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# Europe's Common Security and Defense Policy, Narratives and the Transatlantic Security Community

An analysis of the EU's recent CSDPs regarding their justifications from 2016 to 2020

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## **Abstract**

Since the two narratives of strategic autonomy and European sovereignty first appeared in the EU in 2016 and 2017, they have been omnipresent. At the same time, Donald Trump was elected as U.S. president and a series of difficulties in transatlantic relations began. Although transatlantic relations have been tumultuous in the past, statements by experts and leaders prompt speculation that the Transatlantic Security Community (TSC) has undergone deeper changes this time around. In terms of this change, this thesis examines to what extent the EU's recent Common Security and Defense policies (CSDPs) have been justified in terms of a changing TSC. In order to answer this question, the first part of this thesis examines the literature of security communities and the role of discourse from a social constructivist point of view. The subsequent methodological part lays out the procedure of the conducted qualitative content analysis in order to present on this theoretical and methodological basis the results of the analysis. In doing so, it becomes clear that the TSC is not the only explanation for the EU's recent CSDPs, but is merely one of many. This can be traced back to the fact that the EU does not have a unified definition and conception for strategic autonomy and European sovereignty, which in turn seems to have implications for implementation.

**Key words:** Europe's CSDP, Transatlantic Security Community, narratives, justifications

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## **List of Abbreviations**

EU	European Union
COM	European Commission
CSDP	Common Security and Defense Policy
TSC	Transatlantic Security Community
HR/VP	High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission
EUCO	European Council
EUGS	EU Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy
MS	Member States

## 1. Introduction

*[T]he so called “strategic autonomy” [...] means to me that the European Union should be able to take full responsibility for our own security [...]. Europe in today’s world must – and I underline must - be militarily capable of acting autonomously if and when this is necessary*  
(Federica Mogherini, 2019).

Federica Mogherini, former High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP), released the EU Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS) in June 2016, setting out a central objective of the EU’s foreign and security policy by highlighting the need to achieve “strategic autonomy.” (Dimitrova, 2016: 2, Koenig, 2020: 2) In the following year, French President Macron referred to “European sovereignty” in his famous speech at the Sorbonne University, which he defined as “our capacity to exist in the world as it currently exists, to defend our values and our interests.” (Verellen, 2020: 307) Since then, these two narratives have become leading concepts, both within the Member States (MS) and Brussels.

At the same time, the U.S. was holding presidential elections, in which Donald Trump was elected as the 45<sup>th</sup> president of the U.S.. The period that followed was dominated by widespread debates about how transatlantic relations have begun to erode under Trump’s *America First* doctrine (Bilal and Imran, 2019, Dimitrova, 2016, Viola, 2020). Since then he has criticized NATO members for not sharing their due responsibility regarding the organization’s defense budget and even regularly threatened to withdraw from the alliance. According to Bilal and Imran, he “placed serious strain on the transatlantic relationship [...], especially for European allies who previously shared a collective identity with the US.” (Bilal and Imran, 2019: 4)

Although transatlantic relations have been tumultuous before and the idea of a neutral Europe independent of past and present great powers is not new (Rudischhauser et al., 2018: 197, Demetriou, 2016: 2), the discourse by both experts and leaders suggest that something more fundamental may have changed in the Transatlantic Security Community (TSC) this time around. Is there a correlation between Europe’s new security and defense ambitions and the changing transatlantic relationship? How does the EU justify the need for more sovereignty and autonomy in its discourse? In the following thesis, these questions will be highlighted and debated, with one aspect being explored in particular via the following central question:

## **To what extent have the EU's recent Common Security and Defense policies been justified in terms of a changing Transatlantic Security Community?**

In order to pursue the answer to the question raised and to place it in an adequate context, this thesis first examines the current literature on security communities, with a particular focus on the TSC, and discusses the role of discourse from a social constructivist perspective (2.1). Moreover, the evolution of transatlantic relations is outlined and the relevance of this case as well as expectations derived from the literature regarding the research question are presented (2.2). This theoretical framing serves as an analytical framework to subsequently identify the justifications for the need for strategic autonomy and European sovereignty in the EU's discourse. The methodological part that follows lays out the selection process of the speeches, the cases and the time frame (3.1). This methodological chapter also includes explanations of the coding procedure (3.2) as well as an outline of how the narratives and justifications were identified (3.3). Based on these theoretical and methodological classifications, the results of the analysis are presented and discussed (4.). Finally, a conclusion is drawn (5.).

## **2. A Theoretical Framework: The Transatlantic Security Community in Perspective**

### **2.1 Literature Review on (the Transatlantic) Security Community(ies) and the Role of Discourse**

This thesis closely follows the literature on security communities and a social-constructivist perspective.

The conceptual roots of security communities can be traced back to Karl W. Deutsch (Deutsch, 1957). According to Deutsch, what distinguishes a security community from other kinds of communities is that a security community is a group of people who have the certainty that they will not physically fight each other, as there are dependable expectations of peaceful change (Deutsch, 1957: 5). In the case of the TSC, the process was facilitated by three factors in particular - compatibility of core values, states that responded quickly and well to the needs of other members, and the ability to anticipate the behavior of other members (Deutsch, 1957: 67).

Excluding Deutsch, social constructivists are convinced that there is more at play than just overlapping interests and common institutions (Larsen, 2018: 63). They generally argue that our knowledge of the social world is not a reflection of the world, but rather the result of our way of categorizing it. According to Ikenberry, the TSC must be considered “as an expression or manifestation of a shared Euro-American political identity, a constructed or imagined community that has evolved over the decades.” (Ikenberry, 2016: 23) Also coming from a constructivist perspective, Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett suggest that the expectation of peaceful coexistence arises when states are induced to upgrade their common security (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 38). In this process, a common identity emerges through structural and procedural factors (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 38). Wæver also attributes a special role to identities: the core of transatlantic relations is the “identity-based non-war community.” (Wæver, 1998: 71)

In the literature influenced by social constructivism, security communities are often not only discussed in terms of their formation, but also regarding their duration and challenges. In general, there are many different explanations for the erosion of the TSC (Ikenberry, 2016, Kupchan, 2016, Risse, 2016). Regarding the duration of its existence, Risse developed four categories, the so-called four “I’s,” in order to assess the state of the transatlantic community: interests, interdependence, institutions and identities (Risse, 2016: 23). As soon as one of the four “I’s” is questioned and no longer provides an incentive for cooperation, the TSC is in

danger (Risse, 2016: 26). However, the most important cornerstone of a security community, according to Risse, is a collective identity (Risse, 2016: 25). Shared identities and values are particularly important because they can affect transatlantic relations in a variety of ways. Once disagreements arise, allies can point to the shared values and express the identity that originally represented common consensus (Kitchen, 2009: 111). Besides identity, according to Risse, political and economic elites are of particular importance, as they are “responsible for the transatlantic community.” (Risse, 2016: 36) Once this support is damaged, the community will be in trouble (Risse, 2016: 35).

Since these elites express their opinions in discourse, it is worth examining discourses. Within the framework of social constructivism, discourse is important because “it mediates norms and identities that shape foreign policy directly through the logic of appropriateness or through the shaping of interests that in turn shape foreign policy.” (Diez, 2014b: 30) This also leads to the discourse, which includes norms, and therefore becoming an independent variable that then explains the outcomes of foreign policy (Schmidt, 2010). In social constructivist thinking, actors who advocate for these norms play an important role (Diez, 2014a: 322). These actors, whether an individual actor or a group, act as “norm entrepreneurs” and in the process drive a discourse (Diez, 2014a: 322). It is not only in relation to Euro-Atlantic relations that discourse is important and shows changes - it has increasingly become an object of analysis regarding the legitimation of EU policies as well (Diez, 2014b: 27).

The role of discourse is also frequently mentioned in the context of security communities, “because the creation of discursive structures is one of the ways in which a community is constructed.” (Kitchen, 2009: 101) According to Kitchen, the best way to identify change within the Atlantic community is through an analysis of the public pronouncements of security elites as the members of the TSC have employed the strategy of *Grand Design* (Kitchen, 2009: 100). The technique of *Grand Design* is a way of communication and aims to change the discourse, builds on discursive structures, and expands the rhetorical resources available to political elites (Kitchen, 2009: 103). *Grand Designs* are thus used when members are dissatisfied with the status quo of alliance relations, global changes force a rethinking of the community’s boundaries, or when there are points of contention within the community that need to be highlighted and discussed (Kitchen, 2009: 104). For this reason it can be expected that the TSC, and more precisely a change in the TSC, is expressed and can be best identified within the elites’ opinion and therefore in discourse.

Of particular interest are the narratives that the EU has developed in relation to how it presents itself in its external relations. Chris Bickerton states that these narratives about the EU's foreign policy and external relations are functional in the way that they positively promote European integration at times when internal development is not progressing (Nițoiu, 2013). However, it should also be noted that there is undoubtedly a discrepancy between, on the one hand, the goals that are defined within the framework of narratives and, on the other hand, the real political performance of the EU's external relations (Nițoiu, 2013: 241). Narratives, as continuous discursive redefinitions, contribute to a dynamic context in which goals are always revised as soon as the political reality no longer coincides with them (Nițoiu, 2013: 241). Compared to discourses, which are considered impermanent and always interacting with each other, narratives are formed only by the discourses that are institutionalized through social and political practice (Nițoiu, 2013: 252).

As this overview illustrates, on the one hand, the TSC as well as its changes and, on the other hand, the European CSDPs are reflected and expressed in discourses and more precisely in narratives of political elites. For this reason, it is particularly relevant to look at such narratives.

## **2.2 Relevance for Research and Theoretical Expectations**

This thesis traces justifications of the recent narratives of the European CSDP towards more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty in the speeches of key political elites in the EU from 2016 to 2020. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the case, state its theoretical and empirical relevance, and present the expectations derived from the literature to better connect the study to existing research.

After World War II, there was no longer a need for Europe collectively to arm itself defensively, as the U.S. was always present (Demetriou, 2016: 4). The U.S. presence developed an apparatus of Euro-Atlantic institutions and procedures in which the EU's defense policy was integrated (Demetriou, 2016: 4). However, while the U.S. "defense umbrella" was a simple defense and security solution for Europe, Europe was also left without the capacity to develop an independent security and defense policy (Demetriou, 2016: 4). However, this has changed and the erosion of the transatlantic relations has been ubiquitously discussed for several years now, especially since the Bush Administration began to abandon international commitments (Bilal and Imran, 2019: 7). Although many scholars do not claim that "the West" is disappearing

altogether (Kupchan, 2016, Ikenberry, 2016, Hall, 2016), they speak of a transformation of the Atlantic community into a new kind of Western order (Ikenberry, 2016: 5/6).

In this regard, the literature claims that especially the loss of a shared EU-U.S. identity has led Europeans to question the reliability of this long-standing alliance (Bilal and Imran, 2019: 5). According to Risse, the “feeling of mutual indifference” (Risse, 2016: 34) is spreading. Kupchan adds to that by stating that the identities of the U.S. and Europe have become increasingly antagonistic rather than common (Kupchan, 2016). The security community in the Euro-Atlantic region still exists, but the Atlantic “we-feeling” has diminished (Kupchan, 2016: 123).

This fractured partnership has been particularly visible under the Trump administration. Without doubt, Trump is not the first president under whom U.S. national and global interests differed from those of European partners (e.g. Churchill and Roosevelt, Johnson and de Gaulle, and Kohl and Reagan). President Barack Obama also called for greater burden sharing for European security in the course of the *Pivot to Asia*. The difference, however, is that Trump’s hostile foreign policy toward Europe and the lack of diplomacy threatened to further damage transatlantic relations (Bilal and Imran, 2019: 9). The common values that have held Europe and the U.S. together are the principles of democracy, the rule of law, the willingness to strengthen and defend the system of international rule-making as well as its enforcement and institutions (Rudischhauser et al., 2018: 184). One indication that this changed under the Trump administration is the long list of U.S. withdrawals from international agreements.

In addition, polls also show a worsening impression of the TSC. As shown by a survey conducted by the *Pew Research Center* in 2020 in 13 countries, the reputation of the U.S. in Europe has continued to decline compared to earlier polls (Wike et al., 2020: 3). In France, only 31% viewed the U.S. favorably and Germans give the U.S. some of the worst ratings in the survey (Wike et al., 2020: 10). Only 26% of people surveyed in Germany have a positive image of America, while only 10% have confidence in Trump when it comes to his handling of world politics (Wike et al., 2020: 10). These views are in stark contrast to the very positive assessments Germans had during Barack Obama’s presidency, but are roughly on par with views at the end of George W. Bush’s term (Wike et al., 2020: 10). Another representative poll, conducted by *Atlantik-Brücke* and the *American Council on Germany*, examined public perceptions of the transatlantic relationship and the challenges facing Europe and the U.S. in

April 2018 (Atlantik-Brücke, 2018). The survey found that while shared values exist in the transatlantic alliance, they are eroding (Atlantik-Brücke, 2018). This can be determined based on the fact that only 14% of Germans and 12% of Americans believe that a foundation of shared values is intact (Atlantik-Brücke, 2018). In addition, one in five Germans believed there was no foundation of shared values at all (Atlantik-Brücke, 2018).

To claim in general, though, that transatlantic relations are no longer intact and that there are no longer any shared values is very daring. It should also not be forgotten that the passive and active resistance of some state department employees in the past showed that Trump does not necessarily represent the majority, especially among the U.S. political elite, and therefore transatlantic relations cannot be described as completely broken. However, based on the existing literature and the surveys presented, it can be assumed that the TSC has changed, especially since Trump's election, and that the political elites in this case predominantly justify the new EU policies regarding more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty with a changing, and perhaps a weakening TSC.

### **3. Methodological Approach**

In order to empirically analyze the link between the changing TSC and the narratives of strategic autonomy and European sovereignty, a qualitative content analysis was conducted. This method is usually utilized to evaluate qualitative data and interpret their meaning (Elo et al., 2014: 1, Schreier, 2012). According to Mayring, qualitative content analysis is an “approach to empirical, methodologically controlled analysis of texts in their communication context that follows content-analytic rules and step-by-step models, without rash quantification.” (Mayring, 2000) Qualitative content analysis was chosen because data can be interpreted and coded in a valid and reliable manner (Moretti et al., 2011). In addition, there is enough data available for this analysis that is well suited for qualitative content analysis. It was also used as it provides an objective and systematic means of quantifying and describing phenomena (Schreier, 2012). Regarding implementation, qualitative content analysis can be used either inductively or deductively (Elo et al., 2014: 1). The category formation of this work was carried out both deductively and inductively as both seemed to be appropriate methods. Both variants include three main phases: Preparation, organization, and reporting of results (Elo et al., 2014: 1). Within the preparation phase, it is first necessary to explain why exactly speeches are being studied, which actors are being analyzed, and why the period from 2016 to 2021 was chosen as the period of study (3.1). Secondly, the organization phase is conducted by explaining how the speeches were coded and how the analysis was conducted (3.2), including the definition of the objects of study (3.3). Lastly, the results of the study will be presented (4.).

#### **3.1 Selection of Speeches, Cases and Timeframe**

According to Coffey, content analysis of speeches should be considered more often as a useful method to assess the views of public officials, as they provide a direct measure of actors’ preferences, values, and ideologies (Coffey, 2005: 88). Moreover, democracies represent a special form of government in which political decision-makers have to justify their decisions to the population in order to have a chance of being re-elected (Kitchen, 2009: 101). Therefore, it can be concluded that specifically in public speeches, the justifications and reasons why they chose a certain policy are accurately stated.

The most commonly used method in content analysis studies, and the method that will also be used in this thesis, is purposive sampling (Elo et al., 2014: 4). This method is suitable for this thesis because the focus should be on the actors who have the best knowledge about the research topic and are responsible for security and defense policy. However, the sample, in this case the

speeches of the actors, must be appropriate and include participants who best represent the research topic (Elo et al., 2014: 4). Like Popuu, this thesis argues that an actor's speech can represent a multiplicity of speakers and addressees to/with/for whom the protagonist is speaking (Poopuu, 2015: 137). Even when the EU agrees on principles of action, it "does not necessarily speak with one voice, but with several voices singing the same song." (Carta and Morin, 2014: 305) For this reason, speeches of politicians from the EU institutions as well as the MS were examined. Additionally, only speeches that were delivered to particularly large audiences were selected, as it can be assumed that these speeches have a particularly wide reach.

At the executive level, according to Carta and Wodak, the management of foreign policy issues within the EU is assigned to three groups of institutional actors that intervene in the design of foreign policy measures: The Council of the EU, the EU Commission, and the HR/VP (Carta and Wodak, 2015: 2). For this reason, the speeches of the President of the Commission, the President of the Council of the EU and the HR/VP were selected. On the member state level, speeches of German and French politicians were selected, more precisely the speeches of the presidents/chancellors, the defense ministers and the foreign ministers, as they all have competences in security and defense policy. France and Germany have become the most important actors in the field of security and defense in the EU, especially after Brexit (Zieliński, 2020: 2). Moreover, France is considered one of the biggest supporters of strategic autonomy in the EU (Zieliński, 2020: 9). For this reason, these two countries were selected and the speeches of German and French political actors were studied.

In addition to the selection process of speeches and cases, the time frame was also carefully chosen. As mentioned before, former HR/VP Mogherini published the EUGS in June 2016. This was followed by two Franco-German papers in July and September 2016 that outlined a common vision and concrete proposals for a European Security and Defense Union (Koenig and Walter-Franke, 2017: 3). Since the narrative of strategic autonomy first appeared in Mogherini's EUGS in June 2016, and the narrative of European sovereignty first appeared in President Macron's speech in front of Sorbonne in 2017, June 2016 represents the starting point of this analysis. The end of the analysis framework is December 31, 2020, as Joe Biden was sworn in as the new U.S.-President starting in January 2021 and the term under Trump is particularly interesting as an object of analysis.

### **3.2 Coding Procedure for the Analysis**

Besides explaining the selection process of the speeches, the cases and the timeframe, it is also important, in particular in terms of validity, to present how exactly the results were obtained, as it must be possible to clearly understand the analysis and the resulting conclusions (Schreier, 2012, Elo et al., 2014: 1). This second phase, the organizing phase, will guide through the selected inductive and deductive approach.

Categories were established from the literature discussed in the second chapter and thus deductively. Deductive category application works with previously formulated, theoretically derived aspects of analysis and connects them to the text (Mayring, 2000). In this process, a methodologically controlled category is assigned to a text passage during the analysis (Mayring, 2000). For this reason, one category/justification (TSC) was created based on the existing literature. Since it is important here that explicit definitions, examples, and coding rules are established for this deductive category that describes exactly when a text passage is coded with the category, a coding agenda with category definitions was created (see Annex 1). It should also be noted that although these category definitions, differentiation rules and text passages were formulated in a theory-based manner, they were repeatedly completed and revised during the analysis process.

In a second step, during the coding phase, additional categories/justifications were added to the codebook whenever a new justification was mentioned that was not clearly assigned to the existing justification (TSC). This inductive approach includes open coding, category formation and abstraction (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008 cited in Elo et al., 2014). During this process, data is examined for content and coded for correspondence to identify categories (Polit and Beck, 2012 cited in Elo et al., 2014). As the researcher works through the material, categories are derived step by step (Mayring, 2000). These are then revised in a feedback loop and finally combined into main categories and tested for reliability (Mayring, 2000).

Overall, the codebook contains 15 different justifications. In total,  $n = 517$  justifications were coded in the 111 speeches, an average of 4.6 justifications per speech.

### **3.3 How to Identify Narratives and Justifications**

It also needs to be discussed how the two objects of study, the two narratives of strategic autonomy and European sovereignty, as well as their justifications, are to be identified. How

exactly narratives and justifications are defined and discernible in the speeches is presented in detail in the annex (see Annex 1).

Narratives in general can be understood as the result of intersections between different discourses (Nițoiu, 2013: 240). However, these discourses are more fluid than “normal” discourses and sometimes tend to collide with each other (Nițoiu, 2013: 240). Finally, only discourses that are institutionalized through social and political practice become part of a narrative (Nițoiu, 2013: 240). Should a narrative be shared by the broader political community, they are very likely to become disconnected from the dynamics that characterize the discourse (Nițoiu, 2013: 242).

What exactly is meant by the narratives strategic autonomy and European sovereignty is not defined explicitly, neither in the EUGS nor in any other of the EU’s documents on foreign and security policy. This poses a major obstacle to the implementation. However, Bajpai refers to strategic autonomy as “a foreign policy stance in which a nation maintains an independent view and orientation in foreign affairs with respect to the issues that define its core interests.” (Bajpai, 2020) Similarly, Alexander Wendt defines strategic autonomy as “the ability of a state-society complex to exercise control over its resource allocation and governance decisions.” (Wendt, 1999: 98) However, since the term was used in particular within the context of Europe’s CSDP, European strategic autonomy can be understood as the ability of MS to set their own priorities in foreign, security, and defense policy issues, to make decisions, and to have the means to do so, should they wish to implement the decisions made on their own or with partners (Järvenpää et al., 2019: 1).

As with strategic autonomy, there is a distinction between internal and external in the notion of European sovereignty. The narrower internal meaning focuses primarily on security and defense (Koenig, 2020: 1). In this context, there is a notion that “European countries should take on a greater share of the burden within NATO and, where appropriate, through the EU.” (Fiott, 2018: 2) However, the term European sovereignty refers primarily to external aspects. According to Daniel Fiott, the call for more European sovereignty, like that for strategic autonomy, goes beyond the realm of security and defense and also applies to economic and foreign policy (Fiott, 2018: 2). It is about a Europe that sits at the decision-making table in international affairs next to great powers such as the U.S. or China (Verellen, 2020: 314).

This thesis defines strategic autonomy and European sovereignty in such a way that these concepts can be understood as the ability to act and cooperate with partners whenever possible, while acting independently whenever necessary. However, these concepts do not necessarily question the TSC, but emphasize the need to become a relevant partner as a global security provider (Zieliński, 2020: 7).

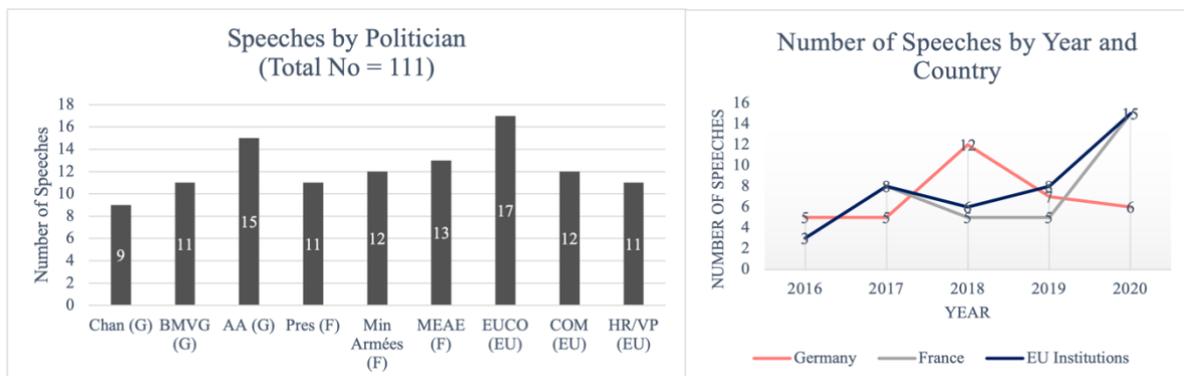
Additionally, it is equally important to understand the second category of analysis: Justifications. They are embedded in the discourses because discourses “(re)define what is justified and legitimate.” (Vaara and Tienari, 2002: 279) The justifications in the context of this thesis are to be understood as explanations that directly accompany the narratives of strategic autonomy and European sovereignty. They can be found before or after the narratives and always represent the answer to the question of why the narrative is relevant.

## 4. Results: CSDP Narratives and their Justifications

### 4.1 Overall Findings and all Identified Justifications

Within this chapter, the final and reporting phase, the results are described using the content of the categories (Elo et al., 2014: 2). First, however, overall findings and all identified justifications are presented in order to obtain a first overview. The following two chapters will then delve into more detail on specific results.

111 speeches were selected in which at least one of the two previously analyzed narratives (N1: strategic autonomy and N2: European sovereignty) appears. In each of these speeches, at least one justification for the found narrative could be identified in addition to the narrative. The graph below (Figure 1), on the one hand, clearly shows a differing number of speeches between the categories of politicians (e.g. Chan: 9; Min Armées: 12; EUCO: 17) and, on the other hand, shows that the number of speeches between 2016 and 2020 varied. When Europe's reorientation toward greater defense and security independence entered the European discourse in 2016 and 2017, politicians used the narratives less than in the subsequent years. Whereas German policymakers used the CSDP narratives by far the most in 2018, French politicians and those working in EU institutions referenced the narratives most often in 2020. Although no definite conclusions for these findings are drawn, some possible explanatory propositions could be inferred.



**Figure 1: Overall findings**

*Source: Own illustration*

The increase in the use of CSDP narratives at the EU level in 2020 may be due, on the one hand, to the new EU Commission starting in 2019, which resulted in more geopolitical as well as security and defense policies. On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic hit Europe in 2020, with dependency structures in the EU being reconsidered and rethought in all aspects.

The fact that German politicians most frequently used CSDP narratives in their speeches in 2018 may be due to the fact that the global security situation became more critical. Donald Trump announced in 2018 that he would withdraw from the multilateral nuclear agreement with Iran, multilateral structures were increasingly coming apart, and at the same time tensions between the U.S. and North Korea were coming to a head.

However, the focus of this analysis lies with the justifications. In addition to the deductively established category of “Transatlantic Security Community,” a further 14 justifications were inductively identified (see Table 1; for a more detailed account, see Annex 2).

#### All Identified Justifications

<i>J1: Africa</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• need for more European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is linked to emerging and/or continuing tensions on the African continent (excluding the Eastern Mediterranean region)</li> </ul>
<i>J2: Brexit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• need for more European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is justified in terms of Brexit</li> </ul>
<i>J3: New Global Order</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• need for more European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is justified by a changing world and a new global order, the U.S.-China duopoly and new future threats</li> </ul>
<i>J4: China</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategic autonomy and European sovereignty are justified by an increasingly strong and unpredictable China</li> </ul>
<i>J5: Climate Change</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• need for more European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is linked to the dangers and consequences of climate change affecting Europe and its security</li> </ul>
<i>J6: Digitization</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• need for European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is justified by advancing digitization and technologies and/or the resulting security threats</li> </ul>
<i>J7: Decline in Multilateralism</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with multilateralism in crisis, it is argued that Europe needs more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty</li> </ul>
<i>J8: Eastern Mediterranean</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European sovereignty and strategic autonomy are justified by tensions and conflicts in the Eastern Mediterranean affecting the EU</li> </ul>
<i>J9: Eastern Partnership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Eastern Partnership serves as a justification for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty</li> </ul>
<i>J10: Economy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• need for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty is justified from an economic perspective due to a changing global economy and restrictions on free trade</li> </ul>
<i>J11: Migration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European sovereignty and strategic autonomy are justified by migration flows to Europe</li> </ul>
<i>J12: Russia</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European sovereignty and strategic autonomy are justified with (an aggressively acting) Russia, in particular Russia’s behavior towards Ukraine</li> </ul>
<i>J13: Terrorism</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• need for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty is justified by the dangers posed by terrorism</li> </ul>
<i>J14: Transatlantic</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• need for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty is justified by a changing TSC</li> </ul>

<i>Security Community</i>	
<i>J15: Unanimity in the EU</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• need for European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is justified by the fact that there is disunity within the EU and populist forces are on the rise</li> </ul>

**Table 1: All justifications identified**

*Source: Own illustration; Information retrieved from own data (see Annex 1)*

Assumptions and explanations for these justifications can again be made. The justification “TSC” (J14) has been set up as a deductive category and was also found in the speeches as a justification for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty. The changing transatlantic relationship serves as a justification for Europe to reorient itself in terms of security and defense, Brexit removes an important security anchor for the EU (J2), the Sino-American duopoly creates a new global order that poses dangers for Europe (J3), multilateralism, which is very important for Europe, is in crisis (J7), and populist forces and disunity increasingly divide the EU and call for Europe to reorient itself (J15):

- *“This takes me [...] to our relationship with the United States [...]. But we have lived in its protective shadow for decades now, perhaps too comfortably. We ourselves must take more of our own responsibility for security”* (J14)
- *“One of the effects of Brexit was the new impetus this has given to go further in defence cooperation”* (J2)
- *“but in the big confrontation that is coming between the US and China we have to look for our own way”* (J3)
- *“We want a stronger Europe that puts even more weight behind the multilateral system and progress towards a fairer world”* (J7)
- *“today more than ever we need European unity. We cannot afford to leave Europe half-finished”* (J15)

Besides these political events and/or developments, the justification “Africa” (J1) was used by politicians to illustrate the need for Europe to become more sovereign and autonomous in order to respond to the conflicts on the African continent. This need to respond to conflicts/tensions in a specific region also applies to a similar extent to some of the other justifications found, that are regions or countries (“China” (J4), “Eastern Mediterranean” (J8), “Eastern Partnership” (J9), “Russia” (J12)):

- *“Au Sahel aussi, les Européens doivent poursuivre leurs efforts collectifs”* (J1)
- *“wirklich souverän ist Europa nur, wenn es seine Werte und Interessen auch in Zeiten von [...] ‘China first’ wirklich auch durchsetzen kann“* (J4)
- *“I am referring to the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean, where the attitude of Turkey, which is violating the maritime area of a European Union Member State, is utterly unacceptable”* (J8)
- *“The Eastern Partnership region is one of old and new security threats, and of conflicts that [...] affect your independence”* (J9)
- *“The European Parliament agrees: Russia’s strategy is to weaken the EU and the EU must react”* (J12)

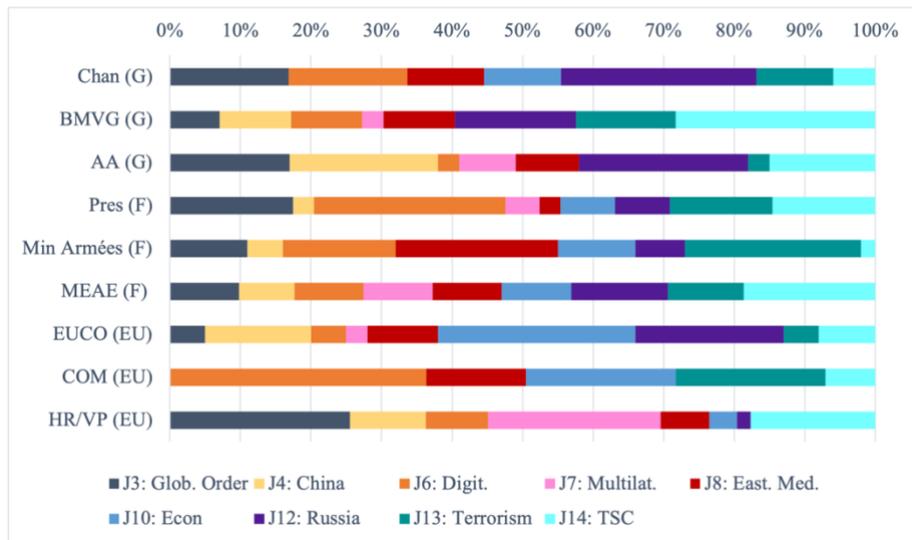
In addition to these justifications related to geographical locations, others were identified that refer to the dangers of global phenomena or developments. The first is climate change (J5), as it is argued that the need for more European sovereignty and strategic autonomy exists due to the dangers and consequences of climate change for Europe and its security. Furthermore, the need for European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is justified by advancing digitalization and technology and the resulting security threats (J6), by the changing global economy, the restrictions on free trade (J10), by migration flows coming to Europe (J11), and by the threats of terrorism (J13):

- *“climate transformations are paving the way for a stronger and more resilient Union”* (J5)
- *“Et enfin, la sécurité et la défense se jouent aussi dans ce nouvel espace de conduite des relations internationales qu’est le domaine numérique, où nous devons également viser l’autonomie stratégique”* (J6)
- *“It applies on foreign trade, an area where we have to step up diplomatic pressure”* (J10)
- *“Cette souveraineté européenne doit prendre plusieurs visages, c'est d'abord une réponse commune au défi des migrations”* (J11)
- *“Im Angesicht der internationalen Dimension des Terrorismus muss das Europa der Sicherheit unser Schutzschild sein”* (J13)

Although this list is undoubtedly incomplete, it can serve to provide an initial overview of the identified justifications.

#### **4.2 The Most Prevalent Justifications and their Meanings**

In order to present the results more clearly and draw more precise conclusions, the nine most prevalent justifications were extracted from the 15 found in the 111 speeches. Here, the justifications were sorted and titled as not prevalent enough if they did not make up at least 15% of all justifications for any of the politicians (see Figure 2 and Table 2). The question can be raised whether all these prevalent justifications were nevertheless used by each of the politicians. It must be noted here that there were various changes in office (in France, Germany and within the EU) within the period of analysis and that it is therefore only possible to speak in general terms for the presidents and ministers.



**Figure 2: Shares of the most prevalent justifications per politician**  
*Source: Own illustration; Information retrieved from Table III (see Annex 2)*

Only the French President (Pres), the French foreign ministers (MEAE) and the presidents of the European Council (EUCO) used all of the nine most prevalent justifications in their speeches. The German Chancellor (Chan) did not use China (J4) nor the decline of multilateralism (J7) as justifications for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty in Europe. Although there are numerous explanations for this, one of them could be that there is a closer economic tie between Germany and China. Moreover, it could be because fewer speeches by the German Chancellor were analyzed and those by the other politicians and therefore comparatively few reliable comparisons can be made (see Figure 1).

The German defense ministers (BMVG) did not use the dangers resulting from changes in the global economy (10) as a justification and the French defense ministers (Min Armées) did not use the justification of the decline of multilateralism (J7). Both could be due to the functions of this office, as neither economic developments nor multilateral structures fall within the purview of a defense minister. German foreign ministers (AA) also did not justify the need for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty with changes in the global economy (J10), just like the German defense ministers (BMVG).

The EU HR/VPs did not justify the EU's reorientation in security and defense matters with terrorism (J13), which has been a security issue often discussed over the last few years. Although this is definitely surprising, further analysis is required in order to answer the question why they did not use terrorism as an explanation. Presidents of the European Commission (COM) used the fewest of the nine justifications - only five out of the nine most prevalent

justifications were found in their speeches. Neither the new global order (J3), China (J4), the decline of multilateralism (J7), nor Russia (J12) were used as justifications.

However, if one looks at which politicians used which of the justifications most frequently, further explanations can be derived (see Table 2).

Justifications	Chan (G)	BMVG (G)	AA (G)	Pres (F)	Min Armées (F)	MEAE (F)	EUCO (EU)	COM (EU)	HR/ VP (EU)
	<i>Germany</i>			<i>France</i>			<i>EU</i>		
J3: Glob Order	17%	7%	17%	18%	11%	10%	5%	-	<b>26%</b>
J4: China	-	10%	21%	3%	5%	8%	15%	-	11%
J6: Digit	17%	10%	3%	<b>28%</b>	16%	10%	5%	<b>36%</b>	9%
J7: Multilateralism	-	3%	8%	5%	-	10%	3%	-	25%
J8: East Med	11%	10%	9%	3%	23%	10%	10%	14%	7%
J10: Econ	11%	-	-	8%	11%	10%	<b>28%</b>	21%	4%
J12: Russia	<b>28%</b>	17%	<b>24%</b>	8%	7%	14%	21%	-	2%
J13: Terrorism	11%	14%	3%	15%	<b>25%</b>	11%	5%	21%	-
J14: TSC	6%	<b>28%</b>	15%	15%	2%	<b>19%</b>	8%	7%	18%

**Table 2: Shares of the most prevalent justifications per politician**

Source: Own illustration; Information retrieved from Table IV (see Annex 2; Rounded shares; Most frequent justification for each politician bold)

As can be seen from the bolded figures in Table 2, the German Chancellor (Chan) and German foreign ministers (AA) most often justified Europe's need for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty by referring to an increasingly dangerous Russia (12). This is particularly interesting given that Germany was considered one of the most important links in Europe between the EU and Russia, and the German chancellor frequently advocated for mediation between Russia and the EU. However, the French President (Pres) and the Presidents of the European Commission (EUCO) most often used the impacts of digitization and technologies (J6) on Europe's security as a justification. This cannot be seen as surprising either, since all politicians used this justification in the context of the present analysis and the dangers posed by technologies have been playing an increasingly important role as a new security threat in Europe for some years now.

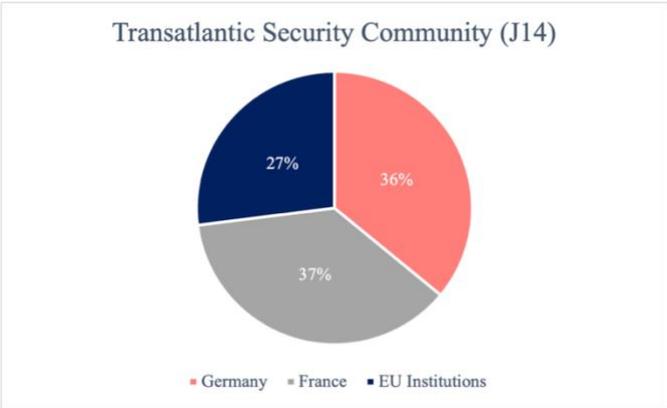
The fact that the French foreign ministers (MEAE) used the threats posed by terrorism (J13) and the Presidents of the European Council (EUCO) used the changing world economy (J10) most frequently as justifications for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty, shows that politicians employ these narratives to refer to any challenge that is important for security

at home and at European level. The EU HR/VP's most frequently used the new global order (J3), primarily created by the Sino-American duopoly, as a justification. This may be due to the fact that the new European Commission, which was elected in 2019, placed a focus on the geopolitical strategy of the EU in a world with a new global order. In addition, most of the speeches by politicians from the EU institutions analyzed in the context of the present analysis were held in 2020, which may have influenced these results.

### 4.3 The Transatlantic Security Community as Justification and Comparisons Across Borders

Previously, within this thesis, it was assumed that the changes in the TSC could affect the discourse of the European CSDP and are reflected in it. As a result, the changes in transatlantic relations were expected to be used as a justification for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty.

As can be seen in Figure 2 and Table 2, the changes in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership were used as justification for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty by all politicians in their speeches, but only constituted the most frequent justification by the German defense ministers (BMVG) and the French foreign ministers (MEAE). Germany's former Defense Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer often stressed Europe's need for the U.S. as a security guarantor during her term in office. Since transatlantic relations have changed and this implies consequences for U.S.-European security and defense cooperation, it can be concluded that German defense ministers are advocating for more European capacity to act and more independence in security matters, using America's partial withdrawal from Europe's security affairs as an explanation.

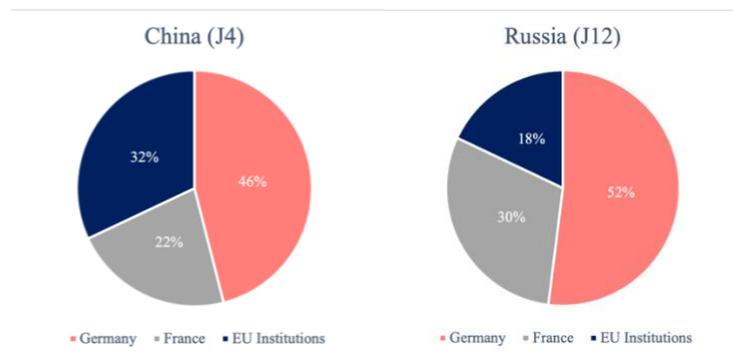


**Figure 3: Shares of the justification ‘Transatlantic Security Community’ per country**  
*Source: Own illustration; Rounded shares; Information retrieved from Table IV (see Annex 2)*

When looking at Figure 3, however, further conclusions can be drawn. Although only the German defense ministers and French foreign ministers most frequently cited the TSC as a justification, the chart shows that German and French politicians, as well as those from the EU institutions, cited this justification with roughly equal frequency. Therefore, it can be assumed that changes in the TSC were on the agenda of all countries and served as an explanation for the need for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty in equal measure. However, since a total of 15 justifications were analyzed as part of the analysis, it cannot be concluded beyond reasonable doubt that the narratives of European sovereignty and strategic autonomy arose solely from a changed TSC. In addition, it should not go unmentioned that the narratives may also partially overlap and that it is not necessarily possible to make a clear distinction between the narratives. This finding also shows how complex political decisions and changes at the EU level have been in recent years and that narratives or discourses are difficult to describe with just one explanation.

#### 4.4 Further Findings and Results

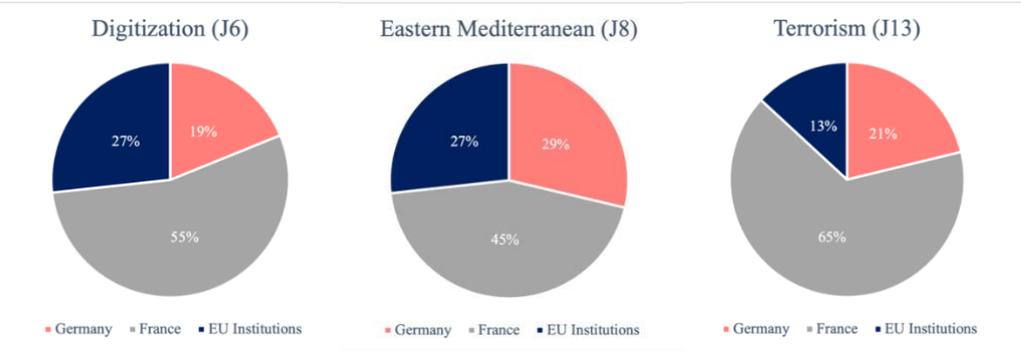
Although no general conclusions can be drawn, within the framework of the analysis, the prevalence of justifications can be compared at the country level.



**Figure 4: Shares of two justifications most frequently mentioned by German politicians**  
*Source: Own illustration; Rounded shares; Information retrieved from Table IV (see Annex 2)*

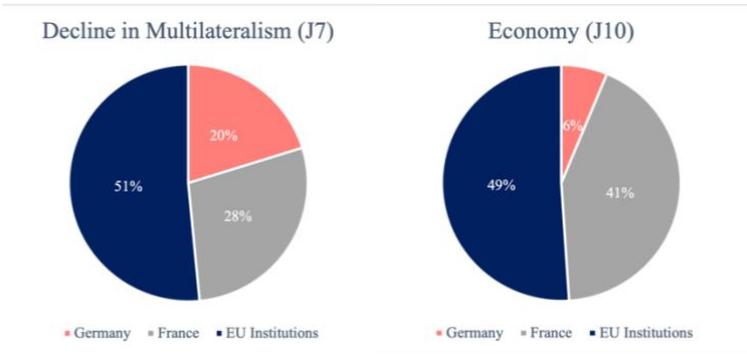
When looking at China and Russia as justifications (see Figure 4), these two countries are used significantly more often as justifications in Germany compared to France and EU institutions. This is particularly surprising, since the general tenor in France and the EU institutions is that the actions of China and Russia are to be observed critically and that Europe must take countermeasures. Nevertheless, there are possible explanations for this result. Former HR/VP Federica Mogherini used the narrative of strategic autonomy for the first time in 2016 and the French president used the narrative of European sovereignty in 2017 for the first time. Since the EU institutions and France thus “introduced” these narratives and therefore may have had

clear ideas as to the meanings of these narratives, it is possible that these meanings persisted at the EU level and within the French government and that they simply included neither Russia nor China as explanations of strategic autonomy and European sovereignty.



**Figure 5: Shares of three justifications most frequently mentioned by French politicians**  
*Source: Own illustration; Rounded shares; Information retrieved from Table IV (see Annex 2)*

In a further country-level comparison, however, it becomes clear that French politicians used digitization, the Eastern Mediterranean region and terrorism as justifications significantly more often than politicians from the EU institutions and Germany (see Figure 5). It is relatively unsurprising that France uses threats as terrorism and conflicts in the Eastern Mediterranean region as justifications. On the one hand, France is the one in which terrorist attacks have occurred most frequently in recent years. On the other hand, France is also a MS that is particularly engaged in North Africa and the Mediterranean, as some countries are former colonies of France and, most notably, the French military is stationed there. However, why France uses the impacts of digitization and technologies on Europe’s security as a justification significantly more frequently than politicians from the EU institutions and Germany would require further analysis.



**Figure 6: Shares of two justifications most frequently mentioned by politicians of the EU institutions**

*Source: Own illustration; Rounded shares; Information retrieved from Table IV (see Annex 2)*

The crisis of multilateralism and the impact of a changing world economy, as well as restrictions on free trade, are the justifications used predominantly by EU institutions (see Figure 6). First of all, the EU is based and functions on multilateral structures; within the framework of multilateralism, the EU's goal is to fight global problems and to benefit from cooperation with other states. Since the crisis of multilateralism has had and continues to have a direct impact on the EU and, moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this crisis, it can explain why the EU institutions are using the decline of multilateralism as a justification for why Europe should become more autonomous and sovereign. The fact that politicians from EU institutions frequently reference the changing global economy in their speeches may be due to the fact that the EU was founded as an economic community and has made the most progress regarding integration in the field of economics and trade. It thus stands to reason that the EU would want to break new ground if the global economy changes.

## 5. Conclusion

As a first step, the literature on security communities and the role of discourses were examined. In addition to the characteristics of security communities in general and the TSC in a narrower sense, it was shown that changes in a security community are most likely to show up in the discourses of elites. For this reason, a qualitative content analysis was conducted in which speeches of key security elites from Germany, France and EU institutions were coded and analyzed. It was shown that the changes in the TSC were used by all politicians in their speeches as a justification for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty, but were only used as the most frequent justification by the German defense ministers (BMVG) and the French foreign ministers (MEAE). The fact that 14 other justifications were found in addition to the TSC shows that the TSC is not the only explanation for the EU's recent common security and defense policies, but is merely one of many.

These differences in the justification of the narratives (could) indicate that the EU does not yet have a truly unified idea of what strategic autonomy and European sovereignty mean. As was pointed out in chapter 3.3, there are many definitions for the two narratives, but no single one from the EU. For this reason, the differences in justifications could be due to the fact that the justifications represent different conceptions of strategic autonomy and European sovereignty, or different priorities. This, in turn, seems to have implications for implementation - everyone in the EU is talking about strategic autonomy and European sovereignty, but the likelihood that there is at least some "talking past each other" occurring is undoubted.

These results offer a starting point for numerous further investigations. Once again, it should be noted that the present analysis is limited due to the given scope and, accordingly, does not provide an exhaustive description of all justifications. Each of the factors mentioned can be explored in greater depth, while this thesis only intends to provide an adequate insight into the subject. Moreover, while the research highlights the justifications used in the context of the selected speeches, it does not take into account other documents in which the narratives of European sovereignty and strategic autonomy are used, nor can the results be generalized to other MS or the EU as a whole.

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## Annex

### Annex 1: Detailed selection process of speeches and coding scheme

#### Detailed selection process of speeches regarding narratives (N)

- *Sample*: Speeches were selected on the basis of the rules explained in chapter 3.1.
- Only those speeches were used and justifications coded in which the narratives strategic autonomy (N1) or European sovereignty (N2) are explicitly mentioned.
  - Strategic autonomy (N1):
    - A speech is also coded for justifications if the words autonomous or autonomy can be found in a speech.
      - → However, if the words autonomous and autonomy are mentioned and not strategic autonomy, the speech is only selected if the context refers to the definition of strategic autonomy used in this thesis (“This thesis defines strategic autonomy in such a way that this concept can be understood as the ability to act and cooperate with partners whenever possible, while acting independently when necessary.” (see chapter 3.3))
    - e.g.: “*Strategic autonomy obviously requires the capacity to take autonomous military action when necessary, always in a multilateral framework – I want to stress this. But strategic autonomy is also about something that goes beyond military action.*”
  - European sovereignty (N2):
    - A speech is also coded for justifications if the words sovereign or sovereignty can be found in a speech.
      - → However, if the words sovereign and sovereignty are mentioned and not European sovereignty, the speech is only selected if the context refers to security and defense matters and Europe’s own security way.
    - e.g.: “*C’est pour cela que l’Europe doit être plus forte. C’est pour cela qu’elle doit être plus souveraine parce qu’elle ne pourra jouer son rôle si elle-même devient le jouet des puissances, si elle ne prend pas davantage des responsabilités dans sa défense et sa sécurité et se contente de jouer les seconds rôles sur la scène mondiale.*”
- Also those speeches were selected and justifications coded in which strategic autonomy and or European sovereignty are not explicitly mentioned but paraphrased (N3).
  - This includes speeches that talk about the need for greater independence and Europe’s capacity to act in security and defense matters, or that explicitly mention the need for a new security strategy. It must be clear that this is about change and that the EU wants to go in new directions
  - If it is mentioned that Europe needs new ambitions, a new strategic culture and more responsibility in its CSDP, a speech is selected.
  - e.g.: “*Zugleich wollen wir aber mit aller Energie daran arbeiten, dass Europa auch in Fragen der Sicherheit und Verteidigung eigenständiger und handlungsfähiger wird.*”
    - However, change here does not mean a complete change of course, but can also be meant only in parts (e.g., “*The EU needs to do more to guarantee security and stability both inside and outside its borders*”).
- Justifications are not coded if European sovereignty and strategic autonomy narratives, as well as their paraphrases, do not refer in some way to security and defense.

- Even if they refer to economic sovereignty, for instance, it must be made clear that they also refer in some way to security and defense (rule: in the very same paragraph)
- e.g.: *“Our ambition is to make Europe the leader in the fight against climate change, in the economic transformation of our planet and in security, defence and space.”*

### Coding scheme of justifications (J)

- For justifications, the coding categories are assigned to at least one sentence (ending with either a period, a question mark or an exclamation mark) and at most one paragraph.
- In the case where the same category occurs on two consecutive paragraphs, it is coded twice.
- A single sentence may also be coded with more than one category if multiple justifications are found in the sentence.
- It is always important to think about the context in order to apply the correct category. As a rule, it is preferable to code several sentences as a group instead of a single sentence (assuming it is a paragraph).
  - These rules are used to avoid either neglecting the context of individual words or fragmenting the context, which is, however, of central importance in justifications as meaning structures.
  - Furthermore, these rules allow for a comparison of the frequency and “weight” of individual justifications in the speeches.
  - This criterion also serves to enable speakers not only to express their opinions, but also to be able to justify them sufficiently.

### Detailed coding scheme of justifications (J)

Category	Description	Examples	Coding rules
<b>J1: Africa</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the need for more European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is linked to emerging and/or continuing tensions on the African continent → this includes the entire African continent, excluding the Eastern Mediterranean region</li> <li>• e.g., the Sahel region, conflicts in Mali, Sub-Saharan Africa, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Au Sahel aussi, les Européens doivent poursuivre leurs efforts collectifs.”</i></li> <li>• <i>„Vor allem in Afrika sind wir gefordert – mit konkreten Angeboten.“</i></li> <li>• <i>„Und ich denke an die Sahel-Zone, die längst zu einem neuen Rückzugsort des internationalen Terrorismus geworden ist. [...] Und wir sind auch bereit, noch mehr zu tun – sicherheitspolitisch“</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Africa as a clear justification for Europe’s realignment</li> <li>• the passage is not coded here if it merely points out that the African continent has been in Europe’s interest for some time and does not refer to a new or increased interest</li> <li>• when explaining and justifying the need for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty with consequences of climate change/ the fight against terrorism/ consequences of migration on the African continent, the statement is coded twice (J1: Africa and J5: Climate Change/ J13: Terrorism/ J11: Migration)</li> </ul>
<b>J2: Brexit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the need for more European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is justified in terms of Brexit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“One of the effects of Brexit was the new impetus this has given to go further in defence cooperation.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“Nos compatriotes savent que la Défense est le garant de notre souveraineté, dans un contexte d’incertitude stratégique, marqué par la</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a passage is not coded when strategic autonomy and European sovereignty are justified in terms of Brexit, but without being linked in any way to the military and or security strength of the UK in the European Union</li> </ul>

		<p><i>décision de notre allié britannique de sortir de l'Union européenne</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Le Brexit, finalement, pourra être un aiguillon pour que l'Europe affirme sa souveraineté, affirme sa puissance”</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a reference to tensions within the European Union without clearly mentioning Brexit is not coded (see J15: Unanimity in the EU)</li> </ul>
<b>J3: New Global Order</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the need for more European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is justified by a changing world and a new global order</li> <li>• U.S.-China duopoly as well as resulting new future threats for Europe are meant by this “new” global order</li> <li>• justification of strategic autonomy and European sovereignty by a new world can also be justified by the COVID-19 pandemic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“but in the big confrontation that is coming between the US and China we have to look for our own way.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“It is because we are facing different kinds of threats in the world that we need different kinds of security providers with different kinds of tools than the ones we had in the past”</i></li> <li>• <i>“In short, while some believe Europe will give in to the apparently inevitable rise of a US-China duopoly, it needs to invent a third path. A European third path, to retain its sovereignty and assert its independence.”</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a passage is coded when speaking generally of a changing global order, a new world or new emerging future threats</li> <li>• a passage is not coded if there is explicit talk of either an increasingly powerful China or the realignment of the U.S. (in this case J4: China or J14: TSC) → a passage is coded in this case only if the U.S.-China duopoly is associated with a new global world order → if both is the case, the passage is code twice</li> </ul>
<b>J4: China</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategic autonomy and European sovereignty are justified by an increasingly strong and unpredictable China → China’s power position and influence in the world justifies Europe’s will its own way in security and defense matters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>„Wirklich souverän ist Europa nur, wenn es seine Werte und Interessen auch in Zeiten von [...]“China first” wirklich auch durchsetzen kann.“</i></li> <li>• <i>„Der Umgang mit Chinas Aufstieg ist eine strategische Herausforderung“</i></li> <li>• <i>„Und wir brauchen eine gemeinsame Strategie, wie wir mit den machtpolitischen Ambitionen Chinas umgehen - auch um gezielten Spaltungsversuchen in der Europäischen Union geschlossen entgegenzuwirken“</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a passage here is coded if China is listed alongside Russia and the U.S. as a justification</li> <li>• a passage is not coded if China is only associated with a decline in multilateralism and is not also referred to on its own as a justification for greater European sovereignty and strategic autonomy (in this case J7: Decline in Multilateralism)</li> <li>• a passage is also coded here (and does not fall under J1: Africa) when China’s worrying influence in Africa is described and Europe wants to counter it</li> </ul>
<b>J5: Climate Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the need for more European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is linked to the dangers and consequences of climate change</li> <li>• climate change leads Europe to expand and change its security and defense strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“climate transformations are paving the way for a stronger and more resilient Union.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“Cet élément d’espoir s’est traduit aussi par la volonté de faire en sorte qu’un pacte vert nous permette d’affronter les enjeux écologiques. Ce qui nous permet aussi d’affirmer que l’Europe de la défense, qui affirme son autonomie stratégique, sera aussi au rendez-vous.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“Das vierte Schlüsselement unserer Souveränität besteht darin, dass wir in der Lage sind, auf die wichtigste große Veränderung unseres</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a passage is not coded if climate change is referred to only in isolation (e.g., by an adjective such as “climate-damaging”), and by not constituting a justification</li> </ul>

		<i>Planeten zu reagieren: den ökologischen Wandel.</i>	
<b>J6: Digitization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the need for European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is justified by advancing digitization and technologies and/or the resulting security threats</li> <li>this includes e.g., artificial intelligence as well as cyber and hybrid wars/attacks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“any technological advances in this field will inevitably have strategic defence implications”</i></li> <li><i>“Et enfin, la sécurité et la défense se jouent aussi dans ce nouvel espace de conduite des relations internationales qu’est le domaine numérique, où nous devons également viser l’autonomie stratégique.”</i></li> <li><i>“Das soll weit über das Militärische hinausgehen. Deswegen wünsche ich mir zum Beispiel auch mehr Initiativen zur Zusammenarbeit auf den Feldern der Künstlichen Intelligenz und des Quantencomputing.”</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a passage is not coded if digitization or technology is only mentioned in isolation (e.g., by adjectives such as “technological” or “digital”) and does not represent a rationale</li> <li>the description of technology or digitization in general is not sufficient</li> </ul>
<b>J7: Decline in multilateralism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>with multilateralism in crisis, it is argued that Europe needs more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty</li> <li>the fragile multilateral system must be restored for the security and stability of Europe</li> <li>with less cooperation at the multilateral level, Europe needs its own way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“If we want to preserve the multilateral system, I believe we must invest in changing it.”</i></li> <li><i>“This strategic autonomy is therefore the opposite of isolationism. We want a stronger Europe that puts even more weight behind the multilateral system and progress towards a fairer world.”</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a code is placed if, on the one hand, the crisis of multilateralism is the reason and justification for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty and, on the other hand, if within the framework of more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty Europe is to fight for multilateralism</li> <li>should only failed multilateral agreements be listed and not specifically referred to as a justification, a passage will not be coded</li> </ul>
<b>J8: Eastern Mediterranean</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>European sovereignty and strategic autonomy are justified by tensions and conflicts in the Eastern Mediterranean affecting the EU → this region includes (besides the EU MS) Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab, Emirates, Yemen<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“In the Eastern Mediterranean we face tensions and unpredictable developments. Libya and Syria are centres of insecurity and instability. [...] Our relationship with Turkey is being severely tested. This is why the next European summit will be dedicated to adopting a strategic European position in relation to the region.”</i></li> <li><i>“I am referring to the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean, where the attitude of Turkey, which is violating the maritime area of a European Union Member State, is utterly unacceptable. Letting our security in the Mediterranean fall into the hands of others would be a grave mistake.”</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>although the Eastern Mediterranean region includes EU MS, a passage is coded here only when reference is made to non-EU MS in the Eastern Mediterranean</li> <li>a passage is not coded if only specific situations in the Eastern Mediterranean are described without reference to the EU</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup><https://www.iapb.org/connect/regions/eastern-mediterranean/>

<b>J9: Eastern Partnershi P</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Eastern Partnership serves as a justification for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty</li> <li>Europe's Eastern Partnership includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“The Eastern Partnership region is one of old and new security threats, and of conflicts that not only affect your independence, your sovereignty, your territorial integrity and the protection of human rights, but which also threaten to undermine the stability and security of the EU.”</i></li> <li><i>“the events in Belarus again highlight the challenge at Europe’s eastern borders.”</i></li> <li><i>“There will be no sovereign Europe without stable Balkans integrated with the rest of the continent.”</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>if Ukraine is mentioned in the framework of the Eastern Partnership and explicitly refers to it, the passage is coded</li> <li>if the need for strategic autonomy and European sovereignty is justified with the annexation of Crimea and a dangerous Russia towards Ukraine, the passage is not coded here (falls under J12: Russia)</li> </ul>
<b>J10: Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the need for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty is justified from an economic perspective</li> <li>a changing global economy and restrictions on free trade mean that Europe wants to become more strategically autonomous and sovereign</li> <li>economics in this security context also includes arms exports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“We need to make sure that these supply chains remain open. We also need to make critical supply chains more secure, more resilient, and more diversified.”</i></li> <li><i>“The internal market is also linked to discussions on the European Union’s strategic autonomy and I sensed an increasingly shared conviction at this European Council of the need to draw lessons from the past and to restore Europe’s production capacities.”</i></li> <li><i>“It applies on foreign trade, an area where we have to step up diplomatic pressure, particularly at the WTO, to put a stop to practices that distort the rules of the game, and no longer hesitate to exploit the balance of power to ensure respect for the principle of reciprocity”</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a passage is coded here if the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic relates directly to the global economy or free trade (if the pandemic is described as a cause of a new world order, it falls under J3: New Global Order)</li> <li>if multilateralism is mentioned as a justification without explicitly mentioning free trade, the passage is not coded (falls under J7: Decline in Multilateralism)</li> </ul>
<b>J11: Migration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>European sovereignty and strategic autonomy are justified by the migration phenomenon → The EU wants to become more sovereign and autonomous because of migration flows to Europe</li> <li>these include, e.g., migrants/refugees from Syria or from Africa that reach Europe via the Mediterranean</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“assurer la sécurité de nos concitoyens et lutter contre les migrations irrégulières”</i></li> <li><i>“Mais nous savons que la pression migratoire est une réalité durable, une réalité de long-terme. Et nous devons lui apporter une réponse qui soit européenne”</i></li> <li><i>“Cette souveraineté européenne doit prendre plusieurs visages, c’est d’abord une réponse commune au défi des migrations.”</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a passage is only coded when a migration flow has an impact on Europe and is not just mentioned generally</li> </ul>
<b>J12: Russia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>European sovereignty and strategic autonomy are justified with (an aggressively acting) Russia → This includes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“The European Parliament agrees: Russia’s strategy is to weaken the EU and the EU must react.”</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a passage is also coded when not explicitly referring to Russia, but to an ongoing conflict on the EU’s Eastern borders with Ukraine</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup>[https://ec.europa.eu/environment/international\\_issues/eastneighbours\\_en.htm#:~:text=The%20Eastern%20Partnership%20\(EaP\)%20is.%2C%20Georgia%2C%20Moldova%20and%20Ukraine](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/international_issues/eastneighbours_en.htm#:~:text=The%20Eastern%20Partnership%20(EaP)%20is.%2C%20Georgia%2C%20Moldova%20and%20Ukraine).

	<p>in particular Russia's behavior towards Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Europe feels its security threatened by Russia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"I was (and still am) convinced that, in this game, what is at stake, is not only the future of independent Ukraine and the security of Central Europe, including that of my country, but the sovereignty of Europe as a political entity."</i></li> <li><i>"the actions and strategy of Russia have played a significant role in this weakening of the European security architecture. The instability and the challenging of common rules resulting from this reduce Europeans' security."</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a passage is coded when speaking of Russia investing enormous sums in research into critical technologies such as space technology, as this also has a direct impact on European security and defense</li> <li>a passage is also coded when talking about Russia's influence on other regions and countries of the world (such as in Libya), as this also has an impact on Europe and its security</li> </ul>
<b>J13: Terrorism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the need for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty is justified by the dangers posed by terrorism → to fight terrorism, action should be taken by the EU</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"Il faut tout d'abord contenir la menace terroriste."</i></li> <li><i>"Ce terrorisme est une menace d'une particulière gravité pour nos pays, une menace qui résiste à toute approche simplificatrice tant elle provient bien sûr de l'extérieur, mais s'attaque au cœur même de nos sociétés"</i></li> <li><i>"Im Angesicht der internationalen Dimension des Terrorismus muss das Europa der Sicherheit unser Schutzschild sein."</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a passage is coded if it refers to terrorism and the fight against it either within the EU or in third countries with an impact on the EU</li> <li>a passage is not coded if a country such as Syria is mentioned in which terrorist organizations are located, but no reference is made to terrorism, only to the precarious situation in the country</li> </ul>
<b>J14: Transatlantic Security Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the need for more strategic autonomy and European sovereignty is justified by a changing TSC → the deterioration of relations between Europe and the U.S. explain Europe's reorientation</li> <li>the transatlantic relations are described as being a different partner with different visions and ambitions → the U.S. is no longer a partner Europe can fully trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"We have to be in a cooperative approach, the best guarantee for a peaceful and safe future for all, but at the same time we have to assess a good understanding of what is our interest, which does not always coincide with the US' interest. We share with them the same political system, the same economic system, but in the big confrontation that is coming between the US and China we have to look for our own way"</i></li> <li><i>"This takes me - also in the light of current events - to our relationship with the United States. This relationship, which covers much more than just the military domain, remains a cornerstone of our defence. But we have lived in its protective shadow for decades now, perhaps too comfortably. We ourselves must take more of our own responsibility for security."</i></li> <li><i>"One of the absolute prerequisites for a strong Atlantic Alliance is now that</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a passage is not coded if it merely highlights Europe's new role in NATO and does not refer to a change in the transatlantic alliance</li> <li>a passage is not coded if the U.S. is only associated with a decline in multilateralism and is not also referred to on its own as a justification for greater European sovereignty and strategic autonomy (in this case J7: Decline in Multilateralism)</li> </ul>

		<i>Europeans act more proactively and shoulder more responsibilities, within an overhauled and rebalanced alliance.”</i>	
<b>J15: Unanimity in the EU</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the need for European sovereignty and strategic autonomy is justified by the fact that there is disunity within the European Union and populist forces are on the rise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“If we are to address these challenges properly, today more than ever we need European unity. We cannot afford to leave Europe half-finished.”</i></li> <li><i>“I am talking here about the rise of nationalism and anti-European, not only rhetoric, but also anti-European emotion, in many European capitals.”</i></li> <li><i>“Only a united Europe can be a sovereign Europe in relation to the rest of the world. And only a sovereign Europe guarantees independence for its nations, guarantees freedom for its citizens. The unity of Europe is not a bureaucratic model. It is a set of common values and democratic standards.”</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a passage is coded when talking about either the need for Europe’s unity or Europe’s dangerous disunity as a justification</li> <li>a passage is not coded if populism is only mentioned in isolation (e.g., by adjectives such as “populist”) and does not represent a rationale</li> </ul>

## Annex 2: Shares of justifications in the speeches

**Table I: Shares of all justifications (J) in the speeches per politician**

Justifications	Chan (G)	BMVG (G)	AA (G)	Pres (F)	Min Armées (F)	MEAE (F)	EUCO (EU)	COM (EU)	HR/VP (EU)
	<b>Germany</b>			<b>France</b>			<b>EU</b>		
<b>J1: Africa</b>	-	13,89%	4,65%	3,51%	10,91%	2,25%	3,45%	5,56%	-
<b>J2: Brexit</b>	-	-	-	3,51%	5,45%	11,24%	8,62%	5,56%	-
<b>J3: Changing Global Order</b>	14,29%	5,56%	12,79%	12,28%	9,09%	6,74%	3,45%	-	24,59%
<b>J4: China</b>	-	8,33%	16,28%	1,75%	3,64%	5,62%	10,34%	-	9,84%
<b>J5: Climate</b>	4,76%	2,78%	1,16%	8,77%	-	3,37%	8,62%	11,11%	1,64%
<b>J6: Digitization</b>	14,29%	8,33%	2,32%	19,30%	12,73%	6,74%	3,45%	27,78%	8,20%
<b>J7: Decline in Multilateralism</b>	-	2,78%	5,81%	3,51%	-	6,74%	1,72%	-	22,95%
<b>J8: Eastern Mediterranean</b>	9,52%	8,33%	6,98%	1,75%	18,18%	6,74%	6,90%	11,11%	6,56%
<b>J9: Eastern Partnership</b>	-	2,78%	1,16%	-	-	1,12%	5,17%	-	-
<b>J10: Economy</b>	9,52%	-	-	5,26%	9,09%	6,74%	18,97%	16,67%	3,28%
<b>J11: Migration</b>	4,76%	-	5,81%	8,77%	-	4,49%	1,72%	-	1,64%
<b>J12: Russia</b>	23,81%	13,89%	18,60%	5,26%	5,45%	10,11%	13,79%	-	1,64%
<b>J13: Terrorism</b>	9,52%	11,11%	2,32%	10,53%	20,00%	7,87%	3,45%	16,67%	-
<b>J14: Transatlantic</b>	4,76%	22,22%	11,63%	10,53%	1,82%	13,48%	5,17%	5,56%	16,39%

<b>Security Community</b>									
<b>J15: Unanimity in the EU</b>	4,76%	-	10,47%	5,26%	3,64%	6,74%	5,17%	-	3,28%

**Table II: Shares of all justifications (J) in the speeches per politician (rounded shares)**

Justifications	Chan (G)	BMVG (G)	AA (G)	Pres (F)	Min Armées (F)	MEAE (F)	EUCO (EU)	COM (EU)	HR/VP (EU)
	<b>Germany</b>			<b>France</b>			<b>EU</b>		
<b>J1: Africa</b>	-	14%	5%	4%	11%	2%	3%	6%	-
<b>J2: Brexit</b>	-	-	-	4%	5%	11%	9%	6%	-
<b>J3: Changing Global Order</b>	14%	6%	13%	12%	9%	7%	3%	-	25%
<b>J4: China</b>	-	8%	16%	2%	4%	6%	10%	-	10%
<b>J5: Climate</b>	5%	3%	1%	9%	-	3%	9%	11%	2%
<b>J6: Digitization</b>	14%	8%	2%	19%	13%	7%	3%	28%	8%
<b>J7: Decline in Multilateralism</b>	-	3%	6%	4%	-	7%	2%	-	23%
<b>J8: Eastern Mediterranean</b>	10%	8%	7%	2%	18%	7%	7%	11%	7%
<b>J9: Eastern Partnership</b>	-	3%	1%	-	-	1%	5%	-	-
<b>J10: Economy</b>	10%	-	-	5%	9%	7%	19%	17%	3%
<b>J11: Migration</b>	5%	-	6%	9%	-	4%	2%	-	2%
<b>J12: Russia</b>	24%	14%	19%	5%	5%	10%	14%	-	2%
<b>J13: Terrorism</b>	10%	11%	2%	11%	20%	8%	3%	17%	-
<b>J14: Transatlantic Security Community</b>	5%	22%	12%	11%	2%	13%	5%	6%	16%
<b>J15: Unanimity in the EU</b>	5%	-	10%	5%	4%	7%	5%	-	3%

**Table III: Shares of most prevalent justifications (J) in the speeches per politician**

Justifications	Chan (G)	BMVG (G)	AA (G)	Pres (F)	Min Armées (F)	MEAE (F)	EUCO (EU)	COM (EU)	HR/VP (EU)
	<b>Germany</b>			<b>France</b>			<b>EU</b>		
<b>J3: Changing Global Order</b>	16,67%	6,9%	16,67%	17,5%	11,36%	9,52%	5,13%	-	26,32%
<b>J4: China</b>	-	10,34%	21,21%	2,5%	4,55%	7,94%	15,38%	-	10,53%
<b>J6: Digitization</b>	16,67%	10,34%	3,03%	27,5%	15,91%	9,52%	5,13%	35,71%	8,77%
<b>J7: Decline in Multilateralism</b>	-	3,45%	7,58%	5%	-	9,52%	2,56%	-	24,56%
<b>J8: Eastern Mediterranean</b>	11,11%	10,34%	9,09%	2,5%	22,73%	9,52%	10,26%	14,29%	7,02%
<b>J10: Economy</b>	11,11%	-	-	7,5%	11,36%	9,52%	28,21%	21,43%	3,51%
<b>J12: Russia</b>	27,78%	17,24%	24,24%	7,5%	6,82%	14,29%	20,51%	-	1,76%
<b>J13: Terrorism</b>	11,11%	13,79%	3,03%	15%	25%	11,11%	5,13%	21,43%	-
<b>J14: TSC</b>	5,56%	27,59%	15,15%	15%	2,27%	19,05%	7,69%	7,14%	17,54%

**Table IV: Shares of most prevalent justifications (J) in the speeches per politician (rounded shares)**

Justifications	Chan (G)	BMVG (G)	AA (G)	Pres (F)	Min Armées (F)	MEAE (F)	EUCO (EU)	COM (EU)	HR/VP (EU)
	<b>Germany</b>			<b>France</b>			<b>EU</b>		
<b>J3: Changing Global Order</b>	17%	7%	17%	18%	11%	10%	5%	-	26%
<b>J4: China</b>	-	10%	21%	3%	5%	8%	15%	-	11%
<b>J6: Digitization</b>	17%	10%	3%	28%	16%	10%	5%	36%	9%
<b>J7: Decline in Multilateralism</b>	-	3%	8%	5%	-	10%	3%	-	25%
<b>J8: Eastern Mediterranean</b>	11%	10%	9%	3%	23%	10%	10%	14%	7%
<b>J10: Economy</b>	11%	-	-	8%	11%	10%	28%	21%	4%
<b>J12: Russia</b>	28%	17%	24%	8%	7%	14%	21%	-	2%
<b>J13: Terrorism</b>	11%	14%	3%	15%	25%	11%	5%	21%	-
<b>J14: TSC</b>	6%	28%	15%	15%	2%	19%	8%	7%	18%