

**DOES RESILIENCE PERMEATE FOREIGN POLICY?***A Review of the Instruments of the EU,  
Germany, France, and Italy*

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## ABSTRACT

This paper explores how the idea of resilience has made its way into the external action of the European Union (EU) and selected member states (Germany, France and Italy) as a means to address areas of limited statehood and contested orders. It examines the debates informing the development of the EU's external action and current concerns in economic, political, and migration instruments. The main findings are that the EU's economic and political instruments have become gradually dominated by resilience framings, with an emphasis on multilateralism, adaptation, and long-term and bottom-up responses. Resilience also increasingly drives the humanitarian assistance and development cooperation policies in Germany and to a lesser extent France, which have gradually moved away from top-down administrative and centralized models of governance. The EU and member states like Italy, however, have been more reluctant to foster resilience to address migration issues. Instead, they have prevented flows of irregular migrants into Europe by means of containment strategies such as improving border management, policing, and surveillance and combating smuggling networks.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper explores how the idea of resilience has made its way into the external action of the EU and selected member states (Germany, France, and Italy), as a means to address areas of limited statehood (ALS) and contested orders (CO). ALS are seen as spaces – from states and countries to cities and rural areas – in which authorities and institutions are too weak to govern and enforce rules and often lack control of the monopoly of force (Risse and Stollenwerk 2018). CO are seen as state and non-state actors that challenge the generalized EU norms and principles according to which societies and political systems are ruled and should be organized (Börzel and Risse 2018a; on contestation of norms, see also Deitelhoff and Zimmermann [2013]; Wolff and Zimmermann [2016]). The assumption is that both areas of limited statehood and contested orders represent risks and potential threats that challenge the external action of the EU and its member states. As Börzel and Risse (2018a: 2) state: “Only if and when areas of limited statehood and contested orders deteriorate into governance breakdowns and violent conflict do the risks turn into threats to the security and stability of the EU, its member states, and citizens”. Thus ALS/CO cannot be ignored: they will remain, and more will appear in the future.

To understand how the idea of resilience permeates different policies and instruments to address ALS/CO, the paper examines the debates informing the development of EU external action and current concerns in the foreign policy of Germany, France, and Italy. Whereas others in the EU-LISTCO project are exploring how ALS/CO come about or how they tip over into governance breakdowns or



conflict, here the focus is on the external action instruments of the EU and member states. It is a comprehensive review of the existing literature, aiming to inform future research on the capacities of the EU and member states to foster resilience in ALS/CO. In this paper, the instruments are divided into three policy fields:

- (a) *economic*, which enables the EU and member states to enter into agreements and provide aid to third countries;
- (b) *political*, which allows the EU to exert influence in peace and crisis management related tasks, and;
- (c) *mobility*, which refers to the instruments involved in dealing with challenges connected to migration, such as countering migrant smuggling and containing trafficking.

The third policy field, mobility, has often been neglected in various categorizations of the instruments of EU's external action (see, e.g., Smith 2014: 44–65), but it is added here to include increasingly important debates around migration that affect the EU and its member countries.

In the last decade, these three policy areas have gained attention after the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty in the field of external action and the implementation and follow-up of the EU Global Strategy (EUGS 2016). The EUGS has received generalized interest among scholars, and it is often seen as a modest and pragmatic approach to conducting external action that enables the EU to respond to the challenges of a contested, connected, and complex world (EEAS 2015; see also Juncos 2017; Tocci 2016; Wagner and Anholt 2016). The idea of resilience, which features prominently in the EUGS and tinges the current foreign policy instruments of both the EU and, gradually, those of the member states, represents a gradual shift in the manner of addressing external action concerns. (For seminal works on resilience in International Relations (IR), see Chandler [2014]; Joseph [2018]). But, obviously, the trajectory of the EU's external action precedes the recent conceptualizations of resilience. Thus, it is important for this paper to map the debates in historical perspective and assess how the EU and member states' capacities and instruments have evolved into current proposals and policy priorities.

The body of the paper is divided into three sections. The next section summarizes the main institutional debates about the development of the EU's external action, which are important in framing the debate on the nature of the EU and its role in IR. The third section reviews what has been said about the instruments and policies that the EU wields to enhance resilience in ALS/CO. These will be divided into economic, political, and mobility instruments. Finally, the paper addresses the debates on how



Germany, France, and Italy, as particularly relevant member states, are contributing to the same policy fields and increasingly adopting resilience frameworks, drawing some parallels between member states' foreign policy and the EU's external action.

## 2. DEBATES INFORMING THE DEVELOPMENT OF EU EXTERNAL ACTION

The establishment of the EU as an international actor with a common foreign and security policy can at least be traced back to the development of the European Political Cooperation in 1970. Two decades later, international events such as the fall of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe, the Gulf War, or the conflict in Yugoslavia influenced the adoption of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in the Maastricht Treaty (1993) as a key development of European integration (Krotz and Maher 2011; Nuttall 2000; Smith 2014). The 1999 Treaty of Amsterdam further enhanced the role of the European Council to decide on the common positions and strategies of the CFSP, although the modifications to cohere the field of foreign policy were seen as too modest (Dehousse 1998). After Amsterdam, member states began to work on a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP, renamed Common Security and Defence Policy, or CSDP, after the Lisbon Treaty) to run civilian and military missions abroad.

In order to enhance the global influence of the EU, the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon created the European External Action Service (EEAS) under the leadership of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and the Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP). Rather than a supranational institution like the European Commission or the European Parliament or an essentially intergovernmental one like the Council of the European Union, the EEAS both deals with the methods of member states' cooperation and decision-making in foreign policy and maintains complex relations with the Commission in external relations (Helwig et al. 2013: 6). Since external action is split between multiple actors and policies, and a precise account of this complex institutional structure falls beyond the scope of the paper, the preference here will be to refer to the EU's 'external action' as the sum of the EU's foreign policy, where member states remain the most important actors (as in the CFSP and CSDP), and its external relations, where the Commission enjoys longstanding prerogatives (Morillas 2019a).

Drawing on interviews with officials from EU institutions and member states, Morillas (2019b) argues that the HR/VP and the EEAS have substantially increased their autonomy in the traditionally intergovernmental EU foreign and security policies. Relatedly, the term "Brusselization" has also been used to understand both the influence that Brussels-based institutions exert on member states and the



transformation of their policies as a consequence of EU membership (Koops 2011: 212). Over the years, the tendency towards more integration has generated a plural debate on the accountability of EU institutions and the degree to which people's demands are represented in the EU's political decision-making processes (for example, see Bang et al. [2015]; Bellamy [2010]; Murdoch et al. [2018]).

However, other authors have observed that, even if the EU has generally advanced towards supranationalism, the foreign security policy remains a bastion of state sovereignty and intergovernmentalism, where member states have always had the upper hand vis- -vis EU institutions (Fabbrini and Puetter 2016). These authors do not deny the lack of cooperation or the possibility of taking common decisions, but understand that sovereignty drives the decision to (not) cooperate and that intergovernmental forums are key to EU policy initiation and decision-making, to the detriment of the European Commission (Bickerton et al. 2014). Despite member states increasing integration and coordination within EU bodies, these authors imply that "integration take[s] place in the absence of supranationalism, with new institutions created that have concentrated the powers and activities of national governments and national representatives" (Bickerton et al. 2014: 717).

Others prefer to take a middle ground position between supranationalism and intergovernmentalism to qualify the degree of EU integration in foreign policy. Seminal here is Smith's (2004) institutional analysis. He suggests that increasing participation by member states in EU institutions and processes erodes initial intergovernmental predispositions as institutions become involved in multiple networks and develop (positively or negatively) in new and unexpected ways (Smith 2004). Hill also finds a balance between the two positions. He examined EU foreign security policy activities and argued that in some cases, like the Afghanistan and Iraq wars or the Israel-Palestine conflict, the preferences of European states diverged substantially and undermined the autonomy of the CFSP. Yet he discerns that, on some other occasions, like the responses to September 11 or anti-terrorist measures, member states have shown solidarity and a commitment to Europeanizing their foreign policy (Hill 2004).

The institutional debates assessing the degree of EU integration provide the context against which to assess the nature of EU's external action – a dominant assumption being that, without integration, the EU lacks 'actorness' and is thus incapable of performing a prominent role abroad (for an overview of the debate on actorness, see Drieskens 2017). If the questions during the Cold War were predominantly about whether the EU had a foreign policy at all (Bull 1982), during the 1990s they were more about what international role the EU could play. By noticing that the EU was not only expanding its trading capabilities but also committing to development aid,





democracy promotion, and humanitarian assistance, many scholars defined the specificity of the EU in the international system against Duchêne's notion of a 'civilian power' (Duchêne 1973), which emphasizes the use of civilian rather than military instruments in international relations (Aggestam 2008; Risse-Kappen 1996; Smith 2005; Stavridis 2001; Whitman 1998).

Influentially, Manners (2002) argued that, rather the EU being defined as either a civilian or a military power, it should be understood as an entity capable of shaping conceptions of what can be considered 'normal' and setting standards in international politics, coining the term 'normative power' (see also Manners 2008). In tune with broader debates in IR, Manners and others shifted the focus to ideas and norms as key elements to understand the logic of the EU's external action (Lucarelli and Manners 2006; see also Diez 2014). Throughout the 2000s in particular, different terminologies were used to capture the specificity of the Union, including 'ethical', 'responsible', 'gentle', 'pragmatic' or 'global' power, and empirical research was done to conceptualize the nature of the external action of the EU (see also Sjursen 2006), while critics exposed the inconsistencies and limits of considering the EU a normative or civilizing power (Hyde-Price 2006; Whitman 2013).

The self-image of the EU as a value-promoter is reflected in its strategic documents, which act as "autobiographical narratives" and are useful in tracing the evolution of its external action from the European Security Strategy in 2003 to the Global Strategy in 2016 (Mälksoo 2016: 376). Whereas, at the beginning of the 2000s, the EU sought to transform the world according to its image and likeness, today these external ambitions have decreased due to the urgency of resolving multiple internal crises and of facing a more troubling neighbourhood (Bendiek 2017; Morillas 2018).

The EU's shift – from being a willing and confident value-promoter to being a more defensive and pragmatic actor – can be seen in debates assessing the EU promotion of human rights, democracy, and multilateralism, which are considered key principles informing the EU's external action. For example, while the European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders sets out practical suggestions to protect and support organizations and civil society actors defending human rights in third country missions, the member states' commitments to implement the guidelines in practice are "patchy and inconsistent" (Bennett 2015: 908). Furthermore, when examining EU activities in the East, some authors have observed that the EU has sacrificed norms to interests when cooperating with authoritarian regimes that have repeatedly violated human rights (Crawford 2008; Sharshenova and Crawford 2017; Sicurelli 2017).



Like the promotion of human rights, democracy has been conceived as an opportunity to export European values and facilitate peace, stability, and economic prosperity abroad. The EU sought to endorse democracy through integrative relationships, partnerships, and socialization mechanisms, which helped countries stabilize in ways that went beyond institutional fixes (Freyburg et al. 2009; Keohane 2002). Some authors have noted that the EU’s preference for enhancing democratic institutions that are inclusive of diverse civil society actors and are adapted to the historic-political context of each society have made the EU’s democracy promotion different in substance to those of the United States and the UN, which have traditionally focused on regime change and institution building ‘from above’ (Barga es-Pedreny 2016; Bridoux and Kurki 2015; Del Biondo 2015; Magen et al. 2009; Schmidt 2015).

Yet the export of democracy does not mean, as Del Sarto (2015) argues, that the EU is not acting as an “empire”; indeed, looking at the EU responses to the Arab uprisings, she suggests that it is acting as a “normative empire”, reconciling interests and identities at the same time (see also Zielonka 2013). Other authors have also been critical of the EU’s efforts at democracy promotion, highlighting, among other pitfalls (for an overview, see Peters [2012]), the problems of implementing one-size-fits-all programmes (Haukenes and Freyberg-Inan 2013), or the over-reliance on technocratic mechanisms (Kurki 2011). The tendency is to notice that the EU has altered the framing of democracy promotion, prioritizing security and stability concerns and pragmatic arrangements over institutional and regime change (B orzel, Dandashly and Risse 2015; Dandashly 2018).

Also, an ‘effective multilateral’ agenda has been considered key for the EU in order to emphasize alliances and institutional and legal reforms in global affairs, relying on the export of the EU’s own recipe for success (Ujvari et al. 2016). Multilateralism is seen as a constructive strategy of engaging in global affairs in comparison to the more ‘assertive multilateralism’ proposed by the US (Cronberg 2017). The aims of multilateralism notwithstanding, often the priority of the EU has been to use bilateralism (via strategic partnerships) at the global level (Renard 2016; Song and Hall 2018). Critics have suggested that multilateralism requires long-term commitment and political and economic stability that are difficult to achieve in current international relations, which are dominated by uncertainty and shifting balances of power (Barb e et al. 2016; Peterson 2010).

This shift towards a more pragmatic external action is, in part, influenced by the fact that, in the past decade, questions about European integration have become gradually politicized and contested among the public (De Wilder and Z urn 2012; Statham and Trenz 2013). Debates on how or what issues should be delegated to the



supranational level are becoming salient not only in the parliamentary settings of member states, but also in intermediary arenas like interest groups and the media, and even among the broader citizenry (Hurrelmann et al. 2013). Sometimes this politicization has been beneficial to open democratic and deliberative spaces that are seen to strengthen the union and its shared norms (Beck and Grande 2007; Deitelhoff and Zimmermann 2013). On other occasions, however, researchers have noted that politicization becomes problematic for the progress of European supranational policies. Influentially, Hooghe and Marks (2009) argued that politicization is a constraining force that hampers European integration, as the debate is framed by opponents of European integration and conducted in terms of nationalist identities.

Rather than assuming that the politicization of the EU's integration is inherently beneficial or problematic for its becoming a coherent actor that can shape international affairs, the tendency is to analyse such politicization in relation to the different contexts (countries or arenas) in which it takes place (Hurrelmann et al. 2013: 44; Schimmelfennig 2017). For example, Börzel and Risse (2018b) have observed that, during the euro crisis, state governments transferred substantial fiscal competences to the EU level, countering the forces of politicization and euro-scepticism that attempted otherwise (see also Dehousse 2016). By contrast, during the Schengen crisis, right-wing euro-sceptic parties successfully mobilized national identities and the need for exclusionary policies of border control, frustrating efforts at enhancing the role of supranational institutions (Börzel and Risse 2018b: 93–98). Barbé and Morillas (2019) contend that more politicization can lead to more integrationist practices in security and defence.

Furthermore, the EU has toned down the transformative ambition of its external action due to internal tensions like the departure of the United Kingdom and a hostile international environment – from the growing contestation of liberalism and democracy to economic uncertainties, international crises like Syria or Libya, or complex and diffuse security threats. It is in this context that the paradigm of resilience is gradually permeating all foreign policy debates and instruments of the EU (Chandler 2014; Joseph 2018). As stated by the EUGS (2016: 23):

It is in the interests of our citizens to invest in the resilience of states and societies to the east stretching into Central Asia, and south down to Central Africa. Fragility beyond our borders threatens all our vital interests. By contrast, resilience – the ability of states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises – benefits us and countries in our surrounding regions, sowing the seeds for sustainable growth and vibrant societies.

Resilience approaches are understood as means to overcome some of the limitations of liberal forms of intervention. Rather than exporting European norms and



institutions abroad, assuming that top-down models of governance could guarantee international peace and security, a focus on resilience seeks to improve modes of governance indirectly and through partnerships, embracing non-linear processes, context sensitivity, and bottom-up initiatives (Bourbeau 2015; de Weijer 2013; Dunn Cavelty et al. 2015). The next section explores the debates about the external action instruments of the EU and suggests that those instruments are increasingly tinged by the idea of resilience as a means to deal with ALS and CO.

### 3. RESILIENCE IN THE EU'S EXTERNAL ACTION INSTRUMENTS

This section looks at the debates regarding the external action instruments the EU wields to enhance resilience and prevent the risks of ALS and CO from tipping into governance breakdown and violent conflict. What matters is not so much why certain policy instruments have been used over others (as in public policy instrumentation approaches – for an overview, see Menon and Sedelmeier [2010]) but the debates that ensue when the instruments are implemented.

We have categorized these instruments into three distinct policy areas: economic, which enable the EU to enter into agreements and provide aid to third countries; political, which relate to the influence of the EU in peace and crisis management related tasks; and those related to mobility and which seek to address the recent challenges connected to migration. This categorization may obscure the cross-sectional dimension of most policies and the tensions from diverging and difficult to reconcile interests across different policy fields (Bretherton and Vogler 2012). Also, since the EUGS, the EU has advocated for a holistic approach to security that integrates different policy areas under the umbrella of resilience, particularly as a result of the growing nexus between internal and external security. Yet our division of these categories allows us to map dominant debates that have assessed the EU's external relations in these three fields and understand the transition towards resilience policy frameworks.

#### 3.1 EU Economic Instruments in External Action

Economic agreements (trade, cooperation, and association) and the provision of aid to third countries are two of the most important external action instruments of the EU and the most integrated ones (Smith 2014: 45–53). As emphasized by the literature on the EU's trade power, the EU is not only the biggest player in global trade but also influences power politics by economic means (Meunier and Nicolaïdis 2006: 907; see also Smith 2016):

The Union is not only a formidable power in trade. It is also becoming a power through trade, using access to its huge market as a bargaining chip to obtain changes



in the domestic policies of its trading partners, from labour standards to human rights, and more generally to shape new patterns of global governance.

Moreover, scholars have noted the emergence of “new trade politics” in the EU (Young and Peterson 2006), accompanied by an EU commitment towards deep and comprehensive free trade agreements (Laursen and Roederer-Rynning 2017: 764). This trend is characterized by increasing legalization (with more precisely defined rules, dispute resolution, and sanctions, for instance), closer linkage of trade and domestic policy, a changing international context (featuring an increasingly multipolar system, for instance), a greater variety of issues (such as investment and intellectual property), and the inclusion of more actors (such as parliaments) in trade policy (Orbie and Kerremans 2013; Young and Peterson 2015). As a consequence of the greater involvement of parliaments and civil society, trade has become increasingly politicized and contested (Laursen and Roederer-Rynning 2017: 765; Orbie and Kerremans 2013: 494).

The EU has reacted to the questioning of the legitimacy of its international trade policy by actors such as NGOs and national parliaments by attempting to promote the “social dimension of globalization” and seeking to promote labour standards through trade (Kerremans and Orbie 2009: 630). Furthermore, the EU is attempting to improve the connection between trade policies and development, recommending both the expansion of liberal democratic norms and a pro-poor development agenda to assist low-income countries. However, some observers have criticized the EU for not having a clear vision of how to put the trade-development nexus into practice, noting that it preaches free trade and development while also pursuing commercial interests and protecting its market from external competition (Carbone and Orbie 2014: 7).

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), launched in 2004 and revised in 2015 with the intention to integrate the EU’s relations with near neighbours, has been analysed as a key economic and financial instrument to achieve political goals. The need for security and stability are seen to be the central drivers of EU policies, which target diverse state and non-state actors (Bicchi 2007; Roccu and Voltolini 2018). The prospect of access to the EU market or the provision of financial support through the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) are used as incentives for reform (Bouris and Schumacher 2017: 15; Poli 2016: 41; Roccu and Voltolini 2018: 12). Furthermore, the EU’s Neighbourhood Policy is employed both to address crises in the neighbourhood and to stabilize the EU itself by addressing internal vulnerabilities (Johansson-Nogu es 2018).

The trade power of the EU’s external relations has not gone unnoticed by critical analysts. For instance, in his Foucauldian analysis of EU resilience governance,



Joseph (2014) identifies political economy as the main tool in the promotion of economic modernization and the mechanism of governing “from a distance” (Joseph 2014: 286; Korosteleva 2018: 6). Other critical scholars have looked at the effects of the EU’s promotion of market liberalization in the neighbourhood countries, assessing the extent to which the policies have brought stability and prosperity. When examining the Southern Neighbourhood in particular, some authors have criticized the destabilizing effects of EU policies on local economies (Bicchi 2014; Bouris and Schumacher 2017; Dodini and Fantini 2006; Gstöhl 2015; Langan 2015; Poli 2016; Roccu and Voltolini 2018). According to Katsaris (2016), the risk of adverse effects due to the EU’s promotion of market reforms stems from the systemic differences that exist between the EU’s economy and those of neighbouring countries.

In addition to trade as a foreign policy instrument, the EU offers financial assistance to third countries in the aftermath of shocks (Poli 2016: 44). Some scholars have focused on how European integration or the principle of policy coherence have affected development initiatives (Carbone 2008; Holland and Doidge 2007; Orbie and Carbone 2016), while others have focused on the EU’s evolving relations with developing countries (Söderbaum and Stalgren 2009). It is only recently that aid-related financial tools have explicitly aimed at enhancing resilience, as seen for example in the EU Trust Funds (EUTF). These respond to the EU’s need to create swift, more flexible, and effective joint responses to emergencies and seek to facilitate the transition towards the development and resilience of developing countries (Crowe 2017: 442–443). For instance, the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa supports economic and resilience governance practices and assists on issues of mobility; the Bekou Trust Fund assists with stabilization and reconstruction in the Central African Republic, and the Madad Fund fosters the resilience of Syrian refugees in EU neighbourhood countries having primarily supported educational projects (Carrera et al. 2018: 72; Maass 2017: 239–240).

However, several limitations of these funds have been identified: firstly, contributions by member states have been limited, in particular for the Madad Fund (Hauck et al. 2015: 8). Secondly, negotiations within the trust funds are complex due to the variety of actors and interests involved, e.g., the different Directorate Generals of the European Commission (Castillejo 2016: 6–7; Maass 2017: 240). Most projects are implemented in cooperation with national organizations, international agencies, and non-governmental organizations, often undermining project effectiveness (Carrera et al. 2018: 71, 75; Hauck et al. 2015: 12). Thirdly, some authors argue that member states lobby for certain funds and not others, overlooking local priorities and knowledge, and resulting in development processes that are insufficiently tied to partnerships and ownership (Castillejo 2016: 12–14).





The literature has recently identified two aspects in which the EU's economic policies in external relations are increasingly contested. The first is domestic political opposition in member states that have different trade preferences and positions (Van Loon 2018). The second is the contestation emerging at the international level. For example, the EU's attempt to reach comprehensive free trade agreements with Eastern Partnership countries is challenged by Russia, which has different and sometimes opposed priorities and geo-strategic interests (Gstöhl 2015: 864; Hoekman 2017: 371; see also Calus 2018).

As a response to CO, the main instrument of the EU is sanctions, as these can be imposed “on states that pose a threat to the EU and/or the international community” (Young and Peterson 2015: 839) and per definition are responses to “objectionable behaviour” (Portela 2017: 270). Sanctions are considered an instrument of liberal governance, which is applied coercively in response to a violation of international laws, principles, or norms (Korosteleva 2018: 6; Poli 2016: 48–49). Sanctions are also used to discourage authoritarian leaders or practices – from violent actions against minorities to actors challenging the territorial integrity of a country – and thus enhance democratic transitions (Poli 2016: 50; Portela 2017: 276). In the context of secessions, sanctions can be applied to non-state entities, although this is rather uncommon (Poli 2016: 53–54). It has been noted that the purposes of sanctions seem to differ depending on the neighbourhoods they are applied to: whereas sanctions have been used to promote democracy in the East, in the Southern neighbourhood they have been imposed as a result of concerns about international security (Portela 2017: 276–277).

### 3.2 EU Political Instruments to Address International Conflict

Political instruments include a wide variety of diplomatic and military policies (from strategic partnerships, démarches, and diplomatic recognition to arms embargoes, civilian and military interventions, or the Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace) to address conflicts and crises in the international sphere (for a full list, see Smith 2014: 54–64). Most of the political instruments that the EU employs have generated debate on a case-by-case basis. For example, the EU–South Africa Strategic Partnership has been evaluated in terms of gains in economic and political relations, peace, and security (see the special issue by Masters and Hierro [2017]). Diplomatic recognition of Kosovo as an independent state or as a province of Serbia has generated disagreements among member states and undermined the EU's coherence, as discussed in several studies (Dessus et al. 2017; Ker-Lindsay and Armakolas 2017). As James Ker-Lindsay (2015) notes, it is key that the EU and its members learn how to pursue diplomatic relations with areas of contested statehood like Kosovo, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Abkhazia, or Eastern Ukraine.



Enlargement is considered one of the most successful political instruments to effect reforms in liberal democratic institutions and governance effectiveness and thus gradually improve the political, socio-economic, and security conditions of new EU members (Börzel and Schimmelfennig 2017; Börzel and Sedelmeier 2017; Grabbe 2014). Over the decades, the material and ideational incentives that are offered when entering the Union – from economic benefits to ethnic conflict mediation and democratic certainties – have been used to expand from six initial members to twenty-eight, without counting the UK's exit (Moravcsik and Vachudova 2002; Schimmelfennig 2005).

Yet, the transformative power of enlargement is seen to be waning both because of internal contestation – divergences among member states and also in their domestic politics, especially with the rise of right wing populist parties that have mobilized public opinion – and challenges from the outside, as critiques of the European Union burgeon (Dimitrova and Kortenska 2017; Grabbe 2014). The possibilities for expanding the Union have dimmed. The early optimism with the prospects of Turkey's integration has withered (Müftüler-Baç 2008), mainly due to Turkey's increasingly authoritarian leanings, missed opportunities to reach agreements, and growing scepticism and bilateral disputes among member states (Phinnemore and İçener 2016; Turhan 2016). Therefore, most of the focus is on the possibility of enlarging through the remaining countries in the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia), although the divergent positions among member states on the prospects for enlargement present a complex picture (Epstein and Jacoby 2013; Ker-Lindsay et al. 2017; Vachudova 2013).

Following the end of the Cold War, the EU gradually sought to assume further responsibilities in the fields of conflict and crisis management and peace-related activities with the support of civilian and military forces. In 1999, after a Franco-British summit in St. Malo, France, the ESDP was launched, enabling EU members to undertake joint military and civilian actions. Whereas, initially, military interventions were meant to focus on conflict prevention and restoring peace and security efforts through the use of force, civilian missions drew on civilian capabilities, including rule of law, civil protection and administration, policing, crisis management, and monitoring (for overviews of institutional development, see Bossong and Benner [2012]; Bossong [2013]; Engberg [2014]).

These tasks and the coordination at the EU level expanded under the Lisbon Treaty, which, for example, explicitly mentioned “peacekeeping” and encompassed “joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, [and] tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilization”





(see article 43). Again the EUGS served to further coordinate and give new impetus to other military instruments, like the EU Battlegroups, which enable the EU to respond rapidly and independently with small-scale units (Reykers 2016). Since the first policing mission was launched in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU has run more than thirty missions and operations in the framework of the ESDP first and the CSDP today, seventeen of which are still ongoing. In total, eight have been military operations with an executive mandate, which means that they are authorized to intervene forcefully to stop violence if it is deemed necessary (Engberg 2014; Nováky 2018).

Most debates on political instruments have evaluated how these have been applied to specific cases. For example, civilian and military interventions in the Balkans (in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia) have struggled to be seen as legitimate by local actors, a factor which decisively influences the effective functioning of the missions (Gippert 2016; see also Wolff 2018). The largest civilian mission ever operationalized, the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), launched in 2008 to assist Kosovo in establishing sustainable governing institutions (Dijkstra 2011), has received diverse criticisms. Some studies have emphasized the difficulties and tensions experienced by the mission when attempting to act coherently and efficiently (Greiçevci 2012; Kirchner 2013; Papadimitriou and Petrov 2012), while others have underlined local resistances and the negative effects of the mission on the population (Bargaúes-Pedreny 2016; Qehaja and Prezelj 2017; Visoka 2011).

The EU missions in the African continent have also received notable attention. Unlike the large-scale and ambitious UN interventions, these are characterized by targeted and tailored operations and missions with a narrow focus (Brosig 2014), increasingly prioritizing – at least in sub-Saharan Africa – “deterrence” or “regional integration” and support for local processes over invasive actions (Haastrup 2013; Kluth 2013; see, also, Nováky 2018). Other debates assessing EU missions in North Africa discuss the links between the tasks of conflict prevention and peacebuilding with broader concerns of European stability, security, and migration management (see the special issue edited by Bauer [2013]; also Geddes [2015]).

Another important theme in the literature is the EU’s increasing commitment to engage with bottom-up initiatives in foreign interventions (both civilian and military) to transfer ownership and help develop locally-owned security sector reforms and peacebuilding projects (Ejdus and Juncos 2018). This is perceived in a variety of contexts, from the Border Assistance mission to Moldova and Ukraine, which seeks to build confidence among parties and change perceptions about conflict, to the inclusive peacebuilding approach taken by EU missions in Mali and the Sahel (Dias 2013; Jayasundara-Smiths 2018).



In the last few years, the emphasis on bottom-up processes has intensified, particularly since the adoption of the EUGS and the increasing emphasis on the idea of “resilience” (Tocci 2016), with the EU decisively abandoning a priori blueprints and goals and building instead on local resources and understandings to find more pragmatic solutions (Juncos 2017; Wagner and Anholt 2016). This approach, according to Wagner and Anholt, represents “a perfect middle ground between over-ambitious liberal peacebuilding and the under-ambitious objective of stability” (2016: 415). Although some authors consider that “the shift to the local” is merely a rhetorical move which has not been reflected in practice (Ejdus 2017; Ejdus 2018; Rayroux and Wilén 2014), the idea is to evolve from a top-down implementation of local ownership, in which local actors implement externally designed objectives, to a process of cooperation and partnership between the EU and diverse local actors (Bargués-Pedreny 2018: 77–90; Ejdus 2017: 465).

### 3.3 EU Instruments to Address Migration

In 2015, the EU adopted the European Agenda on Migration “to build up a coherent and comprehensive approach to reap the benefits and address the challenges deriving from migration” (EC 2015: 2). Since then, a multitude of new instruments have been introduced to respond quickly and more coherently, including the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) and the Migration Partnership Framework (for an overview, see Castillejo 2016). Whereas migration was not mentioned in the European Security Strategy in 2003, it figured prominently in the EUGS in 2016 as both challenge and opportunity (Ceccorulli and Lucarelli 2017).

Knoll and de Weijer (2016) note that the objective of these frameworks is European security through containment strategies that prevent flows of irregular migrants into Europe, mainly by improving border management, strengthening surveillance, and combating smuggling networks. In a joint meeting in Paris in August 2017, the EU – together with France, Germany, Italy, and Spain – again stressed the need to protect migrants, prevent departures from countries of origin, facilitate returns to home countries, and fight against migrant smugglers (Bundesregierung 2017). At the same time, it was stated that migration requires long-term efforts and consistent plans for joint action in order to address the root causes of irregular migration and promote sustainable development, inclusive growth, and community resilience (Bundesregierung 2017). In sum, the intention is to combine short-term strategies with longer-term aid and commitment that also rely on other instruments like partnerships, civilian missions, or the European Development Fund (EDF).

The assumptions that migration implies an increase in criminality, regional economic and political instability, and grievances against the people on the move



and that containment is therefore the most efficient strategy to address these problems are contested in the literature. As Reitano and Shaw (2015: 21) argue:

Migration has proved a resilience strategy for the vulnerable populations living in the countries across the Sahelian band [...] The facilitated movement of people was considered a positive economic opportunity, which was broadly overlooked by the states through which the migrants transited, and thus became closely ingrained into the economies of the border towns along the route.

Ranieri and Rossi (2017: 24) also observe that “seasonal patterns of rural flight and of regional migration (most notably towards North Africa) represent a key strategy to cope with the dry season in places like Mali and Niger”. They consider migration and smuggling an opportunity and suggest that migration may even “contribute to states’ security” and “regional stability”, as it “represents an alternative to taking up arms” (Ranieri and Rossi 2017: 11). Similarly, Molenaar and Kamouni-Janssen (2017: 14) contend that cross-border migration can be considered a “coping strategy to deal with climatic challenges that serves to dampen the harshest shocks to peoples’ livelihoods”. Venturi underlines the need for cross-border mobility as an important factor of development, accusing the EU of lacking a “deep understanding of local social and economic dynamics, such as regional mobility” (2017: 123).

Other scholars have analysed European migration policies in the context of broader EU-African Union (AU) relations, particularly after adopting the Joint Valletta Action Plan (2015) to strengthen cooperation between the two. According to a variety of studies, the EU migration policies have been adopted in the context of fundamentally contrasting interests of the EU and AU: while the former focuses on containing migration movements before they reach European shores, the latter has an interest in increasing legal migration routes to Europe (ICG 2017; Mackie et al. 2017). Castillejo argues that the shift to bilateral transactional engagement has caused “deep frustrations” (2017: 33) and soured relations between the EU and AU. In addition, International Crisis Group (2017: 9) claims that the EU’s decision to relocate EDF funds to the EUTF has led to disappointment and frustration among the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa.

Another tension seems to be the contrast between the short-termism of EU migration policies and the tendency within the AU to see migration as a structural phenomenon that has long-term implications (Barana 2017: 2; Mackie et al. 2017: 10). Authors point out that the root causes of migration cannot be addressed with policies of containment like policing and border control mechanisms but require more complex and lengthy processes which understand the phenomenon holistically, as linked to broader problems of development and peacebuilding (Clemens and Postel 2018; Gowan 2017; van der Lijn 2017). As Gowan (2017) explains, without civilian crisis

management efforts, the cycles of violence affecting the Sahel and Horn of Africa will likely persevere, rendering the strategies to contain migration futile.

While protection and security may be achieved through short-term measures, current policies might also “backfire in the long term” (Knoll and de Weijer 2016: 28; see also Barana 2017; Molenaar and Kamouni-Janssen 2017). Examining the cases of Niger and Mali, Bergmann et al. (2017) find that increased capacity for border management has aggravated the vulnerabilities of migrants by, for instance, easing situations of abuse, pushing them to take more precarious routes, or limiting their right to seek asylum. Again, this contrasts with the preferences of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which sees free movement as a means to stimulate economic and social dynamics in the wider region and controverts long-term peace strategies (Mackie et al. 2017: 8).

This point is also made concerning EU operations like EUNAVFOR MED operation Sophia, the naval mission to respond to the migration issue that, for example, takes unwavering measures against human smuggling activities (Johansen 2017; Riddervold 2018). Feyock (2016) argues that these actions will have a limited impact as long as no stability is achieved in Libya. Micallef and Reitano confirm this view when they see conflict and instability as “fundamental stumbling blocks to the long-term sustainable management of migratory flows in the central Mediterranean” (2017: 16–17). They conclude that current policies to contain migration movements in Libya have prolonged political instability. Assessing migration in northern Niger, Molenaar and Kamouni-Janssen warn against securitized measures that are insensitive to local conflict dynamics, especially concerning inter-tribal rivalries, and argue for a longer-term approach that “recognizes regional stability as a prerequisite” (2017: 1) for the development of migration policies in the region.

Other authors critique the EU’s current longer-term perspective (which runs in parallel to short-term mechanisms, as stated in its policy documents). The migration-development nexus adopted by the EU is based on the assumption that fostering economic development in countries of origin and transit can contain migration. Most actors have questioned this perspective. As Clemens and Postel assert, “evidence that aid can greatly and sustainably deter emigration from poor countries is weak at best” (2018: 15). De Haas also finds that economic development has a “U-curve effect” (2010: 39) on migration, as it only starts decreasing after a long period of sustained economic growth. Consequently, Ranieri and Rossi conclude that the current migration-development narrative promoted by the EU is “utterly misleading” (2017: 20).



## 4. THE RISE OF RESILIENCE IN MEMBER STATES' FOREIGN POLICY

This fourth section explores how resilience is gradually permeating the foreign policy of EU member states. It focuses on the policies of Germany, France, and Italy, as it is these that have sparked public attention and academic debate. A key observation is that, while a resilience paradigm is still incipient, it is increasingly apparent in the foreign policy documents of Germany and France, particularly in their development and humanitarian agendas, whereas it has been largely absent from Italy's foreign policy approach, which has focussed mainly on containing migration. The section is divided into three parts: The first discusses Germany's approach to development cooperation and humanitarian policies, through which it has increasingly adopted a mixture of short term and long-term strategies to enhance resilience. The second looks at France's foreign policy, which is transitioning from prioritising the state and governmental institutions towards emphasising processes that strengthen civil society and the private sector to facilitate societal resilience to humanitarian crises. Finally, we examine Italy's approach to foreign policy, which in recent years has been shaped primarily by migration concerns. Rather than measures to promote resilience, the focus has been on strategies of containment that parallel some of the policies adopted by the EU.

### 4.1 Resilience in Germany's Development and Humanitarian Policies

Being rooted in ecological debates on natural hazards and climate change (Birkmann 2008; Greiving and Fleischhauer 2012), resilience is gradually understood in the German context as an instrument of humanitarian assistance and development cooperation. According to M uller (2011), a more comprehensive understanding of the concept, as comprising aspects of societal and regional vulnerabilities, is relatively recent, and has led to a gradual popularization of the term in the German academic and policy debate. The German Federal Foreign Office (FFO), for example, locates strengthening resilience in its policies of both "humanitarian assistance and long-term development cooperation through recovery and rehabilitation" (2012: 7). Yet a resilience approach has not been integrated systematically into the existing foreign policy tools of the FFO. Resilience is mentioned in the new German guidelines on preventing crises, resolving conflicts, and building peace, but it is not linked to specific (foreign) policy instruments and generally refers to the capacities of states and societies to cope with crisis and violent conflict (Federal Government of Germany 2017).

In 2014, the FFO established a new Directorate-General for Conflict Prevention, Stabilization, and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding, which works with and on doctrines of stabilization (Rotmann and Steinacker 2014). This stabilization focus is the subject of



debate, as is the FFO's approach to crisis prevention within the Directorate-General, which is a structural, long-term perspective including implicit notions of fostering resilience in societies targeted for intervention. Comparing the conceptual visions of stabilization of Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States, Rotmann finds that the German FFO often employs a narrow approach to stabilization as an "urgent effort to prevent and overcome emergency situations of extreme political volatility and large-scale organized violence. Such emergencies may remain acute for many years" (Rotmann 2016: 14). This stabilization approach does not explicitly reference resilience-building but implies a shift from stabilization-as-peacebuilding to stabilization-as-crisis-management. This means that interventions do not see fragile state institutions as problems in need of statebuilding but as normalcy with which local populations will have to cope, with international support, for decades (2016: 11). As Rotmann (2016: 5) notes:

[T]he kind of stability sought here is no more than the absence of acute crises or, phrased positively, resilience to political shocks. Resilience implies a dynamic vision of stability in which political structures are adaptable to shifting demands and changing distributions of power, capable of assuming a minimum level of responsibility in the international system.

This implies a minimal approach of "defusing crisis" that is realistic, responsible, and flexible, and differs from the former ambitious goal of democratic statebuilding (Rotmann 2016). This approach parallels the pragmatism embraced in the EU's external action as a strategy to influence indirectly and adapt to a complex international arena in which Western liberal norms are contested (Chandler 2014; Joseph 2018; Juncos 2017).

German Humanitarian Assistance, which is also handled by the FFO and supports projects like the Nansen Initiative and the Platform on Disaster Displacement, refers more explicitly to resilience-building when it comes to disaster preparedness in view of sudden-onset shocks, recurrent or long-term stresses, and forecast-based financing. These approaches focus on enhancing the resilience of systems, rather than of individuals. This understanding of resilience is rooted in concepts of adaptation and capacity building, while also aiming at reducing underlying factors of vulnerability (health, food security, water and sanitation, etc.). This perspective is also reflected in the publications of the German Red Cross (GRC), which is a major actor in the elaboration of a German approach to resilience in a humanitarian context (GRC 2014).

The centrality of resilience to Germany's foreign policy framework follows the EUGS, which is meant to be integrated into the national policies of member states, and is itself connected to broader international concerns about the need to work on





“prevention” and “sustainability” (Bernstein 2018). This tendency is amplified by the traditional orientation of German foreign policy towards international cooperation, multilateralism, and a pro-active approach to European integration (Klein 2018: 229). The German seat in the Security Council for the period 2019–2020 is seen as an opportunity for the German government to foreground conceptual work on conflict prevention, stabilization, post-conflict peacebuilding, and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies.

Drawing on existing DFID/EU definitions of resilience, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has incorporated the concept in pertinent policy papers, discussing resilience at the individual and the community levels, as well as in the context of building inclusive institutions (e.g., in Agenda 2030 and the SDGs). Furthermore, the BMZ has commissioned policy-oriented research on resilience in crisis contexts (Mosel and Levine 2014a; Mosel and Levine 2014b). According to Joseph (2017), the BMZ approach to resilience is to strengthen existing coping mechanisms in the partner countries. He finds that the BMZ combines an emphasis on people’s capacity to recover from stress situations with the more traditional focus on institutional capacity building (Joseph 2017: 12). He also detects differences between the German and the Anglo-Saxon approaches to resilience: the Anglo-Saxon approach implies governing populations from a distance while encouraging self-responsibility and entrepreneurial behaviour by communities to adapt to crisis and shocks, whereas the German understanding is less individualistic and seeks to strengthen already existing societal and statist coping mechanisms in the neighbouring countries (see also Joseph 2018). Such nuances of approach when conceptualising resilience also play a role in French foreign policy (see 4.2 below).

Camacho and Kreibaum (2017) argue that, in the context of German development policy, resilience is generally operationalized in the form of innovative financial programming and cash-based interventions (CBIs). This is also reflected in the BMZ’s support to the “InsuResilience Global partnership”, which is an instrument for climate and disaster risk finance and insurance solutions. CBIs combine short-term, labour intensive tasks with local infrastructure projects, which in turn can contribute to livelihood development and disaster prevention. Germany has implemented CBIs in, for example, Afghanistan, Northern Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, and Nepal (Camacho and Kreibaum 2017: 11). Sometimes, these measures are accompanied by microfinance/SME or business training interventions. Recent CBIs mostly focus on enhancing employment opportunities for Syrian refugees in the countries neighbouring Syria. While most of these initiatives are implemented by the official German cooperation agencies, i.e., the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Credit Institute for Reconstruction (KfW), Germany also finances multilateral cash-based programmes of specialized UN agencies and funds.



These interventions usually target societal resilience. Camacho and Kreibaum (2017) also report recent tendencies in the German FFO to encourage NGOs to work with CBIs. Yet, CBIs remain a minor sector within German development cooperation.

Furthermore, resilience features prominently in the Transitional and Development Assistance (TDA) instrument, which takes a longer-term approach to enhancing the recovery of populations in areas affected by conflict. This instrument focuses on linking humanitarian and development interventions (Mosel and Levine 2014a). TDA addresses transition processes, filling the void between short-term relief and long-term development measures and aiming explicitly at fostering resilience through rehabilitation of social and productive infrastructures, disaster reduction, re-integration of refugees, and food security.

## 4.2 From Robustness to Resilience in French Foreign Policy

As in the case of Germany, the French term ‘résilience’ had been established in other disciplines such as ecology, physics, psychology, and geography (Blanc and Nicolas 2013; Koffi 2014) before it eventually reached policies and political science. The notion first entered the policy discourse on defence and national security, and subsequently expanded to development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. While resilience was initially conceived as robustness, centring on strengthening state capacities and responses, it has recently broadened in scope and now refers to a form of governance that includes a variety of actors and societal processes (Bourcart 2015). Yet research has been rather limited (primarily assessing France’s attempts to foster its own resilience in national policy areas), thus neglecting how the French may support resilience in ALS/CO through development and humanitarian policies.

Whereas the term resilience has remained largely absent from the policy discourse on counter-terrorism (Joseph 2018: 69) – the exception being the 2016 Action Plan against radicalization and terrorism (Premier Ministre 2016) – it has been prominent in defence and national security policy. Resilience was mentioned for the first time in the French 2008 White Paper (Présidence de la République 2008: 59–60) where it is defined as the

determination and the capacity of a country, a society and a government to withstand the consequences of a major aggression or disaster, and then rapidly to restore their capacity to function normally or at least in a socially acceptable manner. This concerns not only government, but the whole of civil society and all actors in the economy.

This definition reveals that resilience is understood as resistance or robustness, in contrast to the Anglo-Saxon dominant viewpoint, which suggests that “crises should





be seen as opportunities not to return to how things were, but to reorganize how we operate” (Joseph 2018: 54). Unlike in the US and UK literature, there is no in-depth discussion of either governance or community and individual preparedness in French defence and national security policy (Joseph 2013: 256).

Instead, France’s conception of security and risk prevention remains state-centric: despite references to the social dimension of resilience, the White Paper clearly focuses on public authorities’ capabilities (Joseph 2018: 53). Similar to Germany, France has traditionally followed an interventionist approach, led by the state and government, which emphasizes solidarity and national cohesion and offers little space for bottom-up resilience building by individuals and communities (Joseph 2013: 261; 2018: 177). This “acts against the Anglo-Saxon appeal to specific enterprising groups and individuals” (Joseph 2018: 179). On the White Book’s website, however, a government’s explanatory note elaborates on the “new concept” of resilience and points to the relevance of local authorities, civil society, and the private sector. By stating that resilience is not only an objective of the state but also a state of society, and by emphasizing the need to increase awareness among citizens, the text represents a step towards a form of governance that operates through more bottom-up societal practices and processes (Pr esidence de la R epublique 2008; Joseph 2013: 257). Also, regarding critical infrastructure protection, Joseph observes “a gradual transition from a strong form of state protection to a greater devolution of powers to the private sector and non-state actors” (2018: 93) since the mid-2000s, although this has not developed in a uniform manner.

Joseph finds that the reason for the French reluctance to embrace the idea of resilience is its Anglo-Saxon origin and its connection to a neoliberal rationality of governance. He suggests that France’s top-down and centralized administrative processes and the republican tradition of its political discourse impede the consolidation of the resilience concept outside the realm of security strategies. Furthermore, there is a less positive view of the private sector than in the UK: cooperation with private actors is often seen as inevitable rather than desirable. While the state is no longer perceived as the exclusive provider, it should always be ready to intervene, or at least coordinate, regulate, and facilitate (Bourcart 2015). Even when the French state tries to devolve some power to private and municipal actors, these show only limited interest in assuming responsibilities – a passivity that might have been created by the state operating through decrees and legally binding guidelines (Joseph 2018: 177). However, Joseph suggests that the introduction of resilience in the French security discourse and its recognition in responses to the 2008 White Paper prepare the ground for the inclusion of resilience as a form of governance “from a distance” (2018: 70) in the future. Also, the idea of resilience is strongly promoted by French think tanks, foundations, and research institutes,



which seem to be closer to Anglo-Saxon understandings (Joseph 2018: 98).

The shift towards an interpretation of resilience beyond a state-centric logic can be noted in the French policy discourses on foreign and development policies, which are closely intertwined in France. In 1999, the cooperation ministry was integrated into the foreign ministry, where the Directorate General for Globalization, Culture, Education and International Development (DGM) is now responsible for these matters. Politicians have also reflected this shift in their pronouncements. For instance, former foreign minister Bernard Kouchner has described development aid as a key *dimension* of diplomacy (Direction de l'information l gale et administrative 2007). The guidelines for French development policies are set by the Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development (CICID), which is chaired by the Prime Minister (Moreau and Kap-Herr 2008).

Policies of fostering resilience are understood as part of the French response to situations of fragility (MEAE 2018: 20). The notion of fragility emerged prior to the idea of resilience and therefore deserves close attention. Being the first of its kind, the strategy document "Fragile States and Situations of Fragility: France's Policy Paper" addresses both state and societal fragility, but concludes that, in fragile societies, it is the state that "needs to be the guardian, arbiter and regulator of public interest, equity and equality of all citizens" (CICID 2007: 2). This publication was followed by a number of government papers on different aspects related to fragility as well as to some remarkable institutional dynamics. In 2008, the Crisis Centre was established within the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs. It was renamed the Crisis and Support Centre in 2014, when divisions for stabilization, humanitarian action, and anticipation were added. Several measures were taken in order to improve the coordination of security and development policies among the ministries charged with foreign, interior, and defence affairs, e.g., the creation of a new Interministerial Committee for Strategic Direction (MEAE 2018: 11–12).

Another announcement of the 2007 strategy was translated into action in 2016, when the CICID approved the creation of the Peace and Resilience Fund as a new instrument for dealing with crisis situations in fragile regions. In this way, the French Development Agency (AFD), which implements policies defined by the French Government through the support of development projects, was provided with additional financial resources. The criteria that have to be met for funding include the degree to which the respective area is exposed to major shocks, the capacities at hand to cope with them, the likelihood that tensions or shocks spread, and the relative benefits for France and the AFD. The fund is organized in regional programmes called "initiatives". In 2017, four of these had been launched – in the Sahel, the Middle East, the Central-African Republic, as well as the countries in the



lake Chad region (MEAE 2018: 29). The fact that local institutions, NGOs, and private actors can apply for funding (AFD 2018) indicates a certain shift towards the Anglo-Saxon approach to resilience, putting more emphasis on the role of civil society, communities, and individuals and going beyond building the capacities of the central government (Joseph 2018: 54). This also becomes apparent when having a closer look at the fund's nine priority axes, which include aid to overcome collective and individual trauma, help for displaced persons, the provision of health care for vulnerable people, and the improvement of opportunities for young people through education and vocational training (AFD 2018). However, it remains to be seen whether these changes will become consolidated, embracing the Anglo-Saxon understanding of resilience, or if these new partnerships will eventually have to subordinate themselves to the French top-down administrative tradition and centralization, where civil society and the private sector play a less active role (Joseph 2013: 261; 2018: 175).

In 2018, the MEAE – more precisely, the DGM – published an update of the aforementioned 2007 strategy, entitled “Prevention, Resilience, and Sustainable Peace, 2018–2022”. It describes the context of its publication as a multiplication of fragility dynamics at the global level (MEAE 2018: 7). According to the paper, the main objective is to establish sustainable peace in fragile states by realizing the sixteenth goal of Agenda 2030, which refers to peace, justice, and strong institutions. Therefore, a central role is dedicated to prevention and fostering resilience before, during, and after crises, seeking to address root causes. This is to be achieved through contributions from diplomacy, security, development, stabilization, and humanitarian aid. Moreover, French interventions are to draw on the five goals of peace and state consolidation mentioned in the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States: legitimate politics, security, justice, economic foundations, and revenues and services (MEAE 2018: 7).

The French approach to fragility focuses on strengthening the social contract between state and society, assuming that, to be sustainable, development and stability have to be subordinated to democratic governance. While the strategy does not present a list of fragile states, it elaborates the criteria that determine whether or not France shall intervene, which are the same as those employed to evaluate projects in the Peace and Resilience Fund. Once an intervention is agreed upon, six principles guide France's activities: support political and diplomatic actors who are concerned with fragility issues and development aid; prevent crises and their resurgence by fostering inclusion and resilience; draw on concerted, prospective, and dynamic analyses of fragilities and risks; respond in an integrated, long-term manner, taking into consideration different dimensions of fragility; support endogenous processes fostering the legitimacy and sustainability of France's activities; and follow a rights-



based approach (MEAE 2018: 7).

Since fragility is deemed a multidimensional, structural, and volatile challenge that is present in different geographic contexts, the report pledges the mobilization of all available bilateral and multilateral cooperation instruments (MEAE 2018: 28). First, financial means for existing bilateral instruments are to be increased and new complementary ones created (e.g., a Stabilization Fund of the Crisis and Support Centre). The French focus on bilateral instruments is reflected in the fact that two thirds of the additional financial means for public development aid will be dedicated to bilateral aid, which supposedly allows more efficient support for priority countries. Following an integrated approach, the authors want to improve the coherence and synergies of the various instruments (MEAE 2018: 28). Second, these bilateral activities are to be complemented by multilateral institutions, and the relevance of the UN and its activities such as peacekeeping missions is particularly emphasized. France's financial contributions are to be accompanied by a strategy of influencing and monitoring initiatives to ensure that both France's and third countries' preferences regarding the approach to fragility are taken into consideration (MEAE 2018: 29). Third, financing is to be diversified by taking into account (i.e., supporting and monitoring) financial sources other than public development aid (including private investments and the internal resources of third states). Moreover, the role of remittances is emphasized: these are to be canalized towards investment in productive activities instead of in everyday consumption (MEAE 2018: 30).

In terms of methods, the text elaborates four key elements of the strategy's implementation. First, the strategy underlines the role of inter-agency coordination between humanitarian aid, development, and security (e.g., in the form of CICID, task forces, etc.). In particular, the early warning system SyAI of the Anticipation and Partnerships Mission – a division within the Crisis and Support Centre – is explained in detail, as this is to allow France to mobilize its means of cooperation appropriately (MEAE 2018: 31). Second, the strategy mentions complementary financial instruments, technical assistance and cooperation (MEAE 2018: 31–32). Third, France is to strengthen collaboration with Civil Society Organizations from the EU's Southern countries, since these possess expertise such as knowledge of fragile contexts and mobilization capacities that is especially important in regions where the state is too weak to intervene. Furthermore, these organizations can also contribute to the elaboration, implementation, and monitoring of public policies (MEAE 2018: 32). Lastly, the exchange between practitioners and French/Francophone researchers is to be strengthened and rendered more coherent in order to gain further insights for decision-making and implementation (MEAE 2018: 33).



Moreover, the concept of resilience plays a key role. The document’s understanding of resilience covers both states and societies, defining it as the capacity to absorb and overcome shocks, which can be limited to different degrees (MEAE 2018: 22). Hence, the idea of robustness is still present. Resilience-building is considered crucial before, during, and after crises and conflicts (MEAE 2018: 10). While the role of the state in fostering resilience, with regards to security and justice issues in particular, is still emphasized, the mobilization of local communities, the private sector, and civil society is also deemed necessary. Moreover, the role of the most vulnerable population groups (women, young people, and displaced persons) is given special attention (MEAE 2018: 26). Besides the case of the Peace and Resilience Fund, this is another indication of a shift from resilience-as-robustness (traditional French approach) towards resilience-as-governance (dominant Anglo-Saxon understanding). A similar development can be observed with regard to the French notion of fragility: drawing on the OECD’s definition of the term, the 2018 strategy recognizes that civil society and communities are crucial actors that possess valuable resources when it comes to tackling fragility (MEAE 2018: 7). Thus, they no longer need to be governed ‘from above’, as in top-down state-building approaches. However, the strategy does not spell out many details of how the aforementioned instruments are to be ideally combined in order to foster resilience. Granted, the food aid programme managed by the DGM is presented as an instrument supporting “population resilience” (MEAE 2018: 36), health as well as education are framed as resilience issues, and there is a list of France’s financial contributions to different funds (MEAE 2018: 15; 25). Nevertheless, there is no overall framework elaborating how existing and new instruments collectively contribute to resilience.

Because the emergence of the resilience concept in French policies towards third countries has been much slower than in defence and national security policy, research on fostering resilience abroad is limited. For instance, the MEAE supported a publication on fragilities and resilience (Ch ataigner 2014) in order to gain insights for its conceptual reflection and reorientation (MEAE 2018: 11). However, the book does not include an assessment of France’s foreign policy instruments strengthening resilience in ALS/CO. Although they appeared prior to the 2018 MEAE strategy, Joseph’s publications (2013; 2018) are also less in-depth when it comes to resilience in foreign and development policies. He finds that the AFD does not apply the concept “in any meaningful way”, despite its participation in events with actors that work on resilience-building (Joseph 2018: 151). While the agency has been mentioning the promotion of resilience in its strategic papers in recent years, Joseph emphasizes that the annual reports reveal how little this has actually affected thinking, let alone practice (Joseph 2018: 152). Even though resilience was only sporadically present in the discourse, however, “the context for a more resilience-friendly approach [has]



clearly already [been] outlined” (Joseph 2018: 152). For instance, the AFD has recognized the need to renovate the practice of development aid, improving donor coordination mechanisms and measures ensuring accountability. Furthermore, the General Commissioner for Sustainable Development has started a project on integrated territorial resilience, which helps various actors (including NGOs, communities, and private companies) to detect both sources of vulnerability and coping mechanisms, implying a transformation in the approach to resilience (Joseph 2018: 152–54).

As in the case of Germany, the recent move away from top-down and hierarchical forms of governance and towards more context-sensitive strategies in French policy-making might be – at least partly – a result of similar developments in the EU’s external action and in other multilateral forums (MEAE 2018: 22). Furthermore, as suggested by Joseph (2018: 154), ideas perceived as Anglo-Saxon could be less contentious when applied to third countries. Thus, while the French understanding of resilience might continue to be increasingly oriented towards British and US-American ideas in foreign and development policies, such an orientation is more difficult in the areas of defence and national security. Italy, by contrast, has been rather disinclined to adopt the concept of resilience in its foreign policy programmes.

#### 4.3 Italian Foreign Policy: Containment Rather Than Resilience

Whereas some authors have underlined Italy’s long tradition of adapting and being resilient to multiple crises (Evangelista 2018), the debate about resilience in Italy’s foreign policy is in its infancy. In the most recent report, the only reference to resilience is in relation to the need to maintain and strengthen the Euro (Greco et al. 2018). In the last few years, Italy’s foreign policy has been under immense pressure due to its proximity to a large number of international challenges, not only in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, but also in Eastern Europe (Brighi 2013; Isernia and Longo 2017). At the same time, persisting economic stagnation (if not crisis) has led to a drastic decrease of resources devoted to foreign affairs and a re-orientation towards economic objectives. In 2014, the ministry of Foreign Affairs saw the number of diplomats shrink to 1,019, half the size of the German equivalent, one third of the French and one fourth of the British (Tramballi 2015: 116). Embassies and cultural institutes have been closed and opened only where it made economic sense.

Differently from Germany and France, Italy has come to privilege a confrontational approach in foreign policy, with the aim of shifting the costs of adjustments onto partners. While it was possible in the past to suggest that Italy was aiming to punch above its weight (Giacomello and Verbeek 2011), the increase of domestic political



volatility has brought the limitations of such an approach to the fore. The new Giuseppe Conte government, which emerged from the 2018 elections, has so far led to a toughening of Italy's position on a few key priorities (Marrone 2018) in an attempt to score points at the international level for the domestic debate.

This approach is most visible in one of the most contentious political issues in contemporary times, namely migration, which overlaps with Italy's long-standing engagement with the Euro-Mediterranean area (Bicchi 2007). Whereas in Germany the Syrian refugee crisis centred public and policy attention in mainly domestic terms, the focus in Italy has shifted to Italy's foreign policy, supported by a public opinion in favour of addressing arrivals with a policy of refoulements and limited attention to human rights (see Fig. 10 in DISPOC/LAPS and IAI 2017: 17).

The evolution of Italy's set of policy instruments occurred in three steps. First, the early response centred on internal adaptation mechanisms, which not only assumed the resilience of Italian society, but were also designed specifically to sustain welfare mechanisms, such as “colf” (domestic workers) and “badanti” (caregivers) (see also Geddes 2008). In terms of systemic resilience, then, international migration came to substitute the previous internal Italian pattern of South-North migration. It also freed Italian women, to an extent, from traditional female roles in terms of welfare provision. However, this approach became untenable in the context of the EU because Italy's decision affected the other EU member states within the Schengen area. At this stage, the issue centred on migration understood for labour purposes.

The second step in this process shifted the emphasis on to externalization and was directly driven by increased numbers of Mediterranean arrivals, particularly after 2014–15. The chosen approach was to secure agreement with so-called transit countries, of which Libya was the most important. On a bilateral basis, Italy signed a memorandum of understanding with the Government of National Accord (GNA) in 2017, the main purpose of which was to stem the flow of migrants and prevent them from leaving Libyan territory (Greco et al. 2018). The cost of this agreement was high in terms of the financial support required by Libyan forces as well as in terms of widespread and systematic human rights abuses. The agreement led to a significant decrease in the number of migrants arriving to Italian coasts from Libya (there was an approximately 80 percent fall).

The third and ongoing development has been linked to the reconfiguration of Italian domestic politics following the 2018 elections. Two parties with nationalist anti-migration stances – the Lega, previously Lega Nord (Northern League), and the M5S, or Movimento 5 Stelle (Five Star Movement) – secured nearly 50 percent of the votes. While the EU had previously been understood as a ‘vincolo esterno’ (‘external

constraint' on domestic politics) offering external credibility to the Italian system, it was now represented as the cause of Italian problems. Most notably, the Dublin system, which required the first country of arrival to process asylum applications, meant that Italy (as well as Greece) bore the brunt of arrivals. Attempts to secure a more equitable distribution of up to 150,000 asylum seekers across the EU were read as a notable failure, much to the Italian government's chagrin. The rhetoric used by the M5S and Lega was distinctly Eurosceptic. Of crucial importance was the appointment to the position of Interior Minister of the Lega leader, Matteo Salvini, who adopted a very tough rhetorical approach to migration enhanced by the reinvention of the Lega as a nationally based and overtly nationalistic political party. Previously, the Lega Nord had argued for "prima il Nord" ("the North first"), but by 2017 Salvini was calling for "prima gli italiani" ("Italians first"). The subsequent choice of policy instruments on migration by Salvini did not mark a significant change from the preceding centre-left government and has continued to rely on restricting access to Italian territory. But Salvini also targeted NGOs as so-called sea taxis ferrying migrants to Italian shores, most notably in relation to the Aquarius rescue boat that was forced to travel to Spain with around 55 migrants on board (Scherer 2018). Also, these policies have been accompanied by the multilateralism of external initiatives, reflecting a new alignment at the EU level with the Visegrad group supplemented by the Austrian coalition led by Sebastian Kurz and the new Italian government within which Interior Minister Salvini is a key player (Brandt and Reinert 2018).

Therefore, the concept of resilience has had few appearances in the current Italian approach to migration since the abandonment of regularization as a policy instrument. Italy, like other EU members, has relied on financial incentives alongside development initiatives that have political stability in mind in order to achieve a series of political goals within countries in the Southern neighbourhood. In Italy's case, these incentives have been specifically (if not uniquely) tied to the implementation of externalized migration controls aimed to contain the arrival of migrants to Europe – primarily those traveling from Libya (Breines et al. 2015). Countries in the Southern neighbourhood have responded accordingly, implementing most European demands to monitor, control, and impede migration flows (Brachet 2018: 22). As critics have often observed, none of these measures have been put into place in order to enhance long-term resilience in the region. Rather, these responses stand as short-term, piece-meal solutions that have often had negative impacts on local economies and whose goals are often rooted in Europe's limited understanding of mobility practices and their organization, ultimately leading these plans to backfire (Knoll and de Weijer 2016: 28; Mackie et al. 2017).





While Italy has pledged to provide alternative economic growth models for migrant generating countries, as in the memorandum for understanding (MOU) by the Odysseus Network (2017), its attempts to dismantle and counter smuggling networks have altered long standing mechanisms of protection – what Ayalew Mengiste (2018) refers to as “communities of knowledge”. These mechanisms had historically provided not only improved conditions for those traveling across the region, but also a subsistence income for many of those facing precarious lives along the migrant trail and whose work provided a range of mobility services. The criminalization of mobility practices through Italian-funded counter-smuggling efforts have, in this sense, led to the incarceration and sentencing under smuggling charges of many men and women across the Southern neighbourhood. While Italian-funded initiatives are not new, this was the first time that people in Niger, for example, saw accusations of smuggling lead to jail sentences (Brachet 2018). Another discouraging consequence of Italian counter-smuggling and migration and border enforcement efforts can be seen in the case of Libya. Here attempts to contain attempts at migration into Europe have led to the proliferation of clandestine detention centres and camps run by a series of official and unofficial actors (Al-Arabi 2018). Furthermore, an estimated 700,000 to 1,000,000 migrants are being stranded in the country, unable to leave (IOM 2018), often forcibly detained by militias benefiting from the Italy-Libya MOU.

In sum, Italy’s responses to migration reflect a broader trend in the EU that favours containment strategies, often dominated by short-term concerns that have negative effects for the people on the move and the region. Sensibilities to foster resilience do not permeate these instruments, which lack an understanding of the local social and economic dynamics of Europe’s neighbours – in this case, the markets and the people who had historically shaped regional and transnational mobility (Ayalew Mengiste 2018).

## CONCLUSION

The EU’s external action is being affected by a changing international environment – from the crisis of liberalism and democracy to the economic and financial crises, international conflicts like Syria and Libya, to events such as the Arab Spring, terrorist attacks, and migration flows. Also, internally, the politicization and contestation of European integration by the rise of Eurosceptic right-wing parties or the discrepancies among member states regarding migration and security policies are shaping the EU’s role in international affairs. ALS/CO are here to stay and the EU and member states’ instruments and capacities to deal with them need careful examination.



Today, the transformative ambition of the EU's foreign policy seems to have withered away. The EU seems to be changing gears, and if during the 2000s the determination was to transform the world by spreading democracy and liberal values, in the past decade these external ambitions have decreased. The EU is becoming a more defensive and pragmatic actor that seeks to pursue stability and foster resilience while addressing multiple internal crises (Bendiek 2017; Morillas 2019a). This shift has been captured here by reviewing the debates on the EU promotion of human rights, democracy, and multilateralism. In the realm of human rights, some authors have observed that the EU increasingly sacrifices norms to interests, as in, for example, its cooperation with authoritarian regimes that have dubious records of human rights violations (Crawford 2008; Sharshenova and Crawford 2017; Sicurelli 2017). Also, the EU appears to have altered the framing of democracy promotion, gradually prioritizing security and stability concerns and pragmatic arrangements over institutional and regime change (e.g., Kurki 2011; Schmidt 2015). Although multilateralism continues to be a priority, it is seen as ever more difficult to pursue in times of uncertainty, political and economic instability, and shifting balances of power (Barb e et al. 2016).

In this context of hollowing ambition, this background paper has looked at how resilience permeates the policies and instruments that the EU and member states wield to deal with ALS/CO. It has argued that the EU's economic instruments (such as trade, the EU's Neighbourhood Policy or development assistance) and political instruments (such as strategic partnerships, diplomatic relations, Enlargement policies or civilian and military missions) have increasingly been framed in terms of resilience. A key concern in the literature is that economic and financial instruments are subjugated to the EU's own security and stability and, therefore, often have destabilizing effects on local economies (Bicchi 2014; Carbone and Orbie 2014; Dodini and Fantini 2006; Langan 2015; Gst ohl 2015; Bouris and Schumacher 2017). Similarly, the lack of solid support for bottom-up initiatives in civilian and military missions has been criticized and identified in the literature as one of the key remaining challenges for achieving peace and resilience in societies targeted for intervention (Ejdus 2017; Ejdus 2018; Rayroux and Wil en 2014).

Similarly, a key observation made by this paper is that, in Germany, resilience is mostly understood as a concept for humanitarian and development policies, for example in the context of Transitional and Development Assistance and humanitarian assistance programmes. In these fields, Germany aims to promote the resilience of populations in areas affected by conflict through, for instance, rehabilitating socio-economic infrastructures, helping disaster recovery, mitigating violence, and enhancing food security. Such instruments integrate short-and long-term needs. However, Germany has also begun to embrace resilience in the context



of its foreign policy – though the concept has not been incorporated systematically into the policies and instruments of the German FFO. These developments are reinforced by Germany's commitment towards international cooperation and multilateralism, as the idea of resilience is also gaining in importance in international policy forums. France also seems to have considered resilience in its recent foreign and humanitarian policies – although timidly and without a consolidation of the framework in other sectors. This is remarkable, particularly when considering the French preference for top-down administrative and centralized models of governance, where civil society and the private sector play a less active role. Today, however, France seems more inclined to facilitate resilience before, during, and after crises and conflicts, fostering the participation of local communities and private actors.

Migration has been the third policy area examined in this paper both at the EU level and at the level of member states' foreign policy. In contrast to the French and German foreign policy documents, where migration was less important, it has sparked a particularly heated debate in Italy. In dealing with the recent migration flows coming from North African countries and from the Middle East, the EU has prevented flows of irregular migrants into Europe by means of containment strategies, such as improving border management, policing, and surveillance, and combating smuggling networks (Knoll and de Weijer 2016). Similarly, Italy has addressed migration issues through control tactics and border enforcement, preventing migrants from reaching European soil. Ultimately, though, even EU policies and partnerships that commit to long-term efforts to promote sustainable development and resilience to cope with deep-seated societal problems are driven by a focus on containment (Bundesregierung 2017). Containment has been criticized in the literature because it tends to be harmful for migrants and have negative economic consequences for the countries of origin (Micallef and Reitano 2017). We believe that such policies fundamentally misunderstand the socio-economic dynamics of the region, where migration – rather than containment – may stimulate economic growth and enhance political stability.



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