

European Foreign and Security Policy in the Making

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This article critically reviews and analyses the books listed below. The works reviewed provide an overview of the state of the art in the academic literature on the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Bearing their original contributions in mind, the themes standing out in the review do not dramatically depart from the ones that have repeatedly been placed under the microscope of scholars. This article argues that the EU is still an ineffective power due to the lack of coherence among the Member States and institutions, and its reluctance and/or inability to promote universal values around the globe.

Giegerich, B. (ed.) (2010) *Europe and Global Security*. New York: Routledge.

Lăidi, Z. (ed.) (2008) *EU Foreign Policy in a Globalized World: Normative Power and Social Preferences*. New York: Routledge.

Kaunert, C. (ed.) (2010) *European Internal Security: Towards Supranational Governance in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Merlingen, M. and Ostrauskeite, R. (eds) (2008) *European Security and Defence Policy: An Implementation Perspective*. New York: Routledge.

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The EU's foreign and security policy has been the subject of significant scholarly attention over the last decade due to the Union's growing visibility in international affairs. The EU has greatly expanded its foreign policy tools from merely issuing common positions to its modern presence in crisis management missions both civilian and military. This article explains why, despite the fact that EU foreign and security policy is progressing tremendously, it is not yet an effective power. An 'effective power' refers to the ability of a power (in this case the EU) to change the world by promoting universal values and contributing to the construction of sustainable peace. Based on a study of these four books, two factors limit the EU's effective power. First of all, the EU's Member States and institutions still display limited coherence in virtually every area of the EU's foreign and security policy, including capability development for civilian and military missions. Second, the EU has displayed great reluctance in promoting universal values. Hence, the EU lacks decisiveness in promoting its norms around the globe and therefore its effective power is limited.

This article aims to present recent empirical work on the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in order to assess the EU's global standing. Accordingly, thorough attention is paid to the works of scholars who evaluate different areas and dimensions of EU foreign and security policy, dealing in particular with the EU's external relations and actions.

Even though they concentrate on different aspects of the EU's foreign and security policy, the four books studied intersect on two main themes. I identify these themes as the 'depth' and 'breadth' of EU foreign and security policy. These two themes explain the EU's lack of effective power. The 'depth' refers to the degree of coherence among the Member States and the institutions, which shows how integrated the EU is in its foreign and security policy substance. On this point, despite some positive insights presented later, the contributors seem to contend that the EU still has many voices. Therefore, coherence among the EU Member States and institutions is a major problem. The second theme, the 'breadth' of its foreign policy, refers to the EU's ability to promote its norms on the global stage by using the existing substance of its foreign and security policy. Many of the discussions surrounding this theme seem to suggest that the EU's norm-promotion capacity remains rather limited. Although there are also several other domestic and external factors or factors relative to the decision-making process that might explain the EU's lack of effective power these two broad themes appear throughout the discussion of the books under review and they are treated as the main factors limiting the effectiveness of the EU's foreign and security policy.

The Depth of the EU's Foreign and Security Policy

As mentioned before, 'depth' refers to the degree of coherence in the EU in the making of foreign and security policy. It assesses the extent to which EU integration in the realm of foreign and security policy has moved from the individual Member State level to the EU level where the Union is treated as a distinct institution. No matter how it is used in the literature, coherence problems in the EU's foreign and security policy appear as one of the major themes in each of the books reviewed. Furthermore, this theme complements the wider literature that discusses the EU integration process from the perspective of supranationalist and intergovernmentalist approaches. The conclusions drawn do not challenge previous scholarly research that proclaims the triumph of intergovernmental elements (see, e.g. Regelsberger and Wessels, 2005; Smith, 2000; Wong, 2005). However, within that context, the empirical data they use imply that some progress is evident.

Europe and Global Security, edited by Bastian Giegerich, discusses coherence problems – most noticeably in the making of the EU's foreign and security policy. The volume brings together various cases involving different dimensions and areas of global security, ranging from the study of major powers to the military and civilian capabilities of the EU-led crisis management operations, terrorism, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) proliferation and energy policy. It also studies global demographics, critical infrastructure and climate change, which are largely understudied areas, and it is highly interesting to note the EU's divergence in these areas.

The volume demonstrates that coherence problems exist even with regard to transnational issues, which limit the EU's role in global security. Nigel Inkster's contribution on counter-terrorism and Christopher Langton's on demographic challenges show that the EU prioritises its national security concerns and the demands of domestic labour markets, and favours previously made post-colonial agreements. Therefore, its reactions are largely motivated by national considerations of its Member States. On energy policy, both Virginia Comolli and Langton point out the role played by national governments

and companies. Similar problems persist with regard to the implementation of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), as shown by Giegerich's own contribution. Therefore, even though the ESDP was defined as a 'civilian power' by François Duchêne (1973), its civilian missions were less successful compared to its military ones and the EU did not apply them in conjunction with its military missions. According to Giegerich, this is caused by the involvement of different institutions and different strategies of the Member States in civilian capability development which in turn influences the quantity and quality of personnel to be deployed in these missions.

The volume also shows that Member States do not even use the instruments provided by the Lisbon Treaty and instead prefer national solutions, despite their insufficiency. Thus Giegerich comes to the conclusion that the EU is unable to convert its capabilities into global effectiveness (Giegerich, 2010, p. 198). With regard to the EU's relations with great powers, François Heisbourg is pessimistic that the EU will achieve coherence and unity of purpose, reminding the reader that the only time the EU came to consensus with Russia was when the latter invaded Georgia in 2010. A hopeful prospect appears to be Inkster's contribution, which demonstrates the noteworthy steps forward taken on issues such as terrorist financing. Another break in the clouds is the EU's portrayal of itself as a 'good non-proliferation citizen' as it has been able to formulate common positions on non-proliferation treaty conferences, despite the presence among its ranks of France and the UK – both nuclear power states. Inkster also manifests this by reminding us of the EU's efforts to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon capability.

Giegerich's insights on the ESDP missions are analysed more deeply in *European Security and Defence Policy*, edited by Michael Merlingen and Rasa Ostrauskeite. This groundbreaking volume focuses on the effectiveness of the EU's military and civilian crisis management capabilities and offers an in-depth and systematic analysis of the ESDP across different cases. It is both informative and well-structured, and touches upon a range of the EU's civilian and military crisis management missions. In particular, it concentrates on the international security dimension, which is one of the most revealing and comparatively neglected dimensions of EU foreign and security policy. While the book confirms problems of coherence, it strongly emphasises the EU's ever increasing involvement in military and civilian crisis management missions across Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia. Security and defence is clearly the area in which the EU's activity has expanded the most in recent years, showing that the EU's role in international security is imperative.

Maria Raquel Freire's contribution underscores the conflicting interests between the actors who represent the EU in major meetings and the marked disagreements between the Commission and the EU Council. She also highlights that not only do institutions and Member States compete for influence, but there is also contention within the Commission itself on what the ESDP should involve. Xymena Kurowska confirms this finding as she notes significant divergence between the Commission, which emphasises a 'civilian power Europe', and the EU High Representative for the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), favouring a 'militarised civilian power' in order to enhance the EU's credibility. Furthermore, she observes that Member States become active in the ESDP if the region on the agenda is in their interests (Merlingen and Ostrauskeite, 2008,

p. 22). *European Security and Defence Policy* also links these coherence problems to the scantiness of resources, which makes the ESDP operations limited in scope and leads it to deal mostly with soft security issues. This also explains why most of the ESDP's operations are civilian in nature, as noted by Freire and Kurowska in their contributions (and also discussed by Giegerich in *Europe and Global Security*). Continuing the analysis, Thomas Bertin, Tobias Flessenkemper and Thomas Mühlmann all note significant problems with regard to personnel, logistics and planning in the implementation of the ESDP due to the institutional rivalries and ad hoc arrangements of the EU Member States.

On the other hand, complementing Merlingen and Ostrauskeite's volume, *European Internal Security*, edited by Christian Kaunert, concentrates on internal security within the EU. The study focuses on counter-terrorism, asylum and border management policies, specifically with regard to freedom, security and justice. These aspects are all linked to national security and show marked differences between Member States. As with foreign and security policy, this is an area of high politics for the Union but one which has the weakest institutional arrangements, and therefore the findings of this study can be generalised to the EU's foreign and security policy as well.

In particular, Kaunert offers a theoretical approach based on John Kingdon's (1984) policy-making model, which consists of three streams. The first stream identifies the problem, followed by the second stream where alternative solutions are explored and the third stream where a decision is taken from among these alternatives. Kaunert argues that a 'policy window' opens for the adoption of certain policies and this is then used by 'supranational policy entrepreneurs' – in this case the EU institutions – in order to get their policy proposals accepted. Despite the intergovernmental nature of the second stream where national interests dominate the agenda, Kaunert is optimistic about the emergence of 'European home affairs' as a policy area aiming to deal with security threats. This is because of the Commission's role as a supranational policy entrepreneur in pushing for humanitarian norms in this area. Kaunert defines this as a remarkable success not only because it is a hard case, but also because it has been achieved after the September 11 terrorist attacks in the US and following the bombings in Madrid and London in 2004 and 2005, respectively. Therefore, Kaunert argues, the area appears to be one of the promising fields for integration in the EU in the near future.

EU Foreign Policy in a Globalised World, edited by Zaki Laïdi, focuses mostly on the outcomes of coherence among the Member States and the institutions in determining the EU's global role. The volume is dedicated as a whole to the EU's significance in promoting global norms, over and above those discussed with regard to the other three books. The problems of EU coherence still cast their shadow over almost every section of the book, however, in the same way that it dominates virtually every aspect of the EU's foreign and security policy. The book brings together diverse aspects of the impact of EU membership, ranging from political to technical matters. An innovative aspect of the volume is its focus on how the EU is perceived by others in the international system. Hence, it emphasises the actual impact of the EU's policies on the EU's global standing, which is generally neglected in the other works. In this volume, Franziska Brantner and Richard Gowan's analysis is highly interesting as it demonstrates that, even on the issue of human rights, there are still cases that the EU does not vote on as a bloc at the UN.

This is a surprising finding considering the fact that the EU has portrayed itself as the promoter of universal human rights standards.

By and large, the books reviewed here contend that the EU's coherence problems are so extensive that Member States do not rely solely on the ESDP for their security, as shown by Merlingen and Ostrauskeite. Without denying the impressive contributions of the books reviewed, in general they seem to treat EU foreign and security policy as a distinct area, immune to new theoretical approaches. Only Kaunert's study is innovative in this sense, for although he studies a hard case, he also uses an informative theoretical approach and conceptualises the role of the EU's institutions as supranational policy entrepreneurs.

While similar positive findings can also be found in the other books, they are not analysed in the same way within a conceptual framework. For instance, Merlingen and Ostrauskeite do find a bright side in their analysis as they observe the growing number of national foreign policy objectives that are filtered and channeled through the EU. They illustrate this with the example of former High Representative Javier Solana's endeavours for developing a consensus on the ESDP. Another hopeful prospect is made clear by Flessenkemper's observation that the EU Council Secretariat and the European Commission have started to improve resources and streamline procedures related to general mission support. However, none of these findings are put into a wider theoretical and conceptual approach as Kaunert has done.

The same holds true for the volumes edited by Giegerich and Läidi. Giegerich's volume presents themes that also run through Merlingen and Ostrauskeite's book and which complement them by focusing on a particular set of security challenges that the EU is facing, and considering its ability to make a contribution in these areas. Similar to Merlingen and Ostrauskeite's indirect conclusions, Giegerich also witnesses the beginnings of a specific 'EU way of doing' security policy, but highlights problems in its implementation. To develop this point, the application of Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier's (2005) three forms of rule adoption with their formal, behavioural and discursive dimensions would have provided a better theoretical grasp. As Giegerich's volume indicates, EU Member States do well at formal rule adoption, but when it comes to implementation, national responses far outweigh any common response. Hence, the formal rules adopted are not reflected in either behaviour or discourse. This is by no means to suggest that these works are atheoretical, but they are too exclusively focused on intergovernmentalist explanations. Diversifying the theoretical analysis and reducing the units of analysis to smaller cases would help to generalise conclusions for the benefit of future research, both in this and in related areas.

The four books reviewed here complement the literature that treats EU foreign and security policy as a weakly integrated policy area and the wide debates within the context of Europeanisation research. Within this body of literature, Michael Smith's statement that 'the capacity of the CFSP to reorient national foreign policies is a surprise' (Smith, 2000, pp. 613–14) is widely quoted. Similarly, Reuben Wong notes that foreign policy is 'immune' to the pressures of Europeanisation (Wong, 2005, pp. 137–8). It is hard to deny that foreign policy is the least centralised policy area of the EU, with no legally binding rules to be adopted (Regelsberger and Wessels, 2005). While it is true that the

intergovernmental nature of the policy area limits its influence, it is important to remember Hill and Wallace's (1996) point that intergovernmentalism also ties to bind. Therefore, Smith's and Wong's concerns are exaggerated since if their argument was correct, there would be no sense in studying the Europeanisation of national foreign policy at all. On the contrary, however, this body of research shows that the decisions made at the national level – both for old and for new Member States – are becoming more and more dependent on collective positions, and it appears that Member States look to see what others do when drafting their own policy papers (Tonra, 2001).

Despite their pessimistic findings, the empirically rich analyses in the four books reviewed also indirectly imply that the EU has deepened its integration in the area of foreign and security policy. Otherwise, scholars would not be provided with such an extensive number of cases to analyse.

The Breadth of the EU's Foreign and Security Policy

The second theme manifested in these four books is the EU's indecisiveness and reluctance to act as a global power. This theme is linked to the debate on the EU's civilian, military and normative power which has attracted considerable academic attention. Due to the increasing depth of EU foreign and security policy, the debate over the specific type of the EU's power is an important one. Each of the books provides fresh and valuable contributions to this debate, which is likely to continue for many years to come. On the one hand, each of the books discerns a distinctive nature in the EU's foreign and security policy, thus contributing to the literature that defines the EU as a 'civilian' (Duchêne, 1973), 'normative' (Manners, 2002; 2006), 'ethical' (Aggestam, 2008) or 'soft' power (Nye, 2004). On the other hand, in each of the books arguments are made and conclusions drawn which appear pessimistic about the EU's capacity to promote its norms around the globe, and consequently the EU is treated as an ineffective power.

Merlingen and Ostrauskeite (2008) confirm Roy Ginsberg's (1989) finding of a 'self-styled logic' in the implementation of the ESDP. In their comprehensive analysis of the EU's civilian and military missions, they find that these missions concentrate on soft security issues, such as ethnic conflict, post-violence stabilisation and organised crime. The conclusion is, therefore, that the EU projects power abroad in order to achieve civilian ends. Nevertheless, the contributors offer an empirically rich analysis and clearly demonstrate the EU's progress in the last ten years to emerge as an international political and security actor. Without denying the adverse impacts of its institutional complexity and lack of consistency, as discussed in the previous section, the volume highlights the EU's role in international peace and security with its emphasis on conflict prevention, regional cooperation and the fight against organised crime, the protection and promotion of human rights, good governance and democracy.

In *Europe and Global Security* (Giegerich, 2010), the EU is referred to as a 'comprehensive actor' as it holds a wide range of instruments from political to economic ones. Even though the volume confirms the EU's struggles to combine different aspects of its security policy into a coherent common policy, as discussed above, it also highlights the EU's distinctive approach to security policy not only by combining hard and soft power

instruments, but also by promoting a rule-based system through effective multilateralism. Giegerich *et al.* regard this as a promising approach, considering the fact that the dividing lines between what is internal or external, civilian or military, are becoming increasingly blurred. The volume strongly emphasises that the EU prioritises good governance; social, economic and political reform; trade and uninterrupted access to markets; and respect for human rights and the rule of law. This is seen as a unique way of addressing the security challenges of the present and the future.

The area which is characterised as the most comprehensive one in terms of treating the EU as a normative power is the proliferation of WMD, as shown in Ben Rhode's contribution; this interprets the EU's great potential in strengthening international non-proliferation regimes through the force of its example. Nevertheless, not all the contributors reach such positive findings as Rhode. On the contrary, the volume in general appears pessimistic about the EU's norm-promotion capacity. Heisbourg's contribution defines the EU as an issue-specific great power only in those areas where the Member States can agree on a common position. He argues that the EU fails to back up its normative attractiveness with hard power tools which limits its leverage in its dealings with great powers. Therefore, the EU is condemned to 'a reactive policy pattern' (Giegerich, 2010, p. 198).

The rest of the volume concentrates on the EU's lack of coherence with regard to transnational issues as discussed above. This is also in contradiction to the EU's own humanitarian principles. The most apparent contradiction is presented by Langton's analysis that European leaders do not try to address the root causes of migration. Instead, they try to resolve problems caused by population growth and crime in urban areas by applying repressive counter-terrorism measures. Comolli's contribution shows that the EU's approach to energy policy is also in contradiction with its norms because its reliance on volatile countries creates a dilemma between the EU's security strategy and its energy security. Either the EU should continue to rely on these energy sources, or it should invest in environmentally friendly sources such as nuclear energy. However, Comolli also reminds us that this option bears with it the risk of further proliferation, which is also in contradiction to the EU's portrayal of itself as 'good non-proliferation citizen', as shown in Rhode's contribution.

The normative dimension of the EU foreign and security policy is discussed most widely in *EU Foreign Policy in a Globalized World: Normative Power and Social Preferences* (Läidi, 2008). Contrary to its sub-title, this volume makes manifest the inability of the EU as a normative power. Some positive remarks are provided by two contributors. For instance, Jean-Noël Ferrié finds that the EU's strategy in Afghanistan is more positive than realist, even though he criticises the EU's emphasis on the link between political stability, the rule of law and economic development, as well as its focus on transitional justice for the better construction of Afghanistan. Ferrié also shows that democratic institutions do not always promote democratic principles.

The rest of the volume highlights the EU's discriminatory treatment and inconsistent approach towards other countries in response to its own interests. Luis Martinez finds that the EU's priority in North Africa is security issues such as migration, terrorism and energy rather than the promotion of democracy. He demonstrates that the EU does not

apply sanctions systematically. It tolerates Algeria and Libya as it has economic interests there but sanctions other states where it has no economic stakes. Ian Manners refers to the EU as a 'committed yet troubled normative power' due to similar problems relating to development policy and core labour standards. David Chandler's study on the Balkans demonstrates that the EU's priority is to export its power in an ad hoc and discretionary way rather than to export democracy, as the justifications for its state-building projects appear artificial. Because of the EU's weakness and inability to regulate or integrate the Balkans through long-term strategic planning, neither the economic attractiveness nor commercial leverage of the region turned out to be useful. Brantner and Gowan's contribution demonstrates the EU's reliance on the US due to its position as the defender of the *status quo* in the UN Human Rights architecture, rather than by adopting a change-maker role. Karoline Postel-Vinay highlights the diminishing normative power of the EU compared to Europe's position in the pre-1945 period due to the EU's emphasis on 'absorption capacity'. This leaves the Union with a discretionary power to deny membership even if all the accession criteria are met by a candidate country. The EU's alternative norm-diffusion strategy – the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) – is also criticised by Florent Parmentier (Laïdi, 2008, pp. 105–6) for 'othering' outsiders and for displaying double standards behind a normative rhetoric, as it exclusively focuses on immigration, which is perceived as a security threat for Western European countries. More strongly, Anne Marie Le Gloannec and Jacques Rupnic (Laïdi, 2008, p. 66) refer to the EU as an un-normative and inward-looking power since its democratisation strategy excludes citizens within the EU. Instead, the ENP is referred to as operating a classic 'semi-periphery control mechanism'.

On the other hand, Christian Kaunert *et al.*'s findings in *European Internal Security* are more positive. Even though they confirm that Member States have been defining counter-terrorism, asylum and border management policies as security threats, by acting as a 'supranational policy entrepreneur' the Commission has nonetheless managed to tackle a gaping 'policy window' and played a constructive role in pushing for humanitarian norms in asylum policy despite pressures from individual EU Member States. Kaunert (2010) finds that even in the intergovernmental second stream of Kingdon's policy-making model, humanitarian norms were observed in the area of freedom, security and justice. This is even more remarkable when it is considered as a high politics area similar to foreign and security policy. Timing was even more astonishing as the deepening of integration in this field has been achieved since the September 11 attacks. Kaunert adopts a constructivist approach as he refutes the idea that Member State preferences and interests are exogenous, and he emphasises that interactions at the EU level have altered their preferences over time. He notes the importance of supranational policy entrepreneurs in the social construction of norms that steer the political movement of other streams. According to Kaunert, they achieve this through first mover advantage, persuasion strategy and alliances formed with other powerful actors.

Aside from Kaunert's edited volume, the other three books all highlight the fact that the EU's norm promotion capacity is limited. Laïdi *et al.* clearly go against the literature that defines the EU as a normative, ethical and soft power and they refute the argument that it 'does well' and considers the well-being of others while conducting its

international relations (Sjursen, 2007). This volume also sheds light on neorealist attitudes observed in the EU and its Member States as their long-term strategic and economic interests triumph. The contributors highlight inconsistencies in the EU's normative power when its interests are threatened. However, the fact that the EU gives primacy to its own interests does not mean that it does not consider the other countries with which it interacts. In fact, as Karen Smith and Margot Light (2001) assert, material interests and ethical considerations are intertwined in the EU's foreign policy, which affirms that it considers its own interests in conjunction with those of others, as Hyde-Price (2006) argued. As Jean-Marc Coicaud and Daniel Warner point out, the EU promotes effective multilateralism and human rights because they serve the EU's own interests as well (Coicaud and Warner, 2001, p. 5). Hence, the conclusions drawn in the books under review do not refute the fact that the EU is following Kantian foreign policy logic based on the primacy of dialogue and cooperation.

All things considered, these four volumes cover different dimensions of security policy and contribute to the debate on the normative foundations of the EU's foreign and security policy even though some weaknesses are noticeable. Lăidi's volume focuses on different theoretical approaches in order to understand the EU's normative role, rather than applying one theory systematically. From this perspective, Chandler's contribution is original in the sense not only that it is rich in empirical data, but also that it studies a theoretical approach not covered very widely. Using Baudrillard's (1983) concepts of simulation and hyperreality, Chandler conceptualises the EU as a simulacrum because it is unable to assert the power of its Member States. It constructs hyperreality as it exaggerates and over-politicises the relations between the EU and Balkan potential members. Hence, he demonstrates the EU's reluctance to assume political responsibility for intervention, which is why it presents its policy proposals as voluntary choices deriving from a country's desire to join the EU – so-called 'EU conditionality'.

Merlingen and Ostrauskeite do not attempt to place their analysis into the wider literature on the EU's global role. In their introduction, the editors openly state that it is beyond the book's objective to comment on the EU's global role, but rather that it focuses on what the ESDP actually entails. Therefore, it could be fruitful if the volume included a section or a chapter to discuss what these findings add to the EU's global role in general. This would further clarify the findings and open up the work to a wider audience. In fact, the number of cases studied and the empirical analysis applied systematically would provide the reader with the tools to comment on the future of the EU and on its potential global role. Instead, however, the analysis seems to be limited to worthy but restricted discussions on the EU's civilian and military missions and subjective assessments of mission experts. This gap is best filled with Giegerich's volume, which focuses exclusively on the EU's role in global security.

Conclusion

The books reviewed in this article provide a significant contribution to the growing literature on the EU's foreign and security policy, which continues to attract significant scholarly attention. Taken together, these books provide us with a critical and empirically rich analysis of the EU's foreign and security policy across different dimensions. They

bring forward a mass of new material in terms of both academic research and documentary evidence, to deepen and update previous analyses. The books guide the reader smoothly through the labyrinth of EU foreign and security policy. Bearing their original contributions in mind, the themes that appear common to them do not dramatically depart from the ones that have repeatedly been placed under the microscope of scholars.

The books reviewed here point towards two main independent variables indicating that the EU is an ineffective power. First, the contributors highlight that the EU Member States and institutions still display significant divergence in formulating foreign and security policy. All of the books show that coherence problems are still a matter of concern for the EU's foreign and security policy. Coherence is indeed an anomaly for every scholarly endeavour to interpret EU foreign and security policy, and this can be expected to continue as long as the EU remains an intergovernmental organisation rather than transforming itself into a federal state-like structure. Nevertheless, the empirical data and the number of cases analysed imply that EU foreign and security policy has the potential to be one of the core areas of EU policy making in the future. Without a doubt, coherence is an important determinant of the EU's ability to play a constructive role in global affairs, but analysis of these books indicates that the inherent difficulties in reaching complete consensus are matters of fact that cannot easily be overcome. Therefore, the EU faces difficulties in using its economic power to have leverage over global issues that impact on global peace and security. Nevertheless, some optimistic signs are also presented here, such as the efforts of the EU institutions to push for better coordination of the EU's full range of resources and the increasingly more powerful collective influence exerted by EU Member States through the CFSP and CSDP.

Secondly, the books point out that the EU and its Member States appear indecisive in promoting universal norms around the globe. They treat this factor as an important determinant of the EU's effective power and argue that, even though EU foreign and security policy is defined as 'normative', the EU's priority appears to be serving its own interests. This is also linked to the problems over coherence and the limited capabilities at the disposal of the EU. The four books under review seem to agree that the EU is trying to promote its norms in order to serve its own security concerns – and even that it tries to avoid taking responsibility, which is why it uses the policy of conditionality through which it can attribute responsibility to candidate countries: if candidate countries want to earn the benefits of membership, they should act in line with EU norms.

All in all, these four volumes provide us with rich empirical data that can also be interpreted more positively. Despite the fact that they generally question the EU's effective power, the data used inform the reader that integration on the CSFP has actually progressed dramatically well and provide with us a growing number of cases that can be analysed using sophisticated research methods.

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