the gradual introduction of reforms or did they prefer introducing all of them at once? Each of the next three subsections will intend to answer one of these three questions by identifying the main arguments, the supporting evidence, and the choice of language.

5.2.1. The necessity of reforms

While Rezső Nyers's elevation to the Party Secretariat in November 1962 is viewed in this study as the symbolic starting point of the Reform period, the reform debates of the 1960s only truly began in December 1963 when the *Politburo* met to discuss the possibility of fiscal and financial reforms in agriculture. First and foremost, it is crucial to clarify that Reformists and Hardliners alike called for certain policy changes. As explained in Chapter 2, the deficiencies of economic management in Hungary in the 1950s and early 1960s were so apparent that there was little excitement for keeping the *status quo*. However, there was general disagreement about whether the reforms were an absolute necessity or whether they were merely a curious option worth considering. This was not a clash between the two camps but rather a detail-oriented policy debate between three prominent members of the Party: Rezső Nyers, Zoltán Komócsin, and Jenő Fock.

Nyers argued that it was necessary to introduce certain reforms in order to increase the relatively low levels of productivity of the Hungarian command economy. He made the argument that Soviet-style central planning in theory could function well only if it existed in a vacuum. However, as this was not the case and there was constant competition from capitalist economies, constant reforming was necessary to be able to attract foreign investment in midst of fierce competition from the West. As evidence, Nyers used both a technical language to refer to investment and productivity levels registered in May 1966 and the rhetorical tool of drawing a rather gloomy image of a Hungary with economic stagnation and a dissatisfied, rebellious public, which he argued would be the consequence of not implementing his ambitious reform agenda[12]. It is unclear whether Nyers truly believed in the absolute necessity of radical economic reforms or whether he used these images only to convince his more skeptical colleagues. Nevertheless, he did make it rather clear where exactly he was standing in these debates.

Komócsin occupied the other end of the spectrum. He approached the matter of economic reforms as an option rather than a necessity. His rhetorical toolbox in-

[12] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, Budapest, Hungary, "A gazdasági reform irányelvei" [Principles of economic reform], Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/394, 119.

cluded both reinterpreting and redefining his colleagues' ideas and presenting an alternative vision. One example for this reinterpretation is labeling the not yet adopted New Economic Theory as a "convincing economy thesis", which in theory could move Hungary closer towards Socialism[13]. With this highly theoretical language, he attempted to allude the seriousness of Nyers's proposal. This way, he could also convey a great degree of skepticism towards these ideas without explicitly objecting to them. He also provided an alternative: a vaguely defined "humanist approach" to the economy, which would always consider first and foremost the socio-political implications of policy decisions[14]. It is uncertain whether he was ever truly convinced by the arguments in favor of the NEM or agreed to the reforms only because he understood that he was in the minority position in the reform debates. What is clear is that throughout the 1960s, Komócsin remained the most skeptical MSZMP leader towards the proposals presented by Nyers.

Finally, Fock viewed economic reforms rather differently from both Nyers and Komócsin. He did not see them as an existential need but rather as a good opportunity to improve productivity and the general health of the economy. As he once put it, "the reforms must be introduced. Not out of a fear that otherwise we would all parish but because common sense dictates that they must be introduced"[15]. He provided little substantial evidence to support this idea. This notion that it is mere common sense that should dictate the introduction of economic liberalization and that no further evidence should be required will be a reoccurring theme when analyzing Fock's discourse. With this line of thinking, Fock essentially occupied the middle of the imaginary scale about the necessity of the reforms between the two extremes of Nyers and Komócsin.

5.2.2. The scope and scale of reforms

Besides the debate about how crucial it was to introduce economic reforms, there was also ample disagreement regarding the scope and the scale of the proposed changes. In this regard, the demarcation line was once again not located neatly between Reformists and Hardliners but between those who wished to reform very specific segments of the economy and those who envisioned an overarching reform of the entire system.

During the aforementioned 1963 *Politburo* meeting that discussed agricultural reform, both then Economic Policy Secretary Nyers and his predecessor Jenő Fock made it clear that they did not intend to open a larger debate about "moral" questions concerning the economy. In their view, economic policy based on the concept of Soviet-style central planning was an adequate system for Hungary for which no fundamental changes were needed. Instead, they wished to modify the way this system was being executed. In this regard, they distinguished between "economic policy", which would rather be left unchanged, and "economic mechanism", which needed to be re-

[13] Ibid., 73.
[14] Ibid., 75-77.
[15] Ibid., 65.

formed[16]. According to Fock, changes in agriculture would serve as the "initial steps" for a more general reform agenda[17]. He made the assessment that the deficiencies in agricultural management were just as present in other sectors of the economy. As he made it very clear in July 1965: "This question, after all, is not only a question of agriculture but a fundamental question of the entire economic mechanism"[18].

While there was little disagreement between Fock and Nyers in this regard, their attitude during these debates differed in one important aspect. While Fock argued more frequently in favor of the overarching scope of the reforms, Nyers put more emphasis on their scale. He placed changes to price regulation at the heart of his reform agenda and envisioned these changes to be quite substantial[19]. At the early stages of the debates, he made lengthy arguments about the need for prices to better reflect the real market value of goods – a rather controversial idea for his time and for his political environment. When formulating his arguments, he used a combination of ideological language and tangible economic evidence to be as convincing to his colleagues as possible. Regarding prices reflecting market value, for instance, he intended to appeal to the Hardliner wing of the Party leadership by explaining how such changes were in fact "in the interest of the working class"[20]. On another occasion, he supported his proposal about price reform with a rather technical analysis of the discrepancy between prices in domestic markets and in international markets[21].

The third major Reformist, Lajos Fehér, approached this question rather differently. Unsurprisingly, the Agriculture Secretary had a strong rural focus and would keep his undivided attention on the question of agriculture throughout the reform debates. He called for the "repair of command mechanisms" in agriculture and self-governance for agricultural collectives. He was also preoccupied with increasing inequality between the peasantry and the urban working class, and he would frequently rely on statistics to explain his concerns. For example, as he cited, in 1960 urban workers had a consumption level which was 16% higher than that of peasants and which by 1965 had reached 18%. Fehér would use such statistical evidence within the narrative of injustice to try to convince his colleagues that the reforms should first and foremost address problems specific to agriculture and the peasantry[22]. Importantly, Fehér was not against an overarching reform of the economy as long as it met his agricultural demands[23].

[16] An aforementioned disclaimer must be reiterated here: While the language of the time did not consider the reforms of the NEM as changes in policy, it is often referred to as such in this study in accordance with contemporary language use.
[17] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, Budapest, Hungary, "A mezőgazdasági ár-, adó- és pénzügyi rendszer továbbfejlesztésének irányelvei" [Principles of the development of the agricultural price, tax, and financial system], Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/322, 59-65.
[18] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, Budapest, Hungary, "A mezőgazdasági ár-, adó- és pénzügyi rendszer továbbfejlesztése" [Development of the agricultural price, tax, and financial system], Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/369, 61.
[19] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, Budapest, Hungary, "A gazdaságirányítási rendszer felülvizsgálata" [Revision of the economic governance system], Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/375, 27-35.
[20] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A mezőgazdasági ár-, adó- és pénzügyi rendszer továbbfejlesztése," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/369, 95.
[21] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A gazdaságirányítási rendszer felülvizsgálata," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/375, 17.
[22] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A mezőgazdasági ár-, adó- és pénzügyi rendszer továbbfejlesztése," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/369, 91-93.
[23] Ibid., 91.

Just like Fehér, leading Hardliner Béla Biszku also wished to see a sector-specific approach to the reforms being implemented. He also agreed with Fehér regarding the need for urgent changes in agriculture. However, his recommendation was more limited in scope than that of his Reformist colleague. Instead of systemic changes, he merely called for more state investment to remedy the ills of the agricultural sector[24]. Furthermore, he imagined increasing living standards for much of the population not by an ambitious redesign of economic management or policy but by addressing the question of government debt. He wished to lift "the burden of indebtedness of the state [from] the shoulders of the peasantry and the working class"[25]. Such unambiguously Marxist remarks were not uncommon to Biszku. He also made it clear that he did not believe that the self-governance of agricultural cooperatives and state enterprises would be for the benefit of society. Instead, he voiced his opinion that the economic reforms should be based on the reconsideration of property relations. (Unfortunately, he did not elaborate on this idea)[26].

Two other Hardliners, Sándor Gáspár and Zoltán Komócsin, also subscribed to this less overarching and more localized vision of economic reform. They were both concerned primarily with changes in wages, prices, and consequently the living standards of workers. Their reform agenda entailed consultation with trade unions so that workers' wages could be increased in an adequate and sustainable manner. They argued against Nyers's proposal about prices to be determined by market values of goods as they were concerned about the possibility of inflation[27]. They notably differed in terms of their style of argumentation. Gáspár tended to be more inclined to make such comments as "the money spent on food and rent is getting a bit too much relative to working people's income" with the likely aim of winning the sympathy of the other Party leaders for the "common people" who were facing financially difficulty[28]. Komócsin, on the other hand, preferred to operate with a more abstract ideology-driven discourse to portray certain potential policy choices as unacceptably dangerous and thus not worth considering. For example, he made references to the menaces of "late 19th century free-market economy" as well as "Yugoslav-style [capitalist] extremism"[29]. He was likely trying to ensure that none of his colleagues would risk going too far with the reforms and thus risking appearing as supporters of such "dangerous" ideas.

Finally, it is unclear what views Aczél and Pullai held regarding the scope of the reforms. They did not participate in the early stages of these discussions and thus had

[24] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, Budapest, Hungary, "A mezőgazdasági politika időszerű kérdései" [Current questions of agricultural policy], Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/326, 33.

[25] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A gazdasági reform irányelvei," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/394, 77.

[26] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A mezőgazdasági ár-, adó- és pénzügyi rendszer továbbfejlesztése," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/369, 67-69.

[27] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A gazdaságirányítási rendszer felülvizsgálata," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/375, 57-59.

[28] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, Budapest, Hungary, "A fogyasztói árreform előkészítéséről" [Regarding preparations for the consumer price reform], Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/433, 59.

[29] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A gazdasági reform irányelvei", Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/394, 73.

little opportunity to clarify their positions on this matter. What is clear is that the Reformist Secretary for Culture and the Hardliner Secretary for Ideology were preoccupied primarily with the questions of cultural policy and especially with funding for the newspaper industry under the proposed reforms. There was little disagreement between the two in this regard. However, while Pullai used a more ideological discourse and tried to win sympathy for financially struggling families who could not afford to buy newspapers, thus mirroring the strategy employed by Gáspár, Aczél opted for a more rationality-based approach and searched for practical solutions. As such, while Pullai was calling for the lowering of subscription prices for all newspapers, Aczél argued for the differentiated pricing of newspapers based on their societal usefulness[30].

5.2.3. The graduality of reforms

The final major issue discussed over many sessions of the *Politburo* was whether reforms would need to be introduced all at once or gradually over a longer period of time. This came up first concerning a proposed price reform in 1965 and then possibly even more contentiously about changing government structure by merging sectoral ministries in 1966. Once again, the divisions only partially but not fully reflected the traditional Reformist-Hardliner fractional line.

Those who wanted to see the reforms implemented promptly both in the case of pricing and organizational restructuring clearly included Lajos Fehér and to a lesser extent also Nyers. Nyers, as the rapporteur for the price reform, presented lengthy arguments in favor of his proposals to be introduced as soon as possible. He argued that it was not his pricing reform that came with inflationary risks, but quite the contrary. Inflation could emerge as a consequence of the continuation of inadequate planning[31]. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that due to economic considerations, the gradual introduction of certain elements of his pricing reform might be more advantageous[32]. In this regard, Fehér was more impatient than him, and in 1965, he called for the introduction of substantial price and wage reforms within three years[33]. In general, both Party leaders used evidence rooted in economic thinking to support their arguments. They tried to drive their colleagues towards pragmatic economic considerations rather than relying on Marxist dogma or emotional factors. They employed a similar strategy when arguing in favor of merging five sectoral ministries into one single "Ministry of Industry". Nyers argued that leaving the governmental structure unchanged would create fertile ground for arbitrary and capricious de-

[30] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A fogyasztói árreform előkészítéséről," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/433, 51-59; Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, Budapest, Hungary, "Az 1968. évi fogyasztói árreform" [1968 consumer price reform], Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/437, 77-83.

[31] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A gazdaságirányítási rendszer felülvizsgálata," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/375, 11.

[32] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A gazdasági reform irányelvei", Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/394, 65.

[33] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A mezőgazdasági ár-, adó- és pénzügyi rendszer továbbfejlesztése," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/369, 91.

cision making in the regulation of the economy and consequently it would cause uncertainty in freshly reformed and still volatile markets. Along similar lines of reasoning, Fehér highlighted the inseparability of the economic reforms of the NEM and structural reforms of the government. He also warned against causing disturbance twice by introducing economic reforms in 1968 and then structural-organizational reforms separately a few years later[34].

Regarding pricing reforms, Biszku, Gáspár, and Komócsin all called for careful planning, consultation with stakeholders such trade unions, and considerations for the wider socio-political implications of economic reforms[35]. The underlying message of the arguments made by all three of these actors was being precautious. Regarding the merger of sectoral ministries, both Biszku and Komócsin relied on one simple argument. They made the case that in 1966 it was already too late and administratively impossible to reorganize the structure of the government. They most likely sensed that they were in the winning position on this issue and thus did not employ any further arguments but merely reiterated this one point a number of times. It is important to note that they did not explicitly object to the possibility of ministerial reorganization as something to consider in the future. They merely called for a gradual introduction of reforms that would target different areas at different times[36]. However, it is impossible to know whether they would have still appeared open to the idea of fundamental governmental reorganization of some sort if this issue had ever reemerged.

Just like in the case of discussions about the necessity of reforms, regarding the debate about graduality, Jenő Fock once again occupied an in-between position. First of all, he rejected any notion of graduality regarding pricing reforms by making some fairly radical and unambiguous remarks: "We must introduce [the reforms] at an accelerating rate now. We must introduce the entire system at once"[37]. With regards to the merger of sectoral ministries, he seemed to genuinely entertain Nyers's suggestions and even agree with them to a considerable extent. Nevertheless, he was convinced by the arguments presented by Biszku and Komócsin and acknowledged the infeasibility of merging the five ministries within such a short timeframe[38]. Aczél, Gáspár, and Pullai did not take a clear stance in this debate[39].

The wider implications of these findings will be discussed in Chapter 6.

[34] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, Budapest, Hungary, "A gazdasági reformmal kapcsolatos szervezeti változtatások" [Organizational changes related to the economic reform], Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/394, 183-185.

[35] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A mezőgazdasági ár-, adó- és pénzügyi rendszer továbbfejlesztése," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/369, 83; Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A gazdaságirányítási rendszer felülvizsgálata," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/375, 57-59; Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A fogyasztói árreform előkészítéséről," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/433, 59.

[36] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A gazdasági reformmal kapcsolatos szervezeti változtatások," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/394, 185-191.

[37] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A gazdasági reform irányelvei", Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/394, 65.

[38] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, "A gazdasági reformmal kapcsolatos szervezeti változtatások," Fond 288, Archival Unit 5/394, 187-189.

[39] Document from the *Hungarian National Archives*, Fond 288, Archival Units from 5/286 to 5/442.

6. Discussion

This chapter will be dedicated to interpreting and discussing the findings of the content discourse analyses of Chapter 5. It will begin with synthetizing and assessing the results of these two different methodological approaches and drawing a coherent interpretation on the basis of them. Then, the validity and limitations of the research method and those of its findings will be thoroughly examined and critiqued. Finally, the last section of the chapter will give some suggestions for future research that could complement the findings of this paper.

6.1. Assessment of findings

When the content analysis and the discourse analysis of this study are viewed together, they created an image of the reform debates of the 1960s and the actors involved in it that is quite different from what much of the existing academic literature tends to suggest. Works of scholars such as Róbert Hoch, Gábor Halmai, and Bianca L. Adair create the impression that those MSZMP leaders that this paper refers to as Reformists and Hardliners were polar opposites of each other. They invoke an image of pragmatic Reformists decentralizing the Hungarian economy in 1968 only for highly ideological Hardliners to undo all of it five years later. The findings of the analytical framework of this study suggest that the reality was more nuanced than this.

The content analysis makes it clear that both Reformists and Hardliners had adequate knowledge of the economy and that neither group was afraid to mix economic jargony with Marxist terminology during their discussions. This all becomes even more apparent when observing the discourse of Party leaders during the reform debates. Reformists often used ideology-heavy language to appear to a certain type of audience just the same way as Hardliners often relied on hard economic data to sound more credible. Moreover, it is not just the language used that does not fit perfectly into the Reformist-Hardliner dichotomy. None of the three major issues of contention studied in Section 5.2 saw a divide falling perfectly along factional lines. Whether Party leaders believed that economic reforms were absolutely necessary was more of a factor of their assessment of the economic situation of Hungary rather than a matter of which camp they belonged to. The scope and scale of reforms they advocated for was primarily determined by whether they had a narrower focus on one part of the economy like Lajos Fehér's preoccupation with agriculture or whether they had a more macro-level outlook on Hungarian society like that of Rezső Nyers. Whether they pushed for an instantaneous or gradual implementation of reforms also seems to depend on factors such as their optimism about the ability of the state apparatus to successfully carry out comprehensive reforms within a relatively short period of time – not variable tightly connected to factional divides either. This all raises the obvious question of whether the Reformist-Hardliner divide was already present in in the MSZMP leadership during the mid-1960s nearly as much as it arguably was around the time of reversal of the NEM in the early 1970s. This question will need to be addressed by some future scientific inquiry.

Nevertheless, the analytical framework of this study provides one rather interesting finding. Based on the results of the content and discourse analyses presented in the previous chapter, it appears to be the case the opposition of Hardliners to certain policy changes of the reforms was not driven as much by Marxist-Leninist ideology as it is often assumed to be the case. Some other factors might have played an arguably even more important role. One such factor was likely the relatively precautious and risk-averse attitude of these Party leaders towards policy changes. This is particularly evident when observing the discourse of Hardliner Party leaders during the debates about the graduality of the reforms (see: Subsection 5.2.3). According to this explanation, more risk-averse members of the Party leadership – those who would be described as "Hardliners" – agreed to the reforms in the mid-1960s, when it seemed to be a relatively low-risk decision. Nevertheless, they remained highly skeptical. However, following the Prague Spring of 1968 and the declaration of the Brezhnev Doctrine, these risk-averse politicians reassessed the situation and found that the risks associated with the reforms became unacceptable high. Thus, they reversed their positions.

It might not require too much of an explanation why enthusiastic Reformists such as Rezső Nyers, Jenő Fock, Lajos Fehér, and György Aczél, who did not only agree to the policy changes of economic liberalization but they themselves initiated this process, would support the introduction of the New Economic Mechanism. The approval of the mostly pragmatic Kádárist Center is also not too much of a mystery. The merit of the theory outlined above is that it also explains why Hardliners such Béla Biszku, Zoltán Komócsin, Sándor Gáspár, and Árpád Pullai would accept the radical economic reforms of the NEM in the 1960s and why they would then turn against them and force their reversal in the 1970s. However, while this narrative may sound convincing, to establish it as factually true and historically accurate, further scientific investigations will be needed. This could only be done convincingly if later discussions of Party leaders regarding the reversal of the NEM were also examined. However, unfortunately, obtaining such data is a challenging task, within the limited timeframe that was available for this study. A number of other reasons also make it difficult to formulate a causal argument with the specific features of this research project. These reasons will be explained in the next section of this paper.

6.2. Validity and limitations

This section will discuss the internal and external validity of this research project and its possible limitations. First of all, both the methodology and the data used in this study have a number of advantages that support its internal validity. Using records of conversations that were highly confidential and thus were not meant to be accessible to the wider public provides a rare opportunity to study policy discussions in an otherwise rather secretive and repressive environment. The data used should not be plagued by any sample bias either as every single one of the 3,440 agenda items of the 610 *Politburo* meetings that took place during the time period covered have been thoroughly examined so that their relevance to this study could be

judged. There is of course always some nonzero probability of human error, and thus misjudgments about the relevance of agenda items are not entirely out of the realm of possibility. However, this research has been carried out with the utmost care and precision in order to minimize the likelihood of such human errors. Unfortunately, there is one weakness of the data collection of this project that could not be avoided: Not all meeting minutes are accessible in a form that is easily legible. This is especially true for those rare occasions when the minutes have been edited with handwriting. Nevertheless, these occurrences are sparse, and they do not infringe upon the validity of the analysis in any meaningful way. The last limitation of the data concerns its scope. The unfortunate truth is that there is relatively little readily available material on Party leadership discussions from those years that this paper refers to as the Counter-reform period. While the absence of such information has not affected the results of this study regarding support for reforms in the 1960s, it has prevented the use of discourse analysis on debates in later years, which could have provided additional insight on why exactly Hardliner Party leaders decided to launch their offensive against the reforms. This lack of information could be complemented by using transcripts of meetings of different organs of the Party. While *Politburo* meetings were the place for the most impactful decision-making processes and collecting data on Central Committee meetings or Party Congresses would not have much added value, studying the meeting minutes of the Economic Committee for example or other relevant specialized committees could potentially prove useful. However, these records are much more difficult to access, and the time that obtaining and processing such documents would require has unfortunately not been available for this project. The relatively short length required for this paper has been another obstacle in this regard. Thus, such inquiries will need to remain tasks for future research projects.

The methodological approach and the subsequent analysis of this study do not come with any such deficiencies either that would significantly undermine the internal validity of the findings. Combining content analysis with discourse analysis leads to a more complete explanation of the phenomena in question than if only one of these methodological tools had been applied. There was significant effort made throughout this study to explain and define important concepts as clearly as possible and to operationalize them as well as possible. The coding scheme, which forms the bedrock of the content analysis of this study, has also been developed in a systematic and consistent manner. There is, of course, an inevitable human bias in the choice of the terms applied for the coding scheme. Nevertheless, these choices, even if not perfect as they can never truly be, have been made after a lot of careful thought and they are justified accordingly. Finally, discourse analysis always comes with certain biases. There is always a certain degree of subjective interpretation of language when this methodological approach is applied. However, what can be done to limit this bias – and what has in fact been done in the case of this study – is to carry out the analysis meticulously, try to understand the underlying motivations of the actors, and consider both arguments and counterarguments to any given narrative. In this particular case, this process is further strengthened by the fact that both the content

analysis and the discourse analysis were conducted in Hungarian, the original language of the documents, thus minimizing the chance for misinterpretations and increasing objectivity. Arguably, this all leads to results with high internal validity.

The external validity of the findings of a research project can most easily be judged by considering their transferability to different temporal, spatial, and topical contexts. Unfortunately, the findings of this project cannot be confidently assumed to be transferable in either of these three dimensions. Regarding transferability in time, this study provides no evidence that the MSZMP leadership would act the same way in later decades as they did in the 1960s. In fact, the very classification of these politicians into the three factions of Reformists, Hardliners, and Centrists stems from their attitude towards the New Economic Mechanism at the dawn of the 1970s, which already appears to be substantially different from their behaviors just a few years earlier. Similarly, as this study only considers discussions about economic reforms, it cannot provide any evidence that MSZMP leaders would approach other subjects the same way. Finally, even though the study concerns very specifically Hungary, there might possibly be some transferability in the special-geographical aspect. A partial decentralization of Soviet-type central planning took place not only in Hungary but also in places like East Germany and later in a much larger scale in China. Even if the findings of this study cannot be applied to explain fully what happened in these other countries, they might provide some useful insight when combined with future country-specific research focusing on different cases.

In conclusion, while the study can be described as one with a rather solid internal validity, its external validity is more questionable. It is unclear to what extent the attitude of the MSZMP leadership towards economic liberalization in the 1960s is representative of the attitude of the same regime towards different policy changes in different times. It is also uncertain to what extent it is representative of the attitude of the political leadership in other Socialist single-party regimes. In order to find this out, there needs to be further scientific inquiry into these subjects. Thus, the next section will be dedicated to giving some suggestions for such potential research topics.

6.2. Suggestions for future research

Given the highly constraining circumstances within which this paper has been written, there was no possibility to benefit from the abundant knowledge contained by many other declassified documents of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. Many of these documents are readily accessible in the Hungarian National Archives in Budapest. This provides fertile ground for further scientific inquiry into the policy debates in Kádár's Hungary. The findings of this study itself could be supported or refuted by consulting more sources. Alternatively, the methodology of this research paper could be replicated focusing either on different time periods or different policy areas. Furthermore, as the previous section explained, it is unclear to what extent the findings of this study are applicable to countries other than Hungary. It could be a rather interesting opportunity to investigate and potentially compare and contrast

findings of this research model (or an improved version of it) but with data from other Soviet satellite states with these ones about Hungary. Finally, there is also a clear possibility to utilize the findings of this project in support of research in other social science disciplines. For example, research in international relations could be carried out to examine the nature of sovereignty under Soviet domination. While some literature on this topic does exist – one notable example is Chris J. Bickerton's 2009 article published in "International Politics" – further scientific investigations could rely on historical studies like this (Bickerton 2009). Political science research could also rely on some of its insight in case the matter of governance of the Soviet satellite states were to be studied.

7. Conclusion

This research project has intended to explain the emergence of the political consensus in favor of the reforms of the New Economic Mechanism (NEM) in Hungary in the mid-1960s. It sought answer for the question of how these radical policy changes could enjoy cross-factional support within the ruling Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP). Above all of its objectives, it has aimed to find a convincing explanation for the initial support for the NEM by Hardliner Party leaders, who just a few years later would spearhead an offensive against these reforms and would eventually achieve their reversal. By relying on a combination of content analysis and discourse analysis methods, this study has examined a large volume of declassified *Politburo* meeting minutes and has made a number of interesting observations. First, through content analysis, it has concluded that Reformist and Hardliner Party leaders alike used both technical economic and Marxist ideological language with rather high frequency during their *Politburo* meetings. This undermines the notion that Hardliners Party leaders would not be familiar with or comfortable with using economic terminology during their debates. Second, the discourse analysis of *Politburo* records from the 1960s has revealed that Party leaders were not perfectly divided along factional lines in case of any of three major issues of contention. In fact, the only factor that could regularly be found in the arguments of all of those Party leaders who have been classified as Hardliners is their apparent precautious and risk-averse attitude towards the proposed reforms. The paper, therefore, has reached two important conclusions. First, the Reformist-Hardliner dichotomy might not be applicable to the 1960s the same way as it is often applied to the 1970s. Such a narrative might need to be seriously reconsidered. Second, this shared risk-averse and highly precautious attitude that was common in the Hardliner wing of the Party might be the reason why members of this faction approached the matter of economic reforms differently at different times. It is probable that they identified the risks associated with the NEM as acceptable under the relatively calm environment of the mid-1960s but they no longer considered them acceptable following the Prague Spring and under the conditions of the Brezhnev Doctrine. However, in order to either support or refute this explanation, further scientific inquiry is needed.

Annex

Table 4. Highest-level leadership of the MSZMP (1957-1975)

Time period	Secretariat										Politburo members outside the Secretariat
	First Secretary	Deputy First Secretary	Administration	Party organization	Foreign policy	Economic policy	Ideology	Culture	Agriculture	Industry	
02.1957 — 06.1957	János Kádár	György Marosán		János Kádár	Károly Kiss	Jenő Fock (not PB)	Gyula Kállai				Antal Apró, Béla Biszku, Lajos Fehér, Ferenc Münnich, Sándor Rónai & Miklós Somogyi
06.1957 — 12.1959						Jenő Fock					
12.1959 — 09.1961							István Szirmai (not PB)		Lajos Fehér		Antal Apró, Béla Biszku, Gyula Kállai, Ferenc Münnich, Dezső Nemes, Sándor Rónai & Miklós Somogyi
09.1961 — 08.1962					Dezső Nemes	Sándor Gáspár (not PB)					Antal Apró, Béla Biszku, Jenő Fock, Gyula Kállai, Károly Kiss, Ferenc Münnich, Sándor Rónai & Miklós Somogyi
08-10. 1962											Antal Apró, Béla Biszku, Jenő Fock, Gyula Kállai, Ferenc Münnich, Sándor Rónai & Miklós Somogyi
10-11. 1962		Béla Biszku	Lajos Fehér								Antal Apró, Jenő Fock, Gyula Kállai, Ferenc Münnich, Sándor Rónai & Miklós Somogyi
11.1962 — 12.1963		Béla Biszku				Rezső Nyers (not PB)	István Szirmai		Károly Németh (not PB)		Antal Apró, Lajos Fehér, Jenő Fock, Sándor Gáspár, Gyula Kállai, Zoltán Komócsin, Ferenc Münnich, Sándor Rónai & Miklós Somogyi
12.1963 — 06.1965		Béla Biszku	Mihály Korom (not PB)	Béla Biszku			István Szirmai	Lajos Cseterki (not PB)		István Szurdi (not PB)	
06.1965 — 12.1966					Zoltán Komócsin						Antal Apró, Lajos Fehér, Jenő Fock, Sándor Gáspár, Gyula Kállai, Ferenc Münnich, Dezső Nemes, Sándor Rónai & Miklós Somogyi
12.1966 — 04.1967		Béla Biszku				Rezső Nyers	Árpád Pullai (not PB)				Antal Apró, Lajos Fehér, Jenő Fock, Sándor Gáspár, Gyula Kállai, Dezső Nemes, Sándor Rónai & István Szirmai
04.1967 — 09.1969											Antal Apró, Lajos Fehér, Jenő Fock, Sándor Gáspár, Gyula Kállai, Dezső Nemes & Sándor Rónai
09.1969 — 11.1970								György Aczél			Antal Apró, Valéria Benke, Lajos Fehér, Jenő Fock, Sándor Gáspár, Gyula Kállai, Dezső Nemes, Károly Németh & Sándor Rónai
11.1970 — 03.1974		Béla Biszku		Béla Biszku & Árpád Pullai (not PB)			Miklós Óvári (not PB)				
03.1974 — 05.1974						Károly Németh	Imre Györi (not PB)	Miklós Óvári (not PB)			György Aczél, Antal Apró, Valéria Benke, Lajos Fehér, Jenő Fock, Sándor Gáspár, Gyula Kállai, Dezső Nemes, Rezső Nyers & Sándor Rónai
05.1974 — 03.1975											

Source: Simon István (eds), Zsolt Horvát, Róbert Szabó, Norbert Szári. (2015). "Pártvezetők". Nemzeti Emlékezet Bizottság. https://neb.hu/hu/partvezetok (accessed February 23, 2023).

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De Europa
Special Issue - College of Europe 2023

Poland's Entry to NATO: The British Role

Otto Barrow

Introduction

Like its members, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has changed constantly since its creation, and this process has accelerated since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union two years later. The organisation's membership has fattened from a lean sixteen states to a plump twenty-eight while also expanding its girth to include issues from piracy on the high seas to the swashbucklers of the invisible oceans of cyberspace. However, there is still a sense in which NATO continues to fulfil the role for which it was created. Lord Hastings Ismay, NATO's inaugural Secretary General, is credited with the statement that the primary objectives of NATO were to keep the Russians out, keep the Americans in and the Germans down (Andrews 2005: 61). While there is little evidence that he ever said these words, this maxim has become a lodestar for the institution (Layne 200: 17). NATO remained valuable as a vehicle to balance the potential power and influence of Russia from the East and to give the United States a say in European affairs (Sharp 1997). It was also necessary to ensure that a newly reunited Germany remained tied to the Western security community (Sharp 1997). Through the principles of pragmatism and international cooperation, Britain was able to leverage its role as a member of the alliance to ease Poland into NATO, and Britain played an active role at the different necessary stages of Poland joining the alliance.

As Jerzy Buzek, Poland's Prime Minister at the time of accession, said on the floor of the *Sejm* (the Polish parliament):

> The repeated attempts to dispel the ill fortunes this country has been dogged by since the 17th century have been the sense and essence of recent Polish history[1] (Buzek 1999; Osica 2004: 302).

Her democratic transition from 1989 allowed her to define her security policy without interference from an Eastern or Western hegemonic protector (Davies 2005: 201). At the start of the democratic transition, Polish security was based on the foundations of the Warsaw Pact, dominated by the Soviet Union(Adler, Barnett, and Smith 1998: 62). But the reorientation of Polish security policy towards the Atlantic occurred gradually, but decisively (Terry 2000: 7). This transformation, in turn, changed NATO's perception of Poland and Central Europe from "a mysterious collective entity charac-

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[1] In the original Polish: "Treścią najnowszej historii Polski było przecież dążenie do przezwyciężenia geopolitycznego fatum, wiszącego nad Rzecząpospolitą od XVII".

terised by mediaeval castles, spicy sausages, and an insufficient supply of vowels" to a cornerstone of the NATO alliance (Albright and Woodward 2003: 210). The thesis aims to analyse the overlap between British and Polish foreign policy during this shift. Using a mixture of British, Polish, and other sources, it will ascertain to what extent Britain's role in the transformation of NATO led to Poland's entry on 12 March 1999.

As part of answering this, the thesis will discuss (1) how Britain viewed Poland from a security perspective during this period. It will also discuss (2) the key factors that led to Poland's decision to seek NATO membership and how these factors aligned with British interests. To do this, it will also (3) examine British policymakers' role in advocating for Poland's NATO membership and their motivations for doing so. It will discuss how the process of Poland's accession to NATO unfolded and the challenges that Poland faced in meeting the requirements for membership.

0.1. Theory

As Karl von Clausewitz, the military theorist, argued:

> The primary purpose of any theory […] is to clarify the concepts and ideas that have become, as it were, confused and entangled. Not until terms and concepts have been defined can one hope to make any progress in examining the question clearly and simply and expect the reader to share one's views (Von Clausewitz 1989: 132).

For as complicated an institution as NATO, theory serves an important role by "simplifying complexity" and outlining the feasible lines of enquiry (Jørgensen 2010; Webber and Hyde-Price 2011: 23).

It is also worth noting that this is a historical thesis. As Juliusz Mieroszewski, one of the writers who shaped much of Polish foreign policy, argued in *Kultura*: "History is on the run, stopped politics. Therefore, a political writer must be able to look at history from a bird's eye view" (Mieroszewski 1974). A historian must be able to look at the sequence of events through the eyes of those who participate in it (Mieroszewski 1974).

The first paradigm will be between a reactive vs proactive foreign policy. A proactive approach involves anticipating potential events and preparing for them, while a reactive approach involves being surprised by events and these events shaping foreign policy. NATO in the 1990s "was characterised by a struggle to change from an increasingly irrelevant, static and reactive security community to a proactive risk community" (Flockhart 2010; Webber and Hyde-Price 2011: 186).

The second paradigm is through the agent-structure problem, which continues to torment any theory of NATO (Webber and Hyde-Price 2011: 34). In other words, "Does NATO possess agency itself, or is it simply an arena upon which other actors (notably states) interact and compete?" (Webber and Hyde-Price 2011: 34). This issue highlights the challenge of "maintaining the disciplinary boundary between domestic and international politics" (Wight 2006: 292). When talking about the role of one country influencing the affairs of another, the challenge emerges of clarifying

whether these views are held by the individuals in question or the institution as a sort of "official mind" (Otte 2011). A government of a certain size inevitably becomes a cacophony of views, and it is important to distinguish these to understand what was going on during the period leading up to Poland's entry into NATO.

The timescale discussed can be chronologically divided into four periods, as per Terry's analysis of the early foreign policy of the Polish Third Republic (Terry 2000: 7):

1. In the early uncertainties – from 1989 to 1992 – Poland was focused on solidifying its relations with neighbouring countries.
2. The watershed year – 1993 – a year in which many of the changes in Poland's external relations occurred. These changes included the demise of the Visegrád (the regional bloc encompassing Czechoslovakia and Hungary), the first moves towards Western integration, and the emergence of serious tensions in Poland's relations with Russia.
3. In the anterooms of Europe – 1994-6 – when Poland and its central European neighbours campaigned for early accession to NATO, while relations with Russia remained frozen.
4. Negotiating the "return to Europe" – 1997 and onwards, joining NATO in 1999 and actively pursuing membership in the European Union (EU). These gains have not come quickly or easily; rather, they demonstrate a hard-earned consistency in Poland's foreign policy agenda, despite numerous changes in domestic politics, as well as an increasingly realistic vision of the country's place in post-Cold War Europe. Some of my sources suggest that by this point, Poland joining NATO was a "done deal" (Macgregor 2019). I will focus less on this period, although the change in government and therefore approach on the British side does make this relevant.

As with any document, this thesis comes with limitations. As I have discovered while conducting the research for this thesis, the topic ranging from Poland's transformation, NATO's changing role, and Britain's foreign policy provides what my supervisor termed an "embarrassment of riches" (d'Allainval 1753). These are as follows:

1. Complexity of the topic: Poland's entry into NATO and Britain's role in this process involves covering a range of events, involving multiple actors, interests, and historical factors. It is hopeless to fully explore all aspects of the topic within the scope of a one-year Master' thesis. This time constraint limits the amount of data that can be analysed, and this limitation certainly has reduced the potential depth of my analysis.
2. Bias: Given the nature of the research topic, there may be potential biases in the data and sources used, particularly given my emphasis on British perspectives when it comes to primary sources. This weakness in my approach limits the objectivity of the analysis and will lead to a skewed portrayal of events if not considered. British diplomatic sources, to use R. B. D. Morier's unappetizing phrase, that these dispatches were the "feeding organs" to supply the "digestive organ" of the Foreign Office in London, and my use of them should be understood in this context (Otte 2011: 5; Weber 1956: 126–28; Wemyss 1911: 131).

3. Generalizability: While the thesis could provide insights into the specific case of Poland's entry to NATO from a British perspective, the findings may not be generalizable to other countries' experiences, or other aspects of NATO membership. The choice of Poland is born from familiarity and the fact that its status as the largest new member means that the trends that I describe were easier to recognise. This limitation means that this thesis may or may not apply to other countries which joined NATO after the end of the Cold War.

It is also worth highlighting some of the questions that this thesis is unable to answer, but which may prove fruitful for further research in the time to come.

1. After accession: I will not be able to answer how the relationship between Poland and NATO has evolved since Poland's accession into the alliance, although many of my sources contextualise their analysis with this in mind.
2. Other countries: Although I touch on the roles of other countries, particularly the United States, Germany, in Poland's accession into NATO, I do not for reasons of space go into more detail than is necessary. A longer study could go into more detail about the French position, or the Danish and Dutch positions.
3. NATO vs. the EU: I have limited the scope of this thesis to Poland's accession to NATO and not the EU. However, I will briefly discuss in my conclusion the implications of NATO enlargement for setting the stage for EU enlargement and contrast it with the policies of the EU in the 1990s regarding its role. As Charles Crawford, a former British ambassador to Poland, argued, it is a good deal easier to get into NATO than the EU (Crawford 2023). Indeed, much of the work that helped Poland prepare for NATO membership was also used for EU membership aspirations.
4. Other historical perspectives: this thesis is a study of the interactions between British foreign policy perspectives, Polish foreign policy, and the internal dynamics of NATO expansion. This thesis does highlight Britain's changing relationship with the former USSR during the period covered and Britain's diplomacy in Brussels. Nevertheless, there are many aspects which are skirted over, but which merit further analysis, such as the role of the BBC Polish service, which operated in Poland from 1939-2005.

As one of my predecessors at Natolin wrote in his introduction, "A more comprehensive study would make an appropriate doctoral thesis" (Smith 2020).

0.2. Structure

After a brief background on Poland's relationship with NATO and the European project, the thesis is divided into three main chapters, as per Ismay's aphorism. Although there is a chronological order to the topics addressed because the dimensions of British and Polish foreign policy are so intertwined, there will inevitably be some overlap with the themes covered (Terry 2000: 9). As Crawford once heard from a Russian diplomat and G E. Lessing before him, "In nature, everything is connected,

everything is interwoven, everything changes with everything, everything merges from one into another" (Crawford 2023; Lessing 1889: 399).

I will also focus at various points on Poland's relations with its Eastern neighbours at the timeframes mentioned. Although this may appear to be contradictory to Poland's entry to Western institutions, understanding how these relationships developed at the same time as relations with Poland's Western neighbours, they are also essential to understand Poland's entry to NATO.

In the first part of this thesis, "Keeping the Russians out", I will discuss the factors external to NATO that led to Poland's initial desire to join the alliance. The initial threat of Soviet expansionism that created the alliance appeared to have vanished with the Soviet Union. However, the instability of the new Russian order meant that Poland felt the need for an alliance to prevent external forces from threatening Poland's independence and to put her on the path to a European future. The instability meant that the alliance remained relevant for countries like Britain, particularly thanks to the emergence of the Bosnian War. This discussion will involve the vision of policymakers in Poland and Britain towards the state of the states that made up the Soviet Union and how this change shaped the foreign policies of the countries mentioned. The analysis here will be predominantly focused on what Terry describes as the "early uncertainties" of Poland's post-Cold War history, but will also focus on what changed in 1993, the so-called "watershed year" (Terry 2000: 17). Although NATO-Russia relations do not finish here, and a longer study would talk about the NATO-Russia act in 1997, culminating in a grand party hosted by Jacques Chirac over bottles of Château Pétrus, along with other items from the Elysée's legendary wine collection, Russia in 1993 had already provided enough motivation by the end of 1993 for Poland to wish for the warm embrace of NATO (Shea 2023b).

In the second part of this thesis, "Keeping the Americans in", I will discuss to what extent Polish and British voices shaped the American view of NATO and the necessity for it to expand. This analysis will be focused on the "anterooms of Europe" phase from 1994-6 and the earlier debate within the Clinton administration regarding the future role and size of NATO. Britain's close relationship with the US meant that interests overlapped when it came to NATO's eastwards engagement, and Britain's support of the Partnership for Peace helped bring Poland up to the standards required for alliance membership. One constraint here is that I have not been able to engage with many American sources for this part. I will supplement this lack with the excellent analysis that has already been conducted by American politicians and political scientists, focusing on next year's *patronne de promotion* Madeleine Albright, and Ron Asmus (Albright and Woodward 2003; Asmus 2004; Asmus, Kugler and Larrabee 1993).

In the third part of this thesis, "Keeping the Germans down", I will discuss the regional challenges that Poland faced when it came to joining NATO after the emergence of a reunified Germany, and the role that Britain played in helping Poland overcome these challenges. I will also use this section to discuss Poland's relationships with the states that made up the former Soviet Union, focusing on Ukraine and Lithuania in particular. This analysis will predominantly focus on the "negotiating the

return to Europe" phase. I will also use this section to discuss the changing policies towards Poland's entry on the British side after the election of Tony Blair's government when it came to the 3+6 Debate within NATO and NATO's Madrid summit in July 1997 (Snyder 2002).

0.3. On the choice of topic

Britain's perspective on Poland's accession to NATO is niche. Britain was hardly the most important country (or even the most important European country) in Poland's entry to NATO. However, there are four main reasons why this topic proves a fertile ground for deeper analysis.

Firstly, developing our understanding of the role of NATO expansion in reshaping the European security landscape after the Cold War is crucial for anyone wishing to understand how states and institutions evolve in response to changes. By understanding the significance of Poland's entry to NATO in the context of geopolitics and power relations in Europe, it is possible to derive insights into the current geopolitics of Europe, and the potential expansion of NATO in the future. Even at the time covered, Warsaw was no longer the "consular backwater" but at the centre of post-cold-war politics, and this increase in relevance has only grown over time (Otte 2011: 86).

Secondly, studying the changing nature of both NATO and the EU in the 1990s provides an opportunity to analyse the role and functions of international organisations. The Studying Poland's entry into NATO allows us to understand the overlap between the EU and NATO in defining a role for themselves and accommodating new members.

Thirdly, the historical context of the period. By studying the factors leading up to Poland's entry into NATO in 1999, it is possible to get a deep insight into the historical context of Europe in the 1990s and the post-cold War area. Poland, the most prominent member to join since the Cold War, is a rich case study using such methodology to understand complex phenomena in history and international relations. The case study of Poland is interesting because of the argument that Poland and the other Visegrád countries used that they were "returning" to Europe. This perceived identity influenced its perception of its role in Europe. Many argue that Poland never left Europe, but "the West" abandoned her by leaving her on the other side of the Iron Curtain that emerged after World War II.

> So that's your Diary – that's your private mind
> Translated into shirt-sleeved History. That
> Is what diplomacy left behind
> For after-ages to peruse, and find
> What passed beneath your elegant silk-hat.
> But I, for one, am grateful, overjoyed
> And unindignant that your punctual pen
> Should have been so constructively employed
> In manifesting to unprivileged men
> The visionless officialized fatuity
> That once made Europe safe for Perpetuity. (Otte 2011; Sassoon 1968).

This thesis will add value by using primary sources in both Polish and English. I rely on the recently declassified diplomatic correspondence between Warsaw and London (especially the yearly "annual reviews") and the collections of oral diplomatic history in the Churchill archives at the University of Cambridge.

Diplomatic history is not the domain of "painstaking plodders who merely chart the waxing and waning of foreign relations, without understanding their wider context or significance", but is a window to understand the politics of the time (Otte 2011: 2). This is through the way that those who witnessed it tried to explain their situation in time and place and the language they used to express such explanations (Otte 2011: 2–3). Government bureaucracies prepare decisions by simplifying policy options to make outcomes more predictable. This simplification can present some options as practical or necessary, based on perceived logic, and others as impractical or undesirable. Senior officials' accounts of developing situations reflect their core beliefs, and these values and ideas determine political actions, recommendations, or deeds. It is also valuable to study the diplomatic perspective because:

> Politicians are likelier than officials to be driven by the desire to vindicate themselves and to polish their reputations in the eyes of future historians: diplomats generally prefer anonymity. (Barder 1997).

Thus, to focus on diplomatic sources here is also to study the "Foreign Office mind". (Otte 2011: 2–3).

Finally, it has been over twenty years since Poland's entry to NATO, making this work both relevant and fresh. Changes in legislation on the UK side mean that many of the primary sources necessary to conduct this work have recently become available and are yet unstudied (The National Archives 2023). Given that the period covered is relatively recent, it was possible to interview a small selection of the people involved in this process on the British side. Of course, more interviews, particularly of Polish sources, would have provided a different direction for this thesis.

0.4. Preface

An important role of a master's thesis is to serve as a portal for reflecting one's experiences in the domain of a particular topic. My identity as a Briton living and studying in Poland, with an interest in NATO and diplomatic history, has undoubtedly played an influential role in the choice of thesis. When the author applied to the College of Europe in Spring 2022, I was advised to be very careful if asked what my *mémoire* would be. The word *mémoire* is also the French term for masters' thesis, as well as memory. However, it must be acknowledged that any thesis is the product of the memories that one accumulates during the time that one writes it, hence it also serves as a reflection of my learning at the College. As Albright said about her own thesis when writing her memoirs: "Writing an honours thesis was daunting, but it taught me how to stick with a single project over an extended period" (Albright and Woodward 2003: 55). Many of the sources that I have used for this thesis emerge from the courses that I have taken during my year at Natolin. I grew up in West London, an area with

one of the highest Polish populations in the UK, I have been fascinated ever since I walked into the Polish Cultural centre opposite my school. Given that Poles and Polish make up one of the largest minorities and languages in Great Britain respectively, and both countries have increased their cooperation over time, the topic of Anglo-Polish relations is unlikely to lose relevance any time soon. It is also a particular source of pleasure that to can research the period involving the patron of my scholarship, Bronisław Geremek, who served as Polish foreign minister at the time of accession.

Finally, a few words of thanks. First and foremost, thanks to my supervisor, Professor Richard Butterwick-Pawlikowski, whose advice and support made this thesis possible, and whose insights into the value of history will remain with me through all the learning that life has to offer, and the Geremek History Scholarship for allowing me to experience the College of Europe. In addition to this, I am very grateful to the Vibeke Sørensen Fellowship at the European University Institute in Florence, at which I had the opportunity to prepare this thesis for publication.

In terms of those who helped me write this, a thanks must go to those who agreed to be interviewed for this thesis, namely Radosław Sikorski MEP, Sir Stewart Eldon, Charles Crawford HMG and Jamie Shea CMG A thank you to both Kilian Bourgois, my academic assistant for the thesis, and Tadeusz Kolasziński, for all the insights on how to navigate the Natolin bureaucracy and the mechanics of the thesis writing process. A thank you to Natasha Voase, who proofread this work. A thank you to Professor Alexander Morrison, whose recommendation that history was a much more proper subject than my undergraduate during a talk on the Russian underworld convinced me to apply for a Master's in history in the first place, and to Philippe Lefevre, with whom a chance encounter on a boat led to me realising this aim. A thank you also to Edward Lucas, from whom much of my interest (and many of the books) on Central and Eastern Europe has been obtained.

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Annabel Freyberg. Although she died from cancer, nine years before I began my Natolin adventure, it is through her that I can claim my interest in travels, languages, and stories.

1. Keeping the Russians out: Putting Poland on the Road to NATO

1.1. Introduction

Kuszelowo, Świteź, Ponary, Bialowieża!
Forest friends to grand dukes of Lithuania!
Adam Mickiewicz (1834), *Pan Tadeusz*

In the fourth chapter of *Pan Tadeusz*, "Hunting and Diplomacy", Adam Mickiewicz, Poland's national poet, saluted the great forest of Białoweża, the ancient hunting ground of the grand dukes of Lithuania (Snyder 2002: 256). Barely a century and a half later, in this very forest, the leaders of what were then the Soviet republics of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus decided to end the Soviet Union (Snyder 2002: 256). In this single decision, many new countries were formed, and the geopolitical arrangement of Europe was transformed. NATO is an organisation that had been founded as

a product of the Cold War to keep the Russians out of Western Europe (Crawford 2023). Although it had its defining threat removed, this removal created the instability that was required to put Poland onto the road to NATO.

This chapter will focus on the external factors that influenced Poland's desire to join NATO, and Britain's role in bringing Poland to a place where it could apply for membership. It will examine the goals and objectives of British and Polish policymakers in the immediate aftermath of the end of the Cold War regarding external threats. In this period of uncertainty, Poland perceived Russia as a threat and NATO as an important security guarantee for Poland's independence and a means of realising Poland's ambition to be considered part of the family of European ambitions. For Britain, NATO expansion became a way of materialising the "peace dividend" that occurred when the Russians moved out of the countries which made up central and Eastern Europe. I will also discuss the challenges and uncertainties that Poland faced in the early years of the Third Republic, and how these uncertainties affected the new independent foreign policy, and the evolution of the Russian-Polish relations. All these combined to put Poland on a path to joining NATO by 1993.

1.2. The Polish Vision: Making Sense of Polish Foreign Policy

At the start of the Third Republic, Poland was a member of the Warsaw Pact, a military pact which involved Soviet troops stationed on her territory, although this arrangement was not a voluntary one (Mastny and Byrne 2005). As Nicholas Henderson, British Ambassador to Poland, wrote in the first sentence of his valedictory despatch:

> If you were to ask me to express in a sentence the most important fact about Poland relevant to the UK (and perhaps to other Western countries) that has impressed itself on me after three years here, it would be this: that the country is living on a lie and that it remains, after 25 years of the present regime, marked by irreconcilable conflicts and instability. (Henderson 1972).

The fact that this was already the impression long before the imposition of martial law and the collapse of the communist regime demonstrates the uneasiness of the previous arrangement.

> Poland is a state run on Communist lines, subject to the dictates of Russia. But it is a nation more religious, probably, than any other in Europe… It is innately anti-Communist, fiercely patriotic and independent, historically hostile towards the Russians and attached spiritually and socially to the West. (Henderson 1972).

Poland's foreign policy has been remarkable for its steadiness throughout the period leading up to NATO expansion, despite several changes in political leadership and constitutions (Terry 2000: 7). An important principle that is typically used when it comes to an understanding how states behave is strategic culture, the "common ideas regarding strategy that exist across populations" (Lock 2017). For Poland, a crucial part of her strategic culture is the experience of a defeated nation, as a victim of realpolitik (Osica 2004: 305). Poland, throughout her history, has been afraid of two

phenomena: either the German-Russian alliance (such as with the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, which partitioned the Second Republic between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union) or collaboration between Western and Russian powers at the expense of Poland (as happened with Yalta, a word that became synonymous with betrayal (Tolstoy 2013: 305). The existence of both of these events in Poland's modern history showed itself through the rules governing Polish foreign policy. It also harks back to a much earlier principle that has defined any Polish government, that of *nihil novi*, which originally meant that kings could not pass laws without the prior consent of the deputies of the *Sejm* (Zamoyski 1987: 99). In the context of foreign policy, it meant that no decisions about Poland should be taken without the participation of Poland herself (Osica 2004: 305).

Poland's initial approach to its post-communist transformation was cautious. The democratic transition that was happening in Poland was being replicated across the Warsaw Pact members. As Timothy Garton Ash (1990: 78) quipped to the first president of post-communist Czechoslovakia Vaclav Hável, "in Poland, it took ten years, in Hungary ten months, in East Germany ten weeks: perhaps in Czechoslovakia it will take ten days!". The process of German reunification and negotiations on the treaty of Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) meant that Poland needed to maintain good relations with the Soviet Union for this to take place (Asmus 2004: 15; Osica 2004: 305). This need is also reflected by the compromise that *Solidarność* (Solidarity in english) reached through the Round Table Talks. Although *Solidarność* had been the first democratic opposition to emerge in the region, it agreed to leave the Presidency and security in the hands of the communists to avoid provoking Moscow. Even after becoming president, Lech Wałęsa initially advocated for Polish neutrality and emphasised that Warsaw merely wished to have closer ties with, rather than full membership of NATO (Kupiecki 2001: 245). As Wałęsa argued when quizzed by journalists about whether he was trying to play both sides on NATO, he answered:

> There is no double-dealing on my part. Poland is not putting itself forward as a candidate for NATO membership. But we indeed want to have certain contacts and to co-operate with this Alliance. (Skubiszewski 1997: 127).

Even though Poland's leaders did not initially advocate for Poland's NATO membership, events in the region made NATO possible. One, which should not be underestimated, was the war in Bosnia, which provided a reminder that the nationalistic demons that had ravaged Central and Eastern Europe were still alive and flourishing (Asmus 2004: 15–16). As Adam Michnik (1991) argued in his essay 'Nationalism', "Yugoslavia is a condensed miniature of a whole set of problems characteristic of the post-communist states" and what was happening in Yugoslavia "sounds a warning for our countries and for each nation". Secondly, and most pressingly, the instability of the Soviet Union in 1991 meant that new arrangements needed to be found to ensure Poland's security (Asmus 2004: 16; Osica 2004: 305). The Warsaw Pact was dissolved on 1 July 1991. Barely a month later, on 10 August, the Soviet citizenry had their regular programming replaced by Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, the musical accom-

paniment to a change of the guard since the days of Leonid Brezhnev. As Bridget Kendall, a correspondent for BBC News in Moscow between 1989-93, put it in a description of the day's events:

> It was so typically Soviet, such a cliche […] Outside our office block, we found a young soldier had parked his tank near an underpass. He just sat there stunned, unable or unwilling to respond to our questions. Our elderly cleaning lady, Masha, gently chastised him and told him to go home to his mother. (Kendall 2011).

This time, anti-Gorbachev generals tried to halt the political loosening of the USSR and oust Gorbachev, an event which precipitated the collapse of the Soviet Union (Asmus 2004: 16; Osica 2004: 207). This ensuing collapse gave Poland more flexibility, allowing them to present their NATO ambitions publicly. As Krzysztof Skubiszewski, the Polish Foreign Minister at the time, described the situation:

> It took the 1991 August coup in Moscow and the break-up of the Soviet Union – events that came out of the blue and had nothing to do with Poland – to open up certain chances. (Asmus 2004: 17).

1.3. The British Vision: Mobilising NATO to counter the Eastern Threat

> We have no eternal allies, and no permanent enemies […] our interests are eternal, and those interests it is our duty to follow. Palmerston, in Henry Kissinger's *Diplomacy*. (Kissinger 1994: 95–96).

For the UK, the end of the Cold War presented an excellent opportunity to reform her defence policy given the new "security needs" brought about by these changes (Garden 2001: 75). To understand the British approach at the start of Poland's democratic transition and the collapse of the Soviet Union, it is important to understand two crucial principles of British foreign policy when it comes to her relationship with Europe (Dalecka 2008: 167).

Firstly, Britain's interest has tended towards widening rather than deepening structures, and keeping organisations separate from each other. This interest is borne out of geographical perceptions. While the symbolic barrier between East and West was removed in 1989, this is the product of another barrier further West – the English Channel (Ramsbotham 1991: 127). Though it may only be 22 miles (ca. 35 kilometres), this strait has had a much wider effect on British identity, and consequently foreign policy, than this width suggests. As a result of this geographical separation, British people have seen themselves as distinct from their continental neighbours (Ramsbotham 1991: 127–28). The legacies of an English-speaking world created by a maritime empire leads many Britons to feel more in common with a Canadian or an Indian on the other side of the world than a Frenchman or a German (Schweiger 2006: 14–17).

Secondly, there is the particularly English idea that the continent is a perpetual source of trouble, and that efforts must be made through bilateral relations to ensure that the continent never unites against Britain (Hopkinson 2000). Since the days of the Roman Empire, there have been several attempts to recreate it, and this desire

has been a consistent thread throughout European history since the founding of the Holy Roman Empire by Charlemagne in the year 800 (Elst 2008: 6; Peel 1902). Britain's foreign policy, and the interests of British intellectuals, have focused on what the Romantic English poet Robert Southey calls the "outcasts of Europe", as can be seen with the British obsession with Tadeusz Kościuszko (Cottle 1848; Laskowski 2012). While Britain has embraced the principles of patriotism and the nation-state around the same time as its European neighbours, this has never developed into a feeling of wanting to be part of the nation of Europe. On the contrary, Britain has tended to advocate for an internationalist approach, where "individual countries can agree to take joint decisions or share joint responsibilities without irrevocably committing themselves to surrendering their essential sovereignty and independence" (Elst 2008: 21). Part of this approach can be seen in the famous speech given by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher at the College of Europe in Bruges, on 20 September 1988. In this speech, she talked about Europe as a family of nations:

> Let Europe be a family of nations, understanding each other better, appreciating each other more, doing more together, but relishing our national identity no less than our common European endeavour. (Thatcher 1988).

Based on these principles, it made sense for Britain to conduct collective European defence through a separate transatlantic organisation, rather than a centralised European one. As Thatcher herself said in a Panorama documentary:

> The defence of the West is not done in the European Community; it never has been. It is done in NATO […] Is it really so difficult to sell people the truth, that NATO has kept the peace in Europe for over forty-five years, and that this is a longer period of peace than Europe has ever enjoyed? And therefore this system, which has kept the peace, which matters to us more than anything else, is the one which can go on keeping the peace, and will do? (Ramsbotham 1991).

Poland was of great diplomatic interest to Great Britain, with much of this interest stemming from its geopolitical location in Europe. However, it is worth understanding that this much broader interest in ensuring that Poland takes its rightful place in Europe is born of a much earlier impulse. Much of the commentary around Thatcher's Bruges speech focuses on her discourse on European integration, though it is important to note her focus on the importance of integrating the countries east of the Berlin Wall:

> The European Community is one manifestation of that European identity, but it is not the only one. We must never forget that east of the Iron Curtain, people who once enjoyed a full share of European culture, freedom and identity have been cut off from their roots. We shall always look on Warsaw, Prague, and Budapest as great European cities. Nor should we forget that European values have helped to make the United States of America into the valiant defender of freedom which she has become. (Thatcher 1988).

On a domestic level, the idea of NATO expansion also meant that Britain could take advantage of the lack of an immediate threat from the Russian Federation to re-

focus cold-war era defence spending elsewhere. During the Cold War, the UK played an important role in NATO, as one of the largest countries. But the end of the Cold War provided the perfect opportunity to obtain a "peace dividend" and reduce defence spending (Garden 2001).

The British government reviewed its defence policy in 1990, in a document known as 'Options for Change' (Hansard 1990). Its crucial assumption was that "a resurgent Russia had the potential to continue to threaten the West" and "continuing to support NATO would be the primary requirement of British defence policy" (Garden 2001: 75).

As Tom King, the British Defence Secretary at the time, wrote:

> History shows that periods of great political upheaval are also likely to be periods of insecurity. Whilst we look forward to a new security order in Europe, we have no right to assume it. New arrangements must be worked at and constructed through patient negotiation and agreement. NATO provides the focus through which its members […] can coordinate and pursue arms control and other ways of managing international security. But NATO can only succeed if it can continue to demonstrate a willingness and ability to defend itself for so long as there remains a potential for military exploitation in Europe. (Garden 2001: 75–76; London: Ministry of Defence 1990).

Furthermore, Britain's position in NATO meant that she was always going to play an important role in the future of the alliance. In July 1991, NATO heads of governments met, and agreed on a strategic concept in response to Europe's changing geopolitics (Council 1991). British defence planners quickly adopted this document as they won the role of lead nation for the newly formed multinational Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction corps (ARRC) (HMSO 1991). The UK's main contribution to NATO was to be the ARRC, which could be deployed "anywhere within the Allied Command Europe area" (Garden 2001). However, aside from the unification of Germany, the UK did not appear to be thinking in terms of changes to NATO membership and was very mindful about keeping Moscow happy.

This approach changed with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Warsaw's shift to aspiring for NATO meant that both Britain and Poland could achieve their goals through NATO's enlargement (Dalecka 2008: 167). For Poland, NATO could provide a security guarantee, and Britain could use its existing role in the ARRC to regain the position of being a regional power in Europe and fulfil the traditional aims of British foreign policy (Kay 1998: 25). This approach would prevent either Russia or Germany from filling the role of a hegemonic protector (Dalecka 2008: 165). From a ministerial perspective, British approval for Poland's NATO admission came in February 1994, when Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, visited Warsaw (Dalecka 2008: 169). During this trip, he both outlined that Britain would support any Polish aspirations in the alliance, and that it would be up for Poland and other states who wished to join NATO to decide whether they wanted to join. These guarantees helped allay fears. One issue that Britain still had with Poland's entry into NATO was the lack of civilian control over the Armed forces, unfamiliar to the army who had been educated under

Soviet tutelage. This was a particular concern of both government ministers and the civil service. As can be seen in the 1994 Annual Review:

> Again, there were problems under the surface, relating to the commitment of the armed forces to NATO and to compatibility with NATO standards. Some in the officer corps (trained, we should remember, in Moscow) resented the alliance and preferred a stand-alone policy. For the Chief of General Staff, the priority was to assert his control over defence policy and planning, and cut the civilian Minister out of the loop, even if this caused difficulties with NATO. So far it has not so much caused difficulties as raised eyebrows. But Poland needs to sort matters out in good time if her NATO aspirations are not to be prejudiced. To start the New Year with neither a Defence Minister nor a fully functioning Foreign Minister looks and is bad. (Llewellyn-Smith 1995).

As Crawford argues, one aspect of NATO that attracted Britain and Poland's leaders alike is that it would be the only way of removing the barnacles of the remaining members of the GRU (the Soviet military intelligence services) from the Polish armed forces. Britain was keen on helping this transformation to occur. Assistance was proposed by military experts, sending Poles to Sandhurst and Dartmouth, and English language training was provided by the British Council (Crawford 2023; Shea 2023a). By 1993, however, it appeared that Russia was not emerging as a threat in the foreseeable future, leading the UK government to assume that earlier assumptions were no longer valid. Thus, Britain saw that it would be possible to bring forward closer relations between NATO and the central European countries.

It is also important to note that the Polish émigré community in the UK helped shape Britain's policies. Although I will talk more about the role of the community in the third chapter of this thesis, many members of the Polish community held eminent roles in British society. As Crawford argued, "they were members of all the good London clubs", and this soft power certainly helped to incline London decision-makers towards advancing Polish integration into Western structures (Crawford 2023).

1.4. Building a relationship with Russia

However, it is also worth acknowledging that Britain and Poland's attitude to the latter joining NATO was also heavily influenced by the somewhat erratic foreign policy of Russian President Boris Yeltsin's Russia. In 1993, Yeltsin visited Warsaw and declared that Russia opposed Poland and other Central European states joining NATO, before, in an equally surprising fashion, retracting this statement a few weeks later (Terry 2000: 19).

However, Russia's foreign policy is part of a broader set of behaviours. These events started with the defeat of the more reformist Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar in December 1992 . This departure led to a shift towards conservatism, which affected both domestic and foreign policy. Moscow's strategy was to redefine the "near abroad" to include former Soviet republics (with an emphasis on Ukraine), and former

Warsaw pact allies (Terry 2000: 20). The Russian Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev, expanded on this point while being interviewed by the weekly *Polityka* (in english, Policy, one of the mosto prominent political weekly journal in Poland). During this interview, he was asked about the role of Central and Eastern Europe in Russia's neighbourhood policy, given the historical importance of Russia's near abroad during the Cold War. Kozyrev's response was simple: Eastern Europe was at the front of Russia's neighbourhood policy, and Russia sought to "to maintain the existing infrastructure of mutual relations" (Kozyrev 1993). In the latter part of the interview, he advised the three Visegrád countries that if they became closer to NATO, it would strengthen reactionary forces in Russia and change the Russian perception of the region into a buffer zone that needed to be crushed (Terry 2000: 23). Rather, Poland and her neighbours should focus on becoming a Finland-style bridge between Russia and Western Europe (Kozyrev 1993).

However, before this article could be published, Yeltsin arrived in Warsaw for his summit with Wałęsa in late August, a visit that would inadvertently start the course of NATO enlargement (Terry 2000: 23). While this meeting was planned in order to conclude agreements around a new gas pipeline and other economic arrangements, along with resolving past matters around Katyń and the *Solidarność* crisis in 1980 and 1981, the most historical thing to take place was Yeltsin publicly declaring no objection to Poland's entry into NATO (Terry 2000: 23). While it has been suggested that "generous libations" may have played a role, as Crawford argued, it was more likely that this shift occurred because Yeltsin did not see NATO as a threat to Russia (Crawford 2023; Terry 2000: 23). Another explanation was that it was a calculated move to ensure that Poland shifted away from closer ties as offered by Ukraine, which was seen as a higher priority in the Russian sphere of influence (Terry 2000: 23). NATO's Secretary General, Manfred Woerner, stated a fortnight later:

> the time has come to open a more concrete perspective to those countries of Central and Eastern Europe which want to join NATO and which we may consider eligible for future membership […] I am happy that President Yeltsin also sees it in this way. (Woerner 1993).

Although Yeltsin then "reinterpreted" this statement, in the midst of domestic tensions within Russia on 1 October, the increasing anti-NATO rhetoric ended up increasing the perception of Russia as an unstable actor who needed to be guarded against for both NATO and those countries wanting to join the alliance (Terry 2000: 24).

This perception ended up leading to the creation of the "Partnership for Peace". NATO had to provide something to the capitals of the Visegrád Group after the Russians had withdrawn their objection, but could not offer full membership immediately, in part to avoid angering Moscow. This partnership had two effects, as will be discussed in the following Chapter. Firstly, by providing an external partnership, Poland's relations became much more based on her Western relationship, rather than on any interregional blocs. Thus, the die had been cast for NATO expansion.

1.5. Conclusion

At the start of the Third Republic, Poland's membership in the Warsaw Pact and the presence of Soviet troops on its territory played a significant role. Despite changes in political leadership and constitutions, Poland's foreign policy remained steady, driven by a single strategic culture and a cautious approach. However, events in the region eventually made NATO membership possible for Poland. The British position on NATO expansion was shaped by multiple considerations. The end of the Cold War presented an opportunity for Britain to reform its defence policy. Britain's interest leaned towards widening rather than deepening structures and maintaining separate organizations. The perception of the continent as a potential source of trouble led to a preference for bilateral relations to prevent a united front against Britain. Poland's geopolitical location in Europe made it of great diplomatic interest to Britain. NATO expansion allowed Britain to redirect defence spending and solidified its significant role within the alliance. The desire to remove the lingering presence of Russia produced some scepticism, but also motivated greater reforms. But most crucially, the erratic nature of Russian foreign policy under Yeltsin played a role in shaping NATO Poland's attitudes towards enlargement, as can be seen from Yeltsin's visit to Warsaw in 1993.

2. Keeping the Americans in: In the Anterooms of Europe

2.1. Introduction

The United States has always been the single point of failure within NATO, on account of the colossal support that they provide the alliance (Shea 2023a). After the Cold War, the United States played an increasing role in maintaining the international order, thanks to becoming the last remaining superpower (Zaborowski and Longhurst 2003). For NATO to have survived as an alliance, it was essential for the US to be present, and this fact was capitalised upon by Britain, a country which has often been a link between Western Europe and the US, through a "special relationship" built on historical links and shared intelligence (Osica 2004: 302). As Oscar Wilde quipped in *The Canterville Ghost*, "We have really everything in common with America nowadays, except, of course, the language" (Wilde 1887). Poland, similarly, has had a close relationship since the days when Kościuszko enlisted as a volunteer in Benjamin Franklin's regiments. Indeed, the United States played a similar role in helping to create the modern Polish state through Wilson's Fourteen Points (Storozynski 2009: 41–42). In this chapter, I will discuss how America came again to defend Poland's sovereignty and Britain's role in this process.

Certainly, America was the most important NATO member when it comes to Poland's entry into the alliance. But Britain played a significant supporting role in America's involvement by providing some of the technical support that was needed for Poland to be able to meet the standards to join the alliance. Much of this happened during the period when Poland was in the "anterooms of Europe" (Terry 2000: 7). It was achieved through Britain's role as a supporter of the Partnership for Peace, which

provided a "Chinese menu" of different options for alignment (Shea 2023b). This approach provided Poland with the space to develop the required capabilities to sustain NATO membership without being part of the bloc. It also allowed NATO to manage relations better with Russia and the countries in Poland's neighbourhood. This combination meant that Britain's role in convincing the US that NATO expansion was necessary and provided much of the technical expertise for Poland to be ready for this to occur.

2.2. Historical context

While NATO's membership has been dominated by its European contingent, the external support that the US provided has been an essential component of NATO's ability to establish itself and continue to achieve its lofty goals. Returning to Ismay, he claimed that the North Atlantic Treaty (which founded NATO) was not:

> one of those treaties that you can sign with great pomp, all the photographers taking photographs, gold pens and all that sort of thing, and then put away in the archives of the various F[oreign] O[ffice]s. (Ismay 1955; Sayle 2019: 17).

On the contrary, members of the Alliance had to engage in "collective action, and continuous action" to enhance their cooperation. NATO's European members alone were not confident enough alone to defend themselves from the external threat of the Soviet Union. As Paul-Henri Spaak, NATO's second secretary-general, stated, "Europeans […] have no confidence in their national military establishments" (Chapin 1951; Sayle 2019). It is worth also considering the immediate circumstances of NATO's formation. The Soviet leader Joseph Stalin had imposed his will across Central and Eastern Europe, defenestrating his political opponents (Albright and Woodward 2003: 318). This immediate challenge prompted Washington to involve itself in European defence to prevent any more Communist-led coups and to rehabilitate the broken economies and societies of Western Europe, allowing a new peace in Europe, culminating with the fall of the Berlin Wall (Albright and Woodward 2003: 318).

Britain's internationalist rather than regionalist strategic culture also plays a role in her perception of the US as an important security guarantee. Britain has tended to advocate for an internationalist approach, where "individual countries can agree to take joint decisions or share joint responsibilities without irrevocably committing themselves to surrender their essential sovereignty and independence". Returning to Thatcher's Bruges speech, where she highlighted the role of the Atlantic community "that Europe on both sides of the Atlantic — which is our noblest inheritance and our greatest strength" (Thatcher 1988). The US did not have a plan for NATO after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the changing security environment after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Polish-Americans like Zbigniew Brzeziński, the US National Security Advisor at the start of the 1980s, suggested that the Soviet Union was the only thing keeping the Eastern Bloc in place as an entity and that Poland along with the rest of Central Europe could escape Russian domination, much of the proposals involved making these countries neutral, like Finland was during the Cold War (Brzezinski and

Griffith 1961: 644). But when the Governor of the State of Arkansas was inaugurated President of the United States in 1993, NATO enlargement was one of the furthest things from Bill Clinton's mind (Asmus 2004: 18). With the superpower enemy that had so long defined the alliance appeared to have become more of a partner than an adversary, it was unclear to the US what role NATO could possibly serve (Albright and Woodward 2003: 19; Asmus 2004: 18).

However, as is the case with any institutions that a new government administration might acquire, the alliance remained useful. Even if the Soviet threat had changed, other threats had emerged that required coordination with allies, such as the ethnic cleansing in the Balkans (Albright and Woodward 2003: 318; Asmus 2004: 18; Crawford 2023). For the incoming Clinton administration, the two theoretical requirements for NATO to continue had been met: there was a security institution whose decision-making ability was superior to any equivalent organisation, like the Western European Union (WEU) or the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) (Barany 2003). There was a pressing reason to continue to use it: the war in Bosnia. Both were priorities, as Clinton had criticised his opponent, George Bush, for not focusing more on Russia and Bosnia, and by using an existing institution, he could use his time to focus more on domestic issues. After all, Clinton's own internal campaign had focused primarily on domestic issues, with the battle cry of "It's the economy, stupid", and so anything that allowed for a streamlining of foreign policy would make the Clinton administration's life easier (Asmus 2004: 18–26).

This process accelerated in June 1993, when the Clinton administration outlined its four-point policy towards NATO: (Albright and Woodward 2003: 210–11).

1. NATO had to remain at the centre of Europe's security, as no other institution (like the WEU or the OSCE) had any similar weight.
2. If the new democracies in central and Eastern Europe met the same standards as other members, NATO should welcome them.
3. Joining NATO can be used as an incentive to ensure that countries in the region reform, ensure civilian direction of their armed forces, liberalise economies, and respect minority rights.
4. Any NATO enlargement should occur at a gradual pace, as not all countries will be ready overnight or make progress at the same pace.

2.3. The role of the Partnership for Peace

To turn these principles into reality, NATO established the Partnership for Peace (PfP). The idea emerged from a Polish-born Georgian-American, John Shalikashvili ("Shali"), who had fled Poland in 1944 to escape Soviet troops (Albright and Woodward 2003: 212; Shea 2023a). After the increasing instability of the region after the incident with Yeltsin's Russia, Shali proposed that NATO should invite the emerging democracies of Europe and the former Soviet Union (including Russia), to participate in military training exercises with NATO countries. The Alliance's former adversaries would be trained in how to operate within it. States which put in the effort to bring

their militaries up to NATO standards, resolve disputes with their neighbours, and strengthen their institutions for civilian control of the military could be welcomed into full membership of the Alliance (Albright and Woodward 2003: 212).

Although this approach was not created by the UK, the PfP aligned perfectly with British interests, and was a masterstroke for British pragmatism (Shea 2023a). To use Shea's analogy, "It's like having a mistress, without the hassle of marriage". Britain had already started cooperation with Poland before this was announced, and it represented a logical continuation of existing policy (Dalecka 2008: 168). Janusz Onyszkiewicz, the Polish Minister of Defence, had visited his British counterpart, Malcolm Rifkind in 1992 to review the range of development of military cooperation (Garden 2001: 76). During this meeting, the Polish delegation expressed their objective of eventually joining the alliance, though, Britain wanted further cooperation without immediately committing to full membership (Dalecka 2008: 168).

The PfP did not initially gather support from Polish leaders. Wałęsa initially accused the PfP of being "blackmail" and "too little" (Albright and Woodward 2003: 212) . Geremek stated: "words are important […] we need words that Poland will be part of NATO" (Asmus 2004: 78). However, after American assurances that the PfP was a necessary step on the way to formal candidacy, Poland, and the rest of the Visegrád states came round to the initiative. This tone was reinforced by the start of 1994, when PfP was adopted. The PfP formalised the alliance's increasing role as an entry point into Western structures, in contrast to a hesitant EU (Terry 2000: 25). Thus, the PfP provided something that Polish leaders could endorse.

The PfP allowed an increase of contacts at different military levels without a massively increased expenditure or massively changing the UK's defence commitments. Under the PfP, Britain provided training for the Poles, helping them with military reforms, and providing English language education. "But you have people in Poland such as Wałęsa and Geremek wanting to use the PfP as a way of getting them locked into NATO. "It's like getting engaged, as a way of locking things in, and then the person you get engaged with saying 'let's get married'" (Shea 2023a). This warmth can be further seen in the UK government's annual defence policy statement after the NATO summit in Brussels in 1994. This statement was the first mention of NATO enlargement as a long-term objective for the UK. It highlighted NATO as a source of stability, not only for the newly democratic states of CEE, but furthered by the PfP (Garden 2001). The PfP was something feasible.

Despite Poland's endorsement of the PfP initiative and its proactive implementation of some of its easier aspects, some parts of the UK government remained sceptical about Poland's commitment to the more substantive parts of joining NATO. The Conservative government under both Thatcher and Major had viewed the transatlantic relationship as more important for security than closer integration with Europe and was worried that any dilution of the membership of NATO would weaken US engagement (Garden 2001: 77). In understanding this, it is worth looking at the 1995 defence statement, 'Stable Forces in a Strong Britain' (Garden 2001: 77; HMSO 1995). While the statement was in favour of greater cooperation, the UK wanted to create "a

balance between partnership and membership in the development of the wider Europe we wish to see" (Garden 2001: 77; HMSO 1991).

The US defence contracting sector also had a significant impact on shaping the US stance on NATO expansion. These regions provided a lucrative market for arms manufacturing, as the neglect and collapse of the Warsaw Pact left the armed forces of these countries ill-equipped for the demands of NATO expansion and would need to upgrade their armed forces. Republican lobbyists such as Bruce Jackson, financed by Lockheed Martin, pushed for NATO expansion to promote arms sales to Europe (Shea 2023a). As new members would need to be interoperable, they would need to purchase NATO-quality weapons. And who else could they buy them from but NATO members, particularly the US? After the Clinton Administration removed export restrictions to PfP countries in 1995, Lockheed Martin and Boeing opened Central European offices (Valasek 1999: 25). Although these defence contractors' interests in promoting arms sales to Central and Eastern Europe may have influenced the US position, the immediate needs of prospective NATO members were focused on training and education (Valasek 1999:25). As General Wesley Clark, the SACEUR (Strategic Allied at the time, argued, investing "in between the ears" is more necessary for new members to meet NATO's interoperability conditions (Valasek 1999:25).

2.4. Conclusion

Britain kept the US involved with NATO by providing practical support to the US's initiative. Western European security has always been guaranteed by the US, despite NATO being predominantly composed of European members. Britain's internationalist strategic culture reinforces its perception of the US as a vital security guarantee. The lack of a concrete plan for NATO after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union posed challenges, but the alliance remained valuable for the Clinton administration. Shalikashvili's creation of the PfP helped turn these principles into action. Although the PfP initially lacked support from Poland, it became a guarantee of NATO expansion if standards could be met. This approach proved advantageous for British pragmatism, as it allowed increased military contacts without significantly increasing expenditure or defence commitments. While Britain remained sceptical about Poland's commitment to NATO, the PfP initiative was positively implemented by Poland. The US defence sector also played an important role. Thus, by helping them to realise US foreign policy, Britain kept the Americans involved in NATO as it brought Poland up to the standards needed to become a member.

3. Keeping the Germans Down: Negotiating the Return to Europe

3.1. Introduction

Even when the Russian threat to the East had been tamed, and American support guaranteed, Poland still needed to build relationships in her neighbourhood to ensure that NATO accession could be completed. Through adopting ideas developed by

the Polish émigré community in Britain and elsewhere, Poland's leaders understood that they needed to "return" to their rightful place at the heart of European affairs. To do this, they needed to transcend the memories of their borders before WWII and the trauma of the shift westwards after the conference in Yalta. Poland could then focus on creating a Polish state that could enter the European institutions. Poland needed to create a strong relationship with the newly united Germany to ensure that her western border was secure and as a guarantor for her entry into the European institutions. To the East, Poland had to contend with the historical legacies of her relationships with Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus and renounce any claim to the lands that had come within the borders of the Second Republic. In addition to this, Poland also had to contend with regional disagreements in NATO on how far NATO should expand and how fast. Britain, with a new government, advocated for a more minor expansion, which eventually culminated in Poland's entry to the alliance in 1999.

3.2. The role of the Polish community in Britain

The Polish émigré community, a significant part of which is in the UK, played an important role in shaping Poland's foreign policy after communism. After the collapse of the Second Republic in September 1939, a government in exile was formed in Paris and moved to London in 1940 (Sword 1996:22–23). Through its wholehearted support of the Allied forces, this government expected some form of role in future negotiations with the Soviet Union over Poland's post-war borders and the administration of the country (Osica 2004: 303). However, these hopes were dashed after February 1945, during the Great Power conference in Yalta (Sword 1996:25). During this conference, the demands of realpolitik led the Great powers to decide upon the future of Poland among themselves, and Britain along with the US acceded to Stalin's demands (Sword 1996:27). The British, French and American governments withdrew their recognition of the Polish authorities-in-exile in Summer 1945 (Sword 1996:27). Though many Poles decided to return *do kraju* (*i.e* to the country, in this context, to the Polish People's Republic-PRL), about 140 000 remained in the UK (Chojnacki 2009: 11–12; Sword, Davies, and Ciechanowski 1989; Zubrzycki 2013). The British government's policy at the time was to encourage the Poles who were in Britain or elsewhere under British command to return to Poland (Sword 1996:28–29). Those who decided to remain in the UK were given the opportunity to restart their lives through official resettlement programmes, forming the basis of the Polish émigré community, although the betrayal of Yalta led many to feel an antipathy towards their new homes (Sword 1986).

While it can be tempting to ignore émigré movements, this is to ignore its role as a political phenomenon worth studying (Williams 1970). Exiles tend to have an effect both in their host country and when they return to their homeland. After all, the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 in Russia was only possible through the experience of Russian exiles in Europe, such as Lenin and Trotsky (Williams 1970). As Tadeusz Wyrwa, Polish historian and émigré writer, the process of emigration is "the time of

trial for every refugee and the sum of their attitudes assumed in exile shows, to a significant degree, the character of each nation' (Chojnacki 2009: 12; Wyrwa 1998: 7). Poles in Great Britain were free to continue in the intellectual and cultural paths of interwar Poland, unlike their relatives in the East (Chojnacki 2009: 3). They were able to produce journals such as *Kultura* (based in Paris) and discuss the politics and policies that Poland would have if it could cast aside the yoke of Soviet domination. One such essay, which led to a rethinking of Poland's Ospolitik, began in this very journal, by Juliusz Mieroszewski, also known as *Londyńczyk* (The Londoner, in english) (Krzoska 2009: 91). A political journalist who translated George Orwell's '1984' into Polish, living in the capital of a crumbling empire, Mieroszewski predicted in 1966 that the Soviet empire would also eventually succumb to the forces of nationalism (Dorosz 2016: 57; Terry 2000: 8).

Mieroszewski had clear ideas for a post-communist Poland's foreign policy. He warned that Warsaw would need to rid itself of any vestiges of great power ambitions to secure its future freedoms (Terry 2000: 8). This change meant accepting the loss of its former eastern provinces "as the price for normal relations with Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania," and abandoning its typical "attitude of hate-cum-contempt" toward Russia (Terry 2000: 8). He acknowledged that the "decolonisation of the USSR" was a necessary first step to the normalisation of Polish-Russian relations, and an end to Russia's territorial empire in Eastern Europe was entirely beyond any control of Russia (Terry 2000: 9). Mieroszewski argued that only by providing a bridge between Russia and the West would Poland be able to escape the consequences of its geography (Terry 2000: 9). While this envisioning of a hypothetical future could hardly affect the foreign policy of the PRL, it did motivate a debate among other members of the émigré intelligentsia. This process produced a set of ideas which shaped a post-communist Poland's foreign policy after 1989 (Terry 2000: 9). Skubiszewski firmly embraced the idea that past grievances should not be allowed to shape present realities. As such, he advocated for Poland to adopt a policy of "European standards", that maintained Poland's borders and used this stability to advocate for a comprehensive legal framework of states (Skubiszewski 1997:29).

3.3. Regional Dynamics and NATO Entry

3.3.1. Germany

On 18 March 1890, the Chancellor of Germany and this author's namesake, Bismark, resigned to Wilhelm II. A century later to the day, the East German population resigned as a people by voting to unify with their Western neighbour (Wæver 1990: 477). Immediately, a unified Germany became the largest economy in Europe and recreated the state that had been at the heart of the twentieth century's most destructive wars (Hayes and James 2014: 400). This change came as a surprise to the British establishment. Indeed, as late as November 1989, Hurd said "the how and when" of the reunification of Germany was not on "the immediate agenda", barely a year before reunification occurred (Hayes and James 2014).

During the days of the PRL, the PZPR (the Polish Communist Party) capitalised on the existing distrust of Germany to reinforce support for an alliance with the Soviet Union and the presence of the Soviet Army on Polish soil. However, the groundwork had already been laid for reconciliation between Germany and Poland. A pivotal moment came in 1965 when Poland's Roman Catholic bishops requested their German counterparts for mutual forgiveness for the past injustices that both nations had committed. The communist government vehemently opposed this request as an unjustified intervention in state affairs from the Church, and the German Bishops responded disappointingly guardedly. However, these actions established the groundwork for a gradual improvement in relations (Karpinski 1996; Pond 1996; Terry 2000: 8). On 7 December 1970, the West German Chancellor Willy Brandt agreed to the Treaty of Warsaw, which established the Oder-Niesse line as the future Polish-German border, although commentators were eager to point out that Article IV of the Treaty meant that this was not a final agreement (Johnson 1997: 93). For Poland, German reunification represented a crucial step toward Poland's European integration. As the British ambassador in Warsaw wrote in the 1990 Annual Review,

> The new situation in Europe created three interrelated objectives for Poland. First, the reunification of Germany should be accompanied by a final settlement of the Polish/ German border, with Poland involved in the process (Barrett 1991).

This policy was in keeping with the principle of *nihil novi*.

> The Poles were grateful for the ready support which we gave them. They participated in the relevant 2+4 discussions, and in November, Poland and Germany signed a Border Treaty, with ratification scheduled for February 1991 (Barrett 1991).

On 17 June 1991, Poland and Germany signed a pact of good neighbourliness, akin to the Franco-German reconciliation that happened three decades prior (Terry 2000: 10).

German reunification also expanded the concept of Central Europe as an essential part of the European identity. While thinkers to the East of the Iron Curtain, such as Czech writer Milan Kundera, perceived Central Europe as a continuously vulnerable area between Germany and Russia, in Germany, the discussion transformed into a discourse about Mitteleuropa, a concept which included Germany (Wæver 1990: 480). This difference was not just a question of translation, but described a region with significant political influence, rather than just a matter of cultural identity (Wæver 1990: 480). Despite the significant challenge of integrating the former East Germany, the newly reunified Germany had two convincing arguments for why the integration of her Eastern neighbours was essential (Terry 2000: 10). Firstly, Germany would be the first to be affected by refugee influxes should these democracies fail (Terry 2000: 10). Secondly, West German leaders realised that their prosperity was due to their position on the dividing lines of Europe and felt a feeling of debt towards their Eastern neighbours who had suffered under Soviet domination. For Poland, a partnership with Germany was essential to reasserting its position as part of Europe. It is an important example of the more contentious issue of her relations with her Eastern neighbours (Terry 2000: 10).

3.3.2. Lithuania and Ukraine

Germany's situation with Poland was replicated by Poland's situation with its Eastern neighbours of Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine. While I will Both Germany and Poland lost territory to the East after World War II, were home to millions of refugees from their former territories (in Poland's case the *kresy*) and their descendants, and felt a responsibility to protect the minorities who found themselves living in their Eastern neighbourhood (Snyder 2002:237). Joining Western institutions, particularly NATO, was a way of dealing with these threats. The British embassy's annual review in 1991 argues:

> Poland's foreign policy addresses her desire, rooted in a thousand years of history, to be a part of Western Europe. It is also designed to guard her against the dangers which spring from the dissolution of the Soviet Empire […] In the longer term, Poland must remain vigilant against the threats which could come from an independent and possibly nuclear-armed Ukraine, as well as from a Russian superpower. The large minorities of Poles in the neighbouring states to the east are hostage to political developments there. All this means that, although the armed forces are now the least favoured financially of Poland's institutions, Poland cannot afford for long to neglect defence (Llewellyn-Smith 1992).

While Poland was not the aggressor in World War II, those living in Poland's eastern neighbourhood viewed Poland as an occupier in cities like Vilnius and Lviv, and a potential revanchist threat in a newly independent Belarus (Snyder 2002:237–38). Skubiszewski and German diplomats were keenly interested in Poland's eastern policy, and even used the Polish position in Lithuania as a reference point for German policy towards its minority in Poland (Snyder 2002:237–38).

Given the concern of West Europeans (including the UK, which as previously discussed wanted to reduce its defence expenditure) and the US, German unification would have likely happened orderly regardless of Polish policy (Garden 2001: 76; Snyder 2002:238). The German encounters demonstrated Skubiszewski's qualities when it came to dealing with Poland's eastern neighbours. The Polish community in the UK advocated for closer cooperation between Poland and her Eastern neighbours, many had come from Poland's former eastern territories (Sword 1996: 73). However, this policy did not come without challenges. In Lithuania, the Polish community sought territorial autonomy after the Lithuanian declaration of independence in 1991, which Poland was one of the first countries to recognise, but Skubiszewski refused to give the Polish state's support for such initiatives. In stark contrast to the approach taken by other countries, such as Hungary, or by the Serbian president Slobodan Milošević, who used the suffering of the Serbs in Kosovo to seize control, the Polish authorities approached the issue of Polish minorities as a matter to be resolved between nation-states by common legal standards (Snyder 2002:240). Britain further supported regional co-operation through joint exercises, such as the exercise Cossack Steppe with Britain, Poland, and Ukraine in 1997 (Przemyslaw 2014).

3.4. The Final leg: from Madrid to the Vistula

The UK also played a significant part in the inter-ally deliberations that led to Poland's admission in 1999 by advocating for a narrow expansion. In May 1997, the Labour Party took office after eighteen years of Conservative Party government and two months before the principal NATO summit on expansion (Garden 2001: 79). Though the new government had little time, it tackled NATO as one of its first priorities. Barely two weeks after taking office, Robin Cook, the new Foreign Secretary, delivered a crucial briefing on the priority for the Labour government's foreign policy.

> The first goal of foreign policy is security for nations. Our security will remain based on [NATO]. We must manage the enlargement of NATO to ensure that a wider alliance is also a stronger alliance, and that the process reduces rather than increases tensions between East and West (Cook 1997).

This policy meant that the British government wanted gradual enlargement, with the most promising countries (including Poland) admitted as a priority. While The US had not yet taken a formal position, Albright revealed that they were also strongly inclined to a group of three countries instead of a wider expansion (Albright and Woodward 2003: 327). The UK's policy was notable in that it differed from all other European countries, bar Iceland. Jacques Chirac, France's president, was a firm advocate of Romania's entry and had managed to convince many of the other European foreign ministries (Albright and Woodward 2003: 327). This debate ended up being resolved by Kohl, whose persuasive speech for consensus led to a conclusion favouring the British and American positions (Albright and Woodward 2003: 328). Kohl argued that it was miraculous that NATO was considering inviting Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, as this would have hardly been imaginable a few years ago (Albright and Woodward 2003: 328–29). Thus, by keeping the Germans down and inside NATO structures, Britain could leverage its position to invite Poland into NATO.

3.5. Conclusion

Britain played a crucial role in facilitating Germany's reunification and the rest of the Eastern neighbourhood, and this reunification advanced Poland's entry into NATO. Poland needed to develop good relations with her neighbourhood for NATO expansion to be feasible. The British-Polish émigré community influenced Poland's post-communist foreign policy by emphasising the need to let go of past ambitions for the sake of future freedoms. The reunification of Germany allowed for an expansion of the notion of Central Europe as a vital part of the European identity. This approach also allowed Poland to build constructive relations with Ukraine and Lithuania, with British cooperation for joint exercises. Finally, the UK played a significant role in the deliberations among allies that led to Poland's admission to NATO in 1999, alongside Germany. This combination underscores its active participation in shaping European security and fostering diplomatic relationships within the alliance.

4. Conclusion

On 12 March 1999, in Independence, Missouri (US), Geremek spoke at the ceremony of deposition of the Protocols of Accession. He began his speech with the words:

> Fifty-three years ago, in nearby Fulton, Missouri, Winston Churchill delivered his famous address. He said:
> "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an Iron Curtain has descended across the Continent." Today, with joy and pride, we celebrate the end of the bipolar world, symbolised by the Iron Curtain (Geremek 1999).

For Poland, the 1990s began with Soviet troops on the ground and surrounded by members of the Warsaw Pact. By the end of the 1990s, every one of Poland's neighbours had changed identities, and Poland was a crucial NATO ally. Despite changes in political leadership throughout this period, Poland's foreign policy remained steady and driven by a steady approach to regaining her status as the heart of Europe, of which being in NATO was a necessary part.

Britain was involved at every stage of this process, from initial cooperation at the start of the 1990s to arguing for Poland's corner at the Madrid summit. Through this time, the desire to remove the threat of an erratic Russia and streamline defence policy remained crucial. Britain also made the PfP successful, which brought Poland's armed forces up to the necessary standards, and in the process keeping the US government and defence sector engaged.

Having inhabited a crumbling empire, Britain's Polish community provided a vision of what a Polish state's neighbourhood could look like. Through facilitating Germany's reunification, Britain kept the Germans down and tied Poland's eastern neighbours in with joint exercises. When it came to signing the final protocols, Britain argued for Poland's inclusion in a swift first round, backed by the Americans and settled by the Germans. This combination underscores Britain's active participation in shaping European security and fostering diplomatic relations within the alliance.

As Britain looks for a new role in Europe after Brexit and the start of the war between Russia and Ukraine, an insight into how cooperation has worked in the past will continue to be relevant. It is important to discuss the mechanisms through how the politics of European security can be negotiated. As Mark Brzeziński, Zbigniew's son and the current US Ambassador to Poland, said to me on the penultimate day of my thesis writing, we must prepare for the future, and prepare the many of those exiled from the war on European soil to return and rebuild the countries they left.

I will end with the words of Geremek himself:

> We should keep the door open for those, who have fought for freedom. Another curtain must never again descend on Europe. Although it would lack the rigidity of the old, iron one, it would almost certainly become as cruel. It would keep us divided economically, if not politically (Geremek 1999).

1. Annexes

Annexe A: Interview with Jamie Shea CMG

CV (selected positions): (All NATO)

- Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges, 2010 – 2018
- Director of Policy Planning, 2003 – 2005
- Deputy Assistant Secretary General for External Relations, Public Diplomacy Division,
- Director of Information and Press, 2000 – 2003
- Spokesman of NATO and Deputy Director of Information and Press, 1993 – 2000
- Deputy Head and Senior Planning Officer, Policy Planning Unit and Multilateral Affairs Section of the Political Directorate, NATO. Speechwriter to the Secretary General of NATO, 1991–1993
- Assistant to the Secretary General of NATO for Special Projects. 1988–1991
- Head of External Relations Conferences and Seminars.1985–1988
- Head of Youth Programmes. 1982–1985
- Administrator in Council Operations Section of Executive Secretariat. 1980–1982

Meeting, 7 March 2023, 5pm GMT; transcript lightly edited for readability

Q (Otto Barrow): Could you tell me about the role that NATO members played in the first round of NATO expansion?

A (Jamie Shea): Of course, to be frank, the people who were behind this idea, the three countries who saw the greatest chance of getting in, were Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. And they did, on 19 March 1999. They saw early on that the US was the decisive player in all of this, and as always in NATO, if the Americans are for it, the rest will go along. The Americans have a massive influence on account of the massive contributions that they make. Ukraine has demonstrated this, big-time, that America is the single point of failure in NATO. If America is there, it works, if America isn't there, it doesn't work, or it works less well. So they really directed their lobby towards the Washington community: the think tanks, the Hill, the whole nexus of policymaking making. Their thinking was: if we can get support from the US, the rest of Europe won't cause a problem. At the end of the debate, there was a debate between: between 6 and 3 some Americans some Eastern Europeans, the French for example looking at in Romania wanted a big round. Others, like the UK under Tony Blair's government after 1997, were very much in favour of three only.
[The attitude was] to be careful, no dilution, no experiments, keep NATO strong. But on the other hand, Blair was not totally aligned with American foreign policy, even before the Iraq War. Blair was trying to get Clinton to intervene in the Balkans, so wasn't going to disagree with American foreign policy around expanding NATO. The UK has a huge influence in Washington, a massive embassy, and when it came to the 6+3 debate.

Q: Do you think the UK had a meaningful influence in the 6+3 debate?

A: Yes, I think we did. Albright was mad keen, and the Pentagon, as always with the Pentagon, was much more conservative and cautious. You always get this debate within the US, between the State department, which is much more gung-ho, and the Pentagon, having the army being reluctant to use force. We saw this with the Balkans. The Pentagon has to extend all of these security guarantees, threat vs. reassurance. As I said at the College, you have to increase the reassurance, but if you increase the threat, you ultimately come out in a better position. So with Clinton, eventually came down on the side of three. Was it entirely because of the UK influence? No, I would not say so, the US will always listen to the Brits, but Clinton will probably listen to the Pentagon more on this. But at a time when the US was focusing on the Middle East and East Asia, even then, the Pentagon wanted to have some sort of peace dividend from the end of the Cold War. Clinton had to be dragged kicking and screaming into the Bosnian conflict, and they were extremely reluctant to be involved in Kosovo. So the idea that when we're drawing down in Europe. The UK definitely had some influence, but others like the Dutch also played an important role and were sending the same sort of message. What are these countries bringing in? Not very much, but Poland has a lot of potential. While Poland today might look a lot more attractive.

Q: Do you think the change of government in Poland played a role?

A: As always, particularly in a complicated place like the United States (the same would apply to London), there's not a monolithic view. Different agencies see it from their point of view. For example, on the one hand, the Pentagon was reluctant about nuclear instruments, but also the lobby Thursday by Lockheed Martin and people like Bruce Jackson, a very significant player in all of this. He was a Republican lobbyist, who lobbied for NATO to expand, financed by Lockheed Martin. Andrew Jackson was basically lobbying because NATO enlargement to promote big arms sales in Europe. Because, of course, American companies would benefit hugely as soon as countries like Poland join NATO. These guys are going to have to go up to NATO standards. They're going to have to buy NATO quality weapons, and they're going to have to buy those from American defence contractors. It's like if you buy an iPhone, if you got a cheap deal, you're going to buy in. The service provider makes money off you. If your army buys American aircraft, you're basically locked into the American defence system because you have to buy your spare parts and everything else from an American company. So, when Turkey bought aircraft from the Russians, this caused a massive problem because Americans were hoping they would buy them from NATO sources. It's never a black-and-white situation, on one son, do you have one side looking at their military commitments, but you also have the defence contractors who are leading on the United States for their business. It's a fierce competition and will get a leg up over Airbus and British Aerospace when it comes to his new contract. I think Bruce Jackson, is someone you should really research. It was important in numbers of convincing people and having people round getting governments to do this do you have different factions and eventually the national Security Council has to sort this out. So you can basically think of the UK as following the United States, not having a

dog in the fight. Poland would've resonated in London because of it being a historic ally of the US. This is before the great wave of Polish plumbers coming to the UK after the enlargement, but traditionally Poland in the UK have had strong ties. Historically, with General Sikorski, who supported the Brits and flying pilots, Spitfires and Hurricanes during Second World War. This may be a romantic way of looking at it, but this is true, and this connection enhanced the case. Historically, Britain has identified with Poland and supported it, but the Blair government would've seen it as not really a hard sell at the time. One thing that the UK was keen on was ensuring that NATO squared a deal with Russia.

Q: How important was the NATO-Russia relationship?

A: Clinton got a mandate in 1996 to engage with Russia and see what sort of mandate for expanding NATO. Could we got with NATO, this was to make the process of NATO enlargement much more transparent. Russia would get assurances for what NATO expansion would look like, and they wouldn't have a reason to misconstrue what it was by NATO, planning to deploy nuclear weapons in Eastern Europe, pointed towards Russia. And and I think this shows that NATO enlargement and good relations with Russia were perfectly compatible. They wanted it to be perceived Real, and it was very much important for the UK to have around in lodgement, which wouldn't provoke or disturb Russia. We therefore don't want an increase of the Russian threat coming our way we look at this in time, Yeltsin was the weather for unpredictable partner, he was not clearly stable, mentally, big alcohol, problem, hostile towards the west. Mind you with the election with Zhirinovsky, the alternative. But you've got to understand, the west was coming really hard behind Yeltsin, when he was facing a revolt from the parliament with a 2nd to attempt. So we can argue whether the west provoked Russia, but Yeltsin have been received very favorably in western Capitals. At the time, other people didn't want to deal with him, because I thought he was a threat to Gorbachev, but the west gave him a favourable hearing. So there was a sense that this deal was going to be done and.

Q: How did the UK's relationship with Russia affect the NATO-Russia relationship then?

A: My sense of the time, this was before the incident with Litvenienko, that back in the late 1990s, the UK, like many other alles was trying to square the circle. So the North Atlantic Council gave a mandate to the secretary general to engage with Russia, to engage with Primakov. Solana, the Spanish Secretary-General, had the mandate to engage with Primakov, who wasn't exactly not going to be a patriotic Russian. The UK may have lost out of it, in terms of presentation. It was Chirac in 1997, who was probably the most pro-Russian out of all theNATO leaders of the time. Chirac was close to Russia, and argued that Russia was being misunderstood, and we need to keep Russia close. And Chirac played important role by hosting the NATO-Agreement in 1997, with the Château Petrus (it was a wonderful day). You can download all the great images of it. And so, in a way, the UK was a step behind in terms of the role.

However, like it was because France had such an investment in terms of keeping good relations with Russia, during this whole period of NATO enlargement, because of the historic Franco-Russian connection during initial partnership. So, maybe the UK was influential behind the scenes in terms of domestic coverage but wasn't necessarily the biggest in terms of presentation. As left, and it was essential to acknowledge that France was outside the NATO structures at the time. Britain was the largest NATO country in Europe but didn't get out in front when it came to the optics. Eventually they agreed on a structure of NATO enlargement, the establishment of the PJCs of the Permanent Joint Council. Then you have the Italians taking over with Berlusconi and the formation of the Russian like NATO-Russia Council. As late as 2008 in Bucharest, NATO summits had Putin attend, along with his new temporary successor. my impression was that the UK was intellectually and politically supportive, but not particularly keen on getting out in front when it comes to the NATO Russia, collect connection. The Brits lead on Kosovo, where it was Blair Blair Blair, all the way.

Most of the big initiative, such as the unification of Germany, we haven't been most enthusiastic camp, we're we'll do it if we have to players, but at least on optical front we don't want to be out in front. When it came to blocking Russia's intervention in Kosovo, because of the British commander of NATO troops, the fact, the Hungarians, and the others were willing to come to the space. And the Russians of sending forces in Kosovo, which would increase a real headache, so this was particularly important for us.

We didn't have the same sort of pattern of conflict which makes people so happy that Poland is in NATO, that you have today. The Russian army was in the process of decomposition and restructuring, the Yeltsin government was very unpopular. There was a risk of him having to bankroll the oligarchs. There were a lot of people, who got used to having to rob the state, and making those profits from it. answer anything else going like difficult instability wise with something which would not of been pretty pleasant watching. Yeltsin was already in like a difficult position seeing of the Communist Party, which was doing okay for a time in Russia. Yeltsin is not ideal, but there was a perception that he was the best person of the west of God, and he wasn't making life difficult for us in the UN Security Council in Bosnia, but it was Neil Atchison, quite a big foreign policy expert, who is the advocate for Russian involve. My impression in the UK is that they were looking at Russia and being quite cautious Political decision in a military one of trying to overcome the division caused by alter, put on the military size. There was very much looking at this of hard-core military facts and question of like whether in stock of a military and whether we could take advantage of the festiv, the UK used to have about 55,000 troops in northern Germany and Britain wanted to bring some of those people back, at a time when we are is a recalibrating force we didn't want to put into reverse all of these actions that we've been done, we want to reduce our footprint. It's expensive to have fun and bases with families and thousands of people. If you went to Northern Europe in the 1980s, as I did, the MOD had the sizable budget, and it was spent were spent installing British teachers, wives and all the infrastructure needed to have British sol-

diers in Germany. It was a big weight. If the MOD wants to build a few new aircraft carriers it would afford this, by withdrawing troops, as would be the case with any other modernising efforts or improving conventional defence capacities. He will have lost people when it comes to NATO announcement. So in 1997, NATO issued the three No's. My impression at the time was that the UK was ensconced in the sort of military factors.

Q: Could you tell me a bit more about the technical aspects of the UK's role in the Partnership for Peace (PfP)?

A: The UK was a big player in the PfP, but they didn't invent it, it was the Americans who invented it, in particular general Shalikashvili, a Georgian-American. However, it aligned perfectly with British interests, and in particular British pragmatism. It's like having a mistress, without the marriage. We train the polls we help them with a military reform. We help them to modernise. We have agreements with British staff colleges. We have Poles at Sandhurst. We have a couple of Poles down at Dartmouth. If you're the British military attaché in Warsaw, this is a good way of building up bilateral relations, but it doesn't involve any expensive big commitments on the defence budget. One thing you can't ignore when it comes to NATO enlargement is the fact that the UK is giving nuclear guarantees. A country like the UK has much more skin in the game than a country like Germany because the UK is providing existential nuclear guarantees. Every time NATO takes a new country if you're in the MOD, you must think to what extent that nuclear guarantee Trident is going to be given, and what are the implications going to be for. UK has a lot more skin in the game. Ian Stallion is the important person for this. He used to come on the nuclear submarine and then join NATO. It's the US and the UK that commit their nuclear forces to NATO, France keeps their nuclear weapons to themselves (although they said they'd give it to any EU country. You've got to remember that, if you're a hardheaded military defence planner, you don't play around with nuclear weapons, and this represents an extra factor for any NATO enlargement. There wasn't necessarily any UK politician who was really preaching the cause. I remember people like Douglas Hurd, who is the Foreign Secretary in a previous government, who was extremely cautious at the time about the prospect ofAny NATO expansion. For him to make Eastern Europe feel comfortable, Bella, more careful about any sort of marriage vowels for EU or NATO enlargement. People who saw NATO in large Ment as the thin end of the wedge, for EU enlargement. There was also some interest on the Conservative side in the OSCE, which could be used as a place to park the eastern Europeans. That something which we could also use to limit tanks and demilitarise Eastern Europe. UK policy is not usually very bold. It's more pragmatic and cautious. Frankly, the UK wanted to offer them something, and some thought that the OSCE and the PfP could be a way of filling the gap instead of NATO enlargement. But you have people in Poland such as Wałęsa and Bronislaw Geremek wanting to use the PfP as a way of getting them locked into NATO. It's like getting engaged, as a way of locking things in, and then the person you get engaged with saying "let's get married".

Annexe B: Interview with Charles Crawford CMG

CV (selected positions):

- Ambassador to Poland, 2003-07
- Ambassador to Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, then Serbia and Montenegro, 2001-03
- (mainly on the Balkans) Director (South East Europe), FCO, 2000
- Deputy Political Director, FCO, 1999-2000
- Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard, 1998-99
- Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1996-98
- Political Counsellor, Moscow, 1993-96
- FCO (Soviet, then Eastern Department), 1991-93
- 1st Secretary, Pretoria/Cape Town, 1987-91
- FCO speechwriter, 1985-87
- 2nd, then 1st Secretary, Belgrade, 1981-84
- FCO (South East Asia Department), 1979-80
- Entry to Diplomatic Service, 1979

Phone call, 4 May 2023, 5.30PM CEST; transcript lightly edited for readability. All errors are the author's own.

Q (Otto Barrow): Tell me about your experience of Poland's entry into NATO.

A (Charles Crawford): Now the thing that is really important to understand is that it is really easy to get into NATO, But it's really hard to get into the EU. If you like a practical reference for what happened in the 1990s, you have to understand that NATO is relatively easy to get into because you didn't have a million pieces of legislation to change. Whereas with the EU it's really difficult. But what Britain wanted to do was to bring it into the EU and the capitalist system. But that's much harder to do. And of course, NATO very much prepare the ground for you, enlargement by bring it into the same military structures.
If you break down enlargement into weeks, it took 700 weeks for Poland to join the EU, and 500 to join NATO, which doesn't seem like that much in retrospect. But you could get them into NATO much quicker. Because, when you join NATO, there's a philosophical requirement and not so much of a practical requirement, and it's not so far-reaching It's much harder to get everything tangled up with the EU, as Britain is now discovering with Brexit.

Q: What was your experience of Russia -NATO relations at the time?

A: Russia never really wanted to join NATO, it wanted a bilateral relationship. It didn't want to be at the same table as Luxembourg or Slovakia, it much preferred dealing with the Americans bilaterally because it allows her to show how big and tough you are rather than making stupid compromises about cheese packets and eggshells. They also don't want to be in an organisation where the Greeks and the Slovaks and the Cypriots can gang up against them and force them to do things they don't want to do. The idea of Russia joining the EU was always a sort of a daydream.

However, when it came to dealing with the Russians after the Cold War ended, it needed a change of logic. When you look at NATO and the EU, they were fundamentally both Cold War institutions set up in the shadow of the Berlin Wall. When this wall falls, their initial logic for existing evaporates, as why would you do you join NATO without an external threat? For example, it took decades to decide whether Ukraine was a European country, as being a European country is necessary to meet the Maastricht criteria as only European countries can join the EU.
So, that should set the context for you. So what we could have done as the West was say, oh look, this Cold War thing was pretty bad, I know we won but let's be magnanimous and Re-organise Europe's economy and security. We agreed in principle to do away with NATO and the EU in the current forms and arrangements and bringing other countries. But we don't want to do that because that would've been too difficult and plus better the Devil you know. Well, you know people like me and a few others are wondering whether that would be a good idea, stupid Bosnia started, and you won't believe how much time Bosnia took of grown-up ministers, just an absurd amount of time.
Any time that would've been used for strategic thinking was spent Sat there looking at the valleys of Bosnia trying to work out whether the Serbian or Muslim should have what was in it. And then okay Russia is someone who we don't know we don't really know what they want. They drink too much blah blah blah it appears in the annual review. And Wałęsa was having a good time with Yeltsin. Many people thought that Yeltsin was pissed when he said that Poland could join NATO. But when I spoke to Wałęsa about his interactions with Yeltsin, he said that Yeltsin was in a good mood, and said to Wałęsa: look, you're a free country, do it because NATO isn't really a threat to us and it still isn't.
The idea of NATO still being a threat is a KGB delirium. You know perfectly well from the configurational forces that the idea of NATO being a threat simply isn't true , andany country joining will hardly make a scrap of a difference because you know it's a just lot of bureaucracy. You can see this with my website, the great treasure trove. So when Yeltsin went back to Moscow, they had to sort of roll back from this because obviously they couldn't say the president was an idiot. But in Nelsons mind, he just genuinely didn't care. It was a bit of a stunner to the polls, who thought the Russians will always care, so they went and joined. This is a big detail, and I didn't realise it myself until just before I left Poland.
While I was living in Poland, are used to invite people round for dinner, including the deputy defence minister, and we were in my field runners for a chat with sit there and just have a natter. One of the people I invited was Antoni Maceriewicz, the deputy defence minister. His view was that the main point of Poland joining NATO was to get the GRU out of the Polish armed forces, and you couldn't do this without Poland joining NATO. The GRU is like a dry rot, only worse, because it's inserted into the military, which is always semi-detached from the government. While the defence minister might nominally be in charge, the actual bases will be controlled by their base commander. They will always be in control, unless you implement the sort of transparency reforms that comes with being a NATO member.

While the Soviet army left, the GRU remained, and didn't want to be driven out of Poland as former Russian-controlled territory. So as much as joining NATO was a personal joining the Western Security family, blah blah, but it was about regaining control over the armed forces after decades of Soviet-style communism. It's worth talking about this angle in Poland, but it's an angle which almost no-one else mentioned in the West. Getting the GRU barnacles out from under the barge.

Q: One of the themes that has emerged from the recently declassified UK government documents is that there was a lack of trust of the Poles , especially at the start. Was this true from your experience?

A: Good question, you probably couldn't. I mean, have you heard of Kukliński? If you have nothing better to do one afternoon, go to visit the Kukliński museum just behind the cathedral in the Old Town in Warsaw. So Kukliński was a police officer for the Russians, because he was so good and being loyal, and he sort of became the attache for something. With one of the top Soviet Generals, he saw in the Soviet nuclear planning that if there was a war with NATO, Soviet Strategy involved blowing up Poland and then most of Germany. The Poles We're just there to be thrown into the fire. He then contacted the CIA for a series of manoeuvers, and then gave the whole lot away, and he handed over photographs of where the Soviets were planning to plant a tactical nuclear weapons, and all of this is there in this museu, and it took many years after communism ended for the polls to recognise him, because the Russian influence was still very much there even if the visible Soviets had left.
In the 1990s, Kuklinski's children were murdered (or at least, killed in suspicious circumstances). So, you can imagine, quite how much difficulty Poland had to extract these people from its structures. And the sorts of files in Warsaw in Poland, such a big deal because they had so much evidence on how the KGB penetrated.
For example, the church hasn't opened a lot of its files because of all the information that the KGB managed to collect on which priests were gay and the Polish approach was when you have all the skeletons just move on and it's difficult and this means a lot to rhetorically, but you've got to do it, and this was very much there when Poland was joining NATO.
It's also important to knowledge that the rule of law was not very strong in Poland. In the 1990s, this is when Miller was the post-Communist social Democrat prime minister, there was an amazing scandal where the police were planning a raid on some petrol smuggling network or something and the Ministry of the interior tipped off the gangsters and prevent this from happening.

Q: How much of a role did the Polish community in Britain play?

A: The community of Poles in the UK was always quite big because of all the fighter pilots, and they became very distinguished and had a big lobbying role, especially with the EU entry. They were all members of the same London clubs after all!

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De Europa
Special Issue - College of Europe 2023

From black gold to a new dawn: a socio-economic comparison of the coal mine closures in the Dutch region of Zuid-Limburg and the German Ruhr Area

Ruben Sansom

1. Introduction – Mitigating the negative socio-economic consequences of coal mine closures

1.1. Differences and similarities between former coal mining regions

Both the Netherlands and Germany have closed the book on hard coal mines (henceforth: coal mines). The Netherlands completed the process in 1974, with the closure of the Oranje Nassaumijn in Heerlen (Nationaal Archief), whereas Germany's final mine closed in Bottrop as recently as the end of 2018 (DW News 2018). Although the two countries finalised their closure processes at very different times, they were set in motion at the same time and, for the larger part, for the same reasons. By the late 1950s and early 1960s, European coal was losing its position as the most attractive energy source, as it was facing serious competition from both coal from the United States and oil and gas from other parts of the world (RP Online). Domestic coal's dominance was evidently drawing to a close, but the Netherlands and Germany dealt with this fact in very different ways. As the respective dates of the closures of the final mine in the two countries show, the Netherlands closed its mines rapidly, while Germany phased the mines out over a sixty-year period.

Today, despite both processes being complete, stark differences remain between the former mining regions in the two countries. All of the Dutch mines were located in the Southern tip of the country in a region known as Zuid-Limburg. One would be hard pushed to find any remaining trace of the region's mining history, however, with almost all buildings and infrastructure related to the former mines having been demolished (Kusters, Perry 1999: 7). As local authors Wiel Kusters and Jos Perry put it: 'The fact that there were ever any mines in the Netherlands almost sounds like a fantasy today' (Kusters, Perry 1999: 7). The comparison with the Ruhr area, where the majority of Germany's coal mines were located, is striking. For example, the *Glückauf Bochum-Werne* miners' association still has almost 200 members, despite the final pit in the vicinity having closed fifty years ago (Küpper 2018). As this was one of the first localities to see its mines closed, the mining heritage in many other towns in the Ruhr area is even stronger.

Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area do not only fare differently in a cultural sense, but also in terms of their economics. The Dutch town of Heerlen, once the centre of

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the Zuid-Limburg mining industry, faces very significant unemployment problems until this day, which have resulted in brain drain and a population decline which looks set to continue into the second half of the century (Schaap 2011). The Ruhr area is not exempt from these issues, as is evident from the fact that Gelsenkirchen still tops German unemployment tables (Küpper 2018). However, its map contains many more bright spots than that of Zuid-Limburg in terms of new industrial hubs: most notably, Bochum has become a major health hub and the Düsseldorf-Duisburg tandem is now a logistics centre of great importance (DOMRADIO.DE 2018). As a result, in many areas, the population is expected to begin growing again in the coming decades (Information und Technik Nordrhein-Westfalen).

1.2. Limiting negative socio-economic consequences

Clearly, the manner in which mine closure processes are carried out matters. Local economies and cultures in mining regions are intertwined with the mines, and to disentangle them is a public policy challenge of the highest order. There is probably no perfect way to do so, as each mining region's particularities will present new problems. Yet that is not a reason not to attempt to draw conclusions from the mine closure processes of the past, particularly in cases where both process and outcome differ significantly, such as in the comparison between Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area. As the European Union strives to create a climate-neutral continent by 2050, more regions around Europe will have to move away from a reliance on their coal mines or gas fields, as fossil fuels are replaced by renewable alternatives. In some cases, direct comparisons to the mine closures of the past have already been made. For example, Dutch media outlet *De Groene Amsterdammer* devoted an article to the mines in the Polish region of Upper Silesia in 2020 that was headed 'Poland does not want to become the new Limburg' (Goethals, Kortas, Van de Ven 2020).

It is one thing to use these past examples to highlight the fact that comprehensive economic transition is not without its risks. It is quite another to use them to identify what exactly these risks are, and how they can be avoided. The existing academic literature which analyses these questions with regard to the transition away from mining-based economies is still surprisingly limited. The literature which does do so is primarily based on policy-orientated social science research. Its main findings are that the most important aspects in avoiding regional economic adversity are long-term planning (Laurence 2006: 285-298) and cooperation between the different actors involved in the process (Bainton, Holcombe 2018: 468-478).

This policy-orientated approach has its limitations, however. Firstly, it only takes into account the effect of political decisions and adopted policies and ignores how these are rooted in both an economic and a cultural reality. The former has been found to be crucial to the outcome of mine closure processes, as it determines a region's ability to develop new opportunities (Everingham *et al.* 2022: 101-136). Cultural conditions have been largely ignored in mine closure literature. Given the fact that mine closure often requires a region to reinvent itself not just economically, but

also culturally, this is a significant shortcoming: Marcin Baron points out that where some regions are culturally cosmopolitan enough to embrace a transition to new industries from outside, other areas struggle to do so to a much a greater extent (Baron 2022). Secondly, any policy-orientated research is naturally inclined to highlight the advantages of consensus and cooperation, as these are preconditions to be able to 'plan' a transition as a policymaker. But when dealing with complex societal transitions, policymakers are rarely able to control the process, nor is it a given that their approach would be the most beneficial to the region even if they were able to do so. An increasing body of literature highlights the deficiencies of the 'consensus thesis', which tends to depoliticise processes which are by nature political, as different choices will be more or less beneficial to different actors (Jensen 2019: 53-64).

In order to use past cases of mine closure to understand the risks involved and how these risks can be mitigated, policy-oriented research alone is insufficient: it requires a better understanding of how the closure process is always rooted in particular economic and cultural conditions as well as an analysis of the interplay between different actors involved in the process, rather than just the government and its policymakers. This is best achieved through historical case studies, as historical research is more effective than any other discipline in combining economic and cultural factors as well as studying the perspectives of and relationships between the different actors involved. This study aims to use the cases mentioned previously – Zuid-Limburg in the Netherlands and the Ruhr area in Germany – to make a historical comparison in this manner and to answer the following research question: 'What determines the socio-economic consequences of coal mine closure in regions with a strong industrial focus on coal mining?'

The study finds that economic and cultural conditions are intertwined in various ways and greatly impact the outcome of the mine closure processes. Moreover, a strong focus on the creation of consensus and cooperation can have negative consequences for the region in question if this focus seeks to depoliticise the process, as this can result in a situation where key concerns of some social groups in the region are not taken into account to a sufficient extent. The development of the level of conflict and/or cooperation between actors is found to be strongly influenced by economic and cultural conditions, as they significantly impact the extent to which some of the key actors, the unions in particular, are able and/or willing to politicise the process and push for the interests of the parties which they represent. In particular, this is because the economic position of both the mines and the region in which they are located can impact these actors' bargaining power to the extent that in some cases they can be forced to accept an approach based on consensus and cooperation, even if the agreement reached does not sufficiently take into account the interests they represent and potentially will do more harm to the region than anticipated by the government at the time. This effect is found to be particularly strong when it occurs in regions which have a limited existing mining culture because the mining industry has only been present in the region for a relatively short period of time.

2. Literature review – Policy-orientated research does not tell the whole story

2.1. Coal mine closure in policy-orientated social science literature

The regional challenges involved in transitioning away from coal mining are well-documented. That the regions in which the mines are located face significant economic difficulties is not surprising, given the mines' importance for regional economies. These impacts of closure are particularly profound because the mines are often highly concentrated in specific regions. For example, 50% of municipalities in Nordrhein-Westfalen have abandoned mines (Kretschmann 2020: 1401). In the Netherlands, all of the mines were located in the southern region of Zuid-Limburg, and in Poland, most of the mines are in Upper Silesia. This means that the transition away from coal was and is particularly burdensome on specific regions, as the closure of such a large part of the regional economy has very significant economic consequences. Yet the challenges are not limited to the economic sphere, as mine closure processes have been found to have complex 'socio-economic, political, cultural and institutional impacts' on the regions in question (Bainton, Holcombe 2018: 468). Not only economies, but societies and institutions were built around the mining industry, and developing these after the centrepiece – the mines themselves – fall away, is as significant a challenge as the economic one. Beatan, Swyngedouw and Albrechts label the collection of these challenges as the 'unavoidable socio-economic drama of pit closure' (Beatan, Swyngedouw, Albrechts 1999: 250). Wirth, Mali and Fischer are more optimistic. In their view, 'transforming mining regions is not a utopian project' (Wirth, Mali, Fischer 2012: 15).

Although the potential problems are clear, surprisingly little literature focuses on the question of how they can be mitigated by the decisions taken in the process of closing the mines. Studies which examine the former mining regions' socio-economic development are still few and far between (Bainton, Holcombe 2018: 468). The literature which does analyse the societal aspect of mine closure is policy-orientated social science research. It comes to two main conclusions. Firstly, Laurence finds that if long-term plans are made in the process of mine closure, closure is found to have fewer negative socio-economic consequences for the region in question (Laurence 2006: 285). Effective long-term plans do not spring from nothing. They rely, most importantly, on cooperation between the different parties involved in the transition (Laurence 2006: 285). In this way, the first main finding is directly connected to the second: Bainton and Holcombe conclude that if consensus and cooperation between the different actors involved in the process of closure is not realised, the social costs are generally higher (Bainton, Holcombe 2018: 468).

2.2 First limitation: a bias towards consensus and cooperation

These findings, in particular the focus on consensus and cooperation, tie into a broader sociological trend of highlighting the benefits of consensus over conflict. The theoretical success of consensus was mirrored by that of functionalism – which has

at times been equated with consensus – and later neofunctionalism (Horowitz 1962: 177). Some argue that the popularity of consensus is not necessarily a good thing, as in many cases it reflects to some extent what White calls 'manipulated opinion and engineered consent' (White 1961: 150). Similar criticisms have been voiced more recently of (neo)functionalism, arguing that the theory's championing of depoliticised progress often plasters over very real political conflicts, the negligence of which results in the popularity of populist parties which manage to monopolize the debates which the (neo)functionalists do not want to engage in (Jensen 2019: 61). In other fields such as memory studies similar trends can be identified, such Mouffe's recent highlighting of the risks attached to a focus on cosmopolitan memory, which also leaves conflict untouched and leaves a space for populists to occupy (Mouffe 2012: 629).

There are signs that consensus-seeking and the depoliticising influence of functionalism might also not be as positive an influence on mine closure as has previously been argued. For example, *De Groene Amsterdammer* highlights that in Zuid-Limburg, what was perceived as a widespread willingness to transition away from coal at high speed and start anew with a clean slate, has in fact turned out to be a somewhat overzealous approach, with many previous miners now lamenting the abruptness of the closures and attempting to reinstate the mining heritage which was previously cast aside (Schaap 2011).

Because the existing research is policy-orientated research, it is likely to be biased towards highlighting the advantages of consensus and cooperation, because if policymakers want to 'plan' a transition, consensus and cooperation are definite requirements. As previously discussed, however, there is little to say that their intended approach would be the best one for the region. Additionally, due to the complexity of a societal transition such as that away from mining, any predetermined plan is unlikely to be carried out as originally intended. Therefore, a closer look at the establishment of consensus and cooperation in the process of mine closure is required, focussing on the relationships between the different actors involved in mine closure in more detail. After all, the conclusions of the existing literature leave some significant questions unanswered, most notably that of how cooperation between the actors involved is to be established. For that reason, the literature would benefit from a more detailed analysis of the different actors involved and their respective positions on some of the key areas of debate in the mine closure process. That might enable one to draw more nuanced conclusions about how the relationship between actors influences the development and outcome of the mine closure process.

2.3. Second limitation: a disregard of economic and cultural conditions

A second limitation of these existing studies is that they do not show the whole picture: due to their strong focus on policies and their effects, they miss key factors which cannot be controlled by policymakers but which do influence the mine closure process and its outcomes. Firstly, economic conditions at the moment in which the closure process is set in motion, as well as throughout the process, have been found

to be crucial. They differ significantly from one region to another, both with regard to the position of the mining industry in the regional and national economy, and regarding the possibility of different new industries potentially being successful in the region (Everingham *et al.* 2022: 101-102). As a result, some mining regions have a much higher adaptive capacity than others do, which makes them more likely to avoid some of the more severe negative socio-economic consequences (Everingham *et al.* 2022: 101-102).

These economic conditions are lacking in the existing literature's analysis of mine closure processes. However, they are not the only important conditions to be omitted: the same goes for cultural conditions. Cultural factors are extensively analysed in many analyses of the mining industry's peak period. Consider for example Kusters and Perry's book on mining culture in both the Netherlands and Germany, which discusses visual art, literature, and even music. They find significant differences between the position of mining in the culture of different mining communities (Kusters, Perry 1999: 7). Baron highlights that one of the main challenges in transitioning away from mining is often that the local population does not want to shift to new industries due to the extent to which working in the mines has become a part of the local way of life (Baron 2022). This suggests that the position of mining in the local culture may also play a large part in determining the process and outcome of mine closure, and thus that it is a factor which should be included in a comprehensive analysis of the risks involved in these processes, as well as that of how these risks can potentially be mitigated or avoided.

Summarising, although some studies have attempted to analyse how the negative socio-economic consequences of mine closure can be mitigated, all research conducted is focussed on the influence of government policy. This gives this research a bias towards highlighting the positive effect of consensus and cooperation and means that it misses the importance of economic and cultural conditions in regions transitioning away from the mining industry.

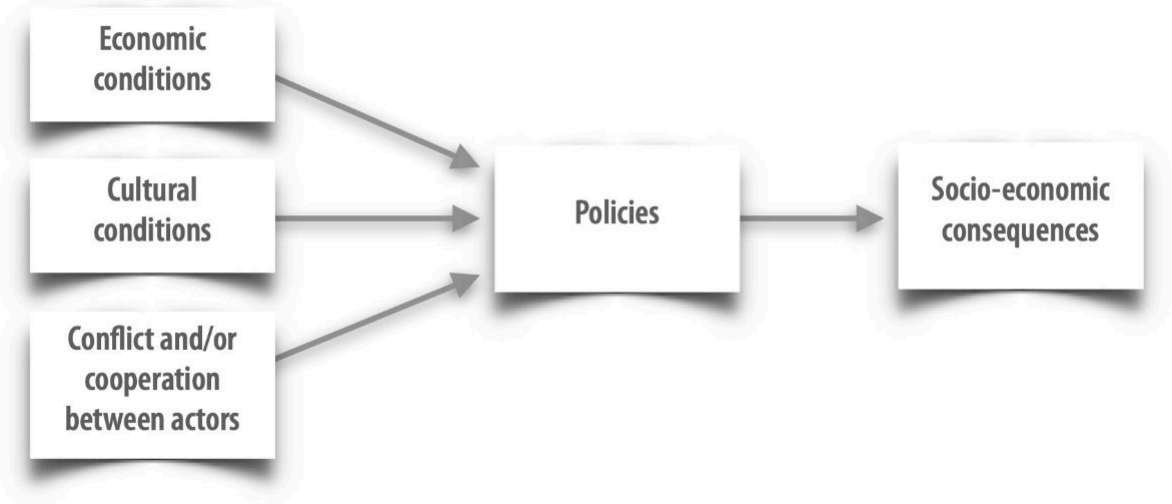
3. Research design – The cases of Zuid-Limburg in the Netherlands and the Ruhr area in Germany

3.1. Research questions: economic conditions, cultural conditions, conflict and/or cooperation

The literature review leads to the conclusion that an effective and comprehensive study into the regional challenges of mine closure and the manner in which its negative socio-economic consequences for the region can be mitigated, cannot focus exclusively on the policies created by governments. The design of these policies, as well as the extent to which they are implemented and are successful, depends on various other factors: the economic and cultural conditions at the time of mine closure, as well as the relationships between the different actors involved and the manner in which they interact, whether that be through the creation of consensus and cooperation or in a more conflict-heavy manner. For the purpose of this study, the policies themselves are therefore not the main independent variable, but rather rep-

resent an intermediate variable in the relationship between these three factors and the socio-economic outcome of the mine closure process, as is depicted in figure 1.

Figure 1: Hypothesised model of independent, mediating, and dependent variables



Following these considerations, the research question – 'What determines the socio-economic consequences of coal mine closures in regions with a strong industrial focus on coal mining?' – can be further specified through the creation of three sub-questions, focussing respectively on economic conditions, cultural conditions, and the presence of conflict and/or cooperation between the actors involved. As the policies adopted are assumed, based on the literature review, to be influenced by a combination of these factors, they are not included as a separate question or chapter, but discussed as an intermediate variable when describing the relationship between each of these factors and the socio-economic consequences of the mine closure process. The questions to be analysed are therefore as follows:

Research question: What determines the socio-economic consequences of coal mine closure in regions with a strong industrial focus on coal mining?

- Sub-question 1: What is the influence of economic conditions?
- Sub-question 2: What is the influence of cultural conditions?
- Sub-question 3: What is the influence of conflict and/or cooperation between the actors involved?

3.2. Cases: Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area

In order to answer these questions, the study needs to combine the investigation of both economic and cultural factors, as well as the analysis of the relationships and dynamics between the actors involved in the mine closure process. As this is a considerable number of interrelated factors which need to be researched, this is best achieved by focusing on a limited number of specific cases. This is another way in which

the study differs from the existing policy-orientated social science research, which analyses large numbers of cases but takes into account only government policy as a factor. By contrast, this study will take the form of historical case study research, as only in this way can all factors be considered in a balanced and thorough manner.

The study will focus on two cases: the region of Zuid-Limburg in the Southern Netherlands, the only region in the Netherlands to have had coal mines, and the Ruhr area in Germany, in which the vast majority of German coal mines were located. The cases have been chosen because, due to their geographical proximity and the fact that both the Netherlands and Germany were part of the European Community for Coal and Steel and the European Economic Community at the time, both regions faced the prospect of declining interest in locally produced coal at the same moment in the late 1950s and early 1960s (RP Online). However, very different approaches to coal mine closure were taken in the two regions, with the final mine in Zuid-Limburg closing as early as 1974, whereas the last mine in the Ruhr area did not shut down until 2018 (DW News 2018). The outcomes of mine closure were also significantly divergent. Several large towns in the Ruhr area, such as Bochum, Düsseldorf, and Duisburg, have become new economic hubs (DOMRADIO.DE 2018), whereas Zuid-Limburg is still dealing with brain drain and a general population decline due to the limited economic opportunities present (Schaap 2011). These economic differences are mirrored by similar divergencies on the cultural side: very little mining heritage remains in Zuid-Limburg (Kusters, Perry 1999: 7), whereas in the Ruhr area, there are not just museums and monuments, but even mining associations in areas where the mining industry disappeared decades ago (Küpper 2018).

For these reasons, the cases of Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area offer an opportunity to compare how different economic and cultural conditions, as well as the presence of conflict and/or cooperation between actors can impact the socio-economic consequences of coal mine closures in different regions. Broadly speaking, the two regions faced the same challenge – the impending loss of relevance of domestically produced coal in the late 1950s and early 1960s – but they dealt with this challenge in different ways, resulting in different outcomes.

3.3. Timeframe: late 1950s until 2018

The study will analyse the process of coal mine closure in Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr Area from the late '50s, when the economic prospects of domestically produced coal first started to deteriorate in both the Netherlands and Germany, through to the closure of the last coal mines (1974 in Zuid-Limburg and 2018 in the Ruhr area). Regarding the case of Zuid-Limburg, attention will also be paid to the period after the final Dutch mine shut down in 1974, in order to be able to trace and compare the socio-economic development of the two regions over the same period of time. This will allow for a comparison between the effects of a faster and slower mine closure process within that period, whilst taking into account that some of the more long-term effects might not yet be visible in the case of the Ruhr area.

3.4. Sources: a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis

The study brings together a broad array of different types of sources. For the analysis of economic conditions, the emphasis is on quantitative data, such as that describing the respective sizes of the mine industries in Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area and the manner in which the coal produced in the two regions was divided over different industries. This information is largely publicly available in the databases of the national bureaus for statistics. Some of the data analysed does not represent actual production levels but predictions of future production levels made by governments at the beginning of the mine closure process. This data is also publicly accessible in national archives.

The analysis of cultural conditions is based on qualitative sources, including both literature and visual art, which depict the position of the mining industry in the regional cultures of Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area. In some cases, the primary sources are analysed directly, whereas in other cases secondary sources which discuss a number of these primary sources are used.

The sources used to compare both the economic and cultural conditions are very similar for both the case of Zuid-Limburg and that of the Ruhr area. Regarding the influence of conflict and/or cooperation between the actors involved, more divergent sources need to be used. This is due to the fact that in the case of Zuid-Limburg, the mine closure process was completed much earlier than in the Ruhr area. Therefore, the analysis can rely both on sources depicting the policies adopted and contemporary arguments made by the different actors for or against the adoption of these policies, as well as the later memories of some of the key actors involved. In the case of the Ruhr area, policy sources are readily available, but primary sources produced by the actors involved in the process, such as memoirs, are more difficult to come by. Therefore, this side of the analysis relies more strongly on a combination of newspaper articles and secondary sources which trace the events as they unfolded, in order to deduct the positions and roles of different actors at the time.

3.5. Structure

In the following chapters, an answer to the research questions will be built up in the following manner. Firstly, a brief contextualisation is provided concerning the reasons why the transition away from mining was set in motion in Western Europe in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Next, the socio-economic consequences of the process in the two regions under analysis, Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area, are analysed and compared. The rest of the paper is devoted to the investigation of what caused these differences. Its structure is in line with the research questions outlined previously: chapter 6 compares the economic conditions in the two regions at the beginning of the mine closure processes; chapter 7 does the same for the cultural conditions; chapters 8 and 9 analyse the influence of the of conflict and/or cooperation between the actors involved for the cases of Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area respectively; finally, chapter 10 compares the respective impacts of the factors discussed in

the previous chapters and the manners in which they are interrelated, drawing conclusions and providing recommendations for further research by doing so.

4. Historical contextualisation – The end of coal mining in Western Europe

4.1. Causes of mine closure

Several factors contributed to what became known as the 'Coal Crisis of 1958': the moment when coal produced in Western Europe lost its competitive position. One of these was the fact that coal imported from the United States experienced a large drop in price during the 1950s. US coal already held an advantage over Western European coal in that it was located much closer to the surface and could thus be produced using open-cast mines, whereas Western European coal required deep deposit production sites in order to be surfaced (Storchmann 2005: 1472). For a long time, this difference in price did not affect the European market, due to the high costs of shipping American coal across the Atlantic. However, various innovations in the shipping sector meant that shipping costs dropped in the late 1950s and American coal therefore became a serious competitor to European coal (Storchmann 2005: 1472). At the same time, low-cost oil wells were being developed in the Middle East, which made oil another competitor to Western European coal. Again, transportation costs had previously been an issue, but with the reopening of the Suez Canal in early 1957, these costs dropped significantly for oil too. Additionally, oil was significantly easier to use in most industries than coal, due to the relative bulkiness of the latter. These three elements combined to make oil a fierce rival to coal by 1958 (Storchmann 2005: 1472). Finally, exchange rates played a role. In particular, from the late 1950s, the US dollar began to depreciate. Its value relative to the Deutsche Mark became significantly smaller, which meant that it became cheaper to import energy sources from outside of Western Europe. This gave these sources, already in a strong position, an additional advantage over domestically produced coal (Storchmann 2005: 1472-1473).

4.2. Consequences of mine closure

As a result of coal's weakening competitive position, mines throughout Western Europe began to close. Although this happened at different speeds in different countries and regions, very few coal mines remain today and the process greatly impacted the regions in which the mines were located regardless of the approach taken. This is because in most cases, the mines were very much concentrated in specific areas (Kretschmann 2020: 1401). For example, in Zuid-Limburg, an area with around half a million inhabitants, 45,000 jobs were lost within ten years: never have so many jobs disappeared in such a small part of the Netherlands so quickly (Schaap 2011). It was not only mineworkers themselves who needed to search for new employment, however. As former Zuid Limburg mineworker Manfred Haffkamp points out, the impacts of mine closure were felt in almost every sector. Not just the industries directly con-

nected to the mines were impacted, but also the local bakers, butchers and shop owners, as the people in the area changed their spending patterns in response to the drop in their incomes which was triggered by mine closure:

> Previously, people would buy a new suit for Easter or Pentecost, as was the norm. But afterwards, your family would say that it was acceptable to go out in your suit from the year before (Schaap 2011).

But this was not only an economic, but also a cultural transition. In many cases, for example, mining was strongly intertwined with religion. Former mine supervisor in Zuid-Limburg, Giel Theunissen, describes how all mineworkers lived in the same neighbourhoods under the watchful eye of the Catholic Church, and that those who wanted to enrol in the mining school needed a declaration of good behaviour from the local pastor (Schaap 2011). Journalist Bern Quadackers highlights how much this changed in the wake of mine closure:

> Everything disappeared, including the many miners' associations. The same goes for the influence of the Catholic Church. We used to have to go to confession as schoolchildren. It all belongs to the past (Schaap 2011).

A similar loss of the homogeneity and religious nature of the region occurred in the Ruhr area. Director of Catholic academy *Die Wolfsburg* in Mühlheim, Michael Schlagheck, states that the differentiated economic development of different parts of the Ruhr area was mirrored in their socio-cultural development, which includes different roles for the Catholic Church from one town to another (DOMRADIO.DE 2018).

The impacts of the mine closure process were thus far-reaching. However, there were also significant differences from one region to another. The respective socio-economic consequences in Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area are discussed in the next chapter.

5. The outcomes – Brain drain in Zuid-Limburg, economic reinvention in the Ruhr area

Both on an economic and a cultural level, the outcomes of the transition away from coal mining were not the same everywhere, as the two cases at hand illustrate. In terms of the economics of the energy sector, clear differences are present directly as a result of the different speeds of the respective mine closure processes. In 1953, coal accounted for 80 percent of the Dutch energy mix (De Pous 1962: 8). After the closure of the mines in 1974 coal disappeared from the energy mix entirely (Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek 2022). By comparison, it took until 1980 for German coal production to be cut by half compared to 1957 levels, and until 2000 for one-fifth of this pre-closure production level to remain (Statistik der Kohlenwirtschaft e. V. 2020). These differences are reflected both in the regions' contemporary economic and cultural characteristics in various ways.

5.1. Cultural differences between Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area today

Culturally, a key difference is that very few traces of Zuid-Limburg's mining past remain visible in the area (Kusters, Perry 1999: 7), whereas many museums and monuments celebrate the Ruhr area's former mining industry (Küpper 2018). Institutionally too, the Ruhr area is still much more intertwined with its mining heritage than Zuid-Limburg is: many miners' associations still remain active in the Ruhr area until this day, even in parts of the region where the mining industry closed down decades ago (Küpper 2018), whereas no such associations remained after the mine closures in Zuid-Limburg (Schaap 2011).

The divergence between the two regions runs even deeper, however. Michael Schlagheck, director of Catholic academy *Die Wolfsburg* in Mühlheim, claims that mining 'has shaped people's attitudes – the way they treat each other and strangers (DOMRADIO.DE 2018).' Bishop Overbeck of Essen connects this mentality to the manner in which the mine closure process was carried out:

> This attitude of trust, solidarity and social cohesion was also displayed when the mines closed: there were socially acceptable job terminations for most people, such as fair early retirement regulations and retraining (Evangelisch.de 2018).

Now, in the eyes of Mathias Bohm, CEO of mining-inspired fashion label *Grubenhelden*, the mentality of the miners is reflected in that of the students and entrepreneurs in the region: 'I don't believe it's all just going to be a case of nostalgia. Rather, I hope that our collective regional story will remain and continue (Küpper 2018).' Contrary to this continuation of a 'miner's mentality', journalist Giel Theunissen describes how in Zuid-Limburg the mining history became an issue of shame more than one of pride (Schaap 2011).

5.2. Economic differences between Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area today

On the economic side, it must first be stated that it is unlikely that any transition as significant as that away from coal mining can be carried out without doing some socio-economic damage. In this respect, it is unsurprising that mine closure in both Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area was accompanied by a period in which unemployment was well above the national average. In Zuid-Limburg, unemployment was more than double that of the national average between 1975 and 1980, when the baby boom generation struggled to find employment in the region with all the mines and the connected industries now closed (see figure 2) (Stichting Behoud Mijnhistorie 2013: 28). During this period, unemployment in the Ruhr area was still low, but it spiked during the economic downturn of the 1980s, during which it rose to around 14%, compared to a national average of around 8.5% (see figure 3) (Oei, Brauers, Herpich 2020: 968). The situation in Zuid-Limburg was even more severe, as unemployment was over 15% for the entire period between 1981 and 1988, reaching a peak of around 22.5% in 1984 (see figure 2) (Stichting Behoud Mijnhistorie 2013: 28). However, unemployment in the Netherlands during this period was also higher than that

in Germany. From the early 1990s onwards, the differences in unemployment between the two regions and their respective national averages were less large, although both regions continued to face higher unemployment levels than the national average (see figures 2 and 3).

Where both regions have struggled with unemployment, then, peak unemployment was significantly higher in Zuid-Limburg, and the presence of a large difference between regional and national unemployment was more prolonged in the Dutch case: from around 1975 until the late 1980s, compared to a period between the early and late 1980s in the Ruhr area.

Figure 2: Unemployment Development Zuid-Limburg & Netherlands (1960-2010) (Stichting Behoud Mijnhistorie 2013: 28)

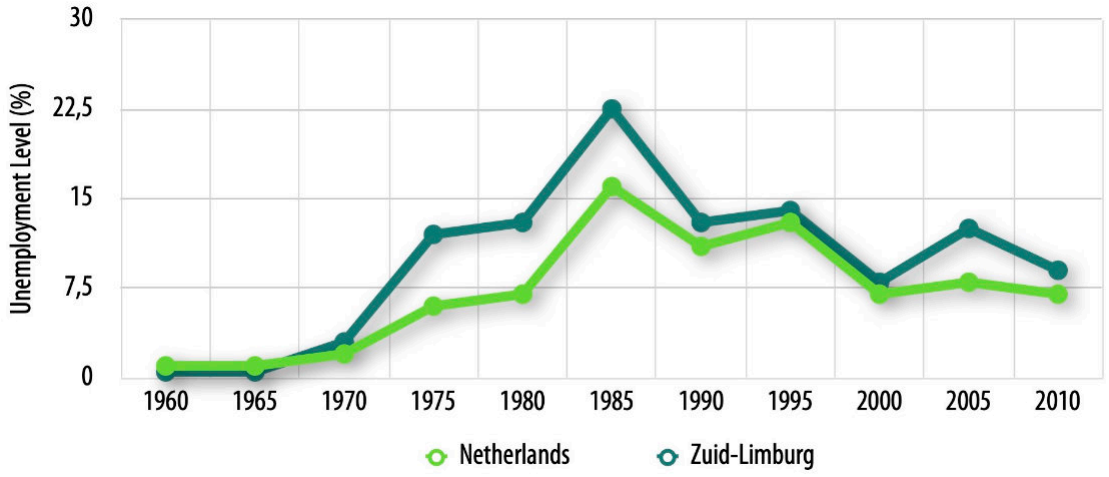
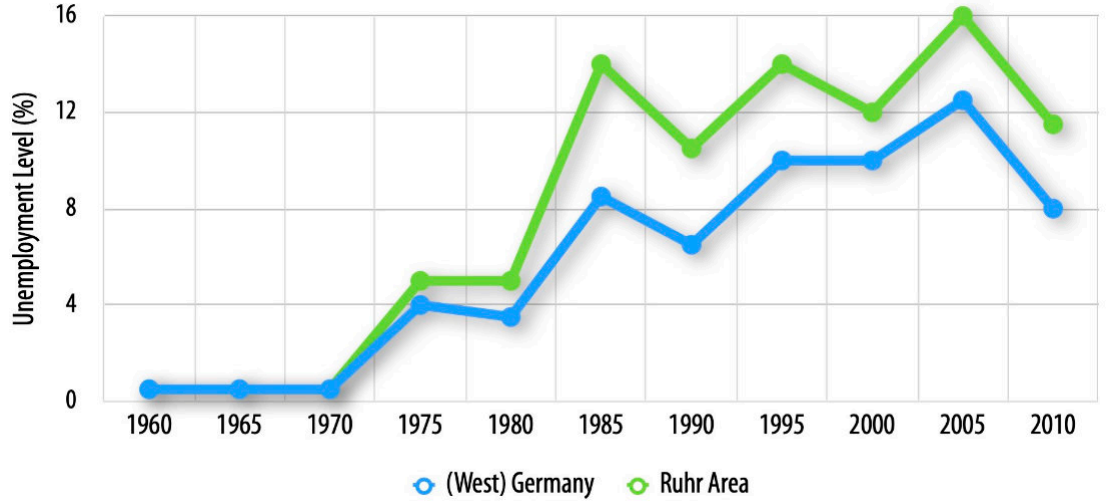


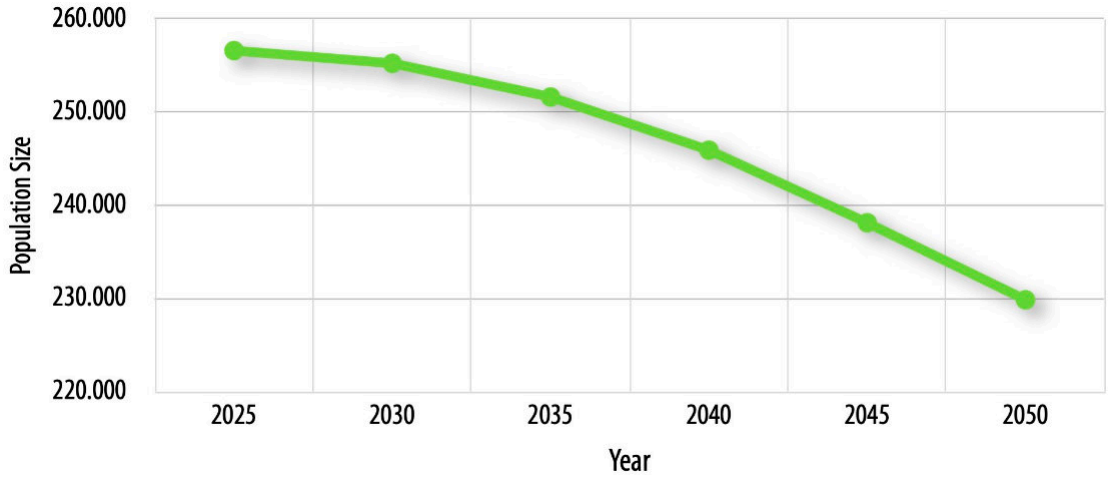
Figure 3: Unemployment Development Ruhr Area & (West) Germany (1960-2010) (Oei, Brauers, Herpich 2020: 968)



Unemployment represents the short-term impact of the mine closure process. As various elements of the industry are shut down, impacts on unemployment are often

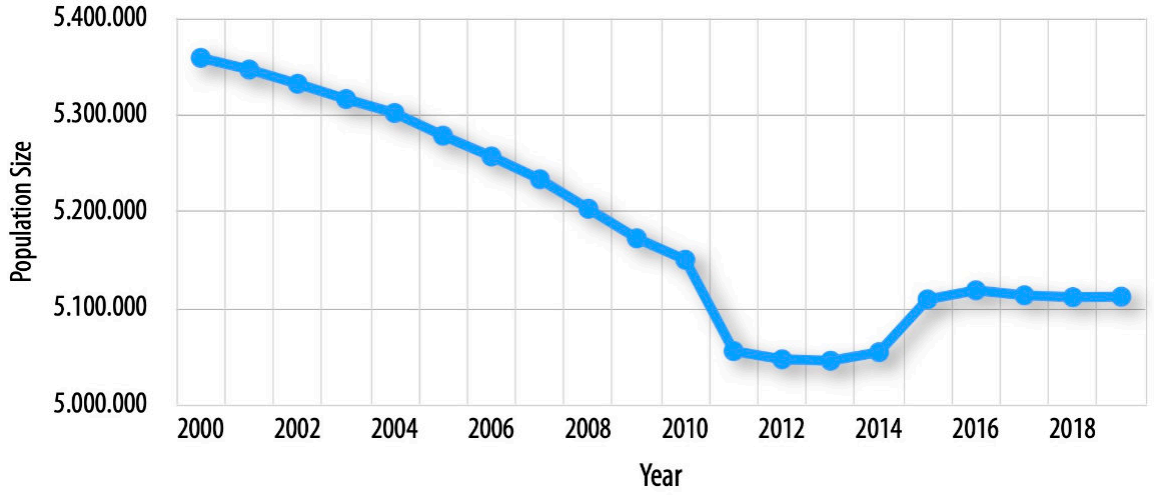
immediate. If new industries appear quickly enough, those previously employed by the mines and connected industries can find new jobs. A more structural concern for a region is if people, in particular those young and with the skills required to work in technical professions, move away. In Zuid-Limburg, this happened immediately as the mines closed in the late 1960s and early 1970s: many Dutch mineworkers moved to Germany, where work was still available in the mining sector (Stichting Behoud Mijnhistorie 2013: 29). Even with the mines in Germany now closed, there is still a strong outflow from Zuid-Limburg to other regions until this day. Where the prognosis is that the Dutch population will grow by 9.4% between 1995 and 2025, it is predicted to decline by 16.5% in Parkstad Limburg, the heart of the former mining area, in that period. If the period is extended until 2040, a decline of 29.5% is predicted (Dijkstal, Mans 2009: 16). That trend is expected to continue for the foreseeable future (see figure 4) (Parkstad in Cijfers 2023). The main problem is that the majority of the people moving away are young and highly educated, whereas the smaller number of people moving to the region are older care-seekers (Dijkstal, Mans 2009: 16). The situation has reached the point where the region has accepted the fact that the population will continue to decline, as it lacks the economic opportunities to maintain the population levels of the past. Therefore, it now focuses on adaptation rather than mitigation of population decline (Dijkstal, Mans 2009: 17).

Figure 4: Predicted Population Development Parkstad Limburg (2025-2050) (Parkstad in Cijfers 2023)



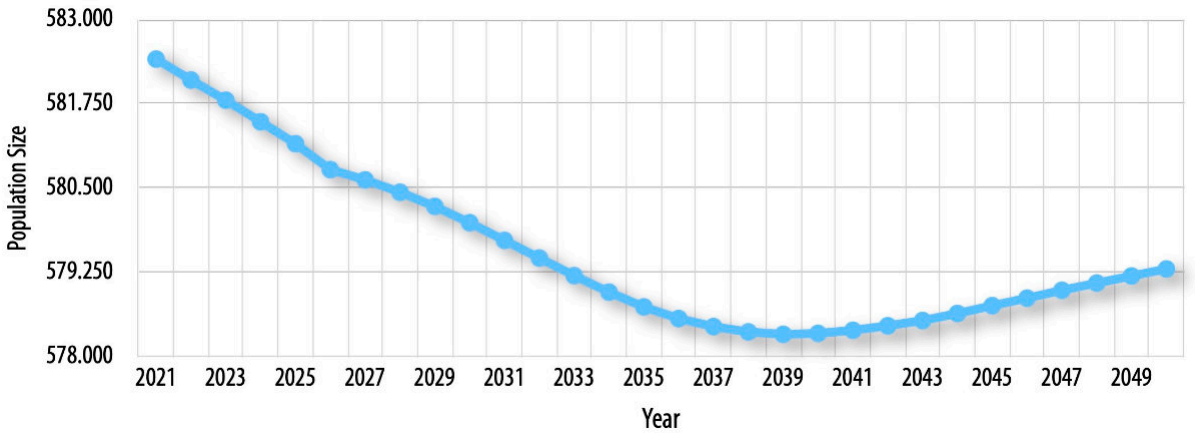
The Ruhr area, also, has had to deal with population decline, the population in major municipalities having declined by 17.2% on average between 1961 and 2011 (Cox 2013). However, the situation is much more positive today. The decline was significantly slowed in past decades, and since 2013 the regional population is even increasing (see figure 5) (Keller 2023).

Figure 5: Population Development Ruhr Area (2000-2019) (Keller 2023)



This is down to the fact that the region has succeeded in creating new sectors in which highly skilled and highly educated people can find jobs. Bochum is an important hub within the healthcare sector, and the Düsseldorf-Duisburg tandem has become a key logistics centre (DOMRADIO.DE 2018). Perhaps most crucially, the service sector now accounts for the employment of more than half of the workforce (Belke, Christodoulakis, Gros 2019: 535). As a result, the Rhine-Ruhr region, which also includes Köln, now has a GDP per capita which is 8.7 percent higher than the German average (Swinney 2016: 8). With that, the expectation is also that the region will continue to attract young and highly skilled workers, and that the general population will increase over the coming decades. Consider the case of the city of Essen, which like Parkstad Limburg is a former heartland of the coal industry. Unlike Parkstad Limburg however, Essen's population decline has slowed to the point that it is barely significant, and the population is even expected to start growing from the late 2030s (see figure 6) (Information und Technik Nordrhein-Westfalen).

Figure 6: Predicted Population Development Essen Municipality (2021-2050) (Information und Technik Nordrhein-Westfalen)



Although both regions have thus faced significant economic and demographic difficulties, the Ruhr area has succeeded in reinventing itself to the extent that the regional population decline has been slowed or reversed and the economy is outperforming the German average. In Zuid-Limburg, on the other hand, a lack of economic opportunities has caused the young and highly educated population to move away until this day, with no sign of this trend reversing in future. On the cultural side, many of the Ruhr area's representatives, in business, politics, and religion, attempt to trace some form of continuity from the region's mining past to its modern economic present in terms of the culture and mentality of the population. In Zuid-Limburg, on the other hand, the mines have vanished without leaving much of a trace on the current regional society.

6. Economic conditions compared – Stronger incentives to move away from coal in the Netherlands, a better negotiating position in the Ruhr area

In order to determine the causes for the socio-economic differences between Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area today, the following chapters will discuss various factors. Before delving into a comparison between the respective processes of mine closure in Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area and the manner in which different actors and the relationships between them played a role in these processes, the economic and cultural conditions at the beginning of mine closure are analysed. As discussed in the literature review, economic and cultural conditions play an important part in determining the success of a region in transforming itself during and after the closure of coal mines (Everingham *et al.* 2022: 101-102). Additionally, they are likely to impact many of the decisions made in the closure process, as different conditions, particularly those of an economic nature, make certain actors more or less likely to adopt a positive or negative attitude toward mine closure (Baron 2022).

Firstly, we turn to the economic conditions in Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area at the time of the beginning of discussions concerning possible mine closure: the late 1950s and early 1960s. Here, four key differences can be identified, of which the first three relate to the position of coal in the respective national economies of the Netherlands and Germany, and the fourth is focused on the role of Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area in these economies: (1) German coal only faced competition from cheaper energy sources from outside of the country, whereas Dutch coal also faced internal competition due to the discovery of gas fields in the north of the country; (2) Coal was a larger part of energy production in Germany than in the Netherlands; (3) Germany had a larger steel industry than the Netherlands, which presented the country with an opportunity to keep using coal; (4) The Ruhr Area is a much larger region in terms of both economy and population than Zuid-Limburg, which may have granted it more bargaining power in (potential) negotiations.

6.1. Different levels of competition for Dutch and German coal

Starting with the first point, Western European coal was becoming a less attractive energy source in the late 1950s and early 1960s due to the availability of both cheap coal from the United States and oil and gas from various other parts of the world (RP Online). However, Dutch coal's perspective was dealt a very significant additional blow when a gas field was discovered in the northern province of Groningen. The size of the gas field (there would later turn out to be more than one) was only determined over the course of several years, but by 1962 it was clear to the Dutch government that Groningen's gas would come to replace Zuid-Limburg's coal. In an internal document drawn up in the name of the Minister of Economic Affairs, which at the time was Jan Willem de Pous, the government indicated that the Groningen gas would dramatically alter the country's energy mix. Where previously the exploitable gas reserves had been quoted at 67 billion cubic metres of exploitable gas, they had now been determined to resemble at least 150 billion cubic metres, with the potential of growing to up to 400 billion cubic metres (De Pous 1962: 6).

Based on this figure, the government calculated that an amount of energy equivalent to around 8 billion tons of coal would be available from the gas fields each year (De Pous 1962: 6). At the time, the Netherlands was using the equivalent of 30.2 billion tons of coal for its energy each year, of which around half (15.4 billion) came from coal, with oil responsible for most of the other half (De Pous 1962: 7). In the ten previous years, the use of coal had remained fairly stable, with an increase of the use of oil accounting for the rising energy consumption in the country (see table 1) (De Pous 1962: 7). Therefore, it appeared that even though the country was steadily increasing its energy use, the gas found in Groningen would drastically reduce the need for energy from other sources, particularly that of coal, which is indeed what De Pous' report predicted (De Pous 1962: 10). In reality, the government's figures still greatly underestimated the amount of gas that would be available. In the end, almost 2800 billion cubic metres of extractable gas were discovered (Nederlandse Omroep Stichting 2017).

Table 1: Development of the Dutch energy mix and total energy consumption (1953-1962, in millions of tons of coal equivalent) (De Pous 1962: 7)

Year	Coal	Oil	Gas	Total
1953	16,8	4,1	0,1	21
1954	17,3	4,8	0,1	22,2
1955	17,5	5,9	0,2	23,6
1956	17,9	7,2	0,2	25,3
1957	17,1	7,5	0,2	24,8
1958	16	8,7	0,3	25
1959	15,1	10	0,3	25,4
1960	15,9	11,7	0,4	28
1961	15,4	13	0,5	28,9
1962	15,4	14,2	0,6	30,2

6.2 The position of coal in the Dutch and German economies

Besides highlighting the imminent challenge that Groningen gas would pose to the coal sector in the Netherlands, the tables above can also be used to compare the position of coal in the Dutch energy mix to its position in the German energy mix. That brings us to our second key difference between the economic conditions in Zuid-Limburg and

the Ruhr area in the early 1960s: coal was simply a more important part of German energy production than it was of Dutch energy production. Table 2 displays the exact energy production figures for both countries. In both 1950 and 1960 the Dutch production of coal was between 12 and 12.5 million tons (Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek 2022). As the mine closure process started in 1965, production at the time will have been a similar figure. Germany started the process slightly earlier, with the first steps in production limitation being taken in 1957 (Meiners, Zander 2018). The German coal production figures for 1960 and 1970 respectively are 145.6 and 113.7 million tons of coal, as part of a generally downward trajectory (Statistik der Kohlenwirtschaft e. V. 2020). A rough estimation for 1965 is therefore 130 million tons, which is more than ten times the Dutch production at the time. The difference is even starker if one compares not the figures for the same year, but for the years in which the respective closure processes began. In 1957, the year that the mine closures started in Germany, the country produced between 145 and 150 million tons of coal: more than 12 times the estimated Dutch production in 1965 (Statistik der Kohlenwirtschaft e. V. 2020).

Table 2: Development of the Dutch and German coal production (1950-2010, in millions of tons) (Statistik der Kohlenwirtschaft e. V. 2020)

Year	Dutch Coal Production	German Coal Production
1950	12,2	150
1960	12,5	145,6
1970	4,3	113,7
1980	0	87,9
1990	0	71
2000	0	34,3
2010	0	13,2

Obviously, Germany is also a larger country than the Netherlands. However, there was also a clear difference between the countries' production levels relative to the energy consumed in the two countries. In 1965, the year the Netherlands announced the closure of the mines, the Netherlands used a total of 414 TWh of energy, while Germany used 2969 TWh: Germany, therefore, used about seven times as much energy, a factor significantly smaller than the factor ten between the two countries' coal production (Ritchie, Roser 2023). One also needs to take into account that the Dutch energy consumption was growing much more rapidly than that of Germany at the time: ten years later, in 1975, one year after the last mine in Zuid-Limburg closed, these figures had grown to 823 TWh in the Netherlands and 3765 TWh in Germany, meaning that Germany's energy consumption was now only a factor 4.5 of that of the Netherlands (Ritchie, Roser 2023). In general then, Germany's coal production was larger than that of the Netherlands relatively to the countries' energy consumption, and that difference was only increasing as the Netherlands' energy consumption was rising more rapidly.

6.3. The impact of the steel industry

At the beginning of the period in which domestic coal production was becoming less economically sustainable in Western Europe, Germany thus produced and consumed more coal than the Netherlands did, both in absolute and relative figures. However, both countries also had different perspectives regarding the possibility to keep using coal in the future at that point. In part, this was down to the energy supply side previously discussed (the Netherlands had access to large amounts of gas, while Germany did not). However, the two countries also differed in terms of their respective industries and their ability to continue to use coal. Table 3 shows that in Germany after 1960, gas soon replaced coal in the heating sector, but coal continued to be used by the steel industry for much longer, with the steel industry only rapidly scaling down the use of coal after 1990 (Statistik der Kohlenwirtschaft e. V. 2020). Germany's large steel industry thus effectively provided the country with an opportunity to keep using coal and thus to scale down production more slowly. The situation was very different in the Netherlands, however, as a comparison between the sizes of the countries' respective steel industries in 1970 shows. At the time, German steel production was over 4 million tonnes a year (Trading Economics – Germany Steel Production), whereas the Netherlands only produced between 400,000 and 500,000 tonnes: about a tenth of the German production (Trading Economics – Netherlands Steel Production). As the comparison of the two countries' overall energy consumption above showed, that is a significant difference not only in absolute but also in relative terms. Thus, both on the supply and the demand side the German situation was different to the Dutch: there was no impending domestic gas supply which would make coal production less tenable, and there was a greater possibility to maintain a domestic demand for coal due to the size of the country's steel industry.

Table 3: Development of the use of coal in the German heating and steel sectors (1950-2010, in millions of tons) (Statistik der Kohlenwirtschaft e. V. 2020)

Year	Heating Sector	Steel Sector
1950	68,1	30,3
1960	61,3	31,3
1970	28,5	27,9
1980	9,4	24,9
1990	4,1	19,8
2000	0,7	10
2010	0,3	3,7

6.4. The larger size and influence of the Ruhr area

It is clear that the position of coal in the Netherlands and Germany in the 1960s was very different, which will have influenced any negotiations that took place as well as the final decisions made. However, one also needs to consider the importance of the relative levels of influence of the two regions in which the majority of the coal was produced – Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area – irrespective of the position of coal itself. It goes without saying that the Ruhr area is simply much larger than Zuid-Limburg, both geographically and in terms of population size. Zuid-Limburg only contains the medium-sized towns of Maastricht and Heerlen, whereas the Ruhr area includes many more and larger cities

such as Duisburg, Essen, Oberhausen and Dortmund. Zuid-Limburg is also very much out on a limb: it is far removed from the Dutch capital Amsterdam and the country's political capital of The Hague. Additionally, the region has its own regional dialect, which in recent years has been granted the status of an official regional language (Algemeen Dagblad 2019). The Ruhr area, by contrast, is located much closer to the former West German capital of Bonn and does not occupy such an extreme geographical position within the country. All of this suggests that the Ruhr area would have held a rather stronger position in any national-level negotiations at the time than Limburg would have done.

To conclude, the Ruhr area's mining industry was at an economic advantage compared to that of Zuid-Limburg in the late 1950s and early 1960s. It did not face the same domestic competition as the Dutch mines did from the Groningen gas fields, it played a larger part in the country's national economy, and the steel industry represented an opportunity to keep using domestic coal in future. Beyond the mining industry, the Ruhr area's size simply presented the region with more bargaining power than Zuid-Limburg had.

7. Cultural conditions compared – An ambivalent attitude to the mines in Zuid-Limburg, a proud mining culture in the Ruhr area

Not only the economic conditions around the time of the beginning of the mine closure process were different in Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area, but the same also goes for cultural conditions. There are also interrelations between the two, for example regarding the shift from a majority of external to local workers in Zuid-Limburg's mines and the impact this had on the social and cultural position of the mines in the region.

7.1. The 'creation' of a mining culture in Zuid-Limburg

The first thing to note is that where mining in the Ruhr area had existed for centuries, the Dutch mining industry was, for the larger part, much younger (Kusters, Perry 1999: 8). Around Kerkrade some form of mining had been present since the middle ages, but in the rest of Zuid-Limburg they were a fairly recent addition (Kusters, Perry 1999: 85). For that reason, a Dutch mining tradition had to be 'created' in the early 20th century in order to integrate the new industry into the local society (Kusters, Perry 1999: 92). Many German elements influenced Dutch mining culture as a result, as is illustrated by the use of terms such *Gluck auf* ('good luck') and *Kumpel/Koempel* (the German and later Dutch word used for 'mineworker') (Kusters, Perry 1999: 8).

However, the creation of this mining tradition in Zuid-Limburg was not always easy, and one can debate to what extent it was in fact successful at all. Local historian Jos Perry identifies four different stages in which the mines took on different faces in the local culture: that of a 'threatening fist', a 'flesh-devouring monster', a 'source of labour satisfaction' and a 'lost paradise' (Kusters, Perry 1999: 35). The first two faces

are strictly negative. The first face, 'a threatening first' is best represented by Felix Rutten's 1914 novel *Onder den rook der mijn* ('under the smoke of the mine'). In this book, the emergence of the mine is depicted as being synonymous with a turn away from the Catholic faith and toward 'cursing and drinking' (Kusters, Perry 1999: 36). Moreover, Rutten considers the mines to be destroying 'our beautiful Limburg' (Kusters, Perry 1999: 36). According to Perry, this is the first real appearance of such a notion, meaning that the idea of 'our Limburg' and any regional chauvinism only emerged in the face of the mining industry (Kusters, Perry 1999: 36). Clearly then, the mining industry was originally very much considered to be an outsider in Zuid-Limburg. In the next stage, that of the mines as a 'flesh-devouring monster', several works highlight the tough life in the mines pre-World War Two. Of key importance here is the fact that the mines were seen to be a threat to the Catholic Church through their pushing people towards the 'evils' of socialism (Kusters, Perry 1999: 41). This is an interesting point given how closely the mines later would come to be connected to Zuid-Limburg's catholic faith.

Originally, then, the mines were seen as a threat both to the regional identity ('our Limburg') and its religion. This can be explained by the fact that before World War Two, the mines were places where primarily outsiders worked, either from abroad or from other parts of the country than Limburg. Mining culture at the time was very much juxtaposed to Zuid-Limburg's local culture (Kusters, Perry 1999: 87). A form of othering took place, in which people from outside and an industry from outside were combined to form the 'other'. As Perry puts it: 'The mines were intruders, built up with the blood and sweat of intruders, newcomers: opportunist workers, seasonal labourers, commuters and migrants (Kusters, Perry 1999: 88).' In Perry's third and fourth stages, however, a shift occurs and the mines are no longer regarded as the enemy. In Ber Hollewijn's *Brandende aarde* ('Burning earth'), the mines and the Catholic faith are even depicted as being connected in a positive manner: in the story, Ailbertus, the founder of the Kloosterrade abbey, describes the mines as a 'gift from God' rather than as the 'Devil's pits', as they had been perceived before (Kusters, Perry 1999: 46). The closure of the mines would later set in motion an extensive debate about whether the mines had been a good or a bad thing for Limburg, but it is clear that starting from the years just proceeding World War Two, the mines were no longer seen as solely negative or foreign.

7.2. Economic and cultural interconnections

What brought about this change in perspective? The development of the mines' cultural position is closely intertwined with economic developments. From the late 1930s, the mines sought to employ a body of more stable, local workers. For example, housing was built specifically aimed at the miners in order to encourage them to settle in the area long term. Furthermore, foreign workers were now only allowed to stay if they had very particular skills which could not be missed (Kusters, Perry 1999: 90). In this way, the association of the mines with the 'other' naturally softened. This

process was complemented by active efforts to create a more positive depiction of the mines. As more local workers were promoted to director positions, they consciously began to create a form of mining folklore, something which previously had only existed in the agricultural sector (Kusters, Perry 1999: 91).

This did not mean, however, that later works would be exclusively positive about the mines' social impact. On the contrary, books such as *Slaven van het zwarte goud* ('slaves of the black gold') are highly critical of the mines' social impact (Kusters, Perry 1999: 49). In the end, it would appear that the mines had never been completely accepted in Zuid-Limburg by the time the possibility of closure emerged. A certain tension between the region and its all-encompassing but young industry had always remained. The leader of the Catholic Miners' Union, Frans Dohmen, writes in his memoirs that the middle class never flourished in Zuid-Limburg like it did in the post-War mining years (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 34). Yet he also mentions that in 1959, he told his mother that the day the mines would close they would hang out the Dutch flag in celebration (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 12).

7.3. From cultural development through the ages to a lasting mining heritage in the Ruhr area

This ambivalent Dutch attitude towards the mines was very different to the German attitude, which was much more based on a sense of pride and belonging. Again, it is highly likely that economic factors played a part: the Ruhr area had known mines for a much longer period of time than Zuid-Limburg had. This is reflected in the very rich presence of museums and monuments in the Ruhr area devoted to the region's mining heritage, the first of which – the German Mining Museum in Bochum – was opened as early as 1930 (Menschen im Bergbau). Throughout the long process of mine closure in the Ruhr area, many more people and institutions sought to preserve the legacy of the mining industry. In 1969, the first building connected to the industry was preserved as a monument: a machine hall in Dortmund. The Westphalian Industrial Museum was then founded in 1979, the LVR Industrial Museum in 1984, and the Zollverein Coal Mine in Essen was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2001 (Menschen im Bergbau). The opening of museums both before and during the closure process suggests a widespread recognition of the importance of the mining industry to the local communities and in the regional identity. This was also very much reflected at the very end of the process, with the closure of the final mine in 2018. Festivals in Bottrop, Ibbenbüren, Essen, Hamm and Dinslaken attracted over 10,000 people (Küpper 2018). The words of Ralf Sikorski of the IG BCE Union following the closure of the mines in 2018 sound rather different to those spoken by Frans Dohmen:

> I hope that a lot of the values of the miners and the Ruhr area will continue to exist in the coming years because it is important for the cohesion of a society. It is difficult to believe that there will ever be a similar cohesion in any community (Küpper 2018).

As we will see in the next chapter, the impact of the different cultural attitudes towards the mines was not without consequence. It impacted the way in which the representatives of the miners, particularly the unions, acted in the face of a potential closure. Obviously, the economic conditions discussed previously also come into play here: they restricted the unions' options and may have forced their hand at times. However, it is unlikely that there was no relationship between two such different cultural attitudes towards the mines and the two very divergent mine closure processes. In fact, there are clear indications that both economic and cultural conditions played an important part.

8. The mine closure process in Zuid-Limburg – Depoliticised consensus-building results in rapid closure

The previous chapter showed that in Zuid-Limburg, the mining culture and the Catholic culture were no longer enemies after World War Two. In fact, they had come to be rather strongly intertwined. Nobody embodied this connection quite like the leader of the Catholic Miners' Union, Frans Dohmen. However, Dohmen is a symbol not only for their reconciliation, but also for their at times rather strained marriage. It was also Dohmen who first predicted that these two pillars of the Limburg society were not as strong as they appeared and would eventually come crashing down. As he was a central figure with respect to both pillars, it is perhaps not surprising that he predicted their demise. What initially appears counterintuitive, however, is that he also played a large part in ensuring that Zuid-Limburg's mines closed as quickly as they did. As we will see, a large part of this is in fact down to the conditions discussed previously: both the economic and cultural factors played a role in their own way.

8.1. A perfect example of Dutch consensus building?

Dohmen sounded the alarm well before the Dutch government or the mine owners did: as early as 1962 he warned at a miners' board meeting that the main coal-producing countries in the European Community for Coal and Steel (ECSC: Germany, France and Belgium) were no longer interested in importing coal from Zuid-Limburg (Schaap 2011). The Dutch Minister of Economic Affairs, Koos Andriessen, subsequently declared that the mines would be financially healthy until 1970 (Schaap 2011). The reality, as we saw in the discussion of the economic conditions, is that at the time the government was already aware of the impending switch to gas, which Dohmen probably was not. In this light, the divergent statements of Dohmen and Andriessen are all the more striking.

Internally, however, the government was already planning how to deal with the impending decline in the use of coal. The internal description of the situation and the government's plans in 1962, signed by Andriessen's predecessor Jan Willem de Pous, indicates a clear ambition to take things at a steady pace so as to avoid disturbing the energy market too much (De Pous 1962: 10). The document states that if the gas were

to be extracted and marketed too quickly, it would lower the costs for consumers, but would also risk negatively impacting the stability of the energy supply on the long term (De Pous 1962: 10-11). The government's ambition was, therefore, to use the gas strategically, in those sectors where it would be most beneficial to the national economy, without damaging the balance of the energy market as a whole (De Pous 1962: 22-23). Furthermore, the government planned to carry out this strategic approach by working in close cooperation with the other stakeholders. Firstly, it planned to involve the different industries in a plan for the development of the extraction and use of the gas reserves: not only the gas industry, but also the public part of the mining industry, the *Staatsmijnen*, would be involved (De Pous 1962: 10-11). Secondly, the government planned to create a new organisation which would control all sales of the Groningen gas. This organisation would bring together energy corporations Shell and Esso, as well as the *Staatsmijnen* (De Pous 1962: 20). In this way, all the largest representatives of the different energy industries would be involved in order to help create a coordinated transition rather than one in which the different industries would work against one another.

As far as the government was concerned, the transition from coal to gas was thus to be a classic example of the Dutch *poldermodel* or consensus model, in which the different actors involved find a way forward through cooperation and consensus-building. One key set of actors is not mentioned in the plan though: the mineworkers themselves, or the union which represented them. Cooperation, of course, works best when it is based on a mutual sense of trust amongst the parties involved. As the mine closure process began, cooperation between the government and the miners – most notably represented by the leader of the Catholic Miners' Union, Frans Dohmen – was indeed set in motion, and arguably came to define much of the process. Dohmen, as we will see, made a point of avoiding any strikes, protests or other measures that reflect a form of conflict between the government and the miners, and strictly limited himself to representing the miners' interests through negotiation. However, it also appears that there was always an underlying sense of mistrust between these two parties, which can be seen to have influenced many of the decisions made.

8.2. Cooperation based on a mutual sense of distrust

As we saw in the government's internal document, it does appear that the government had the best interests of both the country's economic welfare and that of the mining region of Zuid-Limburg at heart: the transition was to be a step-by-step one, not dominated by the mere market dynamics of supply and demand which would turn the energy sector upon its head in no time at all, but based on the principles of cooperating and the maintenance of market stability (De Pous 1962: 10-11; 22-23). Yet the government did not trust the public, and with that the miners, with the knowledge about the real economic position of the mines in the years leading up to the closure, as it attempted to keep any knowledge about the size of the Groningen

gas fields under wraps. In fact, it was not the Dutch government but Belgian senator Victor Leemans who first broke the news that gas had been found in the Netherlands during a European Parliament debate in Strasburg, claiming that the Netherlands had access to gas reserves of almost 300 billion cubic metres (Eindhovensch Dagblad 1960). The government response was not to deny the existence of the Groningen gas, but to play down the numbers (Trouw 1963). In June 1963, Leemans returned to the scene with a new revelation, claiming that the figure of 400 to 500 billion cubic metres, as was being quoted by the Dutch government at the time, was nowhere near accurate and that in fact the reserves contained at least 1000 billion cubic metres of extractable gas (Trouw 1963). This time, the government would neither confirm nor deny the claims, stating that Leemans' words were his own responsibility (Trouw 1963). Several years later, as the estimations of the gas field's true size continued to grow, the government came to the realisation that holding back certain information and leaving it to public speculation was not the right approach: in April 1967, the directors of the NAM, the enterprise tasked with drilling for gas in Groningen, announce that the size of the gas field was not 1100 to 1200 billion cubic metres, as had previously been assumed, but at least 1650 billion cubic metres. The objective of immediately making the news public was to avoid a situation like in 1963, when Leemans' claims had resulted in large-scale unrest and speculation (De Tijd 1967).

Aside from illustrating how the rapid the process of gas discovery in Groningen really was, these examples show how the government initially did not trust the public with information about the gas fields, for fear of sparking social unrest. Its objective was clearly to have a consensus-based transition, without large-scale protests and strikes. It would succeed in that objective, but as the beginning of the mine closures drew close, a mutual sense of distrust had clearly been created, for throughout the process, union leader Frans Dohmen appears to have been very sceptical of the government's ability not to let itself be led by purely economic considerations. Specifically, much of his strategy was based on the belief that once coal would no longer be required by the Dutch industry and energy sector, the miners' interests would be neglected by the government at the drop of a hat. In this situation, he argues that the miners would be powerless, as to strike would be exactly what the industry and the government wanted: 'In that situation, all twelve mines would have closed within a few days, never to reopen again' (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 78).

This mistrust is somewhat surprising given the words with which Joop Den Uyl, the next Minister of Economic Affairs, announced the impending closure of the mines in Heerlen in 1965. The nota was very clear on the fact that mine closure should be a step-by-step process in which not only economic considerations but also possible social repercussions should take centre stage (Den Uyl 1965: 1). Additionally, Den Uyl stated that the mines would not close before new work was found for their employees, and that pressure from the industry to carry out the closure process quickly – as that might make more sense from an investor's perspective than continuing to fund a dying industry – would be resisted (Den Uyl 1965: 2-3). The government would bear the financial burden of these efforts, in part by striking deals with electri-

city producers and steel producers to keep buying Limburg's coal, so that production could be maintained (Den Uyl 1965: 4). Simultaneously, the government would be subsidizing this production directly (Den Uyl 1965: 4). Local newspaper *Limburgsch Dagblad* reported that Den Uyl's speech was full of 'deep concern and human compassion', which 'visibly impacted those present' (Limbursch Dagblad 1965). The general perception therefore appears to have been that the local population did indeed believe in the government's good intentions, and that it would not let the region go under economically simply because it had a new source of energy available.

Dohmen, however, strongly believed that the government would turn its back on the miners if they were to get involved in any kind of social unrest, given that there was no economic incentive for the government to protect them. He therefore got in the way of any involvement of the miners in the process which was not based on co-operation and negotiation. A key example of this is when in the years following Den Uyl's announcement of the impending closure of the mines, the mine owners wanted to lower payment and reduce labour conditions. They attempted to use the situation to their advantage by having the government do the negotiations for them, since it was involved already (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 67). Tough negotiations ensued, and some representatives of the miners planned to attempt the creation of a full-scale government crisis over the issue. However, Dohmen intervened and travelled to The Hague to ensure that an agreement was reached, as he feared that any prolonged disagreement would get in the way of Den Uyl's plans for the transition away from mining in Limburg (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 67). In other words: he felt that any conflict would make the situation worse rather than better. This fits into a broader pattern of favouring cooperation and negotiation over conflict and politics. He argued that a union should not get involved in party politics and warned against invoking any form of social conflict. As he puts it in his memoirs:

> In my trade union days I encountered all kinds of people who were preoccupied with the concept of social conflict. So was I, but only at the negotiating table (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 111).

8.3. The failings of depoliticised negotiations

Concerned as he was with government cooperation, Dohmen ended up disappointed with the extent to which the government had carried out its side of the deal. Den Uyl's nota stated that there should have been a strict timeline concerning the closure of each mine. He specified the periods in which each mine would close, whether that be within three years, five years or six to seven years (Den Uyl 1965: 3). In reality, this did not happen, as there was something of a snowball effect which caused one mine closing to result in the closure of more mines (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 92). This was partly down to the role of the German mines, which offered their workers higher pay (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 99), meaning that many miners whose mine closed preferred to move to a German mine than to another mine in Zuid-Limburg, which was supposed to take over part of the closed mine's production

(Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 103). In Dohmen's eyes, the government did not do enough to combat this effect (presumably by ensuring that salaries in the Dutch mines were not lower than in the Germans mines). Another problem Dohmen highlights is that the government never reacted to his calls for it to install a regional coordinator to oversee the transition process in Zuid-Limburg (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 96-97). This was particularly problematic with regard to attracting new businesses, as Dohmen claims that it resulted in a situation where every mayor was trying to attract new industries on their own accord, resulting in chaos and eventually in the fact that not enough new enterprises settled in the area (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 97). Additionally, Dohmen claims that the government did not make enough support available to improve the investment climate (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 99). The situation was further exasperated due to the relatively high wages in German mines: the fact that many Dutch miners left to work in Germany meant that fewer workers were available for potential new industries, which often ended up opting for alternative locations (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 99).

There are thus clear issues with the approach which the Dutch government, in cooperation with the industry and the union, chose to pursue. The intentions may have been good, but the end result was that Limburg was left with insufficient investment in new industries: something which, as we have seen in chapter 5, still impacts the region today. It is difficult to say with certainty whether things would have been different had the union, and Frans Dohmen in particular, played its cards differently. If it had adopted a more aggressive strategy, politicising the issue of the mine closure and creating more of a social conflict through protests or strikes, could it have been able to push the government to provide more financial support in order to keep the Dutch miners' wages higher and to attract new businesses? It is impossible to know for sure, but the case of the Ruhr area in the next section shows how such an approach need not result in a bad outcome. However, as will be discussed in the following section, one needs to put the actions of the representatives of both the Dutch and the German miners into the perspective of the economic and cultural conditions discussed in the previous chapters. Doing so provides clear pointers as to what may have influenced their decisions.

9. The mine closure process in the Ruhr area – Protest, politicisation, and the development of a long-term transition strategy

The fact that the mines in the Ruhr area were the last ones in German to close is no coincidence. The area was clearly marked as the main area in which the mines would continue to produce deep into the twilight years of domestic coal production. Although the Ruhr area always produced a large part of German coal, the original national production was somewhat less concentrated than it came to be from 1997 onwards, when the Ruhr area produced around 80% of Germany's coal (Storchmann 2005: 1470). From the very beginning, the development of the levels of production was planned several years or even decades in advance. The general approach was to

bring all the mines under the same authority, which was heavily financed by the state, and then to slowly bring the subsidies down (Meiners, Zander 2018).

The 'issue' of the mines was very public and very political from the start. Closures began with the shutting down of the Minden coal mine in the late 1950s, which was determined no longer to be worth the financial support it received. Similar mines around the Ruhr area faced the same fate, and the process could have happened in a timeframe similar to that in the Netherlands had the federal government not stepped in with its very significant funding programmes. For some, such as Küpper, this is a testimony to the power which the miners and their unions wielded in German society and with that in its political sphere (Küpper 2018).

The influence of the unions and their willingness to align themselves with political parties in order to increase their influence are key factors, which were important in ensuring that many mines stayed open as long as they did. On the other hand, however, the characteristics of the German economy discussed previously played a large part in making the German government's approach of keeping mines open through subsidies a possibility in the first place. Not only were all competing energy sources imports, unlike in the Netherlands, but the large German steel industry constituted something of an escape clause: the ECSC did not allow state aid to heating coal, but it posed no restrictions on subsidising coking coal. The German government used this to its advantage by ensuring that domestic coal could continue to be used in the steel industry.

9.1. A complex web of subsidies keeps coal alive

At the very beginning of the process, the emergence of subsidies was aided by the belief that the financial difficulties of the sector would be short-lived. There was an element of surprise to the collapse of the demand for coal which could, in Czierpka's vision, have triggered one of two very different responses: the rapid change in market demand could have resulted in an equally rapid change in the size of the sector, as happened in the Netherlands, or one could have underappreciated the necessity for change, as many believed the demand for domestic coal might rise again (Czierpka 2019). She stresses that German measures were originally based on the assumption that the demand drop would be temporary: the representatives of the industry in particular postulated the economic and thus temporary nature of the crisis (Czierpka 2019). Based on these assumptions, an attempt was made to keep as many of the mines as possible open using subsidies, focussing on the mines' deficits rather than on their profitability (Czierpka 2019).

However, subsidies were here to stay. Over the course of the following years, Germany adopted a very complex subsidy system, which consisted of close to 60 different measures. At times overlapping and conflicting, these measures nonetheless enabled the total amount of subsidies to increase steadily over the years. In 1958, the total amount of subsidies spent on coal was €0.6 billion. By 1989, this amount had increased to €7.5 billion (Storchmann 2005: 1469). Additionally, some

measures were introduced that aimed to make the usage of foreign energy sources less attractive, such as taxing heating oil, banning large power plants fuelled by oil or gas, and introducing import quotas for coal (Storchmann 2005: 1473). Here the impact of the difference in economic conditions between the Netherlands and Germany is particularly clear: where Germany could take measures to limit the attractiveness of foreign energy sources, the main competitor to Dutch coal was soon to become Dutch gas, against which the Dutch government could of course not take similar measures.

German subsidies took many different forms. The largest group of subsidies were the sales aids, which made up around three-quarters of the total amount of subsidies granted to the coal sector between 1958 and 2002 (Storchmann 2005: 1469). Various types of sales aids existed, such as the subsidising of the transport of coal both by road and rail, and the building up of a national coal reserve which would purchase coal when not enough buyers could be found (Storchmann 2005: 1475-1476). All of these measures had the same goal: ensuring that high coal production could be maintained. The most important form of aid, however, was the *Kokskohlenbeihilfe*: subsidies aimed at keeping the price of domestic coking coal for the steel industry at the same level as the price of coking coal imported from abroad. Until as late as 1989, there was no limit to the amount of coking coal which could be subsidised in this manner. This meant that by then, the yearly amount of subsidies granted to domestic coking coal was worth over €2 billion (Storchmann 2005: 1478).

9.2. The political clout of the German unions

The subsidies introduced in Germany thus amounted to large amounts of money, were maintained over a long period of time, and were primarily aimed at maintaining certain production levels. All in all, this is a very different situation to in the Netherlands, where subsidies were short-lived and only aimed at bridging the few years between the moment that domestic coal started to struggle in terms of its competitiveness to the eventual closure of the mines. This calls for a closer look at the role of different actors with respect to the creation and maintenance of the German subsidy system and its influence on the Ruhr area.

Contrary to the situation in the Netherlands, the discussion on the future of the coal mines was always heavily politicised in Germany. In part, this was due to the general strength of civil society organisations. These played a large part in the German political sphere and generally carried significant bargaining power, including those focusing on the mining sector (Brauers, Oei, Walk 2020: 245). Civil society organisations in the Netherlands are also influential, but as was discussed in the section on economic conditions, those which represented the mining sector were not as influential as their German counterparts. Regardless of the economic position of coal itself, with its impacts on the bargaining power of the sector's representatives, the fact that the mining industry was entirely located in the peripheral region of Zuid-Limburg did not help. Frans Dohmen in particular was very much focussed on deal-

ings within the province of Limburg itself: he was not himself a part of the political circles of The Hague.

This is connected to a second and crucial point: whereas Dohmen and the Dutch mining union stayed clear of party politics (consciously so, in Dohmen's case), those representing the German miners were very much engaged in it (Storchmann 2005: 1478). This became particularly important after 1966, the year in which the Social-Democrats (SPD) toppled the longstanding hegemony of the Christian-Democrats (CDU) in the state of Nordrhein-Westfalen, in which the Ruhr area is located (Storchmann 2005: 1478). Later that year, the federal CDU government fell, and a coalition government consisting of both the CDU and the SPD came into office (Storchmann 2005: 1478). At this time, most of those representing the miners in one way or another were also members of the SPD. This meant that when the SPD was governing both on a federal and a state level after the 1966 elections, the mineworkers were very well represented on both levels of government (Storchmann 2005: 1478).). This effect was immediately clear, as one of the new federal government's first moves was to introduce the Concerted Action for Mining. This paved the way for the introduction of the previously discussed *Kokskohlenbeihilfe*: the price support for domestically produced coking coal.

Previously, however, the unions had influenced the process by utilising their power from outside of the political sphere. Most notably, in 1959, the March to Bonn was staged as a demonstration against the impending mine closures. Around 60,000 people took part in the march, which at the time made it the largest demonstration in the history of the German Federal Republic (Meiners, Zander 2018). No large-scale protests ever took place in the Zuid-Limburg, let alone in the Dutch political capital of The Hague. In this respect, one needs to consider a third aspect which made the movement against mine closure in Germany strong: not only was civil society powerful or was it strongly integrated with party politics, but the topic of mine closure was very much at the centre of the German public debate in a manner in which it never was to the same extent in the Netherlands.

9.3. Steel as a way around ECSC subsidy rules

Important as the very public and political push from the industry, the unions and the broader public against mine closure was, economic factors also played a key role. As described previously, the *Kokskohlenbeihilfe* was one of the most important measures in terms of the sizes of the subsidies granted, and therefore also with regard to the effect of keeping more mines open for longer. This measure, which essentially amounted to the Federal government paying the difference between the price of domestic coking goal and imported coking goal upon steel producers' purchase of the former, relied heavily on the fact that Germany had a large and growing steel industry in place. The ECSC had banned state aid for heating coal, which meant that Germany in this way can be seen to have used the steel sector as an outlet to continue its domestic coal production. As was described in the chapter on the economic

conditions in the Netherlands and Germany at the start of the mine closure process, the Netherlands' steel industry was smaller than that of Germany, both in absolute and relative figures. That difference was particularly relevant in this respect, as it was a factor which will have limited the Netherlands' ability to keep the mines open for longer by using the steel industry as a destination for domestically produced coal: one in which state aid was allowed to counter the competition of imported coal, and one in which the use of coal could not be fully replaced by that of oil or gas.

9.4. Reorganisation to boost efficiency

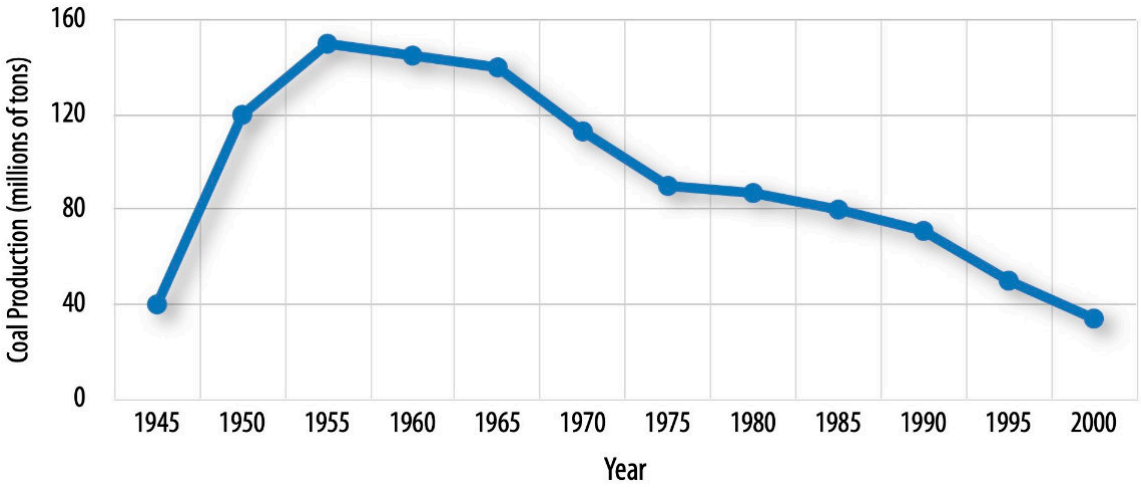
In order to keep the mines open for a longer period of time, significant public financial investments thus needed to be made. However, particularly in the Ruhr area, improvements were also made in terms of efficiency in order to limit the public burden of the sector to some extent. To this aim, the Ruhrkohle AG (RAG) was established in 1969. The organisation merged a large number of smaller mining companies and brought them under a single ownership. In turn, the RAG was given financial assistance from both the federal and state level in order to help it to invoke the structural changes necessary to increase efficiency and productivity (Storchmann 2005: 1471). The RAG enabled the guaranteeing of efficient mining and production volumes, but also allowed for building down production levels in a coordinated fashion using decommissioning premiums and purchase guarantees. Whether this process was carried too fast or too slow depends on who you ask, but the fact is that German coal production continued for decades after it had become unsustainable to it do so from a purely economic perspective (Meiners, Zander 2018).

This illustrates how not all subsidies were aimed just at keeping a dying business alive. The purpose of a substantial part of financial support was to develop the industry and improve it. Compare this to the Netherlands, where Van Uyl, similarly, stressed the importance of ensuring that the mines would not be considered an industry which had already run its course, but that the owners needed to be incentivised to maintain high efficiency of production. However, in the Dutch case, with the perspective of all the mines needing to close within the next decade, this was much less realistic. Subsidies had the sole purpose of keeping the industry alive until then. They were not aimed at improving the sector's efficiency in any way, as no actual improvements were made in this period.

9.5. Coordinated exit aids the regional transition

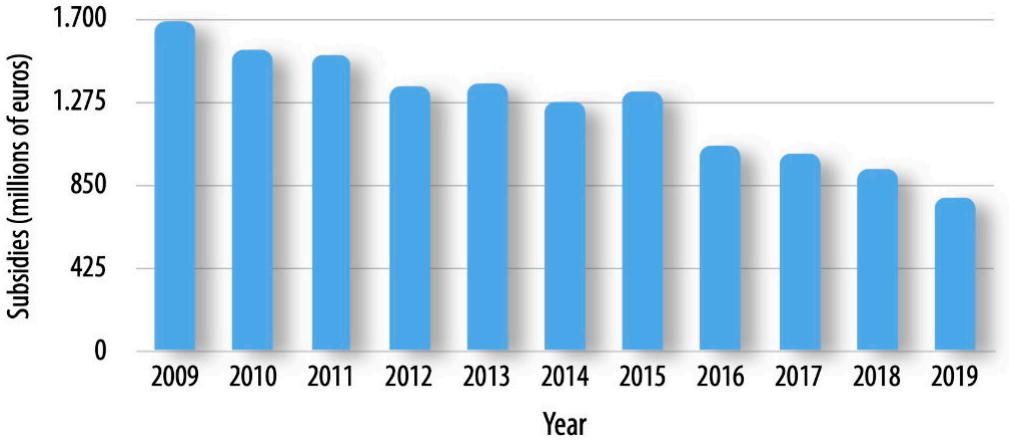
Because Germany decided to close the mines at a much slower rate, there was a possibility for production rates to respond to later developments in the global energy market. In some periods, for example in response to the high oil prices of 1973/1974, the decline of coal production rates stagnated, and at times production even increased (see figure 7) (Storchmann 2005: 1470).

Figure 7: Development of German Coal Production (1945-2000) (Storchmann 2005: 1470)



Nonetheless, subsidies were being slowly cut, especially from 1990 onwards, as it was apparent that the German state could not keep funding domestic coal indefinitely. The end of coal mining in Germany, and with that in the Ruhr area, was effectively determined in 2007. That year, the *Steinkohlefinanzierungsgesetz* was published, following long and hard negotiations between the federal government, the industry, and unions (Frigelj, Seidlitz 2010). The *Steinkohlefinanzierungsgesetz* did two things: it determined that all coal mines would close by 2018, and it outlined how subsidies would be cut back step-by-step over the next decade (see figure 8) (Bundesministerium der Justiz 2007). The law is very clear in both respects, and its outlining of the process probably played a large part in avoiding any large-scale opposition or protest in coal's final decade.

Figure 8: Development of German Federal Funding for Coal Mining (2009-2019) (Bundesministerium der Justiz 2007)



Even in these final years, subsidies followed a very similar model to those of the previous decades. Producers could apply for funding up to the level which covered

the difference between their production costs and the price of imported coal. In that way, although companies would not be able to make any substantial profits, they would be protected from the possibility that cheap imported coal would force them to close down more quickly than expected (Bundesministerium der Justiz 2007). Again, this helped to ensure that the closure process was carried out at the expected pace and avoided a situation such as in the Netherlands, where some mines ended up closing more quickly than expected.

This supported another goal of the law, which was to establish the financing of the final stages of the transition away from coal. It determined that any employee of the mines working below ground aged over 50, as well as any above-ground employee over 57 years of age, would receive an allowance of up to five years to bridge the gap from their becoming unemployed until the moment that they would be entitled to their respective pensions (Bundesministerium der Justiz 2007). Due to the coordinated closure plan, the costs of this programme could, for the larger part, be determined in advance. This probably helped to create a reasonably generous scheme, as there was little risk of costs turning out higher than originally expected.

In more ways than one, then, the German mine closure process was much more of a planned and coordinated one than that of Zuid-Limburg, allowing society to develop during the process and avoid a sudden shock in which a large part of the population needed to find new work. As stated previously, the political nature of the union's efforts – who pushed hard to ensure that the mines would not close quickly – played a large part in this. In this sense, their approach can in retrospect be seen to have been more effective than the Dutch consensus-based approach, which resulted in a closure process which by most accounts was too rapid, and did not follow the timeline originally specified by the government. However, one must also keep in mind that the German unions could be successful because the German government did have an opportunity to keep using domestic coal, albeit heavily subsidised, as it had a large and growing steel industry for which the domestically produced coking coal could legally receive state aid, unlike heating coal. Such economic factors, as well as cultural factors, were also crucial in determining the approach taken by the unions in the first place. That will be discussed in the following chapter.

10. Conclusion – Economics and culture, conflict and cooperation: explaining the different approaches taken in Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area

The previous chapters have illustrated how many different aspects played a role in determining the respective paths that Zuid-Limburg and the Ruhr area took in the mine closure process. In turn, these differing approaches to mine closure have had a significant impact on the socio-economic consequences of mine closure on the regions, which explain the large differences – both economic and cultural – between them today. As hypothesised in the chapter on research design, economic conditions, cultural conditions, and the balance between conflict and cooperation between the actors involved all played important roles in determining the decisions

made and with that on socio-economic consequences of the process. However, what was not foreseen, is just how interrelated these factors proved to be. Not only are there multiple interactions between economic and cultural conditions, but they strongly influenced the approaches taken by different actors, in particular the decision of the unions to engage in either depoliticised consensus-building strategies or to invoke a form of social and political conflict.

10.1 Ruhr area: strong unions utilise the economic position and opportunities of the mining sector

As discussed in chapter 6, despite the fact that coal was struggling economically in Western Europe as a whole, the economic conditions in the Ruhr area were considerably more favourable to coal than those in Zuid-Limburg: there was no German equivalent to the impending large-scale availability of domestically produced gas in the Netherlands, coal production was more important to the German economy than it was to the Dutch economy, and the large German steel industry represented an opportunity to keep using (subsidised) domestically produced coal which the Netherlands did not have on the same scale. On the one hand, this can be seen to have influenced government policy directly: chapter 9 shows how the German government used the option to heavily subsidise domestic coal production aimed at the steel industry. However, the fact that it did so to such a great extent is not down to economics alone. After all, it was still a hugely inefficient thing to do from a purely economic point of view. Rather, the representatives of the mining industry and the miners played an important part in politicising the decisions made and pushing the government to keep open many of the mines: firstly, through the organisation of the March on Bonn in 1959, then through exercising their substantial influence as civil society representatives, and finally in their role within political parties, particularly the SPD, which came to power on both a state and federal level in the second half of the 1960s. The strong stance of the German unions, which did not fear conflicts with the government at any level, was itself possible in part due to the strong position of the mining industry and the Ruhr area in general in the German economy: coal was a key part of the German economy which the government could not afford to lose at short notice, and the Ruhr area was an economic powerhouse and therefore had significant bargaining power.

10.2 Zuid-Limburg: both economic and cultural conditions result in a widespread acceptance of rapid mine closure

The Dutch government opted for a much faster closure of the mines, and the straightforward option would be to point to the economic factors as the key determinants of the differences with the German case: Zuid-Limburg's coal faced not only competition from imported sources, but also from domestic gas, and there was no steel industry of the German scale to use as an outlet for domestic coal. However, the Dutch process was also impacted significantly by the stance of union leader Frans

Dohmen, who agreed to a fast-paced closure process and strived for consensus with the government. As described in chapter 8, there was no politicised push against the government's plans to shut down mines, such as in Germany, nor did Dohmen allow any of the miners' representatives to get involved in party politics. As in the German case, this approach was rooted in the conditions of the time, but in Zuid-Limburg it was not just economic factors, but also cultural factors which played a big part in determining the union's moves.

The economic conditions at the time made Dohmen extremely suspicious of the government's intentions. Many of his words and actions appear to have been based on the assumption that the government would drop the mines as soon as they were no longer required, meaning that he felt the mines needed to close quickly in order to get any kind of government support for the miners. He may well have overestimated the cold rationale of the Dutch government in this regard, but – at the same time – his push for rapid closure of the mines was probably more than mere socio-economic calculation. Chapter 7 illustrates how Limburg's population had always maintained a rather ambivalent attitude towards the mines, and Dohmen was no different in this respect: a deep-seated disliking of the mines had always remained present in his thoughts, even as the main representative of the miners (Kusters, Perry 1999: 88). This, in turn, can be seen to be the result of the economic and cultural conditions during the period in which Dohmen entered the mining scene: in the 1930s, working conditions for the miners were poor, and the mining culture in the region was still very limited (Dohmen, Spanjaard 1986: 22). This illustrates just how interrelated economics, culture, and the actors' attitudes really were: the economic conditions in the mines influenced the extent to which there was a (positive) mining culture, which would later influence the socio-economic calculations of the man who played a key part in determining what the mine closure process in Zuid-Limburg would look like.

10.3 The interrelation of economic conditions, cultural conditions, and the relationships between the different actors involved

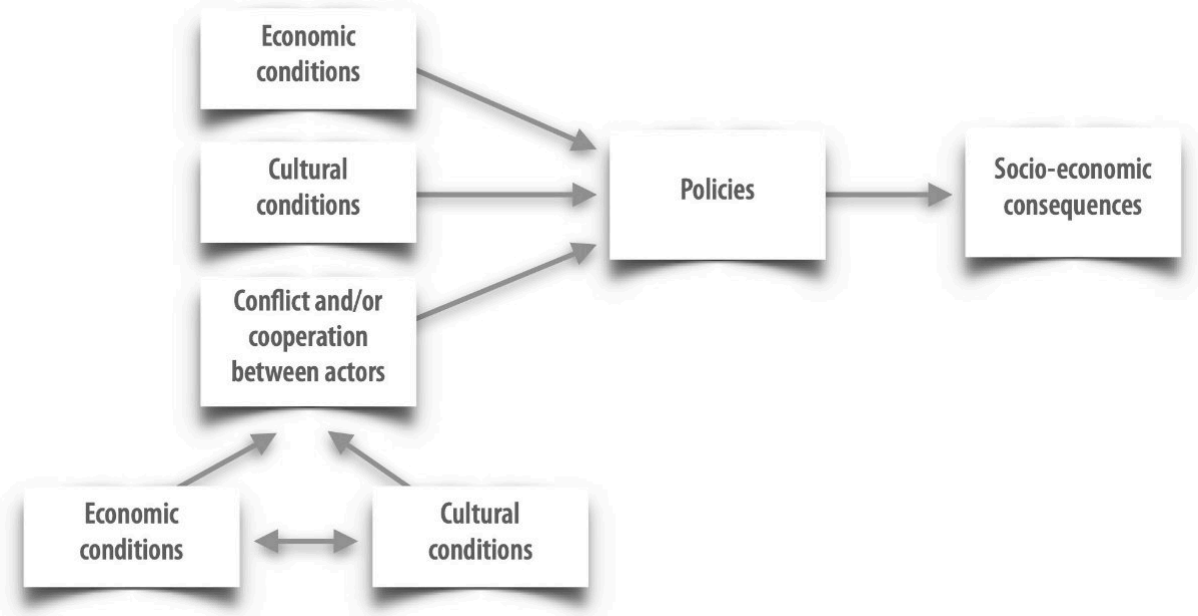
The impacts of the different approaches taken have been discussed in great detail in the previous chapters. What is clear is that the temporised approach taken in the Ruhr Area allowed the region to develop new industries and opportunities while mining was phased out in a manner that Zuid-Limburg never got the opportunity to do. It also meant that the Ruhr Area took more care in developing a mining heritage which is clearly present in the region to this day, although the fact that this did not happen in Zuid-Limburg may also be down to the fact that the mining culture there was never as strong as in the Ruhr area.

In the end, all three of the factors mentioned in the research questions can therefore be concluded to have a significant impact on determining the socio-economic consequences of mine closure. The weaker the economic position of the mines and the culture built around them, the less likely they are to be phased out slowly over time, and thus the higher the risk of negative socio-economic regions for the region

in which they are located. Moreover, if the actors which represent the miners, the unions in particular, allow the process of mine closure to become depoliticised and consensus-based to a great extent, there is a risk that the voice of the miners is not heard sufficiently in the process and thus that decisions are made which will later result in negative socio-economic consequences for the region. However, the answer to the overarching research question – 'What determines the socio-economic consequences of coal mine closure in regions with a strong industrial focus on coal mining?' – is not just the sum of these three parts. Rather, these factors are strongly interrelated and influence one another. Most importantly, the economic and cultural conditions play a crucial role in determining how the different actors approach the mine closure process and their likelihood to engage either in depoliticization and consensus-seeking, such as in Zuid-Limburg, or in politicisation and conflicts with other actors, such as in the Ruhr area.

The model in figure 9 is an updated version of the model presented in the research design which includes the interrelations between the different factors discussed. Future research might test to what extent this model can also be used to analyse other mine closure processes around the world. It may also be valuable to test it for other comprehensive regional economic transitions which do not involve mines at all. For example, the northern Dutch region of Groningen is now transitioning from an economy centred around the same gas fields which made the mine closure process in Zuid-Limburg so challenging. As economies develop, there will always be regions which need to transition away from a strong reliance on a single sector. The better we understand how these transitions can be carried out in a manner which limits the negative socio-economic consequences for these regions, the smoother these transitions will be.

Figure 9: Model of independent, mediating, and dependent variables, based on research outcomes



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De Europa
Special Issue - College of Europe 2023

Avoiding the dependency track: Towards a new European model for international energy and raw materials cooperation

Eric Valdivia Villanueva

1. Introduction

Every energy crisis brings echoes and fears from the past. In this way, the Russian invasion of Ukraine sharply revived the scars that the 70's oil crisis left on the energy sector of the European Union. Thus, granting the EU's energy security of supply became again the major concern for many policymakers amid an unprecedented escalation in European energy prices.

However, apart from bringing some critical reminders from the past, this new energy crisis has also accelerated the pace of the European Union's transformation towards the green energy model(s) of the future. The answer to this crisis will not be based only on the diversification of fossil fuel supplies, but on transforming the very nature of the system itself with special emphasis on the electrification of different sectors and the progressive substitution of fossil fuels with renewable energy sources.

In its move away from Russian fossil fuels, the European Union is using these two answers to be less dependent from Russia and chasing a secure level of the so-called 'strategic autonomy' in energy terms.

However, while seeking to avoid the fossil dependency track, the acceleration of the EU energy transition could simultaneously bring new challenging dependencies to the EU energy and industrial sectors over specific elements such as hydrogen or the so-called critical raw materials. To avoid this dependency paradox, the European Union should be aware of this new dependency path and develop an adequate policy to address this situation while there is still time to maneuver.

This thesis aims to contribute to this endeavour by analysing the key elements behind the new EU's dependency on critical raw materials and proposing a three-stage strategy of international energy and raw materials cooperation to transform this challenge into an opportunity.

Chapters 3 and 4 will set the European energy landscape after the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the current energy policy framework in which the EU is currently moving.

Chapter 5 will analyse the geopolitical and strategic importance of critical raw materials, focusing on the example of China and its control over Rare Earth elements production and refining.

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Chapter 6 will analyse the historical development of the EU approach towards critical raw materials and the policy options contemplated by the recently launched 'Critical Raw Materials Act'.

Finally, chapter 7 will justify the need for a new EU external approach towards critical raw materials supply, proposing a new strategy to develop win-win cooperation dynamics with third resource-rich countries with three main positive outcomes: diversify the EU's supply, develop emerging economies and advance in the achievement of carbon neutrality objectives globally.

2. Methodology and hypotheses

This research is intended to offer an answer to the following research questions: What are the main challenges for the EU arising from the acceleration of the green energy transition after the Russian invasion of Ukraine? And, consequently, how can the EU develop a global strategy to effectively address such new challenges?

Our work will be mainly focused on the problematic of an enhanced European dependency on the so-called 'critical and strategic raw materials' needed to produce clean energy technologies. Accordingly, the content of this research will turn around two consecutive hypotheses:

H1: The acceleration of the European energy transition will bring new forms of dependency and energy security issues to the continent related with critical raw materials.

H2: The EU can develop a sustainable and secure supply of CRM and clean energy technology components if the proper internal and external policy strategies are implemented.

Regarding the research design and the methodology of this master thesis, we will proceed with a qualitative analysis, common to the social and human sciences. The analysis will take the form of an inductive research, where the specific observations and collected data will be used to draw general conclusions in the final section.

Our analysis is based on the combination of three different research methods:

- Extensive primary document analysis in the policy areas of energy and 'critical raw materials'.
- Two Case Studies.
- Interviews.

To know more about the relevance of our methodology, the selection criteria of the study cases and the interviewees, or the limitations of our methodology, see Annex 1. To read the transcripts of the interviews see Annex 1.

There is not a dedicated chapter for the theoretical framework in this thesis. Instead, - thanks to an exhaustive analysis of the academic literature and other relevant sources – it is present throughout the chapters of the investigation, providing the relevant theories and perspectives to understand the state-of-the-art of the subject of our research.

3. A paradigm shift

> The natural effect of trade is to lead to peace.
> Montesquieu. Spirit of the laws, supra note 59, pag. 338.

On the morning of February 24th 2022, Europe began to write a new chapter in history. While European societies held their breath at the uncertain progress of the war on Ukrainian soil, chaos and insecurity quickly spread to the main European energy markets.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine put the whole EU's energy system upside down. Overnight, the energy landscape that was built for more than 50 years around a delicate equilibrium between economic interdependence and geopolitical interests was completely destroyed.

The start of the war changed an important part of the energy model of the European Union. For many decades, this model was based on the consideration of the Russia-EU relationship as a win-win situation. European countries were able to secure cheap energy sources from the Russian pipelines (solving its supply needs) and Russia was able to secure a considerable quantity of its income from the exportation of fossil fuels.

This abrupt ending of the energy model evidenced two intrinsically related phenomena that had long warned about the chronicle of a foretold disaster. On one hand, it showed the already known fragility of the EU's fossil fuels security of supply. On the other hand, it also implied the failure of the liberal economic interdependence theory, which was the guiding principle of EU-Russia energy relations since its foundations five decades ago.

This first chapter will focus on these two key phenomena – the interdependence and energy security – analysing how a bad management of both lead the continent towards a new energy crisis. However, these two elements will also gain relevance in further chapters, where it will be discussed its important role in the new EU's energy strategy.

3.1. The economic interdependence

The energy model between the EU and Russia was born from the ashes of the 1973 oil crisis. In the aftermath of the crisis events, the European Communities concluded that Europe needed new strategic partners to diversify its fossil fuels supply to prevent further crises. At the same time, other political interests played an important role in this process (Franza 2018: 4-5). The idea was to offer a good framework for the distention of the relationship between the USSR and Western Europe through trade and economic exchanges. Based on the liberal approach of the economic interdependence theory, trade and economic interrelations would help to build political affinities and act as a deterrent for further escalations. (Franza 2018: 4-5) In other words, interconnectedness would promote peace between European countries in the middle of the Cold War.

As a consequence, long-term contracts were signed during the 70s and 80s and massive investments were mobilized to create the energy framework operating in the continent for more than five decades.

The idea of economic interdependence was not new. Important European thinkers such as Adam Smith or Immanuel Kant already theorized about the benefits of bilateral economic ties and their pacific effects (Krickovic 2015: 4). According to this economic interdependence rationale – also known as liberal peace theory – mutual need in trade relations may motivate countries to strengthen bonds and interstate linkages in other areas, thereby decreasing the probability of conflict between them (Krickovic 2015: 4).

However, this reciprocal interdependence became much more evident after the 2004 enlargement, when EU membership was extended to former Soviet countries that were fully dependent on Russia for its fossil fuel supplies (especially oil and gas) (Krickovic 2015: 10). Thus, the enlargement changed Europe's energy-related geopolitical dynamics. In this new situation, Russia developed a revenue dependency on European countries while the EU as a bloc enlarged its dependency levels on Russian fossil fuels (Krickovic 2015: 10).

In this way, economic interests were intertwined with the mutual need to achieve an acceptable level of energy security, creating a situation of simple symmetrical interdependence based mainly on the energy relationship between both countries.

But this dual relationship between the economy and energy security soon led to tensions and uncertainty. In moments of geopolitical concord, energy was perceived from a purely economic approach as a 'commodity'. However, when a political event moved Europe's geopolitical table again, the narrative's pendulum for politicians and policymakers swung to the opposite point, beginning to interpret energy as a key element of national security (Casier 2011: 547).

Aware of this dynamic, the European Commission tried to guarantee a 'tolerable level of uncertainty' in its energy relations with Russia. Even so, the narrative pendulum swung on several occasions towards critical levels of tension, stemming mainly from incidents between Russia and Ukraine in 2006[1], 2009 and 2014 with the Russian invasion of Crimea.

Over time, the promise of an idyllic relationship of economic interdependence turned into what is known as a 'classic security dilemma' situation. Both players were increasingly worried about the insecurity created by their interdependence, but they could not enhance their own security without jeopardizing the security of the other (Krickovic 2015: 3). Consequently, the energy relationship between the EU and Russia remained tense until, after the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the pendulum finally broke. The energy relationship between the two countries dropped to marginal levels after the imposition of various sanctions on Russia by the European Union and the refusal of Member States to pay its natural gas imports in rubbles[2]. As

[1] "After this event, the NATO Alliance started using the concept of "energy security" in the agenda of their meetings. Ibid.

[2] Interview to Anna Herranz-Surrallés, in discussion with the author. April 2023.

a consequence, a second phenomenon became evident in the starkest way: The EU was highly dependent on Russia for its security of supply and, in this situation, Russia could use energy as a diplomatic weapon against the EU.

3.2. The fragility of the EU's security of supply

Due to a combination of high consumption and a lack of enough domestic resources or production of fossil fuels, the EU has historically been considered a net importer of energy (Amineh, Guang 2016: 15) since oil and gas phased out coal as a primary energy source.

As we have seen, after the 1973 oil shock, the USSR appeared as a potential reliable partner for the EU. However, European countries did not want to repeat the same dependency mistake and before launching the partnership with the USSR agreed on a tacit strategy by which Western Europe was not to allow Russian gas to exceed 30 per cent of total consumption (Franza 2018: 2).

However, this tacit strategy was not respected. The European Commission warned since its 2000 Green Paper[3] about the dangerous levels of the EU's net energy import dependency, especially about the dependency on gas coming from Russia (Amineh, Guang 2016: 16). Compared to the fungible markets for coal and oil, the fixed nature of natural gas transport infrastructure (pipelines) created a bigger dependency relationship. In this sense, gas supply shocks could be much more impactful for the EU.

Security of supply became one of the three pillars of the EU's energy policy, together with sustainability and competitiveness, (European Commission 2013: 4) although the formers were most of the time ignored in favour of the latter. Even after the 2006 and 2009 gas disruptions mentioned before, the majoritarian consensus was that the preoccupation about Europe's overreliance on Russia was an exaggeration (Franza 2018: 10). After all, Russia had been a reliable gas supplier to the European Union for more than forty years and a few moments of commotion could not overshadow four decades of energy interrelations.

By 2021 the European Union found itself importing more than 40% of its total gas and coal, and around 30% of its oil from Russia (European Commission 2022e). The European energy dependence on Russian energy had increased since the initial tacit strategy, and so did the negative consequences of a possible supply disruption.

Of course, no one could have predicted the future, but the self-depiction of European policymakers, probably guided by short-sighted strategies and competitiveness ambitions, undoubtedly helped to deepen the EU's dependence on Russian fossil fuels. After 50 years, the self-fulfilling prophecy of a new energy crisis shacked Europe in February 2022, bringing echoes of the 70's energy crisis.

However, this time the solution to the crisis is much more complex. Apart from finding a way to diversify the supply of fossil fuels away from Russia (especially gas), the EU is now trying to change the nature of its energy system itself. In the middle of a major energy crisis, the EU has been forced to react and re-think its energy model in

[3] See: Towards a European Strategy for the security of energy supply (Green Paper) COM(2000) 769 final.

what we can describe as a double paradigm change. In the short term, it will be a paradigm shift towards a post-Russian energy landscape. In the long term, the objective is to accelerate the green energy transition and work towards a post-carbon energy system.

4. Towards new directions: between strategic autonomy and new dependencies

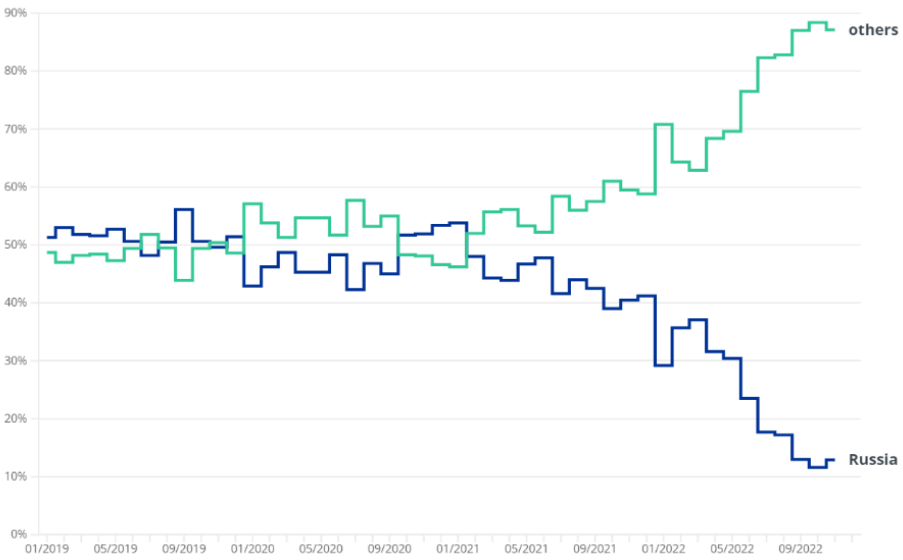
> The global move away from fossil fuels is already well underway. And the effects go beyond climate and environment - they are also geopolitical (European Commission 2021a: 12).

As seen in the previous chapter, the breakdown of the economic interdependence between the EU and Russia and the exposed fragility of the EU's energy security of supply have forced the European Union to rethink its energy model. In this sense, two official communications (the 'REPowerEU Plan' and the 'EU external energy engagement in a changing world') are showing the new directions of this energy strategy, which are different and complementary in the short-, medium-, and long-term. This second chapter will analyse these new directions and their main implications for the future of the EU's energy landscape.

4.1. Changing dictatorships? The short-medium term strategy

After the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the European Union had to accelerate the reduction of its energy dependence (especially in the case of natural gas) amid fears that Russia could use this dependency situation as an "economic and geopolitical weapon" (European Commission 2022c: 20) by suddenly cutting the gas natural flow in the different pipelines connecting Russia and the EU.

Figure 1. Evolution of EU's gas import diversification (2019-2022)



Source: Council of the European Union (Infographics)

The strategy for the diversification of the EU's energy supply was three-fold. First, the EU focused on increasing its gas imports from non-Russian sources through new bilateral or multilateral agreements with third-producing countries[4]. Second, the European Union established the "EU Energy

[4] "The mentioned countries in the Commission documents are: Canada, United States, Egypt, Israel, Qatar, Norway, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Senegal, Angola or Nigeria.

Platform" to aggregate the new natural gas demand of EU Member States and Energy Community Members, optimising its bargaining power with third countries by "using the collective strength of the Union" (European Commission 2022c: 4). Finally, it encouraged the building of new LNG import infrastructure in Member States to effectively absorb the new supplies.

Although this strategy will enhance the energy security of supply of the European Union, it has a main drawback: it will temporarily switch the European Union's dependency on fossil fuel imports from Russia to other third countries. This point is important because, in the current geopolitical scenario, supplier countries could change their external energy policies and restrict energy exports to protect their interests. The situation is especially worrying for the EU when half of the new expected exporters have dubious democratic regimes or are openly authoritarian countries.

As one High EU Official told us, the EU is moving in the short term towards a different form of dependency.

> We are replacing sources to avoid the gap between the dependence on Russia and the independence of the energy transition […] at the moment we are still on the dependence side, but changing the player (or players) from which we are dependent[5] – she said.

4.2. Road to 2030 and 2050: Accelerating the net-zero commitments

The abrupt EU's move away from Russian fossil fuels did not only translate into a mere switch from Russian pipeline gas to new LNG imports. To manage this geopolitical move, the EU also proposed in its REPowerEU package an ambitious increase in the Union's targets for renewable energy deployment (Rietveld 2022: 14).

In fact, the global energy crisis derived from the Russian invasion of Ukraine generated such a strong impact on the international community that even the COP 27 resolution underlined the urgency to 'rapidly transform' the energy systems and accelerate clean transitions to renewable energy. (United Nations 2022: 3).

Let us briefly state what is this clean transition about before analysing why is its acceleration so important for the EU.

The EU's green energy transition – sometimes conceptualized as clean energy or net-zero transitions – constitutes the transformation of the current EU's energy system towards climate-neutral objectives, shifting from a model based on fossil fuels to a new one based on renewable and low-carbon technologies. As one of the main pillars of the European Green Deal, the consequences of this unprecedented transition are called to have an important impact not only on the energy sector but more broadly on a whole global set of new socio-economic, geopolitical and technological trends (IRENA 2019: 14).

Far from a mere fuel replacement, the green energy transition will accompany the profound productive and social change of the new industrial revolution.

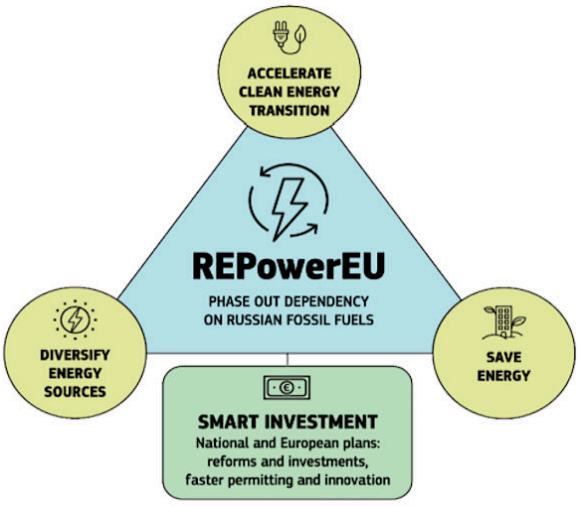
[5] Interview to former EU Official of the EEAS, in discussion with the author. March 2023 (Hereinafter, interview 2).

The reasons to accelerate the EU's energy transition are multiple. The incentives move in a range from the ambitions to comply with climate objectives to other financial and economic reasons (European Commission 2021a: 2) linked with industrial evolution, competitiveness, and innovation (de Ridder 2013: 1).

However, the main reasons behind the recent acceleration of the EU's green transition are – as is visible in the REPowerEU Communication – related to geopolitical motives and the necessity to "rapidly reduce our strategic energy dependency on Russian fossil fuels" (European Commission 2022c: 1).

According to the European Commission, the REPowerEU Plan is to quickly substitute fossil fuels consumption in Europe by boosting renewable energy – especially solar and wind –, accelerating efforts to deploy green hydrogen production and transport infrastructure, and scaling up biomethane. The ultimate goal would be to combine import diversification with energy-saving efforts and the acceleration of clean energy transition and electrification to hand over "the equivalent of the fossil fuels Europe currently imports from Russia every year" (European Commission 2022c: 13).

Figure 2. Visual representation of the 'REPowerEU Plan'



Source: European Commission, 'The REPowerEU Plan' (https://commission.europa.eu/publications/key-documents-repowereu_en)

However, political promises for accelerating energy transformations and enhancing domestic security of supply by reducing import dependencies are not new. In the aftermath of the 1973 oil shock, US President Richard Nixon promised that in 1980 the United States would no longer be dependent on any other country for its energy needs. In the end, that promise was never carried out. Sometime after, US President Jimmy Carter reset again the date for achieving North American energy independence throughout the 90's decade. Something that, again, never happened (Smil 2010: 150-151).

When the Russian invasion of Ukraine derived in a global – but mostly European – energy crisis, the echoes from the oil shock came back, bringing similar old narratives to the European political debate. Now the objective for the European Union is to move away from Russian fossil fuels and reduce our energy dependencies, and the recipe to achieve this is to accelerate the ongoing energy transition.

In this sense, the current narrative of the European Commission with its REPowerEU Strategy is facing two relevant challenges.

First, promises for accelerating energy transformations tend to be a risky bet, given the inherently slow and gradual nature of energy transitions (Smil 2010: 154-155). The before mentioned US example is perfect to illustrate this argument. What politicians were – maybe deliberately – ignoring back then was the difficulty to modify the inertia and rigidity of energy systems (Smil 2010: 151).

In structural terms, energy systems are very rigid, given the massive cost of financing energy infrastructures (such as pipelines, refineries or a network of gas stations) that later become stranded assets for future transformations (Chevalier, 2009: 9). In behavioural terms, there is market inertia concerning the individuals and corporate actors' resistance to change their daily actions (Chevalier, 2009: 9-10) and political inertia concerning the political legacies in the shape of strong long-established political-economic relations between importer and supplier countries (Franza, Van der Linde, Stapersma 2018: 4).

Another problem for accelerating the green transition derives from the clean technology deployment. They are mostly capital-intensive technologies, with big initial costs. But other challenges derive from the new supply chain requirement for the efficient deployment of those technologies – from having enough rare earth minerals to produce permanent magnets for wind turbines to the existence of an extensive network of electric charging stations for electric vehicles –.

When critically analysing the objectives of the REPowerEU document, one can find some similarities between the empty promises of US energy transformations and the clean-energy acceleration promises of the European Commission for 2030.

The objective to "rapidly reduce dependence on Russian fossil fuels by 2027 […] will require significant expansion of renewable energy shares" (IEA 2022b: 117) at such levels that are not even consistent compared to IEA's main and accelerated case forecasts.

Following REPowerEU targets would imply installing 2.5 times the current installed renewable energy generation capacity – mostly by new PV and wind turbines (onshore and offshore) – by 2030[6]. Whether it will end up as another unachievable political target or a European green feat is yet to be seen[7].

Figure 3. Comparison of 'REPowerEU' and IEA estimated benchmarks for the EU by sector

Segment	RePowerEU benchmarks, 2023	Main case / accelerated case benchmarks, 2027
Electricity	69%	54% / n/a
Solar capacity	592 GW	396 GW / 471 GW
Wind capacity	510 GW	290 GW / 316 GW
Transport*	32%	16% / 20%
Heating and cooling		
Share of renewable energy in heating and cooling.	2.3-percentage-point average annual increase to 2030.	0.9-percentage-point average annual increase to 2030**.
Share of renewable energy in industry.	1.9-percentage-point average annual increase to 2030.	0.9-percentage-point average annual increase to 2030**.
Share of renewable energy in buildings sector final energy consumption.	60%	32%**

* Including RED II multipliers.
** Excluding ambient heat harnessed by heat pumps.

Source: IEA, "Renewables 2022"

The second main challenge of the REPower EU Strategy – the one that motivates this very thesis – is the fact that, if the planned acceleration is finally achieved, the rapid change towards a green energy system will bring a great level of energy independence through domestic primary sources

[6] It would amount a total of around 1.250 new GW of renewable energy (Rietveld, 2022: 21).

[7] Despite of this criticism, this REPowerEU political objectives are important because they set a clear target tan can be equally pursued after the 'official deadline' if it is not achieved by then.

for energy, but will create new types of dependencies for the European industry and energy system. The next sub-chapter will look further into this assumption.

4.2.1. The clean-energy acceleration: between the independence narrative and the EU's Open Strategic Autonomy

In a speech delivered to the students at Bocconi University in December 2022, the President of the European Commission, Ursula Von Der Leyen, exposed – perhaps inadvertently – the apparent independence paradox of the energy transition. She said:

> Renewable energies are good for our independence because they are home-grown", but three paragraphs later she also stated that "we are developing an over-dependency on China regarding raw materials that are critical for our green transition. (Von der Leyen 2022a).

Thus, Von der Leyen's speech suggests a paradox in which the clean energy transition would bring energy independence to the European Union in terms of fossil fuels, but at the same time will create new dependencies in terms of raw materials – and, by extension, most of the supply chain for renewable energy technologies –.

This independence narrative connected to the green energy transition can be seen as well in many other official documents. In the 'EU external energy engagement in a changing world' document it is stated that "the green energy transition is at the heart of the EU's drive for energy independence" (European Commission 2022b: 1). This document shows the determination of the European Union to end its dependence on Russian energy and "to avoid new dependencies in the future" (European Commission 2022b: 16).

However, accelerating the energy transition hoping to achieve the long-awaited energy independence for the continent could be like jumping out of the frying pan of fossil fuels into the fire of raw materials and green technologies.

The European leaders of the 27 Member States are well aware of this new geopolitical challenge and the Versailles Declaration adopted in March 2022 after the Russian invasion of Ukraine highlighted the necessity of "reducing our strategic dependencies on Critical raw materials" (European Council 2022: 7) and underlined the strategic importance of Critical Raw Materials in guaranteeing the EU's open strategic autonomy and European Sovereignty.

This last statement is of crucial importance to understand not only the relevance of raw materials in today's and future societies, but also its significant relationship with the Open Strategic Autonomy of the European Union, which will be analysed in the following lines.

The concept of 'strategic autonomy' became popular thanks to the geopolitical ambition of the French elites (Tamma 2020). However, it was not until 2016 that the term was 'Europeanized' and included in the EU's jargon by the EEAS in the 'Global Strategy' communication. Sometimes coined as 'cooperative strategic autonomy', it was initially intended to deal with the EU's development of military and defense capability together with the NATO alliance and, especially, the US. However, as one former

EU High Official told us, Covid-19 changed the attention for strategic autonomy from military capacity to the global supply chains, and later with the war in Ukraine the energy sector became another obvious element for the EU's strategic autonomy[8].

Eventually, the official jargon evolved from 'cooperative strategic autonomy' to the currently used 'open strategic autonomy', but apart from the lexical formalities, the core meaning of the concept remained untouched. In a context of geopolitical instability, (Michel 2020) – driven by the regression in the EU-US transatlantic relationship during Trump's administration and the decline of multilateralism as the model for global governance (Brustlein 2018) – the EU as a bloc needed to become more "autonomous, sovereign and resilient" (Szczepanski 2020: 1). Thus, through the Open Strategic Autonomy, the EU is seeking to avoid unwanted geopolitical and economic dependencies (Breton 2020) by developing the capacity to choose freely our engagement with third countries and anticipate next-generation threats. As one High EU official stated:

> Today, 'strategic autonomy' is to understand which are the sectors that are vital for your society and your economies and your survival sometimes your safety and security. And even if you decide to continue the dependency patterns, have a way out of them in case needed so that you are autonomous in your choices. You choose to be dependent, but you can also choose to cut that dependency and you're free to do it because you have a way out. So, I would say that autonomy today is the capacity to be free to choose whether to stay in a dependency or not[9].

In simple terms, the 'open strategic autonomy' for the EU is about having the possibility to choose our partners, reducing the levels of dependency and increasing our influence in the international arena.

Regarding the critical raw materials, the European Council and the European Commission have already stated that they are called to be a key piece in the development of European Strategic Autonomy[10]. Thus, the main concern for the EU is to ensure a secure and diversified supply (Szczepanski 2020: 6) of the raw materials needed by the European industry by putting in place a set of internal and external policy measures.

The internal measures are intended to increase the levels of primary (through national mining, refining and processing) and secondary (through circularity and improved recycling processes) domestic production of raw materials (Szczepanski 2020: 1) and decrease the levels of internal demand with technological innovation on less resource-intensive manufacturing technologies.

However, the geological and technological limitations for this domestic production in the EU augur a medium-long-term scenario where the demand for raw materials will need to be met mostly by imports. Hence, the EU should complement its internal policy measures with an external policy designed for securing diversified and undistorted access to global markets, ensuring the resilience of global supply chains and reducing the excessive import dependency on some raw materials (European Commission 2020: 15-16) – derived especially from situations of single country supply dependencies (Tamma 2020) –.

[8] Interview 2.
[9] Interview 2.
[10] See footnotes 44 and 56.

In our case, the 'Open Strategic Autonomy' must be seen as a long-term strategy allowing the EU to gradually decrease our raw materials dependency.

Economists would argue that a certain level of dependency is not bad *per se*. In a world with perfectly competitive markets, it would not be a problem for import-dependent countries to buy cheap resources from third parties. At the same time, it would be foolish for the EU to pretend to achieve complete self-sufficiency in resource imports[11]. However, the Russian invasion of Ukraine – as the oil shock did decades ago – clearly shows that along with high levels of dependence comes the acceptance of vulnerability to supply disruptions and price shocks. The main problem is that this vulnerability can prove to be quite dangerous in a context of geopolitical instability where resources are not only a commodity but also a key element for national security in the middle of the ongoing green transition. This is especially the case for the so-called critical and strategic raw materials, which will be analysed in the next chapter.

5. Strategic raw materials, the dark side of the EU's green transition

> The twin transition to a green and digital future relies particularly on the safe and diverse supply of CRMs. In its journey to a low-carbon economy, the EU should however make sure it does not replace its reliance on fossil fuels with a reliance on CRMs (Szczepanski 2020: 1).

As we have seen, the strategy set by the European Commission in the long-medium term is to accelerate the European Union's energy transition to substitute the current dependency on fossil fuels with a domestic and diversified mix of renewable energies. Thus, the commonly accepted narrative states that "it is better to depend on the sun and the wind than to depend on Russian gas and Saudi oil". (Pitron 2018) However, this simplistic mantra is hiding an unpleasant truth. The more we entrust our energy system to the designs of the sky gods *Helios* (sun) and *Aeolus* (wind) to provide us renewable alternatives, the deeper we will dig into our own new dependency on the so-called critical raw materials.

5.1. Conceptualising the Critical and Strategic Raw Materials

The concept of raw materials is a broad category that includes, between other things, metallic minerals, industrial minerals, and construction materials (European Commission 2011: 5). During the last decades, the growing demand from traditional industrial economies and new emerging and developing economies such as China have increased the levels of extraction, trade and consumption of those raw materials (Szczepanski 2021: 2).

Of all the materials included in this catchall category, the most important ones for our analysis are the so-called "Critical Raw Materials" (hereinafter CRM). According to the European Commission's definition:

[11] Interview to Jesús Alquezar, DG ENV, in discussion with the author. March 2023.

"Critical raw materials are those which display a particularly high risk of supply shortage in the next 10 years and which are particularly important for the (productive) value chain." (European Commission 2011: 12).

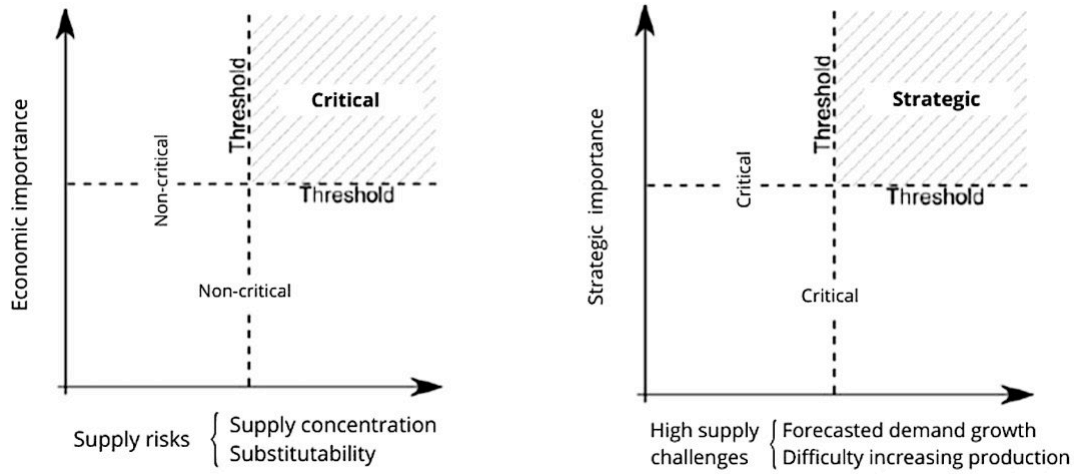
Thus, the CRM combine two key characteristics which makes them a crucial element for the present – and especially the future – of the European Union and the green transition.

The first one is their economic importance, which derives from their key function in the manufacturing of clean energy technologies.

The second important characteristic is the high risk associated with their security of supply, given its geographically concentrated distribution in a few producing countries – which exacerbates its geopolitical challenge (Hafner, Tagliapietra, 2020: 14) – and the lack of EU domestic recycling or possible substitute materials (Szczepanski 2020: 4).

Among all the Critical Raw Materials, the European Commission established on its 2023 Fifth CRM list a new category for those of strategic importance for the EU. The so-called 'Strategic raw materials' combine their high strategic importance with a potentially significant gap between global supply and projected demand and the difficulty to increase its production (see Figure 4) (European Commission 2023a: 3)[12].

Figure 4. Critical and Strategic Raw Materials Assessment Methodology



Source: Own elaboration based on European Commission, "Impact Assessment Report", 2023

Strategic raw materials are expected to experience a huge demand rise, driven by their main role in the global energy transformation. The World Bank and the OECD project that global climate ambitions will rapidly drive CRM demand growth. (European Commission 2020: 5) Thus, it is expected that we will extract more 'rare metals' [13] from the earth's crust in the next 25 years than we have done in the rest of human history (Pitron 2018).

When it comes to the difficulty of increasing its production, the problem is linked to the operating nature of the resource extraction industry. The mining sector is con-

[12] European Commission, "A secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials".
[13] Terminology of the cited author.

sidered to have a slow and inelastic response to demand changes, given their high investment costs and the long lead times between the approval of the mining activity and the effective extraction of resources (Buijs, Sievers 2011: 2). The fears here are that the mining companies won't be able to effectively read the expected growth in demand. Consequently, a supply imbalance could generate a situation of general shortage of CRM.

To sum up, the strategic importance of CRM for manufacturing clean technologies convert those minerals and metals into the cornerstone of the whole EU's green energy transition. However, their security of supply risks could jeopardize this transformation, delaying the climate-neutral objectives for 2050 and plunging Europe into a new dependency model for its energy and industrial sectors, as will be discussed in the following lines.

Figure 5. First European Commission list of Strategic Raw Materials (2023)

2023 List of Strategic Raw Materials		
Bismuth	Lithium - battery grade	Rare Earth Elements for magnets (Nd, Pr, Tb, Dy, Gd, Sm, and Ce)
Boron - metallurgy grade	Magnesium metal	Silicon metal
Cobalt	Manganese - battery grade	Titanium metal
Copper	Natural Graphite - battery grade	Tungsten
Gallium	Nickel - battery grade	
Germanium	Platinum	

Source: European Commission, "Proposal for a Regulation 2023/0079 (COD)"

5.2. Different matter, same dependency?

The low-emission energy systems projected for the EU's green transition differ profoundly from the traditional fossil-fuelled ones – as has been previously discussed in Chapter 4 –. Accordingly, the green energy transition is expected to be accompanied by new risks and challenges (IEA 2022a: 182). More specifically, it is expected to create new geopolitical challenges around a renovated form of dependency on the supply of certain CRM in a context of international hostility (IEA 2022a: 31-35).

As the President of the European Commission stated in his Davos speech:

> The economies of the future will no longer rely on oil and coal, but on lithium for batteries; on silicon metal for chips; on rare earth permanent magnets for electric vehicles and wind turbines. And it is sure: the green and digital transitions will massively increase our need for these materials (Von der Leyen 2023).

This highlights a well-known fact: the EU has already developed – and will increase in the future – a dependency on critical raw materials. In this sense, the acceleration of the energy transition set by the REPowerEU plan and the objectives to strengthen the EU's net-zero technology manufacturing capacity[14] will further increase this dependency if Europe stays with its 'policy as usual'.

[14] See European Commission's 'Net-Zero Industry Act' Communication.

Once it becomes clear that the EU will increase its current dependency on CRM for its industrial and energy needs, we should ask ourselves two uncomfortable questions: Will this new dependency on CRM replace the current EU's dependency on fossil fuels? And secondly, will this dependency be immersed in a more favourable international context than the current for fossil fuels, or quite the opposite?

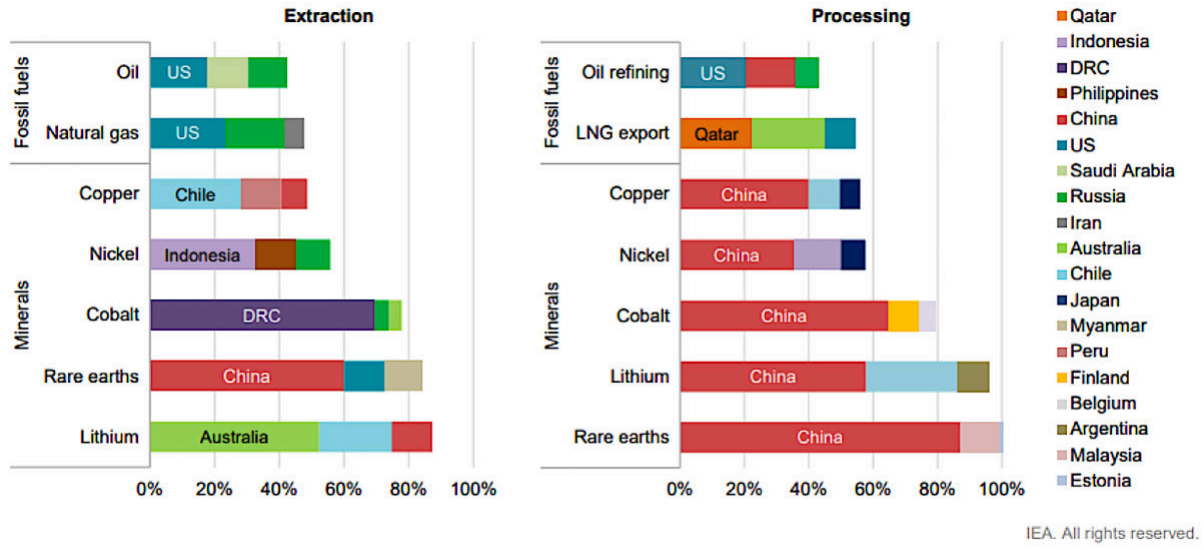
5.3. Critical Raw Materials as the new fossil fuels

The International Energy Agency stated in its 2022 Energy Outlook that "as clean energy transitions gather pace, there accordingly will be a shift from the supply of traditional fuels to the supply of critical minerals" (IEA 2022a: 318). Therefore, the European Union will become eventually less dependent on the fossil fuels that powered the previous industrial revolutions, but at the same time will inevitably rely on the raw materials needed for the massive manufacture and deployment of green technologies.

Indeed, Von der Leyen recalled that "lithium and rare earths will soon be more important than oil and gas" (Von der Leyen 2022b).

The concern of many European policymakers seems to be no longer whether the CRM will become or not the new oil. They are now questioning themselves on what can be done to secure their supply by addressing the vulnerabilities of the existing supply chains (Rietveld 2022: 14) and how to avoid taking blind leaps towards the unknown effects of a new dependency on CRM.

Figure 6: Share of top three producing countries in production of minerals and fossil fuels



Notes: LNG = liquefied natural gas; US = United States. The values for copper processing are for refining operations.
Sources: IEA (2020a); USGS (2021), World Bureau of Metal Statistics (2020); Adamas Intelligence (2020).

Source: IEA, "The Role of Critical Minerals in Clean Energy Transitions"

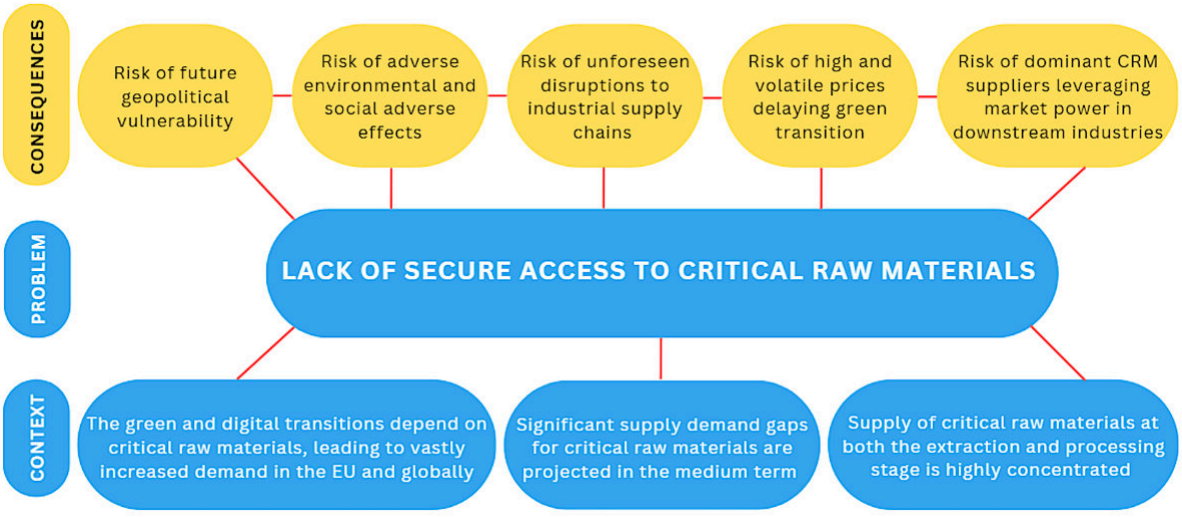
Against what the common mantra of renewable's energy independence states, "any relative emancipation from fossil fuels could well lead to a new problematic dependency" (Pitron, 2018) *on CRM*.

Of course, the possible consequences of sudden supply disruptions on CRM supply chains are not the same as in the case of a supply shock on oil and gas. As Professor Anna Herranz-Surrallés highlighted, the sensitivity and vulnerability of EU's society and industry towards a CRM disruption are less serious than for traditional fossil fuels. A supply disruption of lithium, nickel or rare earths will not disallow the EU to power its industries or heat people's houses during winter[15].

Notwithstanding this, both fossil fuels and strategic raw materials share possible negative consequences if Europe's dependence (and interdependence) with producing countries is not managed properly. First, the emerging development of a 'geopolitics of raw materials' can create new risks and challenges for the EU as an import-dependent country similarly to the current case of fossil fuels' geopolitics. Second, unforeseen disruptions of CRM will create disruptions to industrial supply chains. A sudden disruption of one strategic raw material of the EV batteries – given by natural or political reasons – could block the manufacturing chain of electric vehicles. Finally, fossil fuel supply shocks are normally translated into dramatic price rises, together with their social and economic negative consequences. Problems with raw materials (although on a smaller scale) will translate into price volatility of key clean energy technologies production, delaying and making the green transition more expensive.

As the Energy Community Officer told us[16], this is a matter of evolution of risk and probability. The important question is whether the risks – and therefore the probabilities of any possible disruptive impacts – of this new dependency on CRM are greater or lower than the current ones from natural gas and oil.

Figure 7: Critical Raw Materials Problem Tree



Source: Own elaboration based on European Commission, "Impact Assessment Report", SWD(2023) 161 final, 2023

[15] In addition, the aggregate economic value of the CRM is much lower than the market value of fossil fuels. As Álvaro Rangel explains: *'the market value of oil alone is approximately USD 3 trillion. In contrast, the value of key minerals and metals would represent, at their peak, between 3 and 10% of the value of the oil market in 2016'.* (Rangel Hernandez 2022: 10).

[16] Interview to Energy Community Officer, in conversation with the author. April 2023.

However, the concentration of minerals (in the extraction and refining process) is even more problematic than for fossil fuels. A quick look into the new international and geopolitical context of critical raw materials does not give room for optimistic omens.

5.4. Dealing with a challenging geopolitical and geo-economic environment

Since recent years, the world has witnessed new geopolitical global realignments. Some experts consider these trends as the visible outcomes of a gradual transition towards a multipolar world (de Ridder 2013: 1), which is expected to increase international tensions. With the weaponization of energy and the growing escalation of tensions around trade, the return of confrontational geopolitics (Von der Leyen 2023) is already taking place.

In the case of resource extraction activities – especially those concerning the so-called critical raw materials – the new international tensions intertwine with some old colonial and post-colonial narratives for most developing resource-rich countries[17]. While the import-dependent countries (particularly the US, Japan and EU countries) are trying to secure free access to those materials to sustain their industrial appetite, the resource-rich countries (normally developing countries) are looking to maximise their revenues and increase their geopolitical influence in the new board of green energy geopolitics (Szczepanski 2021: 2). The consequences for the resource sector are a more prominent role of state capitalism and state-capitalist tendencies (access and trade restrictions, government intervention (Buijs, Sievers, 2011: 6) and protectionism) in the international relations on raw materials, sustained by the growing ideological support of resource nationalism (de Ridder 2013: 16).

Let us first examine the concept of resource nationalism before moving forward to discuss some of its practical consequences on resource-rich countries (*e.g.* trade restrictions and state intervention).

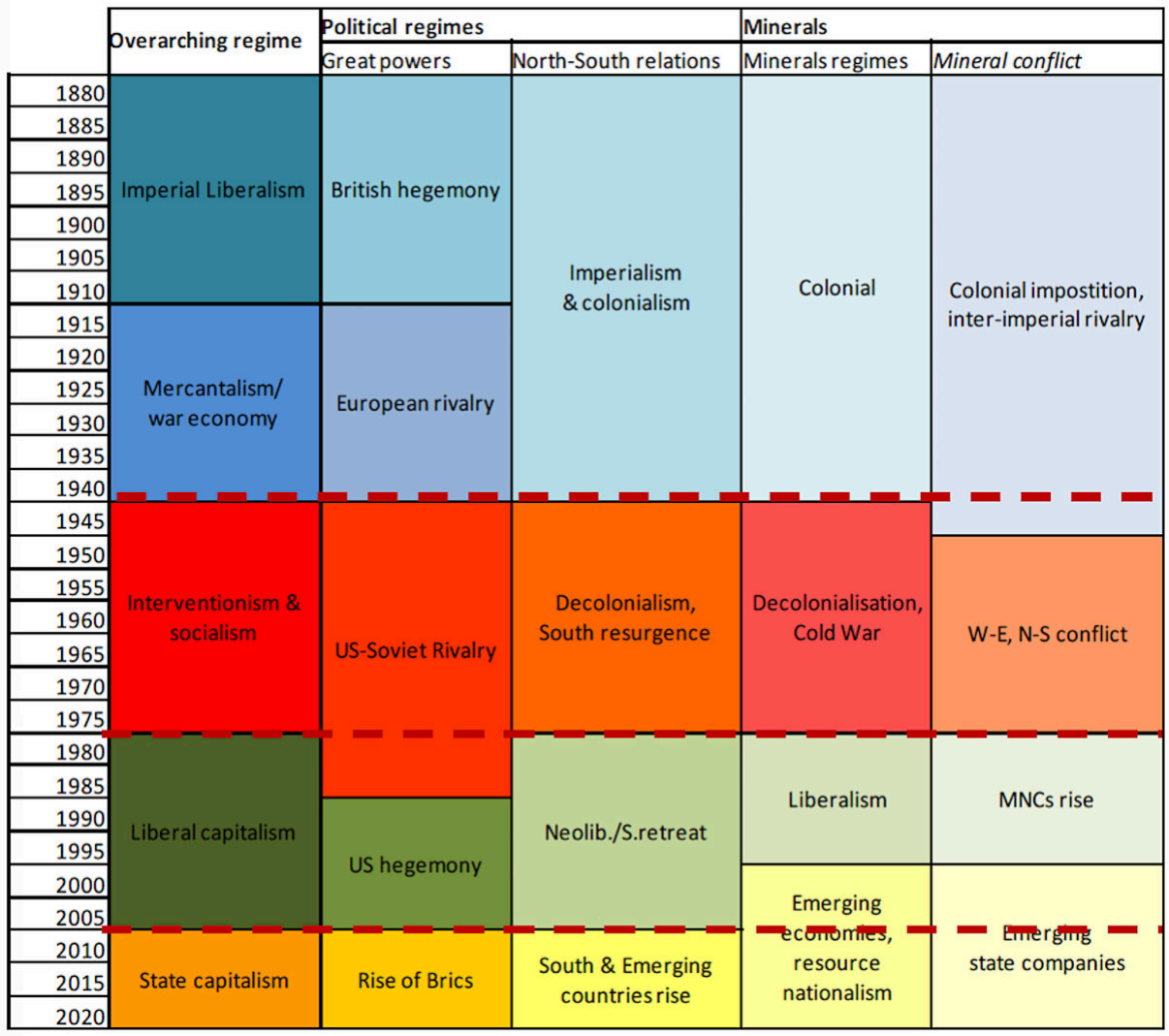
5.4.1. Resource nationalism

The concept of resource nationalism is based upon the idea that the state must keep control over its national resources, including the conditions for exploration, access, production and export of those resources (Chevalier, 2009: 24). According to socio-political explanations, with the claim of preserving the national resources for domestic use and the interests of the nation and future generations, resource-rich countries try to regain control over their natural resources and shift their exploitation from foreign firms to domestic state-owned companies. In a parallel way, according to the reasonings from the political economy, an increase in the monetary value of the extracted resources – driven by increasing demand – creates incentives for the politicization and statal control of the mentioned resources (Buijs, Sievers 2011: 2). Thus, in the new geopolitics of renewable energy, resource nationalism is becoming an important trend as it's gaining popularity among emerging and developing CRM-producer countries around the globe (see Table 2) (de Ridder 2013: 16).

[17] See next chapter.

As Pitron states in his book: "A surge of nationalism over mining resources is sweeping across Asia, Africa and Latin America […] increasingly weakening Western positions." (Pitron 2020: 76-77). Far from being a matter of some isolated cases, the resource nationalism ideology is expanding itself in a domino effect with more and more countries denying or restricting the access of their natural resources to external companies.

Figure 8. Historical international regime types relevant to the resource sector



Source: Bram Buijs & Henrike Sievers, "Critical Thinking about Critical Minerals"

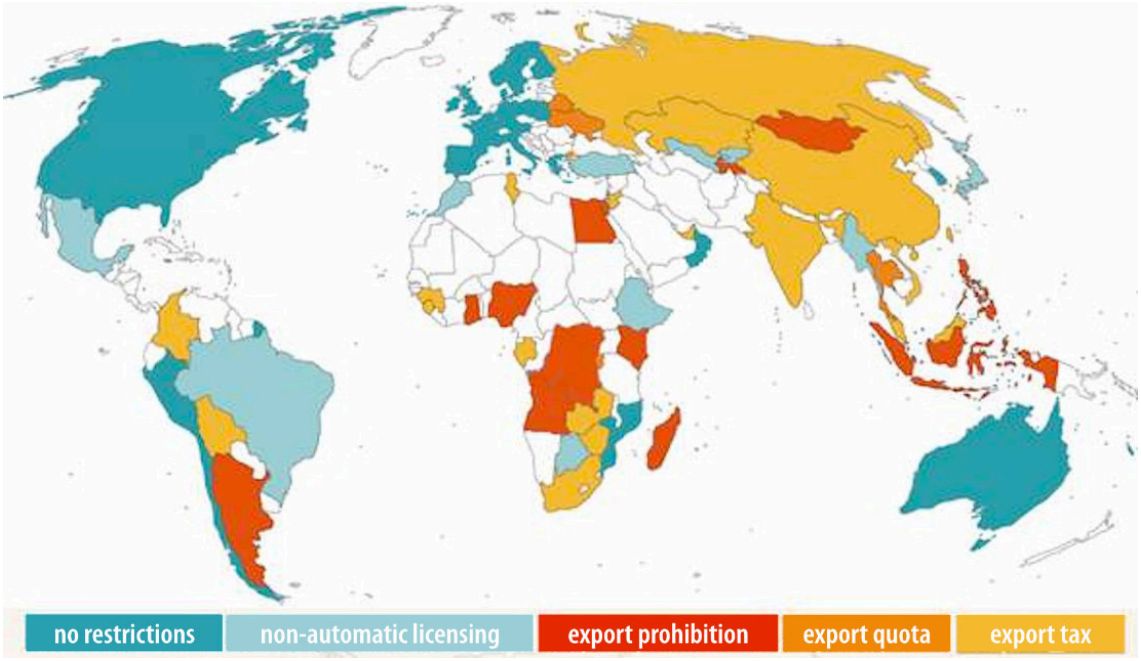
5.4.2. State interventionism and trade restrictions on metals and minerals

Since the last decades, state engagement and influence over natural resources seem to be increasing. As the pendulum swings towards state interventionism over the markets, the new key players of raw materials are putting in place a myriad of governmental measures to protect their resources and boost the development of domestic downstream industries. These trade-restrictive measures range from price-fixing, export taxes and quotas (Commission of the European Communities 2008: 4) to more severe measures such as export prohibitions or even nationalization of industries[18].

[18] Mexico and Chile have already set plans to nationalize its lithium industry.

As Figure 9 shows, resource-rich developing countries are increasingly rejecting free trade agreements and unbridled globalisation as the only way towards economic development and growth.

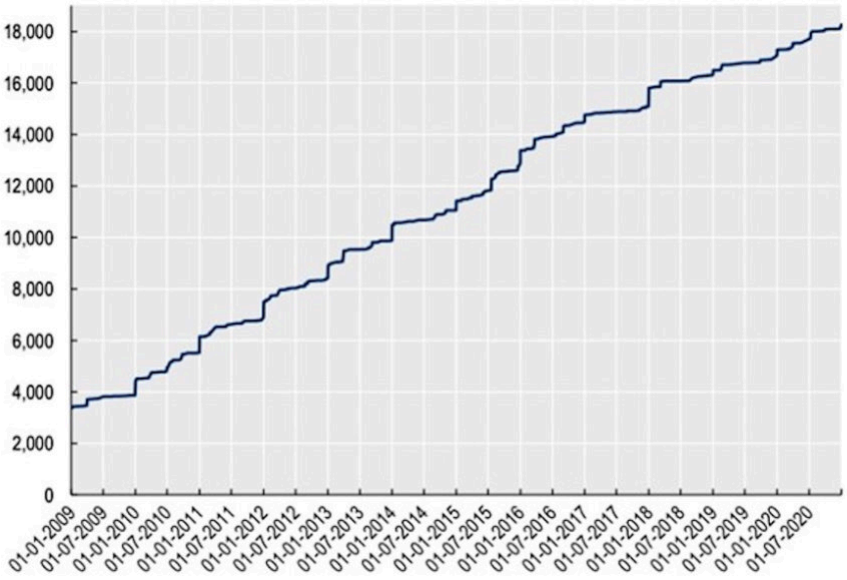
Figure 9. Trade restrictions on industrial raw materials in the world



Source: OECD, "Commodities trade restrictions", 2019

Backed by a situation of competitive consumption, supplier countries lose their fears to intervene in the free market pursuing national interests. This is, while the global demand for CRM is increasing, the implementation of export restrictions intensifies the competition of import-dependent countries to secure their supply. (Szczepanski 2021: 1) As a consequence of this competition and the geographical concentration of some CRM in a few countries, the driver of the market switches from the demand side to the supply side, being the producer the key actor deciding 'what', 'how' and 'at what price' to sell its raw materials to the buyer" (Pitron 2020: 135).

Figure 10. Count on export restrictions in place (by month) on industrial raw materials



Source: OECD, "Trade Policy Paper nº269", April 2023

Therefore, we see how the green energy transition is giving resource-rich countries great leverage power over import-dependent ones. (de Ridder 2013: 2) The worrying part for the EU is the fact that the OECD regards this as a growing trend, (Szczepanski 2021: 2-3) which can derivate in aggravated dependencies on third countries for the supply of certain CRM if the trend is not reverted. In fact, a recent study highlights the fact that CRM export restrictions affecting OECD countries have become more prevalent in recent decades, directly affecting the price and availability of CRM in the global market (see Figure 10).

Furthermore, some analysts highlight the possibility that the energy transition could encourage the creation of specific cartels for certain raw materials needed to manufacture renewable energy technologies (Hafner, Tagliapietra 2020: 40). This possible threat is not new for the EU and other import-dependent countries, as there have been some attempts to establish producer cartels in the mining sector before[19]. The high concentration of raw materials in a small number of countries and the fact that the interests of supply countries and companies "coincide so closely that they could agree amongst themselves a monopolistic action" (Commission of the European Communities 1975: 6) have been for years the main drivers behind the oligopolistic attempts on different raw materials. Needless to say, the fact that Indonesia recently tried to pool the nickel-producing countries into an OPEC-style cartel for nickel does not bode well for the future of CRM supply to the EU and other dependent countries[20].

To sum up, we have analysed how a new set of CRM are called upon to be the coveted matters of the energy future. In addition, we have seen that the geopolitics of CRM offer similar challenges – often bigger ones – than the existing for fossil fuels in terms of resource concentration, supply risks and its possible use as a geopolitical weapon. Thus, it is reasonable to see the growing dependence on CRM as a worrying situation for the EU and other import-dependent countries. However, the consequences of this dependency are far from being just theoretical suppositions, as it will be analysed in the next section about China and its geopolitical strategies concerning rare earths.

5.5. China: the rise of a new dependency

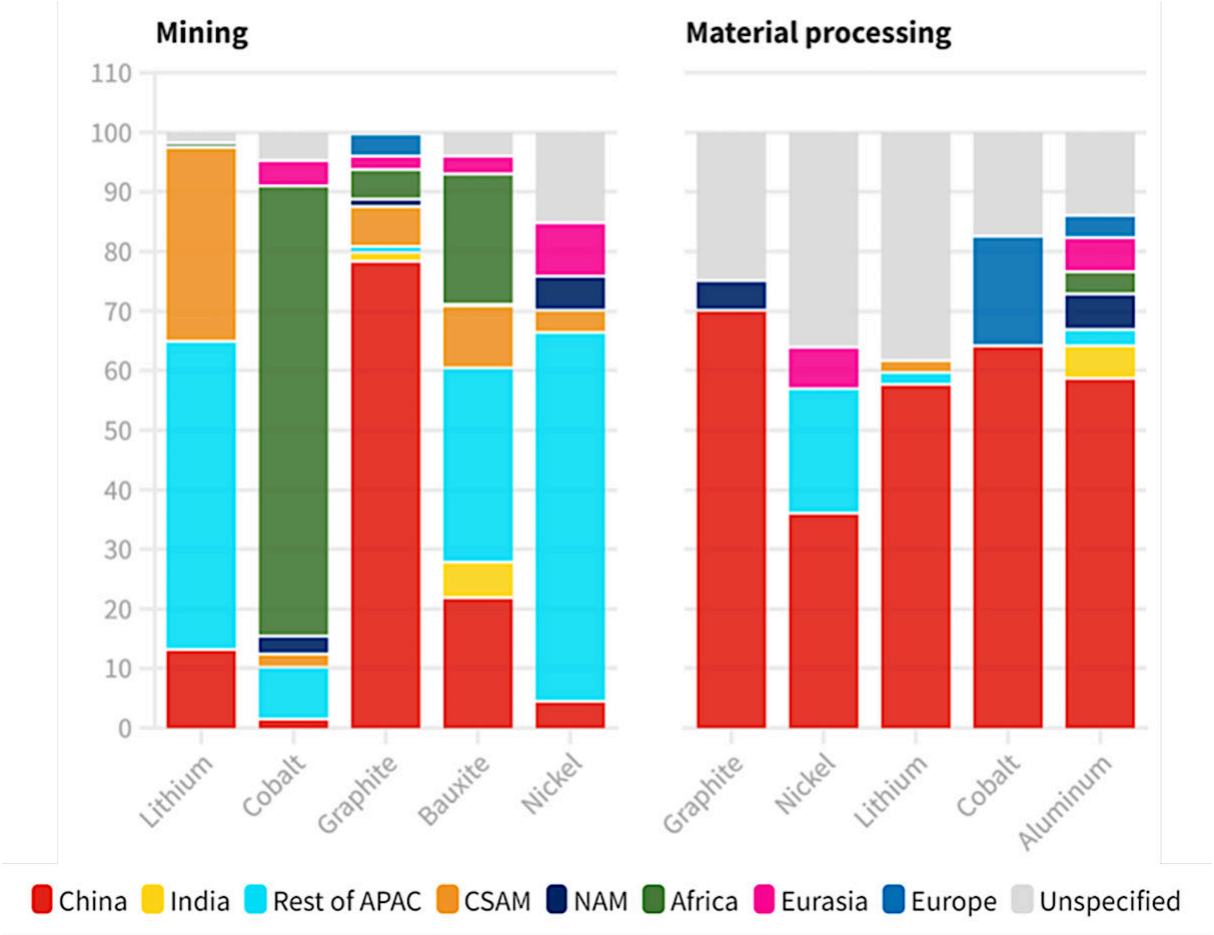
To understand the complexity of the European dependency on strategic raw materials and clean energy technologies it is necessary to analyse first the dominant position that China exercises in the supply chains of most of them.

China holds a preeminent position in the refining and processing stage of most strategic raw materials. Although China does not produce all those raw materials internally, many of those strategic raw materials are sent to China after they are mined to be processed (Erbach, Merz 2021). As a result, China has become "the largest global supplier for the majority of CRMs used in the EU" (Szczepanski 2020: 2).

[19] Some failed attempts include metals and minerals such as silver, copper, iron ore or bauxite. (Buijs, Sievers 2011: 14).

[20] Contrarily, the interviewee Guillaume Pitron argues that the cartel formation is highly unlikely. Interview to Guillaume Pitron, in conversation with the author. April 2023.

Figure 11. Geographic concentration of strategic raw materials (selection) by supply chain stage and country/ region, 2021



Source: Bruegel, "Why Europe's critical raw materials strategy has to be international", April 2023

In this sense, the geographical difference between the mining and the processing stage shows how China is not only a net exporter of processed minerals and ores, but also an import-dependent country for several unprocessed strategic raw materials, which places China as a direct competitor against the EU and other import-dependent countries in the geopolitical supply security race.

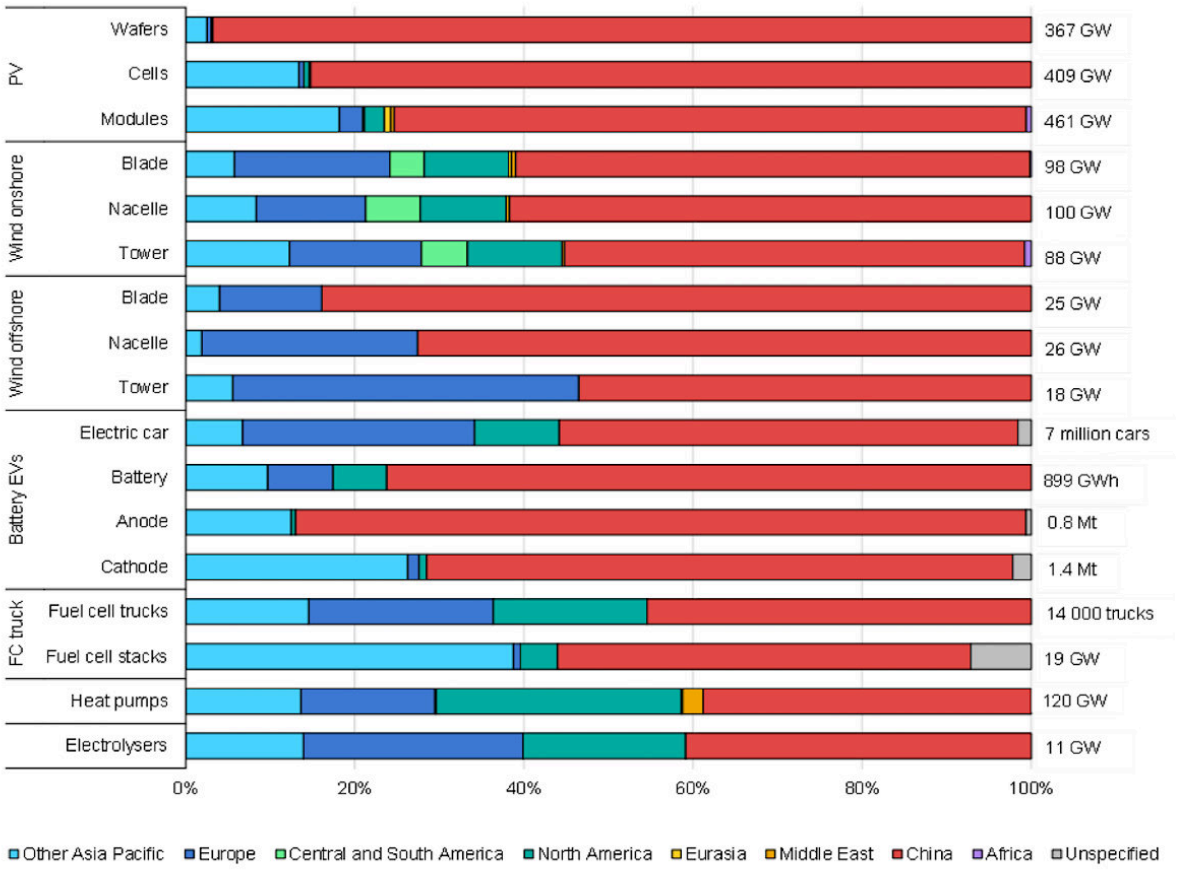
Notwithstanding this, China also holds the almost-monopoly of a specific conglomerate of strategic raw materials called Rare Earth (hereinafter RE), which implications will be analysed in the study case section.

Together with the downstream side of raw material processing, China also controls the upstream section of the supply chain with its leading position in manufacturing and producing clean energy and digital products. Just as an example, China currently produces more than 60% of global battery cells and EV batteries, and more than 90% of the essential components to produce Solar PV panels.

In a context when the green energy transition is gaining importance and impulse in the political and industrial strategies, China is already the 'world's unrivalled leader' in the manufacture of clean energy products, supply of processed strategic materials,

renewable energy capacity deployment and electric vehicles market share (Hafner, Tagliapietra 2020: 12).

Figure 12. Regional shares of manufacturing capacity for selected massmanufactured clean energy technologies and components, 2021



Source: IEA, "Energy Technology Perspectives", 2023

As a logical consequence, the EU has found itself in an overdependence relationship with China, a country recognized as a systemic rival by the European Commission (Szczepanski 2020: 3). But how did the EU end up in this situation? How did China become the leading producer of key technologies for the green transition such as batteries or wind turbine magnets? What lessons can be drawn from this situation? All these questions will be analysed in the next study case on China and Rare Earths.

5.5.1. Study case 1: China and the Rare Earths

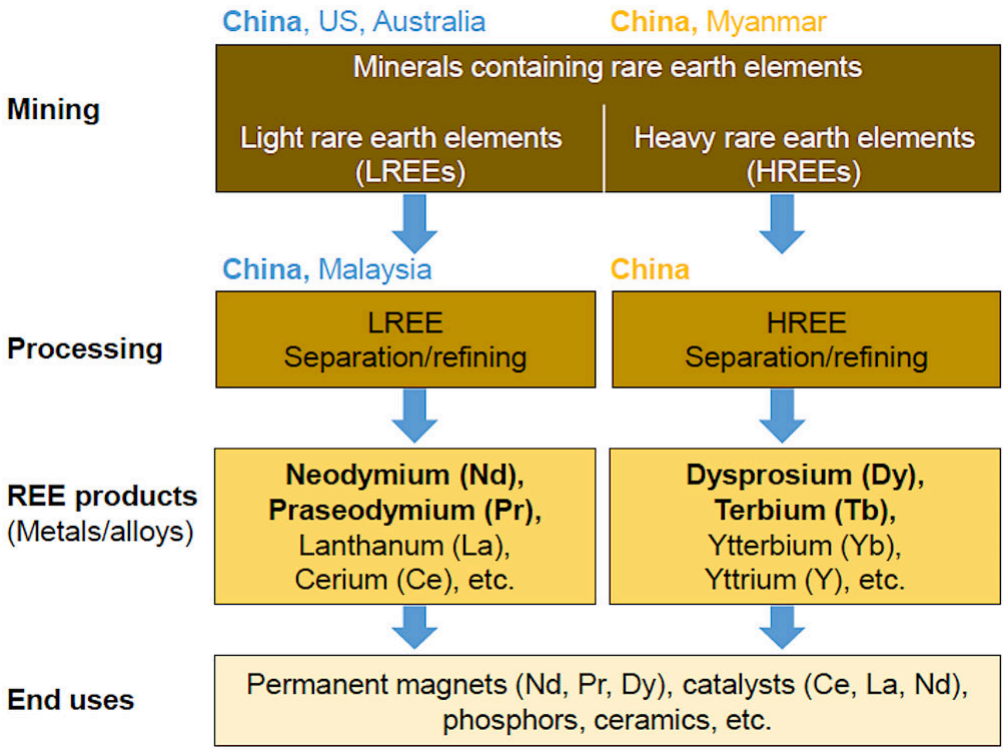
"There is oil in the Middle East; there are rare earths in China".

This famous sentence pronounced in 1992 by the Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping makes clear the geopolitical dimension that strategic raw materials would develop during the past four decades until now. In the same speech, Deng Xiaoping also stated that China should "be sure to handle the rare earth issue properly and make the fullest use of our country's advantage in rare earth resources" (Chu 2010). What

the rest of the world could not see were the important implications and consequences behind these statements.

The Rare Earth Elements (RE) are a group of 17 elements comprising Neodymium (Nd), Ytrium (Y) and other 15 lanthanides (SCRREEN 2 2023). These RE are especially important for high-technology products, especially for wind-turbine and EV battery magnets or smartphones. The EU imports 98% of its demand from China, but the implications of the country's control over RE go far beyond a simple raw materials import dependency.

Figure 13. Visual representation of the Rare Earth elements supply chain



Source: IEA, "The role of critical minerals in clean energy transitions"

In some decades, China multiplied the number of Rare Earth mines in its territory. Given the cheap labour costs and low environmental standards, China soon monopolized the extraction and processing stages of RE, leaving the rest of the countries virtually unable to compete on economic competitiveness against them. As Guillaume Pitron states in his book: "more than simply taking its place on the global rare metals market, China underwent a complete transformation to become a maker of these markets" (Pitron 2020: 72).

Once they had control of the downstream side of the supply chain, with the turn of the millennium China developed a new strategy to achieve control of the upstream production and generate more added value in its territory. Rare earth export quotas and a rise in prices were used to blackmail Western industrial producers. In a situation where the RE market (characterized by its opacity) was unstable and the supply quotas started to be unstable, European industrials using RE were offered an alternative: move

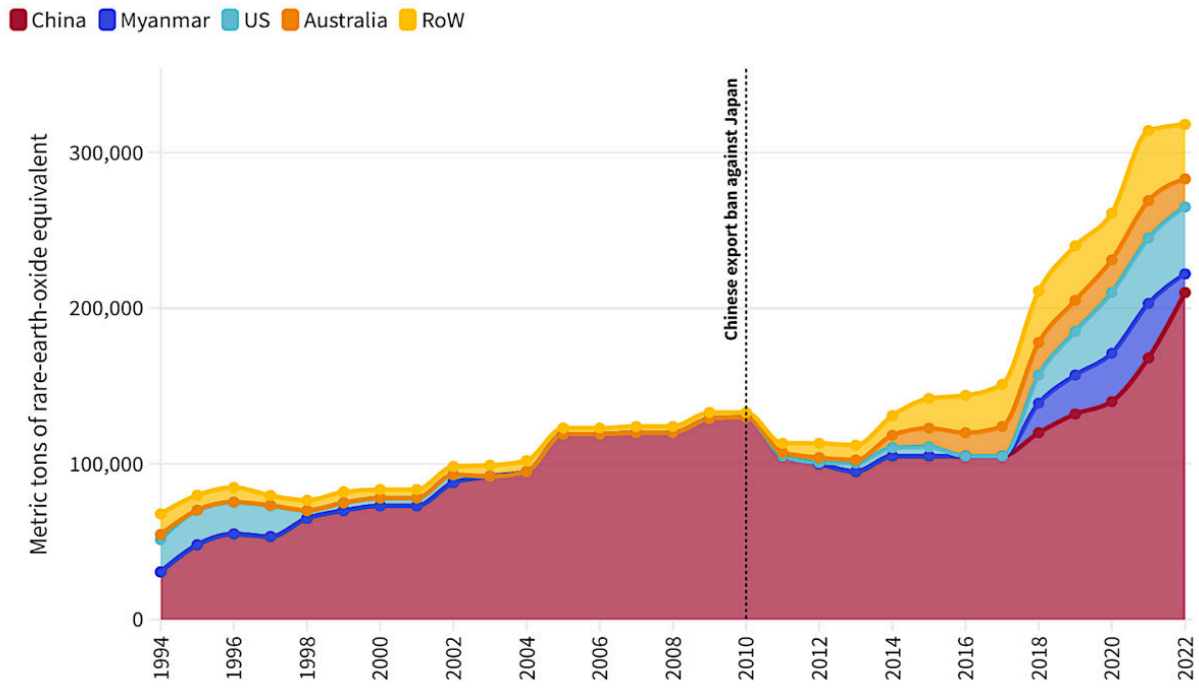
their technology production products to China and enjoy a virtually unlimited supply of cheap RE or keep domestic production in Europe at risk of having higher prices and "slow down production for lack of raw materials" (Pitron 2020: 89).

At the end of the 90s, Europe, Japan and the US produced more than 90% of the global magnet production. But with this new context, many Western producers decided to relocate their production to China. Through a blackmail strategy based on a "technology-versus-resources trade-off," (Pitron 2020: 89) China expanded its monopoly over RE production to the processing and key technology manufacturing stages. Nowadays, China controls three-quarters of global magnet and magnet-related technology production (Pitron 2020: 89).

Once China captured Western technology and know-how for its domestic production, started to move towards a more aggressive strategy, using its monopoly on RE as a geopolitical weapon.

Following a maritime dispute with Japan, China announced an export embargo to Japan and the United States in 2010, weaponizing, *de facto*, the use of its RE exports. This movement was felt as a strong earthquake in some Japanese and American industries, together with a generalized price peak on the RE market. This attracted the attention of scholars, researchers, policymakers and industry specialists, which began to warn about the dangers of the Chinese monopoly over RE and "to identify a number of other critical inputs whose access might be at risk" (Kalantzakos 2020: 5). Thus, the raw materials re-entered again in the media and political agendas of many countries (including Europe) and the conflict situation created new incentives to develop strategic mining of rare earths in other places of the world (see Figure 14) but without major consequences for the Chinese monopoly situation.

Figure 14. Global mining production of Rare Earths, 1994 – 2022



Source: Bruegel. Based on US Geological Survey Mineral Commodity Summaries

Currently, the EU is importing minor volumes of rare earths for its industrial activities. However, the new objectives to develop a European magnets value chain, together with EV batteries and other key RE-intensive technologies will completely change this situation. In the future, the European demand for rare earths is expected to grow exponentially (see Figure 15).

This chapter has shown how CRM – especially the strategic raw materials – will have a significant impact re-drawing the future international geopolitical and geoeconomic maps. The European net-zero energy model, which differs from the fossil-fuel-based one, will create a new but differentiated type of reliance and dependency on external CRM supplies to the EU.

As the sub-section on China and the Study Case on Chinese Rare Earths has shown, trade restrictions – such as export bans – could create major obstacles to the green transition, reducing the availability of CRM and rising the price of clean energy technologies. But this EU's reliance on CRM could pose even greater risks, especially for minerals whose production and processing are extremely geographically concentrated. In such cases, mineral exports could be weaponized – as China did with Japan in 2011 – to pressure and coerce import-dependent countries. This is a major threat that the EU should avoid at any cost.

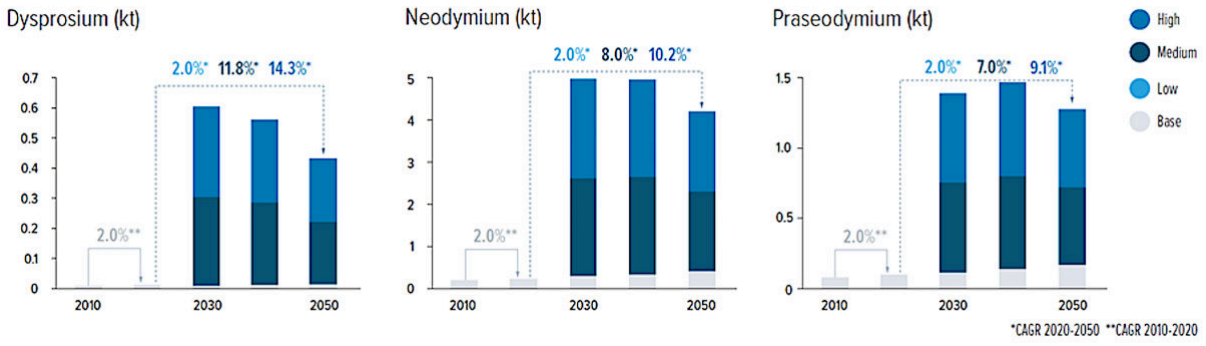
6. The EU and the critical raw materials

> How policymakers and companies handle the challenges around reliable and sustainable supply will determine whether critical minerals are a vital enabler of clean energy transitions or a bottleneck in the process" (IEA 2022c: 2).

6.1. Historical development of EU policy on Raw Materials

Critical raw materials have been a source of concern for policymakers since the decade of 1950. (IEA 2022c: 162) However, it was not until 1975 – after the oil shock – that the EU (European Communities back then) started to question the possible effects of its dependence on certain raw materials.

Figure 15. Evolution and forecast of total demand (Europe) for selected Rare Earth minerals (2010 – 2050)



Source: KU Leuven, "Metals for Clean Energy: Pathways to solving Europe's raw materials challenge",2022

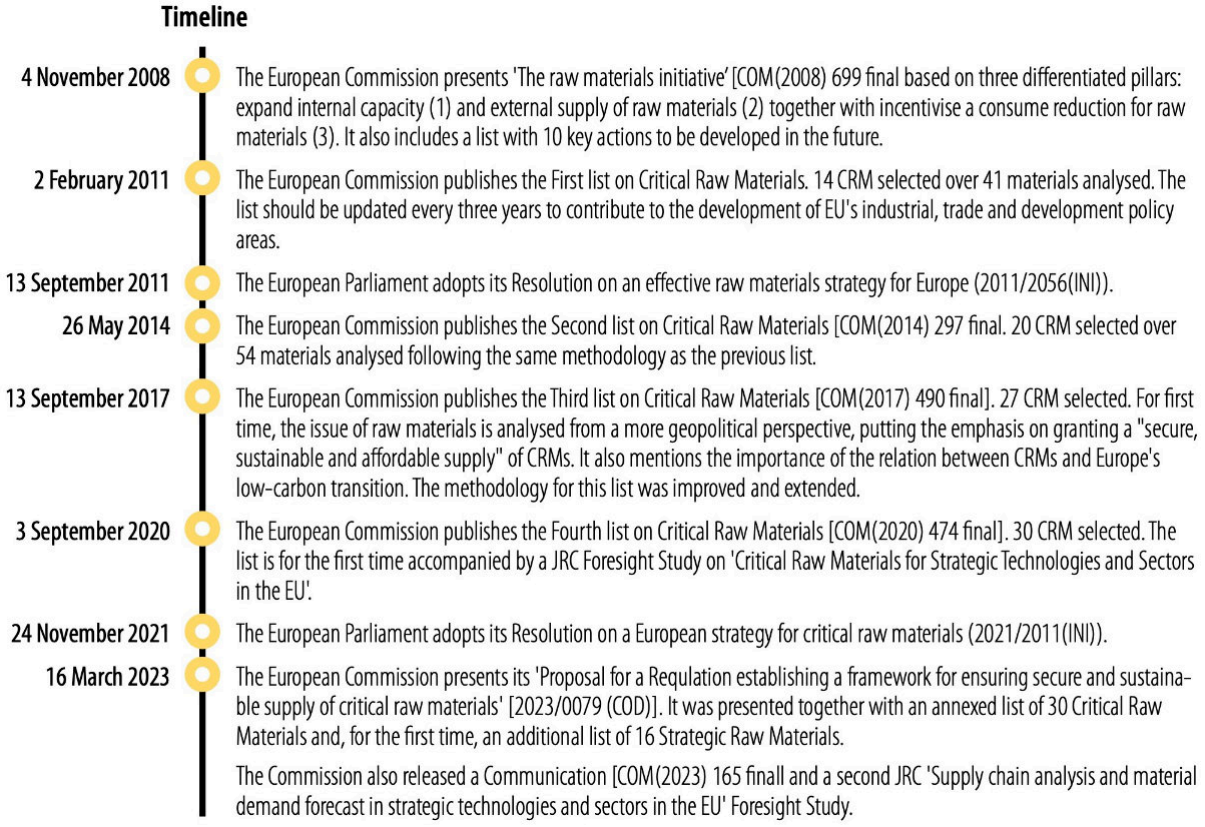
In the context of an energy shock and geopolitical uncertainty, the Commission of the European Communities re-examined its dependency on raw materials with the following justification:

> The forging of closer links between the countries producing oil and some other raw materials, the nationalization of extractive industries, and the sharp price rises occurring over the last three years […] justify a serious examination of possible future problems in the supply of raw materials for Europe (Commission of the European Communities 1975: 2).

However, it was not until the first decade of this century that the EU developed a comprehensive strategy regarding CRM, with the launching of the 2008 Critical Raw Materials Initiative. This new strategy, mainly focused on reducing the EU's external dependencies on raw materials, was sustained in three pillars. The first one was intended to ensure access to raw materials on world markets at undistorted conditions. The second, fostering a sustainable supply of raw materials from European sources. Finally, the third pillar was intended to reduce the EU's consumption of CRM through resource efficiency and material substitution[21]. The Commission also established the necessity to have a clear definition of CRM and a clear methodology to categorise them, and to regularly publish a common list of critical raw materials for the EU.

The next infographic (Figure 16) shows the historical development of these non-regulatory documents.

Figure 16. Infographic of the historical evolution of EU official documents about Critical Raw Materials



[21] See: Commission of the European Communities, 2008 "The raw materials initiative".

6.2. A renovated importance of the Critical Raw Materials

As stated before, the EU has been working on securing Critical Raw Materials since the launching of the Raw Materials Initiative in 2008. But the recent acceleration of the European Green and Digital Transition, the current geopolitical instability, the recognition of a European over-dependence on certain CRM, and the threat of other environmental and social risks and challenges arising on the horizon call for a reinforcement of the European Union's efforts to secure a more sustainable and resilient CRM supply chains. As the European Commission recently recognised: "the game has changed, and we need to do more" (European Commission 2023a: 2).

As we can see in the next table, different EU official documents from different institutions and policy areas are calling for a bigger ambition and highlighting the necessity to act more decisively in this area.

Table 1. Official statements of EU institutions regarding the importance of CRM

European Green Deal [COM(2019) 640 final]	'Access to resources a strategic security question for Europe's ambition to deliver the Green Deal. Ensuring the supply of critical raw materials necessary for clean technologies [...] is one of the pre-requisites to make this transition happen'
Next Generation EU [COM(2020) 456 final]	'With the transition to climate-neutrality, the reliance on available fossil fuels risks to be replaced with reliance on other non-energy raw materials [...] A new Action Plan on Critical Raw Materials will also look at how to strengthen crucial markets in a sustainable way.'
The Global Gateway [JOIN(2021) 30 final]	'Affordable and reliable access to energy and raw materials is a prerequisite for economies to function and industries to be competitive. [...] We will work with partner countries to invest in infrastructure for developing sustainable and resilient raw materials value chains'
A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence [COM 7371/2022]	'Decarbonising and making our economies more resource-efficient and circular come with specific security challenges, including access to critical raw materials, value chain management and sustainability, as well as economic and political shifts caused by the transition away from fossil fuels.'
European Parliament Resolution on a European Strategy for critical raw materials (2021/2011(INI))	'The EU's transition to climate neutrality should not replace reliance on fossil fuels with reliance on raw materials [...] awareness of possible scarcity problems with CRMs is too low and should be improved'
Versailles Declaration European Council 10 and 11 March 2022	'We will secure EU supply by means of strategic partnerships, exploring strategic stockpiling and promoting a circular economy and resource efficiency'
REPowerEU Plan [COM(2022) 230 final]	'Achieving the REPowerEU goals will require diversifying the supply of renewable energy equipment and of critical raw materials, reducing sectoral dependencies, overcoming supply chain bottlenecks and expanding the EU's clean energy technology manufacturing capacity.'
EU external energy engagement in a changing world. [SWD(2022) 152 final]	'As demand for fossil fuels decreases, increased demand for raw materials, including rare earths and metals could lead to new supply challenges in the course of the energy transition [...] The Commission will intensify work on the supply of critical raw materials.'
State of the Energy Union 2022 Report [COM(2022) 547 final]	'To make EU clean energy sector more competitive, the EU will have to secure supplies and build up strategic reserves where supply is at risk [...] Reducing the EU's dependency on raw materials, will shape a more resilient, independent, secure and affordable energy system.'
Critical Raw Materials Act [COM(2023) 165 final]	'Ensuring secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials (CRMs) is at the core of EU's political priorities for the twin transition. [...] While demand for CRMs has never been higher and could increase ten-fold in the next decade, their supply is confronted with greater geopolitical, as well as environmental and social risks and challenges.'

Source: Own elaboration following the visual elements of the European Commission timelines.
Source: Own elaboration, multiple sources.

In this context, the European Commission launched on March 2023 its Critical Raw Materials Act, proposing for the first time a European Regulation establishing the framework for ensuring a secure and sustainable supply of CRM[22]. Former actions such as the 2008 Raw Materials Initiative and the 2020 Action Plan – which provided a non-regulatory framework– are no longer enough to face current and future challenges. With this Regulation proposal, the Commission is making a clear step forward to ensure the well-functioning of its future energy and industrial sectors and to maintain – and regain – strategic autonomy in a fast-changing geopolitical environment.

But, how is the EU supposed to do that? The next section will analyse the internal and external dimensions of the CRM Act to see what are the EU options to enhance its CRM supplies.

6.3. Overview of different EU domestic strategies towards a secure supply of CRM

6.3.1. The internal EU options

There is a clear consensus between the European Institutions and European private stakeholders that "EU internal capacities to face supply challenges of raw materials are underexploited across the whole supply chain" (European Commission 2023e: 2). This involves not only primary (mining extraction, processing and refining) and secondary (re-use and recycling) raw materials production, but also other supplementary measures such as strategic stockpiling or innovation in resource-efficiency designs and mineral substitution. The next sections will analyse the feasibility and opportunities for each of these proposed measures.

6.3.1.1. Mining, processing and refining in the EU

Given the growing importance of critical raw materials and their expected demand rise, the opening of new mining projects is receiving increased consideration from governments around the world.

The EU is now reconsidering the revival of its traditional mining and processing industry to boost its domestic sourcing of specific CRMs. For example, the European geography offers interesting opportunities for mining some CRM needed in batteries such as lithium, nickel, cobalt or graphite (European Commission 2020: 12). Thus, the European Commission is proposing to produce 10% and process at least 40% of the Union's annual consumption of strategic raw materials (European Commission 2023d: 2-3).

To do so, the European Commission is now proposing a new assessment for Strategic Projects related to the 'strategic raw materials' value chain which would benefit from streamlined permitting processes (European Commission 2023a: 3) to reduce the red tape risks of mining projects. In addition, financial resources from the EU would be available for projects that comply with EU environmental, sustainability and social standards.

[22] See: European Commission, "Proposal for a Regulation establishing a framework for ensuring a secure and sustaianble supply of critical raw materials", 2023/0079 (COD). (Brussels, 2023) Accessed May 1, 2023. https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/publications/european-critical-raw-materials-act_en

However, new mining projects in the EU are facing important challenges, such as lack of public acceptance, price volatility, unfair competition from third countries and difficulties to access private and public financing sources (European Commission 2023e: 3).

6.3.1.2. Re-use and recycling

Re-use and recycling strategies are other important measures to mitigate the effect of supply challenges and disruptions. Following the objectives set by the European Green Deal and the objective to create a circular economy, recycling of strategic raw materials will "become increasingly important, with substantial benefits in terms of security of supply – reducing negative impacts associated with extraction –, and creation of economic value" (European Commission 2023a: 15).

However, the European Commission also recognizes that the "economic viability is a key challenge for (CRM) recycling operations" (European Commission 2023a: 16). As one EU Official of DG ENV told us: "the real problem with secondary raw materials is the price"[23]. The technology needed for recycling CRM is expensive and capital-intensive. Additionally, the recycling process is very energy-intensive too[24].

But, together with average energy costs, the availability of waste streams is another main challenge to expanding CRM recycling capacity in Europe.

Thus, recycling levels of strategic raw materials in the EU are still low. First, because it is still too expensive. And second, because there are simply not enough end-of-life wind turbines or EV batteries in Europe to be recycled at a major scale.

But this situation could be reversed, as the Commission forecasts that secondary supply from recycling will increase and become a relevant factor for many CRM around 2040 (European Commission 2023c: 28). In addition, with the appropriate investment, Europe could fulfil "between 20 and 60% of projected EU demand in 2030" (European Commission 2023c: 18) – for different raw materials – with secondary supply.

In addition, a dedicated regulatory framework could help develop the EU's recycling capacity. As the EU Official told us, 'recycling content obligation' – by which every battery sold in the EU should have a determined percentage of recycled components – could help to balance in the medium/long-term the price differences between primary and secondary raw materials production[25].

6.3.1.3. Strategic stockpiling

In November 2021, the European Parliament highlighted the necessity to develop strategic stockpiling capacity in the EU encouraging Member States to create such stockpiling activity within a European coordinated approach. This way, the EU

[23] Interview to EU Official DG ENV, in discussion with the author. April 2023.

[24] In this sense, the electrification of the recycling process with renewables could create a virtuous circle, reducing the total price of the recycling process of old technologies and creating a supply stream of raw materials needed to build new clean-technologies.

[25] It would create incentives to invest in recycling capacity, which would drive prices down as a consequence.

will avoid national overlapping in expensive stockpiling capacity and will create a better-prepared ground for vigilance and crisis response in case of supply shocks.

However, the specific form of strategic stocks is still controversial. The general stakeholder's approach focuses on developing voluntary EU guidance for national stocks, while mandatory stockpiling is regarded as less desirable.

6.3.1.4. Innovation, resource-efficiency and substitution

On the national measures proposed by the Critical Raw Materials Act, each Member State is expected to "promote materials efficiency and the substitution of critical raw materials in applications, at least by including support actions to that effect under national research & innovation programmes" (European Commission 2023d: 39).

Indeed, increasing material substitution and material efficiency in industrial designs and production processes can mitigate the projected EU demand to some extent. But, as the own European Commission recognizes, these steps are not expected to reverse the growing demand trend (European Commission 2023d: 1).

6.3.2. The external-EU options

Along with the aforementioned internal options, the EU could also develop new capabilities in three pain policy areas: trade, development cooperation and 'energy and raw materials diplomacy'.

6.3.2.1. Trade

EU trade policy plays a crucial role in protecting access to raw materials and strategic supply chains. The EU uses its trade toolbox, which includes negotiation of Free Trade Agreements (FTA) and Memorandums of Understanding (MoU), regulatory dialogues and non-preferential agreements with third countries to ensure a "well-diversified and undistorted, secure access to global markets", (Szczepanski 2021: 5) in compliance with WTO rules. Since 2016, (Szczepanski 2021: 5)[26] European Union's TFAs include an 'Energy and Raw Materials Chapter' specially dedicated to promoting energy and raw materials cooperation (European Commission 2022b: 17).

In this sense, the EU can tackle trade barriers and export restrictions on CRM in two ways. In a proactive way, the EU can eliminate or – if it is impossible – limit export restrictions on raw materials with its diverse trade toolbox. In a more reactive way, the EU can tackle international trade barriers through the WTO dispute settlement system, as it did jointly with Japan and the US in 2012 over China's decision to restrict its rare earth exports.

However, with the ongoing trade war dynamics between China and the US, together with the rise of protectionist ideas, the WTO's effectiveness and capacity to resolve trade conflicts are questioned. In addition, as we will see in the next chapter, there are

[26] In its 2015 Trade for all strategy, the EU declared that it would propose an energy and raw materials chapter in each trade agreement.

fundamentally different views and interests around FTAs between the EU and developing countries, which questions what the benefits of signing such agreements are.

6.3.2.2. Global Finance and Development Aid

The EU development policy is another important element for external action on raw materials. Through this important policy, the EU can effectively engage with third developing and emerging countries to diversify CRM suppliers while contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the economic growth of those third countries (Szczepanski 2021: 8).

However, there is a clear divergence of interests and objectives between the EU and developing countries when it comes to the priorities of development cooperation projects around raw materials. As it will be shown in the next chapter, while the EU is interested in securing access to raw materials exports with investments in infrastructure and connectivity, developing countries would like to focus on projects that promote the capacity to manufacture – and export – intermediate and finished goods. Aware of this situation the European Parliament expressed, already in 2011, the necessity to "respect countries resource sovereignty" and to seek a differentiated approach so as not to endanger the "development and industrialization goals of developing countries" (Szczepanski, 2021: 11).

Thus, the EU's development policy may need a recalibration to better reconcile the interests of both parties.

6.3.2.3. Energy and Raw Materials Diplomacy

The external dimension of the EU's raw materials strategy has often been seen as part of its external energy policy– depending as well on the specific resources of third countries –. However, it should be noted that the new 'Critical Raw Materials Act' does not include in his text a single mention of 'the raw materials diplomacy'. Instead, the EU prefers now to talk about the creation of 'Strategic Partnerships on Raw Materials', but these partnerships will still require a significant diplomatic effort on energy and CRM issues.

Table 1. Official statements of EU institutions regarding the importance of CRM

	Energy governance	Energy diplomacy
Problem definition	Security of supply as an economic problem. Focus in lack of transparency, regulatory gaps and market failures	Security of supply as a geopolitical problem. Over-reliance on third countries, lack of strategic vision.
Policy goals	Promote economic competitiveness, defend consumer sovereignty. Ensure supplies through governance and guaranteeing functional markets.	Promote common interests. Defend EU's strategic autonomy. Unity/solidarity in international institutions or alliances. Ensure supplies through strategic diversification and maintaining political trust with foreign suppliers.
Policy instruments	Multilateral institutions and frameworks to promote regulatory harmonization. (Dis)incentives to induce third countries to adopt liberal market reforms	Bilateral agreements in energy and raw materials. (Free Trade Agreements, Memorandums of Understanding...) Political, legal, and economic tools to back strategic energy and CRMs infrastructure projects or commercial agreements.

Source: Own elaboration based on: Anna Herranz-Surrallés, '*An emerging EU energy diplomacy?*'

The EU's external energy policy should be differentiated into two broad categories: energy governance and energy diplomacy (see Table 3).

The combination of these two approaches is crucial to "reinforce the resilience of critical supply chains for the clean energy transition and energy security" (European Commission 2020: 15).

Focusing on the diplomacy side, raw materials diplomacy includes efforts to strengthen strategic partnerships and policy dialogues with CRM resource-rich countries (to expand supply diversification and security) but also with other import-dependent countries (to find common approaches and allies) and in international organizations such as the United Nations, the OECD or the G20 (to advance in multilateral agendas for raw materials governance and trade rules) (de Ridder 2013: 11).

However, the growing geopolitical and geo-economic challenges analysed in the previous chapter constitute a major barrier to the EU's diplomatic efforts. The multipolar world is turning inwards with new geopolitical realignments moving around protectionism, resource nationalism and state interventionism. Thus, the EU should improve its energy and raw materials diplomacy to face those new challenges, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

7. Turning the challenge into an opportunity. Towards a new model of international energy cooperation

> "Diplomatic achievements, ambitious energy-transition laws, and the efforts of the most zealous environmental defenders will amount to nought without sufficient quantities of rare metals". Guillaume Pitron, 2020.

As Commissioner Thierry Breton clearly stated during his speech at the launching event of the European Raw Materials Alliance: "to become green, digital and resilient, EU industry also needs to diversify its supply from outside Europe" (Breton, 2020).

As it has been previously analysed, the importance of critical and strategic raw materials will increment in the near future given the expected rapid increase in demand and its crucial role in green and digital transition technologies. Although the EU is trying to develop and enhance its domestic supply capacity, the reality is that it will not be enough to meet the EU's industrial and climate objectives, and raw materials-related imports will continue their expanding trend in the medium and long term.

The main challenge will come from the clear disparity and conflict of interests between import-dependent and rich-resource countries regarding their economic relations on raw materials.

Import-dependent countries use a diverse set of foreign policy instruments to secure the stability and affordability of their external critical and strategic raw materials supply. The economic logic behind its to import cheap raw materials from abroad and produce finished products with great added value.

On the other side, mineral-rich countries (especially developing and emerging countries) are aware of the growing importance of their critical and strategic raw materials and no longer regard them as an easy source of export revenues. On the con-

trary, they regard its national resources as a key element for developing industrial and manufacturing capacity around the downstream supply chain of the clean-energy and digital technologies, and as a major driver for economic growth. In the same way that France focuses on exporting its wine but not its grapes, developing resource-rich countries want to use its raw materials to transform their economy and domestically produce and export finished or semi-finished products (Carstens, Lozano, Eslava 2018: 7).

One of the testimonies that Guillaume Pitron collects in his book magnificently exemplifies the narrative of these countries:

> We want to be more than just suppliers of raw materials; we want to supply more elaborated products […] Western business that, like the colonisers before them, sought only to mine resources to generate added value back home are no longer welcome (Pitron 2020: 91).

On the first Communication of the European Communities about raw materials – back in 1975 – it was recognised the necessity to reconcile the interests of raw materials importing and producing countries and to extend the participation of those countries in the downstream manufacturing activity (Commission of the European Communities 1975: 10-11). However, in the current geopolitical race where Europe is trying to de-risk its relationship with China and its control over clean-energy and digital technologies supply chains, this principle is being forgotten and replaced by the desire to re-shore the production of key technologies back to European soil.

Developing countries do not regard the export of unprocessed raw materials as a sustainable option for their economies and, as long as EU countries focus only on importing raw materials but not products with more added value, there will be a clear conflict of interests. If this situation is sustained in a context where resource nationalism and export restrictions are becoming a major trend, the fear is – as it was back in 1975 – that the European Union could face serious supply shocks and eventually find itself with an "industrial structure starved of raw materials" (Commission of the European Communities 1975: 12).

The next sections will analyse some recent – but important – developments in global relations on CRM. Through the study case of Indonesia and its nickel, we will see how some resource-rich countries are using their resources as a tool to attract foreign investments and produce local economic growth. The final part will show how should the EU modify its external engagement with third countries to adapt it to the new geopolitical reality in a more pragmatic way.

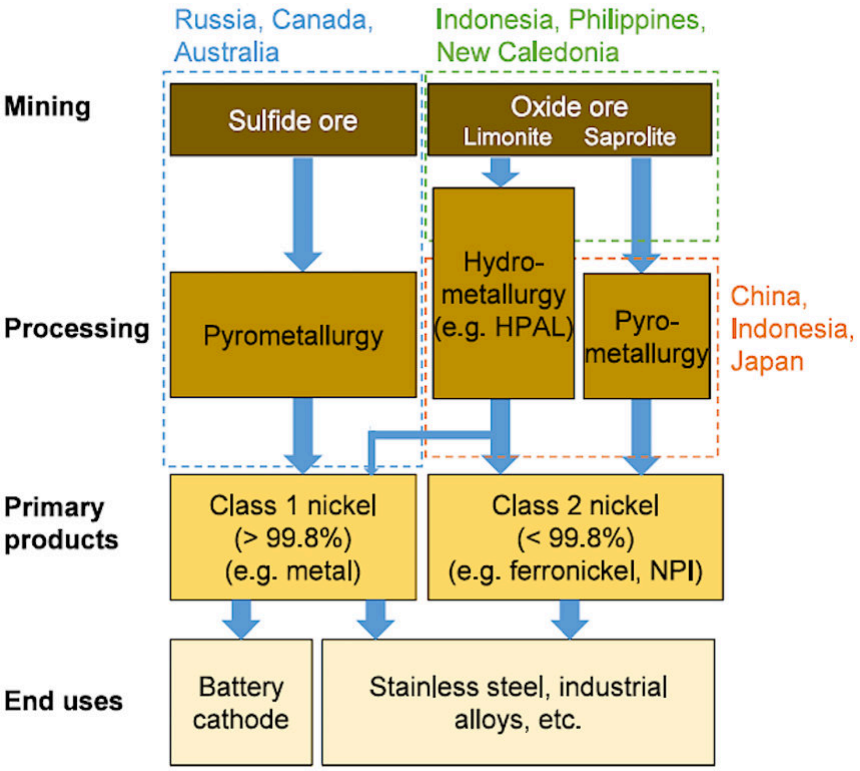
7.1. Study Case 2: Nickel in Indonesia

Nickel is an important mineral historically associated with industrial alloys. However, lithium-ion batteries have changed the strategic importance of the mineral, emerging as a new important source of nickel demand (IEA 2022c: 144).

As it can be seen in Figure 17, there are two types of primary nickel products: high-purity Class 1 nickel (crucial for battery cathode manufacturing) and lower-pur-

ity Class 2 products (used in renewable energy and hydrogen technologies) (IEA 2022c: 148). Thus, according to the IEA, clean energy technologies are expected to drive between 30% and 60% of total nickel demand growth by 2040 (IEA 2022c: 144).

Figure 17. Visual representation of Nickel supply chain



Source: IEA, "The Role of Critical Minerals in Clean Energy Transitions", 2021

The case of Nickel is especially relevant to understand the possible consequences of a European over-dependence on CRM from producing countries. Nickel was not even included in the EU Critical Raw Material list of 2020. However, in only three years, a combination of different factors ranked it as one of the so-called Strategic Raw Materials according to the EU 2023 list. But what is behind this important change? Why is now Nickel so strategic for the European Union?

The top three Nickel-producing countries are Indonesia, the Philippines and Russia (McGillis 2022). Furthermore, the two Southeast Asian countries are expected to control 70% of nickel global output growth by 2025; especially in Indonesia, where HPAL technology is gaining traction to produce large quantities of Class 1 nickel (IEA 2022c: 145).

The expected growing demand for nickel in EV batteries and other clean energy technologies should not be a problem in a well-diversified production market. However, since the recent invasion of Ukraine, Russia is no longer seen as a reliable partner for natural resources or fossil fuels, and the EU's strategic compass is now pointing to Indonesia as a possible new supplier. In the end, this country is likely to drive the progress on nickel's tight supply chains.

In this new situation, the EU – like the rest of nickel import-dependent countries – risks being significantly affected by supply chain disruption in Indonesia in a near future, either due to natural events or political developments in the country (IEA 2022c: 145). Accordingly, recent developments in Indonesia's trade policy on raw materials are transforming this theoretical threat into reality.

Since 2014, Indonesia has put into practice a protectionist policy to restrict the export of all its mineral resources – including nickel, bauxite or gold – in raw form.

In January 2020 the Indonesian government prohibited all nickel ore exports (IEA 2022c: 145). Following the Chinese example, Indonesia used its raw materials export ban to industrialise its economy and reaffirm its sovereignty over domestic raw materials. Prohibiting resource exports, the idea was to attract foreign companies' investment to build processing facilities within Indonesia, which creates much more added value for its national economy than the export of non-processed nickel (McGillis 2022).

Paradoxically, the Indonesian government used China's 'blackmail strategy' on raw materials against China itself. As the IEA explains, Indonesia developed such a policy "with the aim of processing its ore in domestic smelters (instead of exporting to China) and thereby nurturing a downstream industry" (IEA 2022c: 145). Therefore, Indonesian nickel exports to China dropped by almost 90% in 2020.

However, apart from trying to diversify its sources of supply– which has been the most common answer from import-dependent countries to export restrictions, together with innovation on substitution – China also adopted a new proactive approach for ensuring its nickel supply from Indonesia. Following the mentioned Indonesian requests, "Chinese companies invested and committed some USD 30 billion in the Indonesian nickel supply chain" (IEA 2022c: 145). Accordingly, two important industrial parks – Morowali and Weda Bay Industrial parks – were developed by Tshingshan.

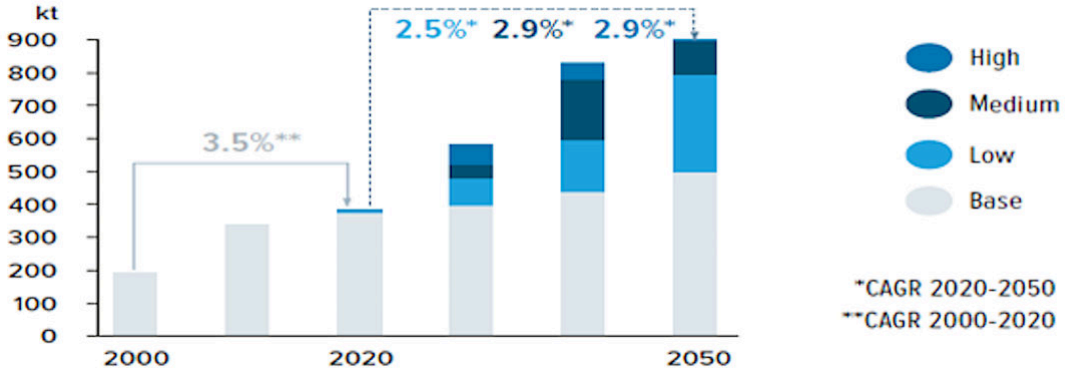
Other multinational companies such as Hyundai, LG or Foxconn also decided to invest in EV battery production. Indeed, after the export ban was put in place, Indonesia "has signed more than a dozen deals involving nickel worth more than $15 billion" (Nangoy 2023). And this trend is expected to grow, as Tesla also announced that it was considering investing in a new EV mega-production facility in Indonesia (Suroyo 2023).

But while Indonesian nickel export has been successful in attracting investments from Chinese or South Korean companies – among others – the European Union decided to challenge this decision with a WTO dispute settlement. Paradoxically, the EU is trying to negotiate in the meantime a Free Trade Agreement with Indonesia. It is difficult to see how can the EU rebalance this contradiction.

In more practical terms, "the nickel export ban has woven Indonesia more tightly into China's Belt and Road Initiative". This should be especially worrying for Europe – and other Western import-dependent countries – as nickel total European demand is expected to grow in the coming decades (see Figure 18) and the traditional nickel supplier (Russia) is no longer a reliable partner.

7.2. Governing the metals

Figure 18. Nickel's European total demand by domestic clean energy technology production scenario (2000 – 2050)



Source: KU Leuven, "Metals for Clean Energy: Pathways to solving Europe's raw materials challenge", 2022

It is becoming clear that if the EU does not put in place new initiatives to augment and diversify its supply needs, the current approach and policy toolbox mentioned in the previous chapter will not be enough to meet future demand. A lack of EU action on the CRM external dimension "would further aggravate the EU dependencies"[27].

The European Commission highlighted the necessity to "engage in strategic partnerships with resource-rich third countries, making use of all external policy instruments". At the same time, it recognised that the EU still has a large untapped potential to pursue these external objectives (European Commission 2020: 15).

The EU's bigger bet has traditionally been the impulse of its trade policy, signing new (FTA) and (MoU) to secure its import needs of raw materials. But this extractive logic from the old fossil fuels models is being increasingly challenged by resource-rich countries. The new logic of the green transition will focus on technology production, and they want a bigger share of the total value chain production. The two study cases analysed are a good example of this new paradigm.

Thus, the current EU trade policy approach, by itself, would be a limited option for the future, and the EU should find new innovative strategies and policy tools complementing trade. Some authors suggest that "supporting diversification of production in raw materials via non-trade policy appears both the most feasible and the most effective solution" (Rietveld 2022: 98). But, what else can be done?

The following sections will try to draft some policy recommendations for the EU's external action on critical raw materials. Our main argument is that the EU needs to do a comprehensive three-stage adjustment: first, it is indispensable to reformulate the EU's diplomatic priorities on CRM and update them to the new geopolitical reality. Second, the new priorities should be effectively promoted, and the EU delegations should have a renovated role in this sense. Finally, to implement the new diplomatic

[27] See: European Commission, "Call for Evidence for an Impact Assesment" Ares(2022)6746256.

strategies, the EU and other European actors will need new tools. The Global Gateway can be a great opportunity to impulse CRM-related projects in third countries, collecting EU cooperation funds and climate investments from public and private sources.

7.2.1. Towards a new Energy and Raw Materials Diplomacy Strategy

The EU's energy diplomacy is expected to face a double challenge. Together with the adoption of a new strategy for the external dimension of the European Green Deal, it will have to deal with the "profound geo-economic and geopolitical shifts" (Pastukhova, Pepe, Westphal 2020: 1) derived from the global energy transition dynamics. It is a complicated movement where the EU will need to balance climate, energy, trade, industrial and development policies along with new strategic priorities to (re)engage with third countries and partners (Pastukhova, Pepe, Westphal 2020: 2-3).

But what partnership model can the European Union aspire to in the new energy transition era? There are some key suggestions.

7.2.1.1. A new framework of sincere dialogue and mutual interest

EU diplomatic and economic engagements with most developing and emerging countries are intrinsically imbalanced in terms of power. As we have discussed, the interests of importing countries (like in the EU) and resource-rich countries are diametrically opposed in many cases.

To build an effective diplomacy strategy, the EU should focus on developing a sincere 'two-way dialogue' (Carstens, Lozano, Eslava 2018: 5) addressing the interests and concerns of both parties. The old 'fossil fuels' extractive model will no longer work in the future. Thus, the EU cannot pretend to achieve a more diversified raw materials supply without listening to the needs and interests of developing countries.

The Critical Raw Materials Act communication goes in this direction stating that projects on raw materials cooperation should be a key element to "promote mutual industrial and economic benefits through an increase in value added in the production of third countries" (European Commission 2023: 11).

Accordingly, the EU should focus now on re-balancing its engagement with third countries, assimilating both parties' interests in a jointly designed strategy. The EU needs to offer more attractive options to third countries apart from simple export revenues coming from unprocessed raw materials. The multi-shoring approach is a good option to deliver these new beneficial options to third countries.

7.2.1.2. Incentivising the multi-shoring trade approach

The EU is currently trying to re-shore clean-energy technology production back from China[28] and other Asiatic markets while pursuing a diversification strategy to

[28] The Net-Zero Industry Act Proposal sets a political objective to manufacture around the 40% of the total EU strategic net-zero technologies demand within EU territory by 2030. The list of the strategic technologies targeted include Solar PV and thermal, on-shore/off-shore wind, battery/storage and electrolysers and fuel cells between others.

increase its raw material suppliers and reduce its dependence on Chinese processed minerals. But, as we have seen, this extractive approach can harm the political cooperation and economic interaction between Europe and third developing countries in the medium-long term. In addition, it is unclear if the EU will be able to bypass China and its almost-monopolistic control of processed CRM and some clean technologies. Similarly, it is still unclear if the new European-manufactured technologies will be able to be price-competitive with production in other cheap-labour markets.

Another option contemplated by the EU would be a near-shoring industrial strategy. Building new parts of the supply chain for clean technology geographically closer to Europe (in the Southern neighbourhood, for example) would reduce average prices and reduce risks related to long-distance supply chains (Rietveld 2022: 98). However, this would not reduce the main problem of dependence on China. On the contrary, the strategy would leave those countries more economically dependent upon China, and this dependency could indirectly affect the EU as well (Crabtree 2023).

Friend-shoring part of the value chain production to like-minded partner countries could be an attractive solution[29]. Locating part of the technological value chain in third resource-rich countries would allow for international specialisation. However, it is unclear how to define a like-minded country, and the EU will need to realize an exhaustive mapping of potential reliable partners for the next 20-30 years[30]. Other Western partners would be a clear bet for this friend-shoring strategy, but it is very unclear whether the EU would be interested in relocating its production to direct industrial competitors, as the general uproar around the US Inflation Reduction Act has shown.

Aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the mentioned options, it is necessary to employ some policy imagination to envisage a feasible alternative.

The European re-shoring strategy is already in place and the political objective to achieve greater levels of domestic production on key technologies for the green and digital transition is unchangeable. However, it will be necessary to balance this re-shoring bet with other models to achieve a desirable level of strategic autonomy. The friend-shoring is an option, but only a few countries in the world are clear like-minded partners for the EU.

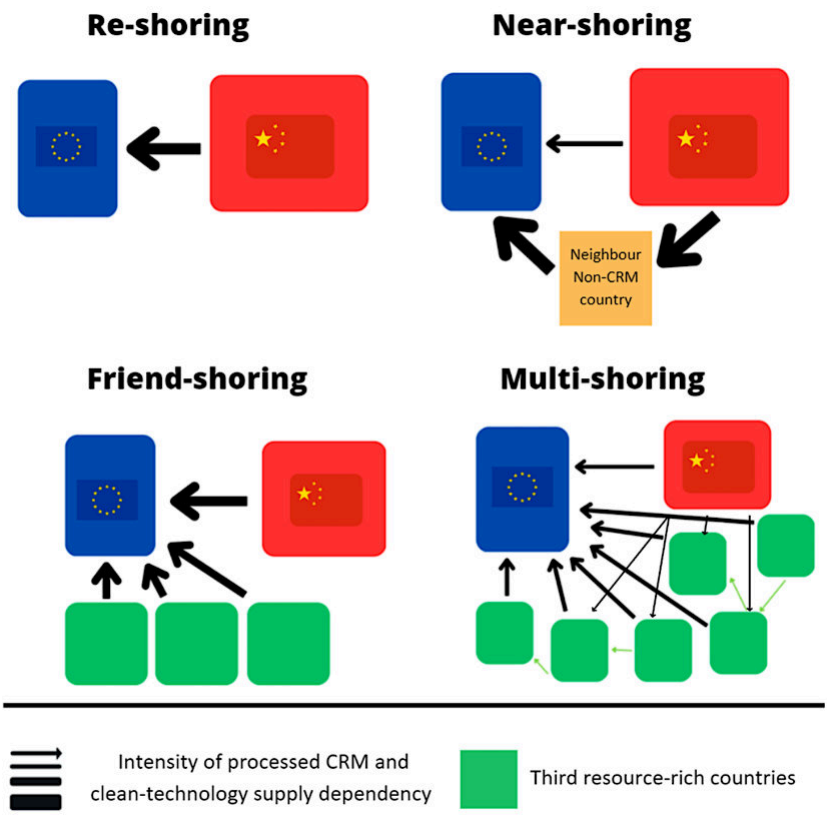
These two strategies need to be complemented with a more ambitious one: the multi-shoring strategy (see Figure 19)[31].

Once we assume that the EU should move on from its traditional extractive framework, the price to pay for securing its clean technology supply chains – incorporating CRMs diversification in a more developed way – is to integrate third resource-rich countries into new stages of the global value chain. In this sense, key strategic raw materials producers like Indonesia for Nickel or Chile for lithium would be in an advantageous position to attract European investment to build key infrastructure for CRM. Accordingly, new projects in mineral processing and battery cell - and other resource-intensive technologies – production should be developed in collaboration with a new myriad

[29] While near-shoring emphasises geographical distance reducing logistical risks from long distance trade, friend-shoring emphasises like-mindedness and (political) reliability. (Rietveld, 2022: 95).
[30] Interview to Guillaume Pitron, in discussion with the author, April 2023.
[31] For a more detailed description and explanation of the different elements of Figure 19 see Annex 2.

of resource-rich countries. With this new model, the EU could re-balance the processing and manufacturing stages of clean and digital technologies, distributing the current Chinese quasi-monopoly among numerous resource-rich countries, which have clear incentives to develop such capacity. By this, the EU would enhance the security and sustainability of its clean technology supply chains, while creating the ground for further political and economic cooperation with developing countries. In definitive, a good way to reconcile European and third-country interests with a more pragmatic approach.

Figure 19. Simplified visual representation of the dependency dynamics of different "-shoring" strategies for clean energy technologies



Source: Own elaboration

7.2.1.3. Fulfilling COP 27 climate pledges and UN Sustainable Development Goals

This new diplomatic strategy should also go beyond the focus of mere bilateral interest bargaining. In this sense, it must be an impulse to materialize the COP 27 commitments to finance the climate objectives of developing and emerging countries. Incentivising European public and private investments in third countries, the EU can fulfil its development aid and COP 27 climate pledges at the same time.

In addition, all the projects and investments pledged under this new multi-shoring approach must be coordinated and inserted within the scope of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, this new energy and raw materials diplomacy strategy could offer a great opportunity for a global advance in SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy) and SDG 17 (Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development).

To materialize these efforts into a concrete reality, the creation of 'Climate clubs' and other international energy and climate partnership forums should be promoted by the EU.

To summarize, the hereby proposed 'EU energy and raw materials diplomacy strategy' has multiple and interconnected objectives. It focuses on creating new part-

nerships and cooperation dynamics with third countries through a multi-shoring industrial strategy. This, additionally, will also reduce the EU's dependence on China for its raw materials and clean technology value chain. Finally, the new strategy will also focus on promoting the Sustainable Development Goals and fulfilling the COP 27 commitments for the developing world, finding a way to bring developing and emerging partners into the decarbonization value chain with financial and commercial support from the EU.

7.2.2. A new Role for the EU Delegations

The active involvement of EU delegations will be a key element to boost the external outreach of the Critical raw materials Act and the new diplomatic strategy proposed before. This active involvement should be accompanied by a reinforced role of the EU delegations in energy & raw materials affairs.

The European Commission and the European External Action Service must develop a short-medium term roadmap strategy to strengthen the Delegations' knowledge and capabilities in the energy and mineral sectors. In this sense, European diplomats must know the strategic importance of raw materials for the EU and developing economies.

As it has been shown, the CRM will be embedded in many external policy issues like trade, energy or development and cooperation with third countries. Thus, EU Delegations must assume a more active "coordinating function for engagements in developing countries" (Carstens , Lozano, & Eslava 2018: 1). The next Figure shows some of the possible responsibilities and actions that the delegations could carry out.

Table 3. Summary of objectives and key actions for the EU Delegations

Objectives	Key Actions
Act as networking hubs	Host business networking events and coordinating joint public-private initiatives in raw materials, technology, and energy sectors.
Support industry relations	Act as a platform to incentivise joint ventures and other private partnerships between European and domestic companies.
Support trade relations	Develop a closer cooperation with Chambers of Commerce of the different European Member States. Stimulate trade missions of European companies in third countries.
Impulse political and diplomatic dialogue with local authorities.	Reduce red-tape barriers for European investments in third countries. Establish cooperation agendas and advancing in negotiations of mutual interests for 'Strategic Projects'

Source: Own elaboration

7.2.3. Cooperation and Finance, making use of the Global Gateway

Cooperation and development projects, together with green finance and investment will become increasingly important in the coming decades. As *O'Sullivan et al*. write:

> in a world in which renewables are a dominant source of energy, investment and technology may increasingly become a source of cooperation or a node of conflict (O'Sullivan, Overland , & Shandalow, 2017: 5).

Committed to speeding up the global green transition, ensuring European access to raw materials and supporting EU's international partners at the same time, the European Union launched December 2021 'The Global Gateway' as its new investment plan for infrastructure and connectivity development in the world[32]. With the Global Gateway, the EU is planning to counter-balance the geopolitical influence of China's Belt and Road Initiative while providing a framework to combine a positive and sustainable offer for third countries with the promotion of European interests.

The Critical Raw Materials Act highlights the importance of the Global Gateway to develop win-win partnerships with third countries promoting "in-country value creation" and contributing to the diversification and sustainability of the EU's raw materials supply chains.

Following the new EU Energy and Raw Materials strategy proposed above, the EU could use the Global Gateway to target multi-shoring projects for developing clean energy technologies production in third countries as 'Strategic Projects'. The positive effect of this proposal would be twofold. On one hand, the EU would be able to effectively develop its multi-shoring strategy to enhance its strategic autonomy vis-à-vis strategic raw materials supply. On the other hand, Global Gateway's development assistance would help establish manufacturing capacity with added value and the necessary related infrastructure in third resource-rich countries. This would not only create competitive supply markets for EU industries (Rietveld, 2022: 98) but also bring significant rents and incentives for local development in third countries.

However, it is yet to be determined how the growing European ambitions for strategic autonomy in critical raw materials will transform, in more practical terms, into funding (Szczepanski, 2021: 11).

According to the European Commission, the rampant demand rise of key CRM needed in the production of clean-energy technologies will translate into massive investment needs in the sector, both globally and in Europe. But, given the risky nature of major mining and processing projects, together with the considerable size of its capital expenditure, access to finance is often considered a major barrier to investing in projects for primary production of CRM.

In this sense, the European Investment Bank (hereinafter, EIB) will have a significant role to play in providing financial assistance to the Strategic Projects on critical raw materials selected under the Global Gateway umbrella.

The EIB can support extraction projects which intend to provide a sustainable supply of CRM needed for the green transition. Following a cumulative assessment of the quality of each project through different climate and economic criteria, the EIB could finance up to 50% of the total cost of any project -outside or inside the EU – aligned with the political priorities of the EU for raw materials supply.

Thus, the EIB is called to carry out an essential function for the proposed 'Energy and Raw Materials diplomacy' strategy. Together with other EU funds, it will directly de-risk mining and processing projects abroad – that would otherwise not be eco-

[32] See: European Commission, "The Global Gateway", JOIN (2021) 30. (Brussels: 2021). Accessed May 1, 2023. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52021JC0030&qid=1653525883495

nomically viable – by financing a part of such projects. Furthermore, it will catalyse indirectly additional private funds for the selected projects thanks to the reputation of its due diligence before financing a project and the clear 'viability signal' that sends to the market once the project has received a green light.

Therefore, apart from supporting industrial re-shoring capacity and domestic recycling, the EU should focus now on how to effectively integrate the EIB into the Global Gateway and its external action. This is especially relevant since access to finance options is much more difficult for projects outside the EU. Accordingly, through a Team Europe approach, the Commission, Member States and European stakeholders should pool efforts to identify and promote Strategic Projects in third countries to be financed by the EIB.

To sum up, we have seen in this chapter how the new commercial and geopolitical dynamics between the EU and developing countries are prompting the EU to take a different approach to its external energy and raw materials relations. The Indonesian study case shows the necessity to adopt a new ambitious approach to secure the foreign supply of CRM. The EU can no longer rely mainly on traditional Free Trade Agreements and MoU. The proposed three-stage adjustment of the EU's external action on raw materials could be a good starting point for the EU to adapt to the 'geopolitics of the green transition'.

However, the challenge for the EU is to ensure that – in its external engagement with third rich-resource countries – the necessity to secure access to raw materials and clean technology components is combined with efforts to support the development of such countries and reduce (or avoid the increase of) its carbon emissions.

8. Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, it has been analysed how the changing energy landscape of the European Union can generate new relationships of dependency or interdependence between the EU and third countries.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine forced the EU to remap its internal and external energy policy. In this sense, special attention was given to the long-forgotten concept of 'energy security' and the EU is now reconsidering its energy dependency relations with third countries (especially Russia). In addition, the EU recently planned an acceleration of the green energy transition as a way of fleeing forward from the energy crisis caused by the Russian invasion.

However, this accelerated transition will create new dependencies for the European industrial and energy sectors. According to the analysed data, the move from a model based on fossil fuels to a new one based on renewables and low-carbon technologies is called to exponentially increase EU demand on new key resources such as the so-called critical and strategic raw materials. In this sense, our first hypothesis has been widely corroborated throughout Chapter 5, with the conclusion that the new net-zero model will create 'new but differentiated' types of reliance and dependency on external CRM supplies to the EU.

The Study case on Rare Earth Elements in China shows how trade restrictions in CRM supply – especially in the current challenging geopolitical and geo-economic environment – could create major obstacles to the European energy and industrial transformation. Together with sudden disruptions provoked by natural or social causes, CRM export restrictions could be also weaponized by resource-rich countries, as China did with Japan and the US in 2011.

Thus, accelerating the energy transition hoping to expand European energy strategic autonomy could be a big mistake if the supply chains of the new energy model are not secured accordingly to its renovated importance. If the rules of the game and the players change, the EU approach should change as well.

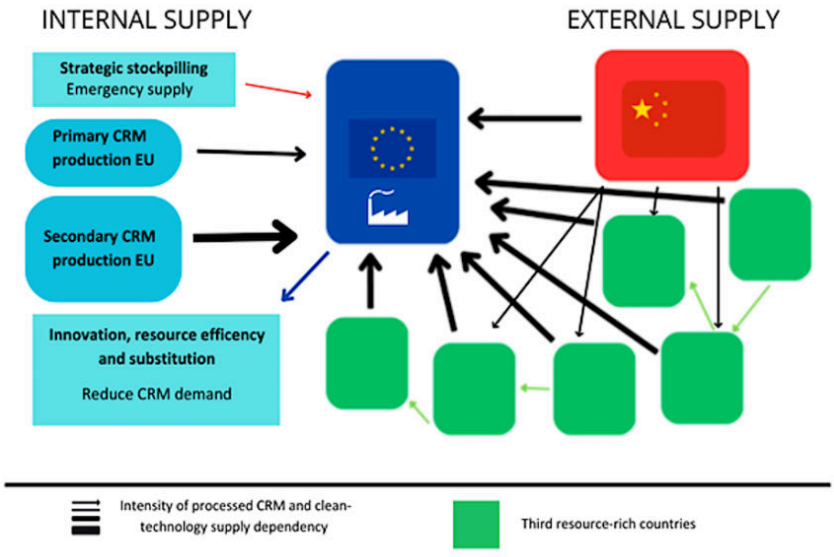
In this new situation, the EU should develop a more ambitious approach towards CRM with additional policy and non-regulatory measures. This proves our second hypothesis (see Chapter 6), and leaves room to defend our three-stage strategy in Chapter 7.

Although the EU has been involved in CRM-related activities since 2008, only with the recently proposed 'Critical Raw Materials Act' is taking a decisive legislative step towards this objective. The proposed regulation is intended to a big push for the internal primary and secondary production of CRM in European territory, with clear objectives for domestic mining and CRM recycling capacity inside the EU.

However, domestic mining and recycling will not be enough to meet the exponentially growing demand for CRM in the future digital and green European industry. A new comprehensive approach should be developed, combining the internal measures already mentioned with an enhanced external outreach (See explanation of Figure 20 in Annex 3).

Our proposal for a three-stage adjustment of the EU's external energy action will help to combine the domestic benefits of the CRM Act with a new model for CRM cooperation with third resource-rich countries. In this sense, it is indispensable that the EU updates its diplomatic strategy, together with a new role for the EU delegations and a more strategic use of financial and development instruments and institutions such as the Global Gateway or the EIB.

Figure 20. Simplified visual representation of an holistic EU approach towards CRM supply with a combination of internal and external* measures**



Source: *Own proposal. **Based on: European Commission, "A secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials"

The effective combination of those elements will bring numerous positive outcomes:

- It will create new partnerships and cooperation dynamics with resource-rich countries based on win-win models through the multi-shoring approach.
- This will replace the current dependency model on Chinese CRM and semi-manufactured supplies with a much more complex but beneficial multi-dependency model, reinforcing the role of multilateral agreements and international governance as well.
- Finally, this new model will help in the promotion of Sustainable Development Goals and COP 27 commitments for the developing world. With new investments and political commitments, the developing countries will be able to increase their economic output with additional production in the CRM value chain and at the same time decarbonize their economy and reduce their emissions. In exchange, the EU will secure the supply of the necessary CRM and semi-manufactured products needed for the future green and digital transition.

This should be understood as a preliminary proposal. But it is, indeed, the first step towards the reconciliation of the EU's open strategic autonomy objectives with the legitimate claims of developing resource-rich countries. The new geopolitics of CRM is coming. It is now the EU's turn to decide what role it wants to play on the new international board.

Annexes

Annex 1.

1. Methodology: Explanation, selection criteria and limitations

1.1. About the data collection

As has been explained in Chapter 2, the methodology of this master thesis will be based on three pillars: extensive review and analysis of EU primary sources and policy documents, interviews and two case studies:

- Extensive primary document analysis in the policy areas of energy and 'critical raw materials': The analysis of primary sources around the specific policy area of our concern will be a key element to critically analyse the historical and present EU approach to raw materials.
- Case Studies: The two selected case studies – the first about Rare Earth elements in China and the second about Nickel in Indonesia – will be a key data collection method to have a deep understanding of the geopolitical situation of the critical raw materials.
- Interviews: The analysis of the transcripts of the seven interviews conducted for this master thesis will provide an insightful source of information to accept (or refute) our hypotheses and to complement our arguments with the opinions and perspectives of different professionals with extensive experience in relevant areas of our study.

1.2. About the interviews

The interviews will follow a semi-structured shape. This type of interview is the most suitable for our investigation because it offers a good trade-off between standardization and flexibility, and between the neutrality of the researcher and the ability to access to in-depth knowledge about the topic.

The standardized questions of the interviews are the following ones:

- Question 1. What were the main consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in the European energy framework? ¿Was the EU prepared for it?
  This question is intended to be a smooth starting point for the conversation, situating the interviewed person in the correct moment and framework and as a prelude for our following questions.
- Question 2. How did the EU react? (Which were the main policy responses in the short, medium and long-term effects?)
  This question is directly related to Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, and was designed to understand the EU energy policy answer after the Russian invasion of Ukraine and to what extent the acceleration of the energy transition is an important part of it.
- Question 3. In a speech at Bocconi University, Von der Leyen stated the following: "Renewable energies are good for our independence because they are home-

grown". Shortly after, she added: "we're developing an over-dependency on China regarding raw materials which are critical for our green transition". ¿What do you think about these statements?

- Question 4. What would be the main differences and similarities between a dependency on fossil fuels and on raw materials?

Questions 3 and 4 will help to collect data to prove – or deny – one of our hypotheses.

H.1 The acceleration of the European energy transition will bring new forms of dependency and energy security issues to the continent related with critical raw materials.

The exact wording of the questions might vary, but the core of the questions is always the same. This set of questions was complemented with other ones specifically designed for every interviewee according to its field of expertise.

1.1.3. About the selection of the interviewees

The selection of the interviewees was established following a methodology of "stakeholders mapping" to check different relevant organizations and professionals in the areas of our research. However, from all the mapped stakeholders not always received a positive answer to our interview request.

Notwithstanding, we believe that 6 interviews offer a perfect balance between the need to collect primary data for our analysis and the balance of time available to write this thesis.

Each interviewee offers a singular added value to our research, and the selection is also balanced in terms of thematic areas, so we have at least one interview focusing in every of the five core chapters of our thesis.

Once the interviewees were contacted, they were asked for their consent to include its name and professional affiliation in the thesis. They could also opt for the interview to be anonymized, maintaining only their professional affiliation. After the interviews, they all received the final transcript of the conversation.

Table 4. Interviews' selection background

Interviewee	Added Value for our Research
Jesús Maria Alquezar Sabedie	His multidisciplinary approach as a socioeconomic analyst for DG ENV in the European Commission was a good starting point to understand the complexity of the Green Transition and its interconnections with other topics such as raw materials.
Former EU Official of the EEAS	Her experience in the EEAS was of great importance for this research to understand the functioning of the external action of the EU and its interrelation with energy and FTA.
Energy Community Officer	His professional experience in the Energy Community was important to understand the consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in the European gas market and in the EU energy sector in general.
Anna Herranz-Surrallés	As an academic expert in energy diplomacy, this interview was especially intended to obtain more information about energy cooperation between the EU with third resource-rich countries.
Guillaume Pitron	His book on 'The rare metals war' became the cornerstone of my literature review in the first steps of the thesis. Given its wide and deep knowledge of critical raw materials and their implications for the green energy transition, Pitron was the most suitable person to interview for understanding the complexity of critical and strategic raw materials.
EU Official DG ENV	The interview with this EU official was recommended to me by one of the interviewees. He has worked during his professional career on the topic of raw materials within different Directorates of the European Commission and this experience offered a great added value to our thesis. More specifically, to understand the role of CRM recycling in the EU.

1.1.4. About the study cases

A relevant part of our argumentation in this thesis is sustained in two conducted study cases.

- Study case on Rare Earth Elements in China: This study case was relevant to understand through a practical example de dangers derived from the excessive geographic concentration in the supply of specific CRM. The Chinese example was important to show the possible risks of our CRM-dependency relations with China and the possibility that this dependency could be weaponized for geopolitical purposes as it is shown in the study case.

CRM where China exerts an almost-monopolistic position in the global market and for which the EU is – in most cases – import dependent.

- Study case about Nickel in Indonesia: The study case of Nickel is important to understand the new geopolitical dynamics of resource capitalism and state interventionism in the area of CRM. It is also important to understand the different approaches towards this new geopolitical scenario and the different approaches of CRM-dependent countries to the exigence of producing countries to develop domestic added-value in their territory. This shows how the current EU approach is not suitable for this new situation and gives room to support our policy suggestion for a multi-shoring approach.

1.2. About some problems of the analysis

The main problem of our analysis is its inherent static approach. During the investigation, we focus our attention to recent geopolitical and policy developments in the field of critical raw materials. Some forecasts about future CRM demand and supply trends are analysed as well, but those are just projections of trends.Thus, this approach is incomplete because it does not take into account future or expected technological advances and discoveries of substitute materials. This falls outside the scope of this thesis, but it is of a great importance for our arguments.

A new technology to produce competitive sodium batteries could drop the forecasted demand for lithium, reducing its relative geopolitical importance and de-risking its supply in the global market. The same could be applied to other strategic raw materials such as Rare Earth or Nickel.

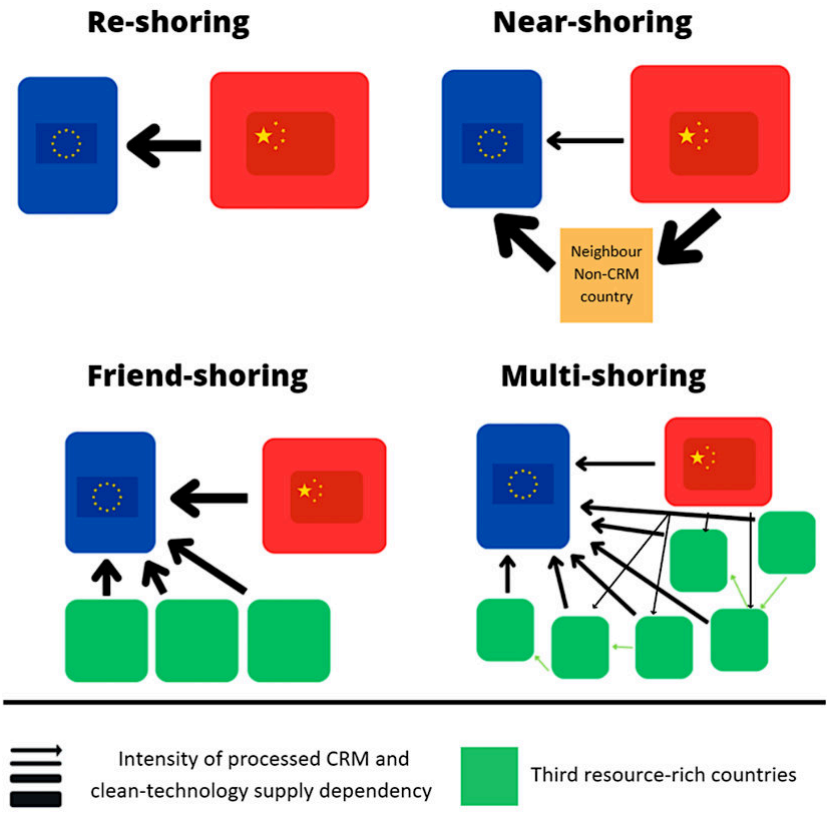
Annex 2.

1. Explanation of the visual elements

This figure shows the four different trade and industrial strategy options that the EU has towards its CRM and clean technology supply. In fact, this is just a simplified version to get the reader a visual representation easy to understand. The reality of these strategies is much more complex, especially for the case of the proposed "multi-shoring approach".

The different size of the arrows shows the intensity levels and the dependency direction for CRM and clean-technology supply. Equally, the relative size of the squares (China or third countries) related to the size of the EU square also represent the importance – in trade volumes and power leverage – of each country.

Figure 19. Simplified visual representation of the dependency dynamics of different "-shoring" strategies for clean energy technologies



Source: Own elaboration

1.1. Explanation

The first option (re-shoring) is the current approach envisaged by the Net-Zero industry Act. Following this strategy would mean producing domestic clean technology in European territory, but at the same time this would increase the EU dependency (see arrow size) towards Chinese imports of raw materials and other clean-technology components.

In the second option, the choice is to near-shore part of the clean-technology production to a neighbour country – maybe from the Eastern or Southern neigh-

bourhood – to benefit from cheap labour costs and geographical proximity of the supply chain. However, if the selected neighbour country does not count with the necessary raw materials, then it will increase its dependency on China exports. Thus, the EU's direct dependency on China is reduced (see size of the arrow) but the indirect dependency increases because that third country will need Chinese CRM to produce the clean-technology components that will export later to Europe.

With the friend-shoring option, the EU is able to domestically produce its clean-energy technology thanks to the CRM exports coming from other third like-minded countries (green) but China will still be a key provider of some CRM to the EU. Thus, the relative size of China (square) and the size of the EU's dependency on China (see arrow) is reduced, and new trade dependencies are established with a limited number of 'friend' countries.

Finally, with the multi-shoring approach the EU can expand and diversify its supply for CRM and clean-technology components. Under this model, a myriad of third developing resource-rich countries would export CRM and/or technology components to the EU after generating added value within their economy with the processing or manufacturing stage. This production would compete directly with the Chinese one, moving part of the global production from China to the mentioned countries.

This strategy offers different benefits that can be seen in the Figure:

First, the relative importance of Chinese supply to Europe (see square and arrow size) is reduced thanks to the new supply from third countries.

Second, the well-diversified supply of CRM and/or technology components creates numerous but smaller dependencies towards more countries (see size of the dependency arrows).

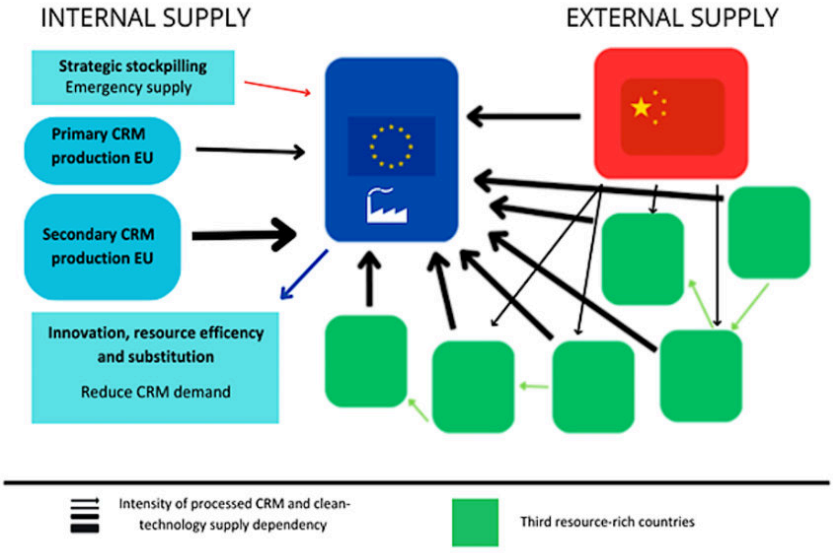
Third, this multi-shoring approach creates the ground for an extended network of global interdependence by which third resource-rich countries are expected to cooperate with each other to obtain the different CRM needed for its domestic production of clean-technology components. At the same time, those countries will still be certainly dependent on China as in the case of the near-shoring, but at a much lower level.

Of course, this new model would create a very complex network of multi-dependency and interdependency relations at a global scale, which will come with its own issues and management difficulties. However, this would be more beneficial for the EU than the current dependency model.

In addition, this reinforced global multi- and inter-dependency network would help reactivate the importance of multilateralism and global governance in a future geopolitical scenario.

Annex 3.

Figure 20. Simplified visual representation of an holistic EU approach towards CRM supply with a combination of internal and external* measures**



Source: *Own proposal. **Based on: European Commission, "A secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials"

1. Explanation of the visual elements

Figure 20 tries to provide a holistic view of the different measures that the EU must take to ensure a stable and affordable supply of CRM in the medium-long term.

The left side of the graph shows the measures aimed at guaranteeing a domestic supply of CRM within the EU (either through primary or secondary production). As we can see, the supply intensity of the primary production will be reduced (approx. 10%) while the secondary production is called to be an important element to provide a significant portion of total EU demand for some specific CRM (see the difference in arrow sizes).

However, as the EU Official in DG ENV told us, the opportunity to exploit the untapped potential of secondary CRM production in the EU through recycling processes will not be significant until 2030.

Continuing on the left side, on the top of the image we have the possibility to use strategic stockpiling deposits to guarantee an emergency supply of CRM in case of a possible sudden disruption. However, this measure will be able to cover the EU total demand for only some weeks, and should be used only under exceptional circumstances (hence the fine size and red colour of the arrow).

Finally, on the left bottom side of the image, we have measures such as innovation, resource efficiency and material substitution, which will be key to reducing part of the total EU demand for CRM (hence the opposite direction of the arrow).

But the internal measures mentioned above will not be enough to secure the total CRM demand of the EU. Indeed, an important percentage of this CRM demand – and/or semi-manufactured products needed for the European industry – will still have to be imported from third-resource-rich countries.

Accordingly, the right side of the graphic presents the proposed multi-shoring strategy presented in Chapter 7 (Figure 17).

An effective combination of both internal and external measures should be adopted to secure the supply of CRM and CRM-related products to the EU in an efficient and sustainable way.

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Jesús María Alquezar Sabedie (DG ENV) in discusión with the author. European Commission. March 2023.

De Europa

SPECIAL ISSUE - COLLEGE OF EUROPE 2023
Publisher: Dipartimento di Culture, Politica e Società (Università di Torino)

Contacts: redazione.deeuropa@unito.it
Website: www.deeuropa.unito.it
Book design: Silvio Ortolani, SISHO - Fotografia & Archivi

Co-funded by the European Union

In cooperation whit: TO EU Centro Studi sull'Europa

Six selected Master's theses by College of Europe students

Guest Editor

Georges Mink, *Titulaire de la Chaire de Civilisation européenne*
Collège d'Europe à Natolin, Directeur de Recherche émérite au C.N.R.S. (ISP)

De Europa et le Collège d'Europe à Natolin se lancent pour la cinquième fois consécutive dans la publication des meilleurs mémoires de fin d'études réalisés par les étudiants, cette fois-ci de la promotion 2022-2023 ayant eu pour patron David Sassoli (1956-2022), président du Parlement Européen de 2019 à 2022.

À chaque fois, il s'agit d'un échantillon de travaux qui se distinguent par leur qualité intrinsèque et par la diversité de centres d'intérêt, avec un point en commun : celui d'être réalisés dans le cadre du programme interdisciplinaire d'études européennes de Natolin.

On bâtit ainsi ensemble un lien académique fort, une sorte de tradition d'échanges et de partage, contribuant ainsi à la consolidation de l'espace académique européen. Les mémoires de fin d'année, dont nous proposons ici une sélection, sont une forme de couronnement des efforts consacrés à l'obtention du Master avancé en Études européennes interdisciplinaires au Collège d'Europe à Natolin. Ces travaux ont une visée académique, mais aussi pratique, en ce qu'ils proposent des solutions et des recommandations, lorsque cela est possible. Ces travaux sont une claire manifestation de l'ethos citoyen européen.

De Europa

Special Issue - College of Europe 2023