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**An Analysis of German-French Relations From the Perspective
of Angela Merkel's Policy Towards the EU**

Master's Thesis
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I declare that I have prepared this work by myself based on the mentioned sources and literature.

In Olomouc, 30 April 2021



Eliška Mičková

At this point I would like to express my sincere thanks to Mgr. Petra Měšťánková, Ph.D., I am really grateful for her systematic and thorough approach, which provided great determination and confidence. Her valuable advice, comments and recommendations considerably helped while completing the thesis.

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‘Yes, now little girls in Germany know they can become a hairdresser,
or chancellor.

Let’s see.’ – **Angela Merkel**

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List of Abbreviations¹

CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union/Christian Democratic Union
EC	European Communities
e.g.	Exempli gratia/for example
et al.	Et alia/and others
etc.	Et citera/and other similar things
EPP	European People's Party
EU	European Union
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	German Democratic Republic
Ibid.	Ibidem (in the same place)
i.e.	Id est/that is
LREM	La République En Marche!/the Republic on the Move
MPs	Members of Parliament
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
p.	Page
pp.	Pages
S&D	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands/Social Democratic Party of Germany
UK	The United Kingdom
UMP	Union pour un mouvement populaire/Union for a Popular Movement

¹ *Cambridge Dictionary* [online]. [viewed 18 February 2020]. Available from: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>

Introduction

As we know from the history of the European Union, its origin was given by the post-war reconciliation of two great rivals, France and Germany. It was the Schuman Declaration of 1950 that laid the foundation stone for building good relations between the two countries. In the course of time, a Franco-German alliance was formed with privileged relations, which gradually became known as ‘the engine of Europe.’² In other words, a good Franco-German partnership has proved to be crucial to European integration, its deepening and development. Couples of leaders such as Adenauer with de Gaulle, Schmidt with Giscard or Kohl with Mitterrand belong to those leaders who maintained a good friendly relationship and who supported each other’s decisions in the context of European integration.

However, these relations have not always been ideal, we can see examples of that, especially in the last few years. And this brings me to the topic I chose for my thesis: *An Analysis of German-French Relations From the Perspective of Angela Merkel’s Policy Towards the EU*.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel is a phenomenon unparalleled in German politics. During her term in office, since 2005, there have been four presidents in France so far – Jacques Chirac, Nicolas Sarkozy, François Hollande and Emmanuel Macron. Which means that this is a very unique period in the history of European integration with the permanent and decisive role of Angela Merkel.

The analysis of German-French relations from the perspective of Angela Merkel’s policy towards the EU will be accomplished on the basis of the political leadership theory. *Koopman’s 4-dimensional concept of political leadership*, which is focused on German-French relations, was chosen for this work. At the same time, the author of the thesis found inspiration in Joseph S. Nye’s discourse about the need to put a leader in a specific context or process. Therefore, *certain contexts* will be selected through which the given German-French couple will be observed. These contexts are the main events going on within the EU development between *2005 and 2019*. Of course, more events took place within this period than the work is able to embrace. Therefore, especially those contexts were selected for which there are enough reliable sources to this day (e.g. context of the EU institutional crisis, financial eurozone crisis,

² MOURLON-DRUOL, E. *Rethinking Franco-German relations: a historical perspective*. Brussels: Bruegel, 2017, p. 3.

migration crisis, Brexit negotiations etc.). The time frame has its justification. The analysis begins in 2005 when Angela Merkel became German chancellor. The 2019 was chosen rather symbolically for the end of the analysis. It was a year when the German-French partnership brought another milestone, this time in the form of the signing of the Aachen Treaty. It follows from the above that this diploma thesis will not include the context of the coronavirus pandemic, which hit Europe and the entire world in 2020. Due to its unpredictable development during the composing of this diploma thesis, the author decided to leave this issue to other writers of diploma theses.

Based on the presented theoretical framework, the individual periods of German-French cooperation will be analyzed. While there is still German Chancellor Angela Merkel on one side, there are regularly changing French presidents on the other side. The author works on the assumption that Germany and France are still the main leaders of the EU. However, we know from the latest developments that the so-called German-French engine of European integration did not work perfectly at certain times. And therefore, the author aims to find out *what impact the German-French leadership had on the EU during the Merkel era*. In particular, the attention will be paid to these research questions. *What changes did they manage to achieve? How did their (dis)agreement affect the direction of the EU? With which of the French presidents did Chancellor Angela Merkel's interests and values converge the most?*

The master thesis will be structured into several main chapters. The first chapter *Political Leadership* will deal with theories of political leadership within both national and international context. This part is crucial for the diploma thesis, as it is a starting point for conducting the analysis placed in the second part of this work. The theoretical scope also includes another chapter, the *State Leader* which aims to present the function of the *German Chancellor* and the *French President* with regard to their main competencies within the given political system. There is also a subchapter *Austrian Chancellor*, which offers a different view of this political function in another member state. Austria is together with Germany, the only country in the EU where such a function exists. The chapter three focuses on particular leaders, i.e. Merkel, Chirac, Holland, Sarkozy and Macron. The aim is to find out *Leader's Positions Towards the EU*. To do so, their political careers will be outlined, especially with respect to the political party they come from and the ideologies they represent. The author considers it important to give the work a historical basis that summarizes the *Major Milestones of German-French Relations from 1950-2005*, i.e. the period when Angela Merkel was not yet chancellor. This

brief excursion into history will be followed by the analysis itself. This is the chapter five, *Analysis of German-French Relations*, consisting of four subchapters, which will deal with the partnership of Angela Merkel and her four French counterparts (Chirac, Hollande, Sarkozy, Macron). The analysis is based on selected contextual situations and on Koopmann's four-dimensional theory of political leadership, thanks to which it will be possible to answer the research questions of the diploma thesis. The chapter six provides a *Summary of the Analysis*. This means that in the first step, German-French relations will be evaluated through Koopmann's theory of political leadership. Afterwards – in the second step – it will be possible to answer the research questions of the diploma thesis introduced above. The content of the thesis will be completed with the last part *Conclusion*. Besides the main chapters, which form the basic body of this work, the structure also includes additional chapters, such as the *List of Abbreviations*, *Abstract*, *Key Words* and *Annex*. The latter provides portraits of presented leaders.

Finally, it is necessary to mention the *References*. The topic of the thesis *German-French Relations from the Perspective of Angela Merkel's Policy Towards the EU* includes two areas of research. The first major area is *German-French relations within the EU*. It may be said that this topic is as old as the EU itself, and therefore there is no significant shortage of resources, especially of those in a digital form. As for the second subordinate area – *from the perspective of Angela Merkel's policy towards the EU* – here the topic of the work narrows to a certain extent. The relations between the German chancellor and all four French presidents (Chirac, Sarkozy, Hollande, Macron) who the chancellor has cooperated with is a relatively new and still ongoing topic, and the author dares to claim that this issue in such a format has not been elaborated yet. Thus, with regard to this fact, the author focused on those contextual situations within the recent EU development (e.g. the rejection of the European Constitution, the conclusion of the Lisbon Treaty, the financial crisis of the eurozone, migration crisis) for which there exist enough reliable sources to this day. Among the main works dealing with German-French relations can be mentioned, for instance *Rethinking Franco-German relations: a historical perspective* by Mourlon-Druol or *Franco-German Relations Seen from Abroad* by Colin and Demesmay. Special focus on German affairs is offered by eminent authors Bulmer and Paterson. Their text *Germany and the European Union: from tamed power to normalized power?* along with the book *Rethinking Germany and Europe. Democracy and Diplomacy in Semisovereign State* by Bulmer, Jeffery and Padgett provide valuable insight into the issue. For the needs of theoretical reflection, publications from various authors will be used. With

regard to the theory of political leadership, the author will stick to the texts such as *The Powers to Lead* by Nye; *Transformational Leadership* by Bass; *Political Leadership in Regime Formation: On the Development of Institutions in International Society* by Young, a crucial source in this area is Koopmann's *A Driving Force despite Everything: Franco – German Relations and the Enlarged European Union* which will be essential for conducting the analysis of German-French relations. An important contribution is brought by Schild's *Mission Impossible? The Potential for Franco-German Relationship in the Enlarged EU* which similarly discusses Koopmann's 4-dimensional theory. Within the theoretical scope, the author will also work with publications dealing with the political functions of the German (Austrian) chancellor and the French president within the given political system. These are for instance *Komparace politických systémů II.* by Říchová; *Francouzský politický systém* by Perottino; *Politické systémy* by Hloušek, Kopeček and Šedo; *Základní modely demokratických systémů: Komparace politických systémů* by Dvořáková. Special attention deserves Vladimír Handl, who is one of the few Czech authors offering insight into the context of Germany's domestic and European politics. His book *Německo v čele Evropy? SRN jako civilní mocnost a hegemon eurozóny* is a great source of knowledge for Czech readers. In addition to books and periodicals, including *Journal of Common Market Studies*; *Perspektiven der Wirtschaftspolitik*; *Studies & Research* the information will be drawn from official EU sources and sources focused on European issues (e.g. Europa – the official EU website, Euobserver, Euractiv, Euronews, Euroskop etc.) and from respectable news websites (e.g. BBC, ČT24, Der Spiegel, Deutsche Welle, France 24, iRozhlas, The Guardian, The Telegraph, RFI etc.). The author of this thesis will also work with the official website of the Federal Chancellery of Germany (bundeskanzlerin.de), of the Federal Chancellery of Austria (bundeskanzleramt.gv.at) and of the President of France (elysee.fr). All these resources contribute to creating an idea of the importance and impact of German-French relations developing during German Chancellor's long-time activity on the European scene.

1 Political Leadership

The author decided to situate the analysis of German-French relations into the theory of political leadership. The term German-French engine of Europe itself refers to a well-functioning leadership that has always been able to set goals and direction for Europe, but also to find compromises and ways out of crises. In relation to the EU, therefore, the presence of a political leadership is a key element without which European integration would not be possible.

Generally speaking, the *leadership* as such is a dynamic concept, standing for movement, shift, change, action and strength, but also communication, motivation and interpersonal contact. There are many conceptions and approaches relating to questions such as *what it actually means to pursue leadership* and/or *what the leader should look like* etc. Of course, these fundamental questions depend on the context in which we want to place our discussion about the leadership. The term *leader* is mostly referred to disciplines as psychology, sociology or management. For the purpose of this thesis it is the discipline of international relations which will be applied to clarify the term leader, particularly the political leadership. Koontz and O'Donnell state that 'leadership is the process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly towards the achievement of group goals.'³ Another definition given by Eckhard Lübke-meier focuses on the leadership in the EU. It says that 'leadership in the EU is provided by actors who are willing and capable, acting as co-leaders, to prompt other actors to contribute to the achievement of collective goals (Schild's translation).'⁴

Table 1: Leader's characteristics – overview

An ideal leader should
...have the necessary material resources.
...seek/create a common position/compromise among member states.
...be able to find allies.
...actively initiate concrete measures and solutions.
...comply with formal and informal EU rules.
...be accepted as a leader by other member states and institutions (as legitimate).
...be able to speak with one voice within the EU.

Source: HAVLÍK and JANEBOVÁ, 2014, p. 304.

³ O'DONNELL, C and H. KOONTZ. *Management, Principles and Methods of Administration*. Montreal: McGraw-Hill, 1955, p. 490.

⁴ LÜBKEMEIER, E. *Führung ist wie Liebe: warum Mit-Führung in Europa notwendig ist und wer sie leisten kann*. Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2007, p. 7.

The author of the thesis chose a total of four concepts of political leadership falling into national and international contexts. Joseph S. Nye discusses in his theory, among other things, the importance of the process and the context in which the leader is positioned. Particularly this placement in the context is also substantial for the analysis of German-French relations itself. As for Bass's theory, the author of the thesis was captivated by his division into transformational and transactional leadership having undoubtedly connection with the EU leaders. Given the subject of this work, it is necessary to introduce theories falling within the international framework, such as Young's or Koopmann's theory. All four approaches will be presented in the following subchapters. Subsequently, based on the given concepts, certain elements will be selected as criteria for conducting the future analysis.

1.1 Political Leadership Within the National Context

The leaders which will be discussed must be strong personalities not only on the international scene, but also at the national level, so the author in the first part of this chapter will pay attention to the political leadership within the national context. Specifically, Joseph S. Nye's and Bernard M. Bass's concept will be presented. Especially with the former, we will be interested in the process or context in which the leader is positioned.

Joseph S. Nye

The American political scientist Joseph S. Nye formulates leadership as mobilizing people for some purpose. According to his definition, a leader is one who helps a group create and achieve shared goals. However, being a leader is not enough, as in the words of Joseph S. Nye: 'Holding a formal leadership position is like having a fishing license; it does not guarantee that you will catch any fish.'⁵ It is important that the leader is, above all, able to set goals for which he/she can inspire his/her supporters. Properly defined intentions are those that strengthen cohesion within this group, its identity, and that stimulate members to work together to fulfil these ideas.

Nye sees leadership as a **process** that consists of **leaders**, **followers** and **context**. It is the context that includes the situational dimension, which largely indicates what goals will be pursued and which leader will be able to meet them. It is important to understand the context well and choose the appropriate strategy accordingly. Rather than the person of the leader,

⁵ NYE, J. S. *The Powers to Lead*. Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 19.

Nye's concept focuses on the leader's performance and related issues. Through this process, both leaders and their followers learn how to perform their roles and how to adapt them to changing conditions. Nye himself admits that there is in principle no universally valid definition of leadership. For this reason, new studies are constantly emerging that address the issue of leadership and seek new ways to grasp leadership and describe the ideal leader.⁶

Bernard M. Bass

There are many views, typologies and theories of leadership. Probably the best-known theory is the so-called Full-range theory of leadership, made by the American scholar Bernard M. Bass. In this concept, Bass deals with the model of **transformational and transactional leadership**, which focuses on the patterns of leading actors' behaviour. Transactional leadership is primarily associated with social exchange. Leaders achieve their goals through this exchange and thus offer, for example, subsidies for campaign contributions or jobs for votes in elections. This leader negotiates for his/her own benefit and tries to conclude the best possible deal to the mutual satisfaction with the achieved profits. Transformational leadership does not work on these largely material foundations. It is focused on reaching goals of a more abstract nature. A leader of this type gathers his/her followers to fulfil shared needs and interests. He/she is a strong personality who helps his/her followers grow and develop into new leaders. He/she supports their motivation, gives them a sense of confidence. While the transactional leader concentrates on day-to-day negotiation, policy-making, and gaining political support for his/her own person and for his/her policy proposals, the transformational leader is one level higher. He/she tries to fulfil his/her own and his/her followers' shared goals. Transformational leadership means inspiring followers to achieve a shared vision of the whole group or unit, which faces the challenge of innovative problem-solving, and is also about developing the leadership skills of these followers through learning, support and challenges. The focus here is not on the process, as in Joseph Nye's concept, but on the leader's own personality and actions.⁷

⁶ NYE, J. S. *The Powers to Lead*. Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 19.

⁷ BASS, B. M. and R. E. RIGGIO. *Transformational Leadership*. 2nd ed. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006, p. 3.

1.2 Political Leadership Within the International Context

While the previous chapter dealt with the leadership at the national level, in this section the political leadership implemented within the international context will be brought into focus. Due to the nature of the subject of this work – German-French relations – the international context in particular has its justification to be mentioned. As in the prior chapter, two authors, Young and Koopmann, will be introduced here. The latter deserves special attention.

Oran R. Young

Young's approach belongs to concepts looking at the leadership from the international point of view. There is this fundamental question: 'Why and how individuals perform as leaders in international bargains, in order to solve collective action problems?'⁸ Young distinguishes three types of political leadership that can occur in international interactions. The rule of unanimity is usually applied. It is **structural leadership, entrepreneurial leadership and intellectual leadership**. For structural leadership, a crucial thing is where the leader comes from, because his/her power to a certain extent depends on the 'hard power'⁹ of his/her country of origin (e.g. in terms of population, area, army, GDP). The second type, entrepreneurial leadership, is based on the specific qualities and abilities of the leader to negotiate and thus achieve his/her goal. By contrast, the intellectual leader relies on his/her thoughts and ideas through which he/she can shape other participants in the negotiations. Young's concept of leadership in international relations is particularly suitable for analyzing those dimensions of the EU where intergovernmental negotiations dominate.¹⁰

Martin Koopmann

While thinking about leadership, Martin Koopmann was inspired by the 'shared'¹¹ German-French relationship in the EU and based on this he distinguished four dimensions of leadership.¹² The first dimension is about **promoting of European integration**. In the context of the integration process there can be two levels taken into consideration. The horizontal level

⁸ TÖMMEL I. and A. VEDRUN. Political leadership in the European Union: an introduction. *Journal of European Integration*, 2017, 39(2), p. 105.

⁹ SCHILD, J. Mission Impossible? The Potential for Franco-German Relationship in the Enlarged EU. *Journal of Common Market studies*, 2010, 48(5), p. 1372.

¹⁰ YOUNG, O. R. Political Leadership in Regime Formation: On the Development of Institutions in International Society. *International Organization*, 1991, 45(3), p. 288.

¹¹ SCHILD, 2010, pp. 1370-1371.

¹² KOOPMANN, M. A Driving Force despite Everything: Franco-German Relations and the Enlarged European Union. *Studies & Research*, 2004, (36), pp. 14-16.

refers to the EU enlargement, i.e. the accession of new member states by the EU. On the other hand, the vertical level means deepening of the EU especially in the field of acquiring new policy areas and related new EU competences. It is no coincidence that this promotion of the EU has often been linked to the term of the so-called Franco-German engine of Europe. Because this partnership has shown to be crucial to the deepening of European integration. The second dimension of providing political leadership is given by a **compromise building**. When states, such France and Germany, seek a compromise in conflict situations, it shows that they want to maintain good relations with other states. At the same time, such conduct increases their legitimacy and makes it easier for the other states to accept them as leaders, since the agreed compromise also represents their position. The next dimension, a good political **crisis management**, is a vital part of the correctly conducted leadership. The EU faced looming or open crises many times in the past and the Franco-German tandem has always been key for solving those crises. Finally, the fourth dimension includes a **political leadership in the EU's external relations** in minilateral settings which refers to a small number of member states representing the position of the EU on the international scene. In the past, it was, for instance, the EU-3 format of France, Germany and the United Kingdom.¹³

The analysis of German-French relations from the perspective of Angela Merkel's policy towards the EU will be conducted on the basis of the political leadership theory. From the above-presented theories, Koopmann's 4-dimensional concept of political leadership was chosen as the most suitable for achieving this analysis. Furthermore, according to Nye's concept, each German-French couple will be analyzed with respect to a certain context in which the leaders acted (i.e. the context of the EU institutional crisis, Lisbon Treaty, Union for the Mediterranean, eurozone financial crisis, Ukrainian crisis, migration crisis and Brexit). Primarily, German-French relations will be analyzed with respect to Koopmann's given criteria of political leadership (compromise building, crisis management, leadership in the EU's external relations, promoting of European integration). Secondly, the achieved analysis will provide answers to these research questions. *What impact did the German-French leadership have on the EU during the Merkel era? What changes did the couples manage to achieve? How did their (dis)agreement affect the direction of the EU? With which of the French presidents did Chancellor Angela Merkel's interests and values converge the most?* The table below

¹³ KOOPMANN, M. A Driving Force despite Everything: Franco-German Relations and the Enlarged European Union. *Studies & Research*, 2004, (36), pp. 14-16.

summarizes the already mentioned elements and criteria, by which the analysis will be accomplished in the second part of this work.

Table 2: Analysis of German-French Relations – selected criteria

Koopmann’s 4-dimensional theory of political leadership		
*Compromise building *Crisis management *Leadership in the EU’s external relations		
*Promoting of European integration		
German-French Relations 2005-2019	Leaders	Angela Merkel & Jacques Chirac
	Context	EU Institutional Crisis
	Leaders	Angela Merkel & Nicolas Sarkozy
	Context	Lisbon Treaty
		Union for the Mediterranean
		Eurozone Financial Crisis
	Leaders	Angela Merkel & François Hollande
	Context	Eurozone Financial Crisis
		Ukrainian Crisis
		Migration Crisis
	Leaders	Angela Merkel & Emmanuel Macron
	Context	Brexit Negotiations

Source: KOOPMANN, 2004, pp. 14-16.

2 State Leader

The following chapter introduces two political functions, namely the function of the German chancellor and the French president. Both are key political leaders who, among other things, meet regularly at European Council summits. Thanks to their strong leadership they began to be called the engine of European integration.¹⁴

The aim of this chapter is to point out the position of these functions within the political system of the relevant country. Particular attention will therefore be paid to the election process and powers of both representatives. There will also be an attached list of German chancellors and French presidents governing from the 1940s to the present.

2.1 German Chancellor

Germany is a democratic, federal parliamentary republic, headed by a federal president. However, according to the German constitution, the Basic Law (Grundgesetz) of 1949, the federal chancellor is the central figure of the executive branch. This person is endowed with extensive powers, including the competence to issue policy guidelines (Richtlinienkompetenz). That is why the German political system is sometimes referred to as chancellor democracy.¹⁵

The minimum age of passive suffrage for the chancellor is set at 18 years. The term of office lasts four years (renewable). The federal chancellor is formally proposed by the federal president¹⁶ on the basis of the election outcome to the German Federal Diet (Deutscher Bundestag). Afterwards, it is decided in the Bundestag. According to the German constitution, the candidate must gain an absolute majority¹⁷ of the votes to win. If the candidate is not elected in the first round, there are two more rounds available.¹⁸

¹⁴ MOURLON-DRUOL, E. Rethinking Franco-German relations: a historical perspective. *Bruegel Policy Contribution*, 2017, (29), p. 3.

¹⁵ HANDL, V. et al. *Německo v čele Evropy? SRN jako civilní mocnost a hegemon eurozóny*. Praha: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, 2011, p. 125.

¹⁶ It is valid only for the first round of elections, in the next rounds a candidate for Chancellor is proposed by the Bundestag.

¹⁷ It is valid for the first and second round, there is only a relative majority in the third round.

¹⁸ Wahl des Bundeskanzlers/der Bundeskanzlerin. *Bundeskanzlerin.de* [online]. [viewed 21 November 2018]. Available from: <https://www.bundeskanzlerin.de/bkin-de/kanzleramt/wahl-der-bundeskanzlerin>

The federal chancellor may be dismissed by the Bundestag only on the basis of the so-called constructive vote of no confidence (konstruktives Misstrauensvotum), i.e. only if the Bundestag also agrees on the successor. This has happened only once in history. In 1982, MPs approved a constructive vote of no confidence thereby they removed Chancellor Helmut Schmidt from office and instead of him Helmut Kohl was elected as the new chancellor.¹⁹

The importance of the post of the German chancellor is manifested primarily by significant powers. This person fundamentally determines Germany's policy on both the domestic and international scene. At the domestic level, the federal chancellor particularly influences the functioning of the Cabinet of Germany (Bundesregierung) and of the Bundestag. Specifically, these are the powers: to form the Bundesregierung; to issue guidelines for running the individual ministries; to conduct negotiations with coalition partners; to elect chancellor's representative; to propose to the federal president dissolving the Bundestag.²⁰ Regarding the powers at the international level, the federal chancellor, together with the minister of foreign affairs and the minister of defense, plays a central role in shaping German foreign policy. Chancellor's powers exercised at the international level could be summarized in three slogans: to manage, to coordinate and to think politically and strategically (führen, koordinieren, Strippen ziehen).²¹

The following table lists the chancellors of Germany from the 1940s to the present. Konrad Adenauer became the first post-war chancellor. He is also called the founding father of the European Union. Germany was led by other well-known chancellors, such as Helmut Kohl, who had been in office for 16 years. And it is Angela Merkel who is following his long career. She took office in 2005. According to her last statement, she will no longer run for the presidency of the CDU party again and will remain a chancellor until the end of the term of office, i.e. until 2021.²²

¹⁹ Aufgaben der Bundeskanzlerin. *Bundeskanzlerin.de* [online]. [viewed 21 November 2018]. Available from: <https://www.bundeskanzlerin.de/bkin-de/kanzleramt/wahl-der-bundeskanzlerin>

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ HANDL, V. et al. *Německo v čele Evropy? SRN jako civilní mocnost a hegemon eurozóny*. Praha: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, 2011, p. 125.

²² Anfang vom Ende einer Kanzlerin. *Spiegel.de* [online]. 30 October 2018 [viewed 9 November 2018]. Available from: <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/internationale-medien-ueber-angela-merkel-anfang-vom-ende-einer-kanzlerin-a-1235815.html>

Table 3: List of Federal Chancellors of Germany from 1949 up to the present

1.	Konrad Adenauer	1949-1963	CDU
2.	Ludwig Erhard	1963-1966	CDU
3.	Kurt Georg Kiesinger	1966-1969	CDU
4.	Willy Brandt	1969-1974	SPD
5.	Helmut Schmidt	1974-1982	SPD
6.	Helmuth Kohl	1982-1998	CDU
7.	Gerhard Schröder	1998-2005	SPD
8.	Angela Merkel	2005-2021	CDU

Source: JERÁBEK, et al., 2010, p. 74.

2.1.1 Austrian Chancellor

In addition to Germany, it is possible to find the post of chancellor in another EU member state, namely Austria. These two countries are very close in many respects (culturally and linguistically, historically, geographically etc.), but what about the position of the chancellor within the political system, what similarities or differences can be observed between the German and Austrian chancellor?

According to the 1920 Constitution, Austria is a federal parliamentary republic. The head of state is the federal president who appoints members of the federal government including the federal chancellor. The federal government is accountable to the National Council and consists of the federal chancellor, the vice-chancellor and the federal ministers.²³

Theoretically, the chancellor can become anybody elected to the National Council who is more than 18 years old. The term of office is constituted unlimited. However, it depends on the election outcome to the National Council that takes place every five years. On the basis of this outcome, the federal president appoints the leader of the party with the most won seats to be a new chancellor. In comparison to German system, the parliamentary body in Austria is not involved in the election process of the chancellor. Another difference is observed also in the way of chancellor's dismissal. Whereas there is the constructive vote of no confidence in Germany, the Austrian system applies only the regular vote of no confidence. In 2019, it was

²³ ŘÍCHOVÁ, B. et al. *Komparace politických systémů II*. Praha: Oeconomica, 2009, pp. 129-162.

for the first time in Austrian politics when the National Council successfully used this instrument and expressed distrust to the then (and current) Chancellor Sebastian Kurz.²⁴

The chancellor of Austria as the head of government is endowed with significant powers. Regarding the chancellor's authority at the domestic level, he is the person who has the right to form the cabinet and who chairs its meetings. On the other hand, according to Austrian Constitution, the chancellor does not issue policy guidelines to ministers as it was in the German case. However, his power to influence policies is given by the prestige of the office. The chancellor's powers cover both the domestic and international level as well, these are for instance submitting bills passed by the National Council to the president for certification, countersigning certifications of bills made by the president, announcing the bills that have become laws, announcing the results of presidential elections, announcing treaties the Republic of Austria is party to upon ratification etc.²⁵ With regard to the powers applied at the European level, it is the Austrian chancellor who represents the country at EU summits and is thus responsible for negotiating Austrian interests within the EU.

The table below contains the list of chancellors of Austria from 1945 up to the present. The first visible difference that can be observed with the previous Table 3 is the number of representatives who have held the position so far. From the 1940s up to the present, Germany had eight chancellors, whereas Austria had even eighteen in total. This can indicate a lesser or greater extent of stability within the given political systems. In Austria, Bruno Kreisky served as chancellor for 13 years, which is a relatively long time, on the other hand, many Austrian chancellors stayed in office for only one year. This was also the case of Brigitte Bierlein. Although she can be proud of the title of the first female chancellor in Austrian federal politics, her service in office did not last too long. As far as political parties are concerned, like in the case of Germany, also the representatives in Austria come from two dominant parties, i.e. the SPÖ and the ÖVP.

²⁴ Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz ousted in no-confidence vote. *euronews.com* [online]. 28 Mai 2019 [viewed 22 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.euronews.com/2019/05/27/austrian-far-right-to-back-vote-of-no-confidence-in-chancellor-kurz>

²⁵ Bundes-Verfassungsgesetz-Novelle 1994. BGBl. Nr. 1013/1994, art. 47, 49, 60.

Table 4: List of Federal Chancellors of Austria from 1945 up to the present

1.	Karl Renner	1945	SDAP/SPÖ
2.	Leopold Figl	1945-1953	ÖVP
3.	Julius Raab	1953-1961	ÖVP
4.	Alfons Gorbach	1961-1964	ÖVP
5.	Josef Klaus	1964-1970	ÖVP
6.	Bruno Kreisky	1970-1983	SPÖ
7.	Fred Sinowatz	1983-1986	SPÖ
8.	Franz Vranitzky	1986-1997	SPÖ
9.	Viktor Klima	1997-2000	SPÖ
10.	Wolfgang Schüssel	2000-2007	ÖVP
11.	Alfred Gusenbauer	2007-2008	SPÖ
12.	Werner Faymann	2008-2016	SPÖ
13.	Reinhold Mitterlehner	2016	ÖVP
14.	Christian Kern	2016-2017	SPÖ
15.	Sebastian Kurz	2017-2019	ÖVP
16.	Hartwig Löger	2019	ÖVP
17.	Brigitte Bierleinová	2019-2020	Independent
18.	Sebastian Kurz	2020–	ÖVP

Source: Regierungen seit 1945. *Bundeskanzleramt.gv.at* [online]. [viewed. 2 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/bundeskanzleramt/geschichte/regierungen-seit-1945.html>

2.2 French President

The strong position of the president in France only emerged with the Constitution of the Fifth Republic, which was adapted under de Gaulle in 1958. Despite the significant position of the president, the role of the government continued to be important in this system. Thus, there was created a specific system in France which is called a semi-presidential system.²⁶

The president is elected in a direct election by all French citizens. The minimum age of passive suffrage is set at 23 years. The presidential term lasts five years (once re-elected). The reduction from the original seven to the current five years occurred as a result of constitutional changes during the governance of J. Chirac in 2000. This measure was intended to reduce the likelihood that the president and the prime minister, nominated by parliament, would belong to different

²⁶ PEROTTINO, M. *Francouzský politický systém*. Praha: Slon, 2005, pp. 70-72.

political groupings (the so-called cohabitation).²⁷ The French president can only be removed from office for committing treason.²⁸

We can also classify the president's powers into those exercised at the domestic and international level. The former includes for instance: the right to dissolve the National Assembly; to appoint the French prime minister; to chair the Council of Ministers; to sign laws before their coming into force or to return them to parliament for reconsideration or to have them approved by referendum; he is a commander-in-chief of the French armed forces; he has the right to grant a pardon. Regarding the powers at the international level, based on the Constitution of the Fifth Republic, the president is responsible for foreign policy and armed forces on the basis of the so-called reserved area (*domaine réservé*). He has the right to send troops anywhere in the world without parliament's approval. The French president himself can also represent the country at summits and sign international agreements and treaties.²⁹

In comparison with the Table 3, it is evident that from the 1940s up to the present, there were not as many French presidents as German chancellors. On the other hand, even there were those, such as Charles de Gaulle, François Mitterrand or Jacques Chirac, who were in office for more than one term. It is also interesting to note that Konrad Adenauer cooperated with three French presidents during his 14-year-term and Helmut Kohl with two French presidents during his 16-year-term. Angela Merkel will have cooperated with four French presidents in total until the end of her stay in office.

²⁷ HLOUŠEK, V. and L. KOPEČEK and J. ŠEDO. *Politické systémy*. Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2011, pp. 94-99.

²⁸ DVOŘÁKOVÁ, V. et al. *Základní modely demokratických systémů: Komparace politických systémů*. Praha: Oeconomica, 2008, pp. 169-170.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

Table 5: List of presidents of France from 1947 up to the present

1.	Vincent Auriol	1947-1954
2.	René Coty	1954-1959
3.	Charles de Gaulle	1959-1969
4.	Alain Poher	1969
5.	Georges Pompidou	1969-1974
6.	Alain Poher	1974
7.	Valéry Giscard d'Estaing	1974-1981
8.	François Mitterrand	1981-1995
9.	Jacques Chirac	1995-2007
10.	Nicolas Sarkozy	2007-2012
11.	François Hollande	2012-2017
12.	Emmanuel Macron	Since 2017

Source: Presidents of the Republic. *Elysée* [online]. [viewed 12 February 2021].
Available from: <https://www.elysee.fr/en/french-presidency/the-presidents-of-the-republic>

3 Leaders' Positions Towards the EU

The following chapter introduces German-French positions towards the EU, in particular Angela Merkel's, Jacques Chirac's, Nicolas Sarkozy's, François Hollande's and Emanuel Macron's position. Not only their personal stance but also the stance of their domestic political party will be included. This chapter is supposed to be a pre-step before the analysis itself where the leaders' positions will be observed in relation to each other.

3.1 Angela Merkel

Angela Merkel, originally a chemistry scientist from East Germany, is considered to be a phenomenon of German politics. Her political engagement started in the 1990s when she became a member of the CDU. In 2000, she was elected chairperson of the party and five years later Germany had the first female chancellor in the country's history. The beginning of her political career did not look very optimistic. She was criticized for being a politician without a clear vision or as someone who is not very radical in her opinions. However, in the course of time, her power was unveiled, and she has gradually become an important symbol of stability not only for her own country, but internationally, too.³⁰

Regarding her policy towards the EU, Merkel applied her distinctive style of leadership also at the European level. She changed Kohl's Euro-federalist rhetoric and refused to further strengthen the centralism of the EU. On top of that, she called for the returning of competences to the national level and the strengthening of subsidiarity. This is related to her statement 'not every problem in Europe is a task for Europe.'³¹ Angela Merkel together with her party reaffirmed her support for the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. Although the Treaty eventually was not adopted, Merkel showed her excellent leadership skills later on during the negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty. Greater emphasis on the unity of the EU is evident in the chancellor's second term of office. Especially in times of ongoing financial and debt crisis, she stressed to avoid political fragmentation. One of the characteristic features of her

³⁰ How Germany's Angela Merkel has stayed in power for so long. *Deutsche Welle/Youtube.com* [online]. 22 November 2020 [viewed 1 March 2021]. Available from:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9XTayF73ss&feature=emb_title

³¹ Deutschlands Chancen Nutzen. Wachstum. Arbeit. Sicherheit. CDU/CSU Regierungsprogramm 2005-2009 [online]. 11 July 2005 [viewed 21 February 2021]. p. 35. Available from:

https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=6c914ac8-7c46-b010-b1a1-24aa4261d24b&groupId=252038

policy is to seek a balance between the interests of the EU as a whole and the interests of Germany.³² For a wider perspective of Angela Merkel's attitude towards the EU, her own political party will be introduced.

CDU, the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands), is defined as a party based on the values of Christianity and democracy that supports the federal system in Germany. It adheres to western allied structures, in particular the cooperation within the EU and NATO.³³ It is a popular, Christian-democratic party, offering representation to Christian and Protestant voters. The origin derives from Konrad Adenauer, the first post-war chancellor and chairman of the CDU, who set the political orientation of the party and thus of the whole Germany. Adenauer promoted in particular the policy of alliance with the West and the policy of a social market economy. He took a conservative approach to education and the family model. The CDU can be described as an Euro-enthusiastic or even Euro-optimistic party that supports development and deepening of European integration.³⁴ With its political priorities and overall ideology, the CDU at the EU level belongs to the European People's Party (EPP) which is the largest group in the European Parliament.

3.2 Jacques Chirac

Jacques Chirac is still a figure of great importance in France. After François Mitterrand, he took over the governance in 1995 and remained the head of state until 2007. He previously served as minister of agriculture, minister of industry and later on as prime minister under President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. However, their relationship was complicated since Chirac had stronger leanings towards Gaullism than Giscard.³⁵

Chirac was known not only for his innate charm, but also for his ability to change attitudes flexibly, that is why he earned the nickname Chameleon Bonaparte. An example of this is the fact that the former devoted anti-European Gaullist became one of the main leaders in Europe.

³² Wir haben die Kraft – Gemeinsam für unser Land. CDU/CSU Regierungsprogramm 2009-2013 [online]. 28 May 2013 [viewed 21 February 2021]. pp. 60-62. Available from: https://www.cdu.de/system/tdf/media/dokumente/090628-beschluss-regierungsprogramm-cducsu.pdf?file=1&type=field_collection_item&id=546

³³ Geschichte der CDU. *CDU* [online]. [viewed 21 February 2021]. Available from: <http://www.cdu.de/artikel/geschichte>

³⁴ FIALA, P. and M. MAREŠ et al. *Konzervativní a křesťanské politické strany a evropská integrace*. Brno: MPÚ, 1999, p. 9.

³⁵ PALMER, A. *Who's Who in World Politics*. London: Routledge, 1996, p. 77.

Chirac significantly contributed to the deepening of European integration. He was for instance responsible for the promotion of the common European currency euro or for the development of the common foreign and security policy within the EU.³⁶ To find out more about Chirac's position towards the EU, it is important to introduce a political party which he represented and whose ideologies and attitudes are immediately connected with him.

UMP, the Union for a Popular Movement (Union pour un mouvement populaire), was a French political party founded in 2002 with the aim of unifying Gaullist, liberal and Christian Democratic ideologies. It used to be the strongest party in France whose supporters were both former French presidents, the already mentioned Jacques Chirac but also Nicolas Sarkozy, who will be a subject of the next chapter. The UMP was a liberal-conservative party with right-wing characteristics. Main features were for instance a high degree of pragmatism and a liberal view of the free market. However, also some social topics were included. Historically, the main conservative issue always concerned the importance of the nation. And this applied also to the UMP. The nationalism in connection with the above-mentioned pragmatism was reflected in the strong promotion of national interests (see the common agricultural policy) as well as in the ambitions to be a leader within the EU.³⁷ It should be noted that the UMP does not exist anymore, it was dissolved in 2015. Its direct successor became The Republicans (Les Républicains). Nevertheless, the UMP belonged, as well as the CDU, to the EPP in the European Parliament.

3.3 Nicolas Sarkozy

Between 2007 and 2012, France was led by Nicolas Sarkozy. He was a very charismatic, but also in many ways controversial leader and, despite his ongoing lawsuits, he is still very popular with French citizens to this day.³⁸ During his political career, he served as minister of finance and minister of the interior. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Sarkozy was a member of the right-wing **UMP**. After its dissolution in 2015, he established a liberal-conservative political party **The Republicans** (Les Républicains).

³⁶ FIALA, P. and M. PITROVÁ. *Evropská unie*. Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2009, pp. 633-634.

³⁷ BARTOŠ, J. Kam zařadit Unii pro lidové hnutí (UMP)? *Global Politics* [online]. 26 April 2006 [viewed 1 March 2021]. Available from: <http://www.globalpolitics.cz/clanky/ump>

³⁸ Ve Francii začal soud se Sarkozym, kvůli zdravotnímu stavu spoluobžalovaného byl odročen. *ČT24* [online]. 23 November 2020 [viewed 3 March 2021]. Available from: <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/svet/3230212-ve-francii-zacina-soud-se-sarkozym-obzalovany-v-korupcni-kauze>

In 2008, one year after taking office, Sarkozy was directly involved in the European integration process since his country held the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU. This was also the moment when he presented his position towards the EU. France's priorities could be divided into four categories, namely: energy and climate, migration issues, security and defense, agriculture. During the six-month period, France wanted to focus in particular on protecting European citizens (the presidency's motto: Une Europe plus protectrice) and ratifying the Lisbon Treaty.³⁹ In addition to these priorities, Sarkozy was involved in other integration areas, namely the Union for the Mediterranean which was one of his main achievements.⁴⁰ Furthermore, Sarkozy for instance proposed more intensive integration of military forces in Europe, suggested to create new institutions within the EU and was a big supporter of the euro. Even if the euro had problems during the financial and debt crisis, he did not want to give it up, instead Sarkozy called for a change in the international monetary system.⁴¹

3.4 François Hollande

François Hollande was Sarkozy's main opponent in the 2012 presidential election from the Socialist Party. He did not agree with the austerity measures, which in his view led from Brussels and which were supported by Sarkozy. He wanted to replace these austerity measures with investments in order to create new jobs. His critical rhetoric eventually proved to be successful, as he defeated Sarkozy in the battle for the Elysée Palace and became president for another five years.

His initial direction of European policy was focused mainly on solving the economic crisis within the EU. In the economic field, Hollande held a different position than German Chancellor Angela Merkel, mainly in terms of the institutional design of the eurozone. Hollande was not in favor of the new reform of Treaties that would delegate more power to the EU institutions to coordinate fiscal and tax policies. Regarding other issues of European integration, Hollande was, for instance, active in the field of defense policy. He called for this policy to be strengthened within Europe, to be more unified and coordinated among individual states. In the field of immigration policy, Hollande, despite the terrorist attacks that took place in France,

³⁹ Přehled předsednických zemí EU: Francie (1.7. - 31.12.2008). *euroskop.cz* [online]. [viewed 1 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.euroskop.cz/8426/sekce/francouzske-predsednictvi-1-7---31-12-2008/>

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Davos 2011: Nicolas Sarkozy 'will not let euro fail.' *BBC* [online]. 27 January 2011 [viewed 1 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-12295841>

supported the reception of refugees.⁴² His position towards the EU was naturally a reflection of his political party which he had come from.

The **Socialist Party** (Parti socialiste) is a left-wing, social democratic party whose member was, in addition to François Hollande, also one of the most important presidents of France, François Mitterrand. The Socialist Party is deeply committed to the project of European integration. In a global context, political activity at the international level is necessary to confront the powers of conservatives and ultra-liberals. Before the 2011 presidential election, the party called for France's independence and distinctiveness, which in their view was getting lost inside Europe.⁴³ In relation between the party and the EU, it is also necessary to mention the year 2005, which was a great failure for the party. They were strongly supporting adoption of the European Constitution, which was eventually rejected by the French public. The Socialist Party is a member of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), nowadays the second-largest political group in the European Parliament.

3.5 Emmanuel Macron

Emmanuel Macron, the winner of the 2017 presidential election, clearly presented himself during his campaign as a supporter of European integration and globalism. Compared to previous French presidents, he was more interested in European affairs than usual. Since Macron served as minister of the economy and investment banker before taking office, economic issues naturally attracted his attention most. During the campaign, he pointed mainly to the reform of the EU's fiscal and social policy, the vision of a multi-speed Europe or the renewal of the Franco-German engine. Since 2018, there have also been heard statements expressed by both him and Chancellor Merkel about the necessity to create a common European army.⁴⁴

⁴² Hollande asks Europe for patience with France, vows reform. *euractiv* [online] 19 September 2014 [viewed 1 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/euro-finance/news/hollande-asks-europe-for-patience-with-france-vows-reform/>

⁴³ Europe et international. *Parti Socialiste* [online]. 2011 [viewed 1 March 2021]. Available from: <http://www.parti-socialiste.fr/nos-idees/europe-etinternational>

⁴⁴ HASSELBACH, Ch. France and Germany dream up ambitious EU reforms. *Deutsche Welle* [online]. 20 November 2018 [viewed 1 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.dw.com/en/france-and-germany-dream-up-ambitious-eu-reforms/a-46383897>

Between 2006 and 2009, Macron, like Hollande, was a member of the **Socialist Party**, however in 2016 he founded the **LREM**, the Republic on the Move (La République En Marche!), under which he ran for the presidential election. It is a centrist and liberal political party whose goal is to unite the right and the left. The LREM is considered the most pro-European party in France. In the 2017 French presidential election, the party states in its program, among other things, that it demands in the Brexit debate to defend the integrity of the European single market, to create a single digital and energy market, to act actively on migration issues, or to integrate defense policy more deeply.⁴⁵ Regarding identifying the party at the European level, LREM is part of Renew Europe, the third largest political group sitting in the European Parliament.

⁴⁵ Europe in France: Top 5 French Political Party Programmes. *European Movement International* [online]. [viewed 23 March 2021]. pp. 1-2. Available from: <https://europeanmovement.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Europe-Paragraphs-in-French-Election-Programmes.pdf>

4 German-French Relations

This chapter will deal with German-French relations, with particular focus on the events that took place between 1950-2005. The Schuman Declaration or the Elysée Treaty are considered to be the major milestones on which the two partners began to build good relations and powerful political leadership inside Europe. The following overview is composed chronologically and summarizes the main moments from 1950s until 2005 – the period when Angela Merkel was not yet in power.

4.1 Major Milestones 1950-2005

In 1950, five years after the end of World War II, European nations were still struggling to cope with its tragic consequences. European countries decided to prevent further devastating wars in the future. Therefore, they came to the conclusion that, thanks to joint cooperation based on the coal mining and steel production, a war between historic rivals France and Germany would be (according to the Declaration) ‘not only unthinkable but materially impossible.’ Robert Schuman, the then French Foreign Minister, correctly estimated that involving economic interests would help raise living standards and at the same time it would be the first step on the road to a united Europe.⁴⁶

Based on this idea, **on 9 May 1950**, Robert Schuman issued a declaration, the so-called Schuman Declaration, proposing the creation of a European Coal and Steel Community, the members of which were to establish joint coal mining and steel production. The founding members of the Community included France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. Historically, the creation of this Community was of great importance, since it meant a fundamental and, above all, positive turn in France’s approach to Germany. In the course of time, good Franco-German relations have proved to be crucial not only for both countries themselves, but also for the whole of Europe.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ The Schuman Declaration – 9 May 1950. *europa.eu* [online]. [viewed 16 February 2021]. Available from: https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/europe-day/schuman-declaration_en

⁴⁷ POPTCHEVA, E. M. The Franco-German relationship in the European Union. A short overview. *European Parliamentary Research Service Blog* [online]. 2 October 2015 [viewed 16 February 2021]. Available from: <https://epthinktank.eu/2015/10/02/the-franco-german-relationship-in-the-european-union-a-short-overview/>

Probably one of the most important moments in the history of German-French relations took place **on 22 January 1963** when the Elysée Treaty was signed. At that time in the Elysée Palace, representatives of Germany and France, Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle, pledged to work together on foreign policy issues. They also promised, for instance, that their students would learn the language of another nation. Both de Gaulle and Adenauer's successors have more or less managed to meet their contractual obligations. Nevertheless, the main effect of this Treaty is that the two largest nations in Europe are not at war, as they had been for centuries, on the contrary, they became one of the most loyal allies in the world.⁴⁸

Another significant event was captured in a well-known photograph taken **on 22 September 1984**. French President François Mitterrand and Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl stand hand in hand at the Verdun Memorial to the fallen during World War I. The picture made headlines around the world and became a symbol of the German-French reconciliation after World War II.⁴⁹

At the turn of **1988-1989**, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty, cooperation at the political level was further strengthened. The Franco-German Financial and Economic Council, the Franco-German Defense and Security Council and the Franco-German Environmental Council were established.⁵⁰

When the Berlin Wall fell **on 9 November 1989**, not long after, French President François Mitterrand and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl gave their speeches to members of the European Parliament in Strasbourg. **On 22 November 1989**, in the presence of the European Commission President Jacques Delors, both statesmen explained their views on recent events in Berlin and Eastern Europe. These were historical moments full of emotions. Both politicians reaffirmed the determination of the twelve state leaders to support democratic reforms in this part of Europe.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Helmut Kohl and François Mitterrand: leaders in reconciliation. *europa.eu* [online]. [viewed 16 February 2021]. pp. 1-2. Available from: https://europa.eu/european-union/sites/europaeu/files/eu-pioneers/eu-pioneers-kohl-mitterrand_en.pdf

⁵⁰ COLIN, N. and C. DEMESMAY et al. *Franco-German Relations Seen from Abroad*. Cham: Springer, 2021. p. 171.

⁵¹ Addresses by Helmut KOHL, German Federal Chancellor and François MITTERRAND, President of the French Republic (22 November 1989): extracts from the statements. *europa.eu* [online]. 22 November 1989 [viewed 18 February 2021]. Available from: https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/addresses-by-helmut-kohl-german-federal-chancellor-and-francois-mitterrand-president-of-the-french-republic-22-november-1989-extracts-from-the-statements_I109075-V_v

On 3 October 1990, West Germany (FRG) and East Germany (GDR), two separate entities of a different geopolitical orientation, were reunited into one country, the Federal Republic of Germany. Greater Germany means a stronger partner and France was aware of this fact. There were strong concerns on the French side about the possible growing influence of Germany within the European Communities. Therefore, certain tensions between Mitterrand and Kohl emerged in this time period.⁵²

Cooperation between Germany and France achieved a new – external – dimension when they invited Poland among themselves. The intention of Paris and Berlin was to support Poland on its journey towards NATO and the EU. Within the so-called Weimar Triangle, the foreign ministers of these countries – Roland Dumas of France, Hans-Dietrich Genscher of Germany, and Krzysztof Skubiszewski of Poland – met for the first time **on 29 August 1991**.⁵³

Another equally important moment was the speech of Chancellor Schröder in the French National Assembly **on 29 November 1999**. Schröder was the very first German chancellor to receive this honor.⁵⁴

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty, all members of the French National Assembly and members of the German Bundestag met in Versailles **on 22 January 2003** to solemnly confirm the Franco-German partnership. It was also decided that the Franco-German summits would be replaced by joint ministerial meetings.⁵⁵

At the end of this chapter, it should be reminded that it was France that represented within and beyond the Franco-German partnership a vocal and dominant leader in the field of European politics (see the agricultural common policy, crash of the European Defence Community,

⁵² GERBEAULT, A. German reunification as a misunderstanding between Kohl and Mitterrand. *The New Federalist* [online]. 22 November 2020 [viewed 18 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.thenewfederalist.eu/german-reunification-as-a-misunderstanding-between-kohl-and-mitterrand?lang=fr>

⁵³ HELM, S. 'Weimar Triangle' takes shape for power. *Independent* [online]. 22 May 1996 [viewed 16 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/weimar-triangle-takes-shape-for-power-1348723.html>

⁵⁴ POPTCHEVA, E. M. The Franco-German relationship in the European Union. A short overview. *European Parliamentary Research Service Blog* [online]. 2 October 2015 [viewed 16 February 2021]. Available from: <https://epthinktank.eu/2015/10/02/the-franco-german-relationship-in-the-european-union-a-short-overview/>

⁵⁵ Ibid.

refusal of UK's accession to the EC, empty chair crisis). However, a major breakthrough occurred **on 25 November 2005**. Back then Angela Merkel became German chancellor and a new era of German-French relations began. At this place, the author would like to point out that in the following paragraphs the phrase *German-French* will be preferred (compared to the previous reverse order of the phrase *Franco-German*). The reason why to do so is the long-time and decisive leading role of Germany within the EU since Angela Merkel took office. The author of the thesis is truly convinced that this exchange of leading power between France and Germany should be highlighted also linguistical way.

5 Analysis of German-French Relations

This diploma thesis deals with the analysis of German-French relations from the perspective of Angela Merkel's policy towards the EU. The following chapter shall offer the analysis itself. The couples of leaders will be introduced in chronological order. Their relationship will be analyzed within a certain context (see Joseph S. Nye's theory of political leadership with the focus on *context*). The author of this diploma thesis tried to select the most striking events or contexts that happened from 2005 to 2019. The Merkel-Chirac cooperation (2005-2007) will be observed in the light of the EU institutional crisis that was caused by the rejection of the Treaty establishing the Constitution for Europe. The Merkel-Sarkozy duo (2007-2012) took place in the context of adopting the Lisbon Treaty, creating the Union for the Mediterranean and developing the eurozone financial crisis. The third Merkel-Hollande collaboration (2012-2017) will be seen in the context of three crises, namely the ongoing economic crisis, the Ukrainian crisis and the migration crisis. The Merkel-Macron tandem (since 2017) will conclude this chapter. Given the fact that these two leaders are governing even during the author's work on the thesis, only one event was selected to analyze their relationship, i.e. Brexit, particularly its negotiations until 2019.

Based on Koopmann's 4-dimensional concept of political leadership, the author will try to address the issues, such as *what impact did the German-French leadership have on the EU during the Merkel era? What changes did the couples manage to achieve? How did their (dis)agreement affect the direction of the EU? With which of the French presidents did Chancellor Angela Merkel's interests and values converge the most?* Partial results of the Koopmann's theory will be presented at the end of each subchapter.

5.1 Leaders Merkel & Chirac

This subchapter will focus on how Angela Merkel took office as chancellor and thereby started a new era of German-French relations. When Angela Merkel replaced her SPD rival Gerhard Schröder in November 2005, French President Jacques Chirac had led his country for 10 years. In spite of different experience with high politics, Angela, as a new member of the European engine, gradually began to show that she did not intend to limit Germany's external relations to one and only exclusivity of privileged German-French relationship (as it was so under Chancellor Gerhard Schröder). It can be stated that basically, since the official welcome when

Jacques Chirac received the new German Chancellor Angela Merkel with a gentlemanly kiss of her hand, who was coming to Paris as a recent winner, their relationship took a turn for the worse. The European Constitution, European economic policy, the attitude towards the United States and, last but not least, the integration of new, smaller member states into Europe, all created diverse preconditions for mutual conflicts. Although their common goals had not changed, namely, to keep peace at the heart of an ever-expanding Europe, the Chirac-Merkel relationship had been far from the close bond created between François Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl or Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle.⁵⁶

Context: EU Institutional Crisis

The Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe was adopted by the European Council in Rome on 29 October 2004. The main reason for its adoption was the need to adjust methods and functioning of EU institutions to the enlarged EU after 2004. However, this groundbreaking document had provoked a great wave of discussions within the professional public. Politicians were debating how many changes the Constitution would bring, and whether these changes are good or not. Some regretted that the Treaty had thwarted the chance to create another United States, while others were upset that this was exactly what the Treaty was doing. An essential topic was the incorporation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights into the Constitution.⁵⁷

On 29 May 2005, France voted on whether or not the Treaty should be ratified. As a reason for the referendum, the French Ministry of the Interior was mentioning the extreme importance of this Treaty for the future of every French citizen and the whole of Europe.⁵⁸ The influence of political actors on citizens had been considerable. Chirac's UMP, and some other political parties, namely the Union for French Democracy, the Socialist Party and the Greens spoke publicly for the adoption of the European Constitution. The other parties opposed. However, the stance of the French president remains still an important element. The office of the president in France, compared to other European states, has a great influence on public opinion, especially as far as foreign policy is concerned. And Jacques Chirac, who called the referendum, was

⁵⁶ LAINAULT, A. Francouzsko-německá aliance: nikdy a navždy. *euractiv* [online]. 12 December 2006 [viewed 22 March 2021]. Available from: <https://euractiv.cz/section/aktualne-v-eu/opinion/francouzsko-nmeck-aliance-nikdy-a-navdy/>

⁵⁷ Quick guide: European Constitution. *BBC* [online]. 29 June 2006 [viewed 22 March 2021]. Available from: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/5097578.stm>

⁵⁸ Le référendum de 29 mai 2005. *Le ministère de l'intérieur* [online]. 2005 [viewed 22 March 2021]. Available from: http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/sections/a_votre_service/elections/les_elections_en_france/referendum-2005/elections-2005/downloadFile/attachedFile_9/ue12p.pdf

fundamentally in favor of the adoption.⁵⁹ The referendum outcome was even more surprising when 55 % of French citizens decided to refuse the ratification of the European Constitution. President Chirac marked the decision as threatening France's own interests in Europe. The President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, described the result of the French referendum as a serious problem, but at the same time refused to admit that it would mean the end of the European Constitution.⁶⁰

Angela Merkel became chancellor in November 2005, several months after the failed French referendum. Just for the sake of comparison, Germany did not hold a referendum but was deciding on this matter in the German Bundestag. On 12 May 2005, i.e. before the referendum in France, the Treaty was approved by an overwhelming majority (569 yes, 23 no and 2 no vote).⁶¹ Germany was very interested in approving the document, as the European Constitutional Treaty was largely a German project. Former German Foreign Minister Joscha Fischer first introduced the idea of creating a European Constitution in his speech in 1999, followed by a German-Italian initiative to discuss the future direction of European integration during the so-called post-Nice process. Germany was also one of the authors of the Laeken Declaration and proponent of the Convention on the Future of the EU. Thus, in connection with the failure of the Constitutional Treaty, much greater demands were placed on Germany.⁶²

Despite the not entirely harmonious relationship between Angela Merkel and Jacques Chirac, both leaders were united in their efforts to revive the document and wanted to resume negotiations on the European Constitution. But it was clear that it would take some time.

We agree that the issue of the Constitutional Treaty will come back on the agenda after a phase of reflection. After our presidency for the next 18 months at the end of the French presidency, a decision should be made (translation from Merkel's statement).⁶³

⁵⁹ RICHARD, A. and R. PABST. Evaluation of the French Referendum on the EU Constitution, Mai 2005. *Democracy International* [online]. 2005 [viewed 3 March 2021]. Available from: <http://democracy-international.org/fileadmin/di/pdf/monitoring/di-france.pdf>

⁶⁰ French say firm 'No' to EU Treaty. *BBC* [online]. 30 Mai 2005 [viewed 20 March 2021]. Available from: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4592243.stm>

⁶¹ Germany Approves EU Constitution. *Deutsche Welle* [online]. 12 Mai 2005 [viewed 20 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-approves-eu-constitution/a-1581297>

⁶² EMMANOUILIDIS, J. A. and A. MÖLLER. General Perception of EU integration: Accommodating a New Germany. In: DEHOUSSE, R. and E. FABRY. *Where is Germany Heading?*. Paris: Notre Europe, 2010, p. 6.

⁶³ MERKEL, A. Francie a Německo chtějí oživit jednání o euroústavě. *irozhlas.cz* [online]. 6 June 2006 [viewed 10 March 2021]. Available from: https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-svet/francie-a-nemecko-chteji-ozivit-jednani-o-euroustave_200606061749_vjanous

The Merkel-Chirac duo did not last long, as the French president finished his term in 2007. It was in the first half of 2007 when Germany held the presidency of the Council of the EU, raising high expectations that it would end the one and a half year period of reflection on the European Constitution and come up with a solution.

Application of Koopmann's 4-dimensional theory

With respect to Koopmann's 4-dimensional theory of political leadership, the Merkel-Chirac relationship may be analyzed according to the following criteria, i.e. compromise building, crisis management, leadership in the EU's external relations, promoting of European integration.

(1) Compromise building

After the biggest enlargement of the EU in 2004, there was a need to provide for new functioning mechanisms within the Union that would better fit so many states. And this was one of the things the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe was supposed to resolve. However, France (as well as the Netherlands) said *no* to these reforms, and thus the EU's institutional crisis broke out. In this situation, it was difficult to find a compromise. French representatives first wanted to pick the most important passages from the European Constitution. However, Germany did not consider leaving the document altogether to be on the agenda. Angela Merkel insisted on reviving the Treaty, so she agreed with her French counterpart on an interim solution. This was the so-called one and a half year period of reflection to provide sufficient time and fertile ground for intensive negotiations, which began during the first half of 2007 under the German EU presidency and also under the French presidency in the second half of 2008 (see the next chapter).

(2) Crisis management

As for the dimension of the crisis management, it is very similar to what was mentioned above. In the situation of rejecting the Constitutional Treaty, there were not many alternatives on the table. For Merkel the only possible thing to do was – as her well-known approach says – *wait and see*. Chirac also welcomed this approach. They indeed wished to revive the document and to find a way out of the institutional crisis. However, it should be noted that Chirac's term of office was coming to an end at that time and this meant that the consequence of the failed referendum was to be remedied by his successor.

(3) Leadership in the EU's external relations

Regarding this dimension of political leadership, Merkel and Chirac were not very much on the same wavelength. It was interesting to observe the different relationship the two leaders had towards the Eastern European countries. While Germany, due to historical, geographical and economic ties, supported those countries' involvement in the EU, France was rather reluctant and afraid of Germany's growing influence in Europe. Both leaders had also different views on the united cooperation with the world powers. While Merkel did not resist the expansion of American initiatives, Chirac, on the other hand, focused more on Russia.

(4) Promoting of European integration

It is difficult to talk about any deepening of European integration during the less than a two-year period of the cooperation Merkel-Chirac when the biggest breakthrough was supposed to be the European Constitution that eventually failed. It should be noted that historically this was not the first time that France had revealed itself, rather than an engine, as a brake of the European integration (e.g. crash of the European Defence Community, refusal of UK's accession to the EC, empty chair crisis, narrowly successful referendum on the Maastricht Treaty and failed referendum on the European Constitution).

5.2 Leaders Merkel & Sarkozy

The second subchapter will analyze Merkel's partnership with the second French president coming, as well as Chirac, from the right-wing political spectrum. When Nicolas Sarkozy was elected French president, Angela Merkel had served as German chancellor for almost two years. While he was already a seasoned politician at that time, Angela Merkel did not have much experience in high politics. However, she learned very quickly. Merkel and Sarkozy were similar in terms of political conservatism and hard work, but no closer personal relationship, such as the German-French couple Schmidt and Giscard d'Estaing or Kohl and Mitterrand did have, was established between them.⁶⁴ As background information, it is worth adding that Angela Merkel in the position of chancellor appeared on the European political scene at the time when French President Chirac's term of office was coming to an end and British Prime Minister Tony Blair also handed over a mandate to Gordon Brown shortly afterwards. As a result of this sequence of events, Merkel managed to gain a relatively strong position on the

⁶⁴ BULMER, S. and C. JEFFERY and S. PADGETT. *Rethinking Germany and Europe. Democracy and Diplomacy in Semisovereign State*. London: Palgrave, 2010, pp. 155-156.

international scene even before Nicolas Sarkozy replaced his party rival Jacques Chirac as president.

Context: Lisbon Treaty

The first obstacle the new German-French couple had to deal with was the rejection of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe in referendums in the Netherlands and France (see the previous chapter). Although the European Constitutional Treaty or European issues were generally not among the main areas on which Sarkozy's election campaign had been focused,⁶⁵ in his first speech after being elected to the presidency, Nicolas Sarkozy declared: 'France is back in Europe.'⁶⁶ Efforts to revive the Constitutional Treaty became then a cornerstone of his European policy and the main motivation of the French EU Presidency in the second half of 2008.⁶⁷

The European Constitution was largely a German project, and Angela Merkel raised high expectations that she would end the period of reflection and find a solution leading to the adoption of a modified version of the Constitutional Treaty. Merkel herself made a great effort to save the document, seeing it, among other things, as a necessary step towards simplifying the voting system in the Council. This became a very difficult issue after 2004 EU's biggest enlargement in its history. Negotiating a compromise proposal for a new form of Treaty was not easy, because in addition to rather inconsistent views, there was some criticism heard from Eurosceptic member states represented by the UK, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and Poland.⁶⁸ There was a danger that the EU would split into two entities, the members who ratified the Constitutional Treaty and those who refused ratification. Angela Merkel was supported in her first term by the positive results of the domestic economy.⁶⁹ This had given her a good starting position in conducting bilateral negotiations with individual European partners to save from the originally proposed Constitution as much as possible. By contrast, Nicolas Sarkozy was in a much more delicate position. Following the negative referendum on the Constitutional Treaty, Sarkozy was speaking out during his election campaign against another referendum

⁶⁵ GAFFNEY, J. *Political Leadership in France. From Charles de Gaulle to Nicolas Sarkozy*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 258.

⁶⁶ TULMETS, E. *The European Policy of President Sarkozy: Innovations and Continuity*. Prague: IIR, 2008, p. 1.

⁶⁷ DEHOUSSE, R. and A. MENON. The French Presidency. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2009, 47, p. 100.

⁶⁸ DINAN, D. Governance and Institutional Developments: Ending the Constitutional Impasse. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2008, 46, p. 76.

⁶⁹ MÜLLER-HÄRLIN, B. Angela Merkel's Foreign Policy. *The Contemporary Review*, 2007, 289(1684), p. 4.

held in France on that matter.⁷⁰ In this situation of institutional crisis,⁷¹ the German-French alliance had again proved its effectiveness. Angela Merkel and later, during the French EU Presidency, Nicolas Sarkozy sought bilateral talks with representatives of other member states to reach a compromise on a new draft treaty that would break the deadlock and help the EU show the path for its future functioning. Both Merkel and Sarkozy had used their presidency to make as much progress as possible and to make others agree. They showed bargaining talent and the ability to compromise. For many countries, the question of European symbols or the supremacy of EU law was an extremely sensitive topic. These issues therefore remained open until the June 2007 summit and were separated from the new voting system. Moreover, the new Lisbon Treaty was proposed as an act supplementing the existing treaties (not as a constitutional obligation repealing the existing treaties).⁷² The French president and the German chancellor thus proved the effectiveness of their crisis management by succeeding in achieving the goal of adopting the Lisbon Treaty through a pragmatic approach and intensive cooperation.⁷³

Context: Union for the Mediterranean

The presidency of the Council of the EU shall, among other things, serve not only for the benefit of the EU as a whole, but it shall be also regarded as an opportunity for the leading country holding the presidency to promote its own interests.⁷⁴ And France adhered to this principle during its presidency in 2008 very well. One of its priorities was to build partnerships with the EU's southern neighbors. France intended to create a Union for the Mediterranean with a wholly pragmatic aim, i.e. to control the influx of immigrants, to secure imports of raw materials, especially energy,⁷⁵ and to promote the sale of French nuclear technologies.⁷⁶ However, this intention ran into Germany's dissenting position. Angela Merkel sharply opposed a separate French initiative, in which not all EU members would participate.

⁷⁰ TULMETS, 2008, p. 3.

⁷¹ SCHILD, 2010, p. 1371.

⁷² DINAN, 2008, p. 79.

⁷³ BULMER and JEFFERY and PADGETT, 2010, pp. 162-163.

⁷⁴ KANIOK, P. *Předsednictví Rady EU: příběh půlstoletí*. Brno: Mezinárodní politologický ústav, 2008, pp. 16-32.

⁷⁵ GILLESPIE, R. The Union for the Mediterranean: An Intergovernmentalist Challenge for the European Union?. *Journal for Common Market Studies*, 49(6), 2011, p. 1211.

⁷⁶ NEKVAPIL, V. Dilemata Unie pro Středomoří. *Asociace pro mezinárodní otázky* [online]. 21 August 2008 [viewed 10 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.amo.cz/dilemata-unie-pro-stredomori/>

Cooperation between some member states has to be also open to the rest and it has to be approved by all member states. It cannot be the case that some countries establish a Mediterranean Union and fund this with money from the EU budget.⁷⁷

Thus, the Union for the Mediterranean, which was officially established at the beginning of the French Presidency in July 2008 became a project of the entire Union, but without a specific tone, since it lacked sufficient funding and after the Arab Spring even a political initiative.

Context: Eurozone Financial Crisis

The global financial crisis, gradually coming from the United States to Europe from 2007, triggered the monetary and financial crisis of the eurozone at the end of 2009. This was mainly due to the high public debt of certain euro area countries such as Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain.⁷⁸ In particular, the bailout for Greece posed an enormous challenge for the eurozone and thus for the EU as a whole. While France focused more on the conditions under which loans would be granted to Greece, Germany did not see this as a solution to restoring euro area stability. Because lending money to ‘profligate’⁷⁹ Greeks, according to the German chancellor, only meant to bring further economic difficulties to the EU. Merkel had long refused to lend European money to Greece, instead she insisted on the Greek government’s own rescue initiatives. Only with regard to concerns about the decline in trust in the euro was she forced to change her position. Germany’s approval of financial assistance to Greece was a key requirement, since Germany bore the greatest financial burden on rescuing Greece.⁸⁰ In his famous speech, former Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski urged Germany to be active in the matter of the eurozone financial crisis,

I demand of Germany that, for its own sake and for ours, it help the eurozone survive and prosper. Nobody else can do it. I will probably be the first Polish foreign minister in history to say this, but here it is: I fear German power less than I am beginning to fear its inactivity.⁸¹

⁷⁷ MERKEL, A. Merkel Criticises Sarkozy’s Mediterranean Union Plans. *euobserver* [online]. 6 December 2007 [viewed 4 March 2021]. Available from: <http://euobserver.com/news/25284>

⁷⁸ SINGER, M. *Krize eurozóny* [online]. 2012 [viewed 15 April 2021]. Available from: https://web.archive.org/web/20160910021425/http://www.cnb.cz/miranda2/export/sites/www.cnb.cz/cs/verejnos_t/pro_media/konference_projevy/vystoupeni_projevy/download/singer_20121026_cife.pdf

⁷⁹ TRAYNOR, I. Angela Merkel dashes Greek hopes of rescue bid. *The Guardian* [online]. 11 February 2010 [viewed 15 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2010/feb/11/germany-greece-merkel-bailout-euro>

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ SIKORSKI, R. I fear Germany’s power less than her inactivity. *Financial Times* [online]. 11 February 2010 [viewed 15 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.ft.com/content/b753cb42-19b3-11e1-ba5d-00144feabdc0>

Regarding further questions of the eurozone financial crisis, one of the issues on which Angela Merkel and her French counterpart found it difficult to reach agreement was Sarkozy's request that the European Central Bank should have published the minutes of the Bank Board meetings.⁸² There was thus a controversy between the two countries, with France repeatedly expressing dissatisfaction with the European Central Bank's monetary policy, from which, in its view, especially Germany benefited more.⁸³ William Paterson therefore speaks about the German-French alliance's loss of the driving force.⁸⁴

Even though the two leaders took different positions on resolving the financial crisis, which severely hit the eurozone countries, they were able to reunite in this situation and initiate crisis management. While Angela Merkel was politically encouraged by the positive performance of the German economy, at least until the crisis hit Europe, Nicolas Sarkozy was already in a somewhat more delicate situation since French economy had less favorable results when he took office. France proposed pro-growth measures, but Germany vehemently refused to do so, and with an emphasis on maintaining financial stability, advocated not to increase the euro area's debt and vice versa to adopt restrictive budgetary measures.⁸⁵ The French public finance deficit further strengthened the position of Germany, which to a large extent involuntarily became the economic and thus also the political hegemony of the euro area and the European Union as a whole.⁸⁶ On the other hand, these were both France and Germany that led the initiatives to save the euro and the eurozone countries as well. Merkel and Sarkozy agreed that it was necessary to strengthen the powers to impose sanctions on those euro-paying countries that do not comply with the rules of financial accountability.⁸⁷ They therefore proposed amendments to the existing treaties and called for the establishment of regular summits of eurozone heads of state and government, as well as regular meetings for the Eurogroup to ensure

⁸² GOLDIROVA, R. Sarkozy Pushes for more Control of European Central Bank. *euobserver* [online]. 21 July 2008 [viewed 16 March 2021]. Available from: <http://euobserver.com/economic/26518>

⁸³ BULMER and JEFFERY and PADGETT, 2010, p. 164.

⁸⁴ BULMER, S. and W. PATERSON. Germany and the European Union: from tamed power to normalized power? *International Affairs*, 2010, 86(5), p. 1057.

⁸⁵ SMEE, J. The World from Berlin: Sarkozy's Bewildering Mish-Mash of Measures. *Der Spiegel* [online]. 5 December 2008 [viewed 5 March 2021]. Available from: <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/the-world-from-berlin-sarkozy-s-bewildering-mish-mash-of-measures-a-594650.html>; BULMER and JEFFERY and PADGETT, 2010, p. 166.

⁸⁶ PATERSON, W. The Reluctant Hegemon? Germany Moves Centre Stage in the European Union. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2011, 49, p. 73.

⁸⁷ ERLANGER, S. Sarkozy and Merkel Push for Changes to European Treaty. *The New York Times* [online]. 5 December 2011 [viewed 6 March 2021]. Available from: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/06/world/europe/leaders-piece-together-an-effort-to-keep-the-euro-intact.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

the greatest possible cooperation to overcome the current and possible future crises.⁸⁸ In addition, the European Financial Stabilization Fund was approved in May 2010 (today's European Stability Mechanism). Thus, during the crisis, the German-French couple once again proved that they were able to provide important initiatives for the further functioning of a united Europe, although with a clearly stronger leadership on the German side.

Application of Koopmann's 4-dimensional theory

With respect to Koopmann's 4-dimensional theory of political leadership, the Merkel-Sarkozy relationship may be analyzed according to the following criteria, i.e. compromise building, crisis management, leadership in the EU's external relations, promoting of European integration.

(1) Compromise building

Angela Merkel and her French counterpart had shown the ability to find a compromise in all three contexts presented above. During the negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty, both leaders had a common goal, so they did not have to convince each other. Their task was rather to show their negotiating talent and find a compromise with some other EU member states that were hesitating with approval of the reformed Treaty. Though, it was already different in the context of the Union for the Mediterranean and the context of the financial crisis where Merkel and Sarkozy did not share the same view, and although the final solution was to be a compromise of both sides, the stronger influence of Germany prevailed.

(2) Crisis management

The Merkel-Sarkozy couple had experienced two major crises at the European level. During the institutional crisis, both leaders demonstrated their good management skills and, by negotiating the Lisbon Treaty, they managed to overcome this difficult situation. The financial crisis, in turn, showed that the couple, despite initial disagreements related primarily to the approach to resolving the crisis itself, was able to unite again and initiate crisis management.

⁸⁸ Fostering Fiscal Discipline: Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy's Letter to Herman Van Rompuy in Full. *The Telegraph* [online]. 7 December 2011 [viewed 25 March 2021]. Available from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/financialcrisis/8941290/Fostering-fiscal-disciplineAngela-Merkel-and-Nicolas-Sarkozys-letter-to-Herman-Van-Rompuy-in-full.html>

(3) Leadership in the EU's external relations

Regarding this dimension of political leadership, from the contexts presented above, the project of the Union for the Mediterranean could be mentioned as a good illustration of the EU's external relations. Here Sarkozy created a platform for future cooperation with the EU's southern neighbors. However, it should be also noted that Sarkozy's original intention was achieved with German modifications.

(4) Promoting of European integration

Conclusion of the Lisbon Treaty was a great success in terms of promoting European integration, especially in the vertical direction of deepening. In addition, the initiatives taken in the framework of the common economic and monetary policy and also the extension of EU cooperation to the Mediterranean countries made a significant contribution to strengthening of European integration.

5.3 Leaders Merkel & Hollande

Although the beginning of the cooperation between the German-French couple led by Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy was not very warm, over time and due to economic difficulties of the eurozone, the leaders of the two largest European economies were able to unite and lead functional crisis management.

If Jacques Delors has called the Merkozy entity a superficial version of joint leadership, it remains clear that from 2010 to 2012 Germany and France have controlled and gently guided Europe. After all, only strong domestic leaders can show leadership in Europe and the Merkozy directorate has confirmed itself to be essential for European solutions, even when challenged by other EU members.⁸⁹

However, after Sarkozy, the left-wing François Hollande took over the presidency in 2012, and the German chancellor had to get used to the new style of leadership. As the 2013 Bundestag elections and the related fight for chancellor's post were approaching, the French president did not hide his sympathy for chancellor's left-wing rivals. There was not as much energy between the two leaders as the German-French alliance would have deserved, so there were often talks

⁸⁹ VASSALLO, F. Sarkozy and Merkel. The Undeniable Relevance of the Franco-German Bilateral Relationship in Europe. *German Politics and Society*, 2013, 32(1), p. 109.

about the weakening German-French engine of European integration. Yet, it must be added that this couple also experienced significant moments of good cooperation.

Context: Ongoing Eurozone Financial Crisis

Socialist François Hollande, coming from the opposite part of the political spectrum to the German chancellor, had little understanding for Angela Merkel's policy of moderation and belt-tightening. He strongly opposed excessive economic austerity measures, which in his view did not mean a way out of the crisis, but rather a stay in it. Despite his approach, it was the French economy that was long in the red and urged by the European Commission to introduce structural reforms that would strengthen the country's competitiveness and economic growth.⁹⁰ Under these circumstances, and different economic concepts, it seemed almost impossible for both leaders to reach a common agreement on the future direction of the euro area. Disputes arose at the very beginning when François Holland took office. He was skeptical about the original German-French proposal for a fiscal pact. Especially because of the duty for budgetary discipline which was meant to keep EU member states' budget deficits under a maximum of 0.5% of GDP.⁹¹ François Hollande first wanted to review the pact, renegotiate it, and even spoke out against it.⁹² Finally, despite previous proclamations, he submitted it to the National Assembly for approval, where it was ratified in October 2012.

There was also no consensus between Berlin and Paris on the issue of so-called eurobonds (European bonds), whose introduction Merkel refused, having said that they were not the right strategy to combat the crisis. In her view, such a step should be preceded by reforms. Due to the state of the French economy, François Hollande, on the other hand, promoted the issuance of eurobonds and thus distanced himself from Germany's strategy.⁹³ As a consequence of this disagreement between the two leaders, France got closer to the countries of southern Europe, which were facing almost identical economic problems and favored similar measures.

⁹⁰ WISHART, I. Commission Lowers Economic Forecast. *European Voice* [online]. 3 Mai 2013 [viewed 18 March 2021]. Available from: <http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/2013/may/commission-lowers-economic-forecast/77164.aspx>

⁹¹ SINN, H. W. Die europäische Fiskalunion. Gedanken zur Entwicklung der Eurozone. *Perspektiven der Wirtschaftspolitik*, 2012, 13(3)2012, p. 163.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Hollande-Merkel fail to agree on eurobonds ahead of Euro-summit. *rfi.fr* [online]. 28 June 2012 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.rfi.fr/en/economy/20120628-hollande-merkel-fail-agree-eurobonds-ahead-euro-summit>

Context: Ukrainian Crisis

The situation in Ukraine has been tense since November 2013, when Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich refused to sign the Association Agreement with the EU, including a free trade area (DCFTA).⁹⁴ The EU had been negotiating an agreement with Ukraine for more than six years since March 2007. The Russian Federation was critical against this Ukraine-EU cooperation, imposing various restrictive measures on Ukraine, for instance on exports from Ukraine to the Russian Federation.⁹⁵ The decision not to sign the document was a great disappointment to the EU. In November 2013, the Ukrainian society responded to the rejection of the agreement with protests for which the name Euromaidan was adopted.⁹⁶ After bloody clashes between Euromaidan supporters and government forces in mid-February 2014, Yanukovich eventually fled Kiev and was removed from office by the Ukrainian parliament. Subsequent events took a rapid turn. Russian militants began to occupy Crimea and pro-Russian protests called Antimaydan broke out in the capital Simferopol. Afterward, a referendum was held in Crimea. According to official results, 96,77 % of voters were in favor of joining. However, the existence of the referendum itself was not in accordance with the Ukrainian Constitution. There were also suspicions of manipulating the results or a military presence during the referendum.

The German government had a united position towards the Ukrainian crisis. Germany condemned Russia for its actions in Ukraine and Crimea and it was one of the most vocal EU states calling for tougher sanctions and even threatened with further sanctions if Russia continued with its activities. At the same time, German representatives were also pushing for a diplomatic solution to the conflict by all possible means. The German chancellor and the then German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier warned against further escalation of the crisis. Angela Merkel rejected any aggressive ways of solution to the conflict and completely ruled out the possibility of military intervention, she also strongly opposed the armament of the Ukrainian army.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ EU-Ukraine Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. *europa.eu* [online]. [viewed 26 March 2021]. Available from: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/april/tradoc_150981.pdf

⁹⁵ LEBDUŠKA, M. Vyjednávání o podpisu asociační dohody. Otevře Ukrajina ve Vilniusu dveře do Evropy?. *Asociace pro mezinárodní otázky* [online]. [viewed 28 March 2021]. Available from: <http://www.amo.cz/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/amocz-bp-2013-05.pdf>

⁹⁶ Ukraine protests after Yanukovich EU deal rejection. *BBC* [online]. 2013 [viewed 27 March 2021]. Available from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25162563>

⁹⁷ German Foreign Minister Steinmeier urges caution over Russia sanctions. *Deutsche Welle* [online]. 19 December 2014 [viewed 20 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.dw.com/en/german-foreign-minister-steinmeier-urges-caution-over-russia-sanctions/a-18143066>

French rhetoric was clearly one of the more moderate among the EU states. The government avoided harsh statements against Moscow and was very cautious about key events. From the beginning, Paris participated in the sanctions regime against Russia. However, the French government demanded that it was not only France that would bear the burden of sanctions (there were concerns about the possible cancellation of a contract for the Russian fleet and thus the loss of thousands of jobs on the French side).⁹⁸ Although the sanctions imposed by the EU were initially supported by the French government, President Hollande had said that there was no reason to maintain the sanctions if the situation was remedied.⁹⁹

The Minsk II agreement became an important point of German-French cooperation in the context of the Ukrainian crisis. This agreement followed the unsuccessful first agreement, the Minsk Protocol, concluded in 2014 between Ukraine, the Russian Federation, the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic under the patronage of the OSCE¹⁰⁰ with the support of Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko. Unfortunately, the ceasefire in eastern Ukraine was not maintained through this agreement, and on 12 February 2015 a new higher-level agreement, known as Minsk II, was established for the same purpose, and whose participants were this time also France and Germany.¹⁰¹

The agreement itself was preceded by months of intensive negotiations between the German chancellor and the French president.¹⁰² Their plan for resolving the conflict was first presented in Kiev in February 2015. During a meeting with former Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, François Hollande said,

Together with Angela Merkel, we have decided to take a new initiative. ... We will make a new proposal to resolve the conflict which will be based on Ukraine's territorial

⁹⁸ France condemns Putin's Crimea annexation, mulls sanctions. *rfi.fr* [online]. 18 March 2014 [viewed 25 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20140318-france-condemns-putins-annexation-crimea-mulls-sanctions>

⁹⁹ Hollande: Russia sanctions should be lifted now 'if progress.' *Deutsche Welle* [online]. 5 January 2015 [viewed 27 March 2021]. Available from: <http://www.dw.de/hollande-russia-sanctions-should-be-lifted-now-if-progress/a-18170733>

¹⁰⁰ OSCE Chief Monitor in Ukraine urges all sides to allow monitors to carry out duties safely. *Osce.org* [online]. 15 September 2014 [viewed 16 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.osce.org/ukraine-smm/123591>

¹⁰¹ Minsk peace agreement: still to be consolidated on the ground. *europa.eu* [online]. 12 February 2015 [viewed 28 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/EPRS/EPRS-Briefing-548991-Minsk-peace-summit-FINAL.pdf>

¹⁰² Hollande a Merkelová přivezli na Ukrajinu nový mírový plán. *ČT24* [online]. 5 February 2015 [viewed 8 March 2021]. Available from: <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/svet/1500094-hollande-a-merkelova-privezli-na-ukrajinu-novy-mirovy-plan>

integrity. ... It will not be said that France and Germany together have not tried everything, undertaken everything, to preserve the peace.¹⁰³

The agreement was also welcomed among EU leaders. Former EU High Representative, Federica Mogherini, stated that the deal is ‘a very important step in the right direction.’¹⁰⁴ Although the carrying out of Minsk II was not fully respected from the very beginning,¹⁰⁵ it turned out that in such a complex and difficult situation as the Ukrainian crisis has been, the German-French cooperation played an important role in partially stabilizing the Russian-Ukrainian dispute.

Context: Migration Crisis

German-French cooperation under Angela Merkel and François Hollande was not generally considered the most successful period, it should be noted that with the beginning of the migration crisis in 2015, both leaders showed that the imaginary German-French engine was still working. This meant a lot for the EU as a whole, since member states’ approaches to solving migration crisis differed significantly, and therefore it was essential that the core of European cooperation held together. Both Merkel and Hollande rejected unilateral solutions from individual states and, on the contrary, emphasized the need for a common position of the Union. They called for asylum seekers to be allocated more fairly between member states and for the same rules to apply to all applicants throughout the EU. In their view, the EU should have responded unanimously to global refugee and migration movements. They emphasized the need to build a truly common European asylum system, which would prevent human trafficking and which would be the only way to guarantee the sustainability of the free movement of people in Europe.¹⁰⁶ Although the German chancellor was criticized for her approach to receiving refugees by some member states, especially by Hungary, the French president had supported

¹⁰³ HOLLANDE, F. Hollande and Merkel head to Kiev, Moscow with peace plan. *France24* [online]. 5 February 2015 [viewed 3 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.france24.com/en/20150205-ukraine-hollande-merkel-russia-peace-talks>

¹⁰⁴ Minsk peace agreement: still to be consolidated on the ground. *europa.eu* [online]. 12 February 2015 [viewed 28 February 2021]. Available from: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/EPRS/EPRS-Briefing-548991-Minsk-peace-summit-FINAL.pdf>

¹⁰⁵ Ukraine crisis: Battle rages for Debaltsevo despite truce. *BBC* [online]. 17 February 2015 [viewed 27 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-31495099>

¹⁰⁶ Přehled stanovisek vybraných evropských států, politických stran a institucí k reformě Společného evropského azylového systému. *migracnikonsorciium.cz* [online]. [viewed 26 March 2021]. Available from: <https://migracnikonsorciium.cz/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Prehled-stanovisek-CEAS-final.pdf>

the chancellor. ‘France and Germany have the same answer to the refugee question: Europe. Europe must be able to find the expected solutions (translation).’¹⁰⁷

Undoubtedly, a significant moment for the German-French couple was their joint speech in the European Parliament, which the then President Martin Schulz described as ‘a symbol of Franco-German reconciliation and European unity.’¹⁰⁸ Since François Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl appeared before the European Parliament in 1989,

you are the first heads of state and government to take the floor together, to address Europe’s unprecedented challenges before the representatives of European peoples. ... When Franco-German cooperation does not work well, the whole of Europe suffers. If, in crises, France and Germany come to a good compromise, it is beneficial for all partners and the whole of the EU (former Parliament’s President Martin Schulz).¹⁰⁹

Faced with these challenges [esp. the Ukrainian crisis, terrorism, migration crisis] I am convinced that if we do not move ahead with integration, we shall stop or slip back ... [I propose] consolidating the Euro area [in order to] coordinate policies, promote fiscal convergence and harmonisation, investment, and tax and social policy (François Hollande).¹¹⁰

We must now resist the temptation to fall back into national government action. Right now, we need more Europe! Germany and France are ready. Only together will we in Europe succeed in reducing the global causes of flight and expulsion. We can protect our external borders successfully only if we do something to deal with the many crises in our neighborhood – Turkey plays a key role (Angela Merkel).¹¹¹

Application of Koopmann’s 4-dimensional theory

With respect to Koopmann’s 4-dimensional theory of political leadership, the Merkel-Hollande relationship may be analyzed according to the following criteria, i.e. compromise building, crisis management, leadership in the EU’s external relations, promoting of European integration.

¹⁰⁷ Merkelová a Hollande potvrdili shodu před summitem k migraci. *E15.cz* [online]. 4 March 2016 [viewed 16 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.e15.cz/zahranicni/merkelova-a-hollande-potvrdili-shodu-pred-summitem-k-migraci-1276687>

¹⁰⁸ François Hollande and Angela Merkel face MEPs. *europa.eu* [online]. 7 October 2015 [viewed 6 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20150929IPR94921/François-hollande-and-angela-merkel-face-meps>

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

(1) Compromise building

From the very beginning, the German-French engine of European integration under those two leaders started stagnating. The global financial and debt crisis had shown how difficult it was for them to find a joint compromise. The French president strongly opposed chancellor's policy of moderation, belt-tightening and excessive economic austerity measures. He unlike the chancellor was in favor of eurobonds. Although Angela Merkel was aware of Germany's economic power, she was also very cautious about taking a great burden for her country.

To all those looking to Germany again in these days and expecting a solution in one go, to all those trying to convince Germany about eurobonds, stability funds, European deposit guarantee schemes, more billions and many other things I say: yes, Germany is strong. Germany is Europe's economic engine and stability anchor. ... But we also know that Germany's strength is not infinite.¹¹²

As other crises revealed, apart from economic issues, the couple was able to build compromises. In the case of the Ukrainian crisis, both leaders came up with a joint proposal (Minsk II), which became a compromise that had found favor with the rest of the EU. In the context of migration crises both leaders emphasized their unified approach. The French president also supported the German chancellor when she faced strong criticism by some member states due to her approach to receiving refugees.

(2) Crisis management

As a result of France's economic slump, Germany and its strong economy continued to be a driving force of the euro area and the EU as a whole. Therefore, crisis management applied in the context of the financial and migration crisis was predominant especially on the German side. With regard to the Ukrainian crisis and migration crisis, Merkel and Holland proceeded consistently and actively to solve the problem. Be it the imposition of sanctions on Russia, the initiation of a dialogue between belligerent parties (in the context of Ukrainian crisis) or the fair redistribution of refugees (in the context of migrations crisis).

(3) Leadership in the EU's external relations

A good example in this regard is the Ukrainian crisis, in which both leaders were able to use their diplomatic skills and negotiated a ceasefire agreement with the representatives of Ukraine and Russia, the so-called Minsk II. Merkel-Holland's position was supported and praised by

¹¹² MERKEL, A. Germany alone cannot save Europe, Merkel says. *euobserver* [online]. 15 June 2012 [viewed 12 February 2021]. Available from: <https://euobserver.com/economic/116633>

both European and non-European officials.¹¹³ The couple thus proved to be an important actor on the international scene. This step was even more significant when we consider that it was the German-French alliance that endeavored to preserve peace in Europe.

(4) Promoting of European integration

Although Merkel and Hollande were able to join forces in crisis management (see the migration and Ukrainian crisis), it cannot be overlooked that generally speaking both leaders were not on the same wavelength. Some experts even described the Merkel-Hollande relationship as cold. This might have been reflected in the promotion of European integration and the reason why no major changes had taken place in this area. Although the French president himself diplomatically called their relationship a ‘friendly tension’¹¹⁴ he nevertheless revealed that rather than Angela Merkel he would like to see one of her SPD rivals in the post of German chancellor.¹¹⁵ However, neither of these two countries benefited from this situation. France in particular was aware that without Germany’s support it would not be able to carry out any major changes within the EU, and that was not in its interest.¹¹⁶

5.4 Leaders Merkel & Macron

The following subchapter concludes the analysis of German-French relations from the perspective of Angela Merkel’s policy towards the EU. Since Merkel announced that she will step down as chancellor in autumn 2021, this is also the final stage of German-French relations during the Merkel era. And Emmanuel Macron became part of it. He is the fourth, and the last, French president who the German chancellor has had the opportunity to work with.

The EU engine that Germany and France created experienced good times when Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy were in leading positions. After the arrival of François Hollande, the German-French power somewhat faded, however with the election of Emmanuel Macron, there was a new hope for revival of relations. The newly elected president of France has a lot in

¹¹³ WOLFGANG, B. White House takes wait-and-see approach to Russia-Ukraine deal. *The Washington Times* [online]. 12 February 2015 [viewed 12 February 2021]. Available from:

<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/feb/12/wh-takes-wait-and-see-approach-russia-ukraine-deal/>

¹¹⁴ MAHONY, H. Hollande Receives German Opposition Leader. *euobserver* [online]. 5 April 2013 [viewed 7 March 2021]. Available from: <http://euobserver.com/political/119701>

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ TRAYNOR, I. Hollande Gambling On Election Defeat for Merkel as French Influence Fades. *The Guardian* [online]. 2 Mai 2013 [viewed 8 March]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/may/02/francois-hollande-angela-merkel-relations>

common with Angela Merkel and both are also connected by a strong mutual empathy. From the outset, it was expected that the Union as a whole and euro area countries in particular would have to prepare for deeper integration.¹¹⁷

These initial predictions about good cooperation between Merkel and Macron were confirmed after only Macron's one year in office. The French president was awarded the Charlemagne Prize for work done in the service of European unification and understanding. On this occasion, Angela Merkel highlighted Macron's impact on European politics.

Firstly, Emmanuel Macron knows what holds Europe together at its core. Secondly, Emmanuel Macron has clear visions of where and how Europe should continue to develop. Thirdly, Emmanuel Macron brings his enthusiasm for Europe to the table ... with Emmanuel Macron, a young and dynamic politician has joined the European stage for whom European integration and the single currency are a matter of course. However, he is also a politician who senses that this poses the greatest risk to European integration and to the European model.¹¹⁸

Later on, the couple deepened their good relationship even further. January 22, 2019 was marked as another important milestone in the history of German-French relations. On this day, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron signed the so-called Aachen Treaty, whose aim is to deepen cooperation in economic, energy, climate or development policy. The document thus symbolically followed the Elysée Treaty, which was concluded on the same day 56 years ago. The then representatives Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle committed themselves to closer cooperation, which started a new stage in the post-war development of German-French relations. According to Merkel, the extension of the then Treaty is necessary, due to the special time in which we live, and which require new and more decisive answers. The weakening of the current international order, climate change or

¹¹⁷ LIZCOVÁ, Z. Tandem Merkelová-Macron bude silnější než se Sarkozym, říká expert. ČR musí být ve střehu. *Asociace pro mezinárodní otázky* [online]. 21 Mai 2017 [viewed 18 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.amo.cz/tandem-merkelova-macron-bude-silnejsi-nez-se-sarkozym-rika-expert-cr-musi-byt-ve-strehu/>

¹¹⁸ Speech by Federal Chancellor Dr Angela Merkel at the ceremony awarding the International Charlemagne Prize to French President Emmanuel Macron in Aachen on 10 May 2018. *bundesregierung.de* [online]. 10 May 2018 [viewed 15 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/chancellor/speech-by-federal-chancellor-dr-angela-merkel-at-the-ceremony-awarding-the-international-charlemagne-prize-to-french-president-emmanuel-macron-in-aachen-on-10-may-2018-1008554>

Britain's withdrawal from the EU are challenges that the EU is facing today, and European leaders are committed to tackling these difficult challenges.¹¹⁹

Context: Brexit Negotiations

Emmanuel Macron took office one year after the UK decided to leave the EU in a referendum on 23 June 2016. The Brexit topic thus became the main item on the agenda, which both leaders and the entire EU in particular had to deal with intensively and for several years. The UK's unprecedented decision to withdraw from EU structures caused an international political earthquake. At the same time, it came at the time when Europe was forced to cope with a change in the international environment manifested in particular by the uncertainty of transatlantic relations with the United States, the growing threat of terrorism in Europe, the migration crisis, cyber threats and tensions with Russia. The British decision to leave the EU added another dose of uncertainty that the European leaders had to deal with.¹²⁰

Emmanuel Macron expressed himself on Brexit during his presidential campaign. He pushed for a tough approach to negotiations on Brexit, for him it was vital to defend the integrity of the European single market. Macron's tough position remained consistent throughout the negotiations. He strongly opposed the UK leaving the EU while enjoying the benefits of the single market. 'There should be no cherry-picking in the single market because that's a dismantling of the single market.'¹²¹ Macron also expressed dissatisfaction with setting other later deadlines for negotiating a better agreement. In October 2019, it was France that was going to veto another extension of Brexit by three months, by the end of January 2020. According to him, the EU needed to move further and address other important issues.

I am not trying to read into the future, but I do not think we will grant any further delay. I think it is time to put an end to these negotiations and move on to the future relationship. And put to an end to what is currently ongoing ... what matters is to stick to the

¹¹⁹ ROBERT, A. Treaty of Aachen: 'France and Germany have to show responsibility.' *euractiv* [online]. 17 february 2019 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/future-eu/news/treaty-of-aachen-france-and-germany-have-to-show-responsibility/>

¹²⁰ CHVÁTALOVÁ, N. 5 scénářů budoucnosti Společné bezpečnostní a obranné politiky po brexitu. *euroskop.cz* [online]. 17 August 2020 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.euroskop.cz/9047/35498/clanek/5-scenaru-budoucnosti-spolecne-bezpecnostni-a-obranne-politiky-po-brexitu/>

¹²¹ Macron: 'Special' deal possible for UK, but it can't 'cherry-pick' rules. *BBC* [online]. 20 January 2018 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-42757026>

commitment we made and the deadline we set ourselves. It is up to each and every one to make their own decisions. There will be no delay unless there are major changes.¹²²

For Merkel, it was possible to observe a somewhat different – more patient – rhetoric in the Brexit negotiations. It was important to her that from the very beginning, before the Brexit negotiations even started, London first clearly defined its position, from which further debate could emerge. This strategy, such as proceeding slowly and prudently, waiting for the opinions of all relevant parties and only then taking the position, proved to be a characteristic way of acting for Angela Merkel. A Czech expert in Germany's foreign policy Vladimír Handl commented on this: 'Her caution, in which she tries to *sit it out*, like Helmut Kohl used to do, is sometimes perceived as a weakness, but she makes relatively few mistakes because of it (translation).'¹²³ Angela Merkel did not support no-deal Brexit. At the same time, however, it was unacceptable for her that the UK would have the same rights as EU members. She was therefore in favor of a pragmatic approach. Her main aim was to mitigate damage for both the EU and the UK, to maintain good partnership and to gain a 'potential competitor'¹²⁴ in the UK. During the above-mentioned autumn 2019 summit, 'the German chancellor told EU leaders that a Brexit extension would be unavoidable if British MPs vote down the new deal.'¹²⁵ Angela Merkel was thus more patient with frequent Brexit extensions than her French counterpart. On the other hand, even France did not want Great Britain's separation from the EU being uncontrolled. 'France and Germany have to send a strong signal to the Commission that we need to negotiate a pragmatic and sensible outcome that protects jobs on both sides of the Channel.'¹²⁶

In the future, it will be interesting to follow the post-Brexit developments of EU relations. The UK has always been a brake for European integration. In particular, the common defense policy and deeper political integration were sensitive topics for Great Britain, which it either sought

¹²² MACRON, E. Macron against Brexit extension as Merkel keeps option open. *The Guardian* [online]. 18 October 2019 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from:

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/oct/18/brexit-extension-unavoidable-if-mps-reject-deal-says-merkel>

¹²³ KUBÁTOVÁ, E. Co stojí za úspěchem Merkelové? Rozvážná politika a záruka stability. *euractiv* [online]. 4 August 2015 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from: <https://euractiv.cz/section/aktualne-v-eu/news/jak-si-merkelova-udrzuje-popularitu-rozvaznou-politikou-a-zarukou-stability-012814/>

¹²⁴ RANKIN, J. and D. BOFFEY. Macron against Brexit extension as Merkel keeps option open. *The Guardian* [online]. 18 October 2019 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from:

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/oct/18/brexit-extension-unavoidable-if-mps-reject-deal-says-merkel>

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Brexit talks head to Mediterranean retreat as Barnier hints EU is ready to tweak backstop plan. *thejournal.ie* [online]. 3 August 2018 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.thejournal.ie/macron-may-4162320-Aug2018/>

to avoid by some exceptions or to curb for the entire EU. This indicates that Macron's France calling vocally for reforms and deeper EU integration could be expected to benefit the most from Brexit. Of course, it will also depend on how Germany's European policy develops. In many cases, Germany played a waiting player who came up with its position after everyone else had spoken. With this strategy, Germany often contributed to building a compromise. The question is, however, whether Germany will become more assertive after Great Britain's withdrawal and will proactively come up with, for instance, more controversial topics that France may not like. Negotiations still rather suggest that Germany and France will try to converge than to be in the opposite relation.¹²⁷

Application of Koopmann's 4-dimensional theory

With respect to Koopmann's 4-dimensional theory of political leadership, the Merkel-Macron relationship may be analyzed according to the following criteria, i.e. compromise building, crisis management, leadership in the EU's external relations, promoting of European integration.

(1) Compromise building

Especially in the initial debates on Brexit, Angela Merkel proved her characteristic way of acting. Only after she gets familiar with the opinions of all involved parties does she reveal her position. This keeping enough time gives her room to consider all the circumstances and come up with arguments that help her better build a common compromise. However, Merkel can also firmly defend her position. It happened in August 2019 when British Prime Minister Boris Johnson visited both leaders to convince them of his approach. It was because of the Irish backstop, Germany emphasized the principle of solidarity and refused to make the slightest compromise in this area. Emmanuel Macron is in comparison to Angela Merkel less patient and does not hesitate with his position very much. In relation to Brexit, his tough approach and disagreement with the renegotiation of a new deal was quite obvious.¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Brexit posílí hlavně Německo a Francii. Česko bude muset být aktivnější, tvrdí odborníci. *irozhlas.cz* [online]. 23 March 2019 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from: https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-svet/brexit-velka-britanie-evropska-unie-nemecko-francie_1903230955_kro

¹²⁸ France's Macron: No time to negotiate new Brexit deal. *CNBC* [online]. 22 August 2019 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/08/22/frances-macron-no-time-to-negotiate-new-brexit-deal.html>

(2) Crisis management

Regarding this point, Merkel and Macron were prepared for the uncontrolled Brexit. If the parties did not agree on a negotiated agreement, both leaders had to have an alternative solution in reserve within the crisis management. ‘We are also prepared for the eventuality that there won’t be such a negotiated exit. But in any case, I will try to find a solution - until the last day of negotiations.’¹²⁹ As part of crisis management, Macron was looking towards the future. He saw the Brexit referendum result as a symbol of Europe’s crisis, and therefore it was necessary to learn from Brexit and reform the EU so that something similar would not happen again. ‘Never, since the second world war, has Europe been so essential. Yet never has Europe been in so much danger.’¹³⁰ It would be wrong for the European people to view the EU as a ‘soulless market’¹³¹ rather than ‘a historic success, the reconciliation of a devastated continent in an unprecedented project of peace, prosperity and freedom.’¹³² That was why Macron came up with a range of proposals for change within the so-called ‘roadmap to European renewal’¹³³ – it was, for instance the reform of the Schengen area or the idea of creation of a European army.¹³⁴

(3) Leadership in the EU’s external relations

In the past, the so-called EU-3 format was created, referring to the cooperation of France, Germany and the United Kingdom, especially during the negotiations with Iran from 2003. Now the UK becomes an external partner for the EU. It is a question with whom Germany and France will create another EU-3 format in the future.

(4) Promoting of European integration

As already mentioned, Brexit means the end of a strong member in the EU, but on the other hand, each coin has two sides. In particular, Macron’s France may take advantage of Brexit. Without the UK, the EU might be more open to new challenges and easier deepening of European integration.

¹²⁹ OLTERMANN, P. and A. CHRISAFIS. Merkel gives Johnson 30 days to find solution to avoid no-deal Brexit. *The Guardian* [online]. 21 August 2019 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/aug/21/merkel-gives-johnson-30-days-to-find-solution-to-avoid-no-deal-brexid>

¹³⁰ MACRON, E. EU must learn from Brexit and reform, says Emmanuel Macron. *The Guardian* [online]. 4 March 2019 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/04/eu-must-learn-from-brexid-and-reform-says-emmanuel-macron>

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

6 Summary of the Analysis

The previous chapter dealt with the analysis of German-French relations from the perspective of Angela Merkel’s policy towards the EU. As stated in the introduction of the diploma thesis, German-French relations are intended to be analyzed with respect to Koopmann’s given criteria of political leadership (compromise building, crisis management, leadership in the EU’s external relations, promoting of European integration). While partial results of this concept were put at the end of each subchapter (see 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4), the overall results will be introduced below.

Table 6: Summary of the Merkel & Chirac Leadership

Koopmann’s 4-dimensional theory of political leadership <small>*Compromise building *Crisis management *Leadership in the EU’s external relations *Promoting of European integration</small>		
Leaders	Angela Merkel & Jacques Chirac	
Context	EU Institutional Crisis	

Source: KOOPMANN, 2004, pp. 15-16.

The analysis began with collaboration between Angela Merkel and Jacques Chirac (2005-2007), which lasted less than two years, yet the couple faced an institutional crisis during this period. It started with a French referendum in which citizens said *no* to the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. As a temporary solution which both leaders agreed on was to undergo the so-called phase of reflection. Over time, this turned out to be a very good compromise the couple had made. However, to sum it up, the couple’s political leadership was not very strong. Due to the rejecting of the European Constitution, there were no significant changes in the deepening of European integration, and it emerged that the couple also had other preferences in the field of EU external cooperation.

Table 7: Summary of the Merkel & Sarkozy Leadership

Koopmann’s 4-dimensional theory of political leadership <small>*Compromise building *Crisis management *Leadership in the EU’s external relations *Promoting of European integration</small>		
Leaders	Angela Merkel & Nicolas Sarkozy	
Context	Lisbon Treaty	
	Union for the Mediterranean	
	Eurozone Financial Crisis	

Source: KOOPMANN, 2004, pp. 15-16.

The Merkel-Sarkozy tandem (2007-2012) had a noticeably better drive. Three contexts were selected for the analysis – the negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty, the establishment of the Union for the Mediterranean and the beginning of the eurozone financial crisis – in which all features of Koopman’s theory of the political leadership could be observed. Leaders had mastered crisis management and compromise building, not only with each other but they also had to bargain intensively with their EU partners, particularly when negotiating on the Lisbon Treaty. During their leadership, they also established themselves in the EU’s external relations and, above all, they managed to make great progress in promoting European integration.

Table 8: Summary of the Merkel & Hollande Leadership

Koopmann’s 4-dimensional theory of political leadership <small>*Compromise building *Crisis management *Leadership in the EU’s external relations *Promoting of European integration</small>		
Leaders	Angela Merkel & François Hollande	
Context	Eurozone Financial Crisis	
	Ukrainian Crisis	
	Migration Crisis	

Source: KOOPMANN, 2004, pp. 15-16.

The Merkel-Hollande cooperation (2012-2017) was not very stable. After Sarkozy, Angela had to get used to another leader who had come from another political party than the two previous presidents. At the very beginning, the couple had to deal with the ongoing financial crisis in the eurozone on whose joint solution both leaders could not find a compromise. However, it was different in the case of the Ukrainian crisis and the migration crisis, in which the couple showed the strength of their political leadership. However, no significant changes took place during this period as regards the deepening of European integration.

Table 9: Summary of the Merkel & Macron Leadership

Koopmann’s 4-dimensional theory of political leadership <small>*Compromise building *Crisis management *Leadership in the EU’s external relations *Promoting of European integration</small>		
Leaders	Angela Merkel & Emmanuel Macron	
Context	Brexit Negotiations	

Source: KOOPMANN, 2004, pp. 15-16.

The last partnership the German chancellor established, not only in this diploma thesis, but also in reality, was with Emmanuel Macron. The Merkel-Macron tandem (2017-up to now) has

shown enthusiasm for mutual cooperation from the very beginning. In particular, the French president's desire to deepen European integration was extraordinary. The couple was placed in the context of the Brexit negotiations within the analysis. Although they were in the same boat, there were apparent differences in their approaches to negotiations. However, the determined French president gets along well with the prudent German chancellor, and they both managed to harmonize their characteristic style of leadership in one, in which they can fulfill all the dimensions of Koopmann's political leadership.

As stated at the beginning of this chapter and in the introduction of this work equally – in the first step, it is necessary to achieve the analysis using Koopmann's criteria of political leadership. This was done above. Thanks to these achieved results, in the next step, the author is going to provide answers to the research questions listed at the beginning of this work.

What impact did the German-French leadership have on the EU during the Merkel era?

The analysis showed that the German-French partnership plays an important role for a strong and well-functioning Europe. In many crisis events, these were the leaders of Germany and France who came up with an effective solution or compromise (see the negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty). The author of the thesis is also convinced that the German-French engine under Angela Merkel and her four various French counterparts never stopped working. It may have weakened sometime (see the financial eurozone crisis), but in key moments it regained its strength (see the establishment of the Union for the Mediterranean, united approach in the context of the Ukrainian crisis, migration crisis, Brexit negotiations).

What changes did the couples manage to achieve?

Based on the selected contexts, we can sum up that the Merkel-Sarkozy couple in particular managed to negotiate the conclusion of the Lisbon Treaty for the EU. Both leaders, despite the initial disunity, contributed to strengthening the southern dimension of the neighborhood policy, i.e. the establishment of the Union for the Mediterranean. Merkel and Hollande together managed to play an important role in the Ukrainian crisis when they opened a dialogue between the belligerent parties by concluding the Minsk II document. The two leaders also took a united stance in the context of the migration crisis. Both countries received large numbers of refugees. And they called on other EU member states to share solidarity. The cooperation between Merkel and Macron is still ongoing. Although many stakeholders were involved in the Brexit

negotiations, Macron and Merkel worked together for the same goal, which was to preserve the integrity of the European single market. It is worth adding that during the German Presidency, though at the very end, a Brexit deal was reached (– is it a parallel to the success achieved by German Presidency in 2007?).

How did their (dis)agreement affect the direction of the EU?

As for (dis)agreements, the French side, under both Sarkozy and Hollande, had problems to agree with the German chancellor on a solution to the eurozone financial crisis. However, at this point, the importance of the last German-French cooperation must be emphasized. Merkel and Macron talk together about the future direction of Europe. They stress the necessity for the EU overhaul. Above all, the French president is outspoken about his plans to reform the Schengen area or establish a common European army.

With which of the French presidents did Chancellor Angela Merkel's interests and values converge the most?

The aim of the analysis was, among other things, to find out with which of the French presidents the cooperation was the most convergent. Angela Merkel worked with Jacques Chirac for a relatively short time. But then Sarkozy took office and the couple soon was called ‘Merkozy’¹³⁵ for their work commitment. That is why Angela Merkel wanted to continue in alliance, however, in the presidential election Sarkozy was defeated by the socialist Hollande. This relationship could be summed up, as in the words of the French president, like a ‘friendly tension.’¹³⁶ Towards the end of her political career, Angela lived to see a very ambitious French president, especially as regards the European politics. Emmanuel Macron is considered to be one of the most pro-European oriented presidents of France in recent times. It can therefore be stated that the duos Merkel-Sarkozy and Merkel-Macron were close connections of those leaders where the German-French engine worked well. The author would like to point out a little more the partnership between the German chancellor and the current French president. It was on January 22, 2019, when Merkel and Macron decided to sign the Aachen Treaty whose aim is to boost mutual cooperation between the two countries. With this step both leaders followed the alliance of Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle, who in 1963 concluded the

¹³⁵ WISHART, I. Commission Lowers Economic Forecast. *European Voice* [online]. 3 Mai 2013 [viewed 18 March 2021]. Available from: <http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/2013/may/commission-lowers-economic-forecast/77164.aspx>

¹³⁶ MAHONY, H. Hollande Receives German Opposition Leader. *euobserver* [online]. 5 April 2013 [viewed 7 March 2021]. Available from: <http://euobserver.com/political/119701>

famous Elysée Treaty, which became the cornerstone in building good German-French relations.

Conclusion

The diploma thesis dealt with the issue of German-French relations represented by German Chancellor Angela Merkel and four French Presidents, Jacques Chirac, Nicolas Sarkozy, Françoise Hollande, Emmanuel Macron, with whom she cooperated in the period 2005-2019.

The very core of the thesis was preceded by several chapters. In the first place, it was necessary to introduce the concept of political leadership, which provided a theoretical framework for the practical part of this work. In connection with the political leadership, a chapter dealing with the competencies of the German chancellor and the French president within the given political system was also included. The findings show that the two political functions are real leaders within both the national and international context as well. However, with regard to the subject of the work, the latter is more relevant. The chapter three and four are a preparatory step for the analysis itself. First, the positions of leaders towards the EU were introduced, and in this respect Emanuel Macron proved to be the most pro-European oriented politician of all. Furthermore, the timeline of the events that took place from the 1950s to 2005 was outlined. The aim was to highlight the importance of the partnership not only for both countries themselves, but also for the whole of Europe. The core of the thesis is embodied into the chapter five. An analysis was chosen as the research method, which was carried out on the basis of Koopman's four-dimensional theory of political leadership (comprising of following criteria: compromise building, crisis management, leadership in the EU's external relations, promoting of European integration). The first goal of the work was to analyze the individual partnerships (Merkel-Chirac, Merkel-Sarkozy, Merkel-Hollande, Merkel-Macron) in certain contexts (rejection of the Treaty establishing the Constitution for Europe; adopting the Lisbon Treaty; creating the Union for the Mediterranean; developing eurozone financial crisis; the ongoing economic crisis; the Ukrainian crisis; the migration crisis; Brexit negotiations) and with regard to the above listed criteria. Partial results of the analysis were presented during the chapter five and the overall results were then offered by the upcoming chapter. The second goal of the work was to answer the research questions. The author personally evaluates the cooperation between Merkel-Sarkozy and Merkel-Macron as more stable and it can be probably said that it was also more friendly alliance than the other ones with Presidents Chirac and Holland.

Apart from the set goals, the efforts put into the analysis brought other valuable observations. Is it interesting to think about *what actually brought Germany to the top of Europe?* Or *what*

caused Germany surpassing France and becoming the real leader of the EU? According to some political scientists, it is the Eastern enlargement that has shifted the balance of the German-French alliance in favor of Germany.¹³⁷ While Germany was able to spread its influence to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, France lacked this advantage of geographical proximity and historical ties, and thus, according to them, Germany was slowly becoming the central power of Europe.

Often, Germany's strong position is rightly associated with the person of the German chancellor. Angela Merkel, ranked as the most powerful woman of the world,¹³⁸ is a politician unparalleled on both the German and world political scene. Despite the complex and difficult German electoral system, she managed to defend the post of chancellor even four times. She withstood many crises (especially the financial eurozone crisis and migration crisis) during her political career and to this day she is still respected for her calm and consensual leadership style. The chancellor's great popularity stems mainly from the fact that she has become a guarantee of stability for the Germans and the embodiment of the relatively good times that the country has been experiencing.¹³⁹ In 2018, she announced she wouldn't seek reelection in November 2021. Angela Merkel thus leaves behind a 16-year legacy of her work commitment in high politics. It will certainly be interesting to observe who will replace her and what effect this will have on the German-French partnership.¹⁴⁰ As the presidential election in France is also approaching, it is quite possible that in the near future, both countries will be led by completely different leaders. Whatever the outcome, one thing is certain, for Germany, France and for the whole of Europe too, in today's dynamic and unpredictable world, the EU needs to have its core stabilized. Hopefully the German-French engine of European cooperation will not stop functioning, quite the contrary, it will work properly and will push other member states and the EU as a whole towards a better future.

¹³⁷ HYDE-PRICE, A. and C. JEFFERY. Germany in the European Union: Constructing Normality. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2001, 39(4), p. 699.

¹³⁸ The World's 100 Most Powerful Women. *Forbes* [online]. 2020 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.forbes.com/power-women/list/>

¹³⁹ EBERLE, J. Co stojí za úspěchem Merkelové? Rozvážná politika a záruka stability. *Asociace pro mezinárodní vztahy* [online]. 25 November 2015 [viewed 30 March 2021]. Available from: <https://www.amo.cz/co-stoji-za-uspechem-merkelove-rozvazna-politika-a-zaruka-stability/>

¹⁴⁰ According to the last information, as the CDU chancellor's candidate was chosen Armin Laschet (Germany: CDU party board backs Armin Laschet as chancellor candidate. *Deutsche Welle* [online]. 19 April 2021 [viewed 20 April 2021]. Available from: <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-cdu-party-board-backs-armin-laschet-as-chancellor-candidate/a-57258957>)

‘In order to maintain Europe in the long term, but above all to strengthen Europe in the long term, we must preserve and defend the achievements of European integration.’ – **Angela Merkel**

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Abstract

The diploma thesis deals with the issue of German-French relations within the EU. Specifically, these relations are represented by the collaboration of German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her four French counterparts, Presidents Jacques Chirac, Nicolas Sarkozy, François Hollande, Emmanuel Macron, in the period 2005-2019. Koopmann's theory of political leadership is used for the purpose of the analysis. Based on four criteria (compromise building, crisis management, leadership in the EU's external relations, promoting of European integration) and certain contextual situations (EU institutional crisis, financial eurozone crisis, migration crisis etc.) the individual German-French partnerships are analyzed. The thesis aims to find out what impact the German-French leadership had on the EU during the Merkel era, what changes the leaders managed to achieve and how their (dis)agreements affected the future direction of the EU. In addition, the analysis also reveals with which of the French presidents the German chancellor's interests and values converged the most.

Key Words

European Union – German-French relations – EU leaders – Angela Merkel – Jacques Chirac – Nicolas Sarkozy – Françoise Hollande – Emmanuel Macron – Political leadership – Compromise building – Crisis management – Leadership in the EU’s external relations – Promoting of European integration

Abstrakt

Předkládaná diplomová práce se zabývá problematikou německo-francouzských vztahů v rámci EU. Konkrétně je těmito vztahy myšlena spolupráce německé kancléřky Angely Merkelové a jejích čtyřech francouzských partnerů, prezidentů J. Chiraca, N. Sarkozyho, F. Hollanda, E. Macrona, v období 2005-2019. Práce je zasazena do Koopmannovy teorie politického leadershipu. Na základě čtyřech kritérií (utváření kompromisu, krizové řízení, leadership ve vnějších vztazích EU, podpora evropské integrace) a určitých kontextových situacích (institucionální krize EU, finanční krize eurozóny, migrační krize atd.) jsou jednotlivá německo-francouzská partnerství analyzována. Práce si dává za cíl zjistit, jaký dopad měl německo-francouzský leadership na EU, jakých změn se lídrům podařilo dosáhnout a jak jejich (ne)shody ovlivnily budoucí směřování EU. Analýza navíc odhaluje, se kterým z francouzských prezidentů se zájmy a hodnoty německé kancléřky shodovaly nejvíce.

Klíčová slova

Evropská unie – Německo-francouzské vztahy – EU lídři – Angela Merkel – Jacques Chirac – Nicolas Sarkozy – Françoise Hollande – Emmanuel Macron – politický leadership – utváření kompromisu – krizové řízení – leadership ve vnějších vztazích EU – podpora evropské integrace

Annex

Photo 1: German Chancellor Angela Merkel (in office since 2005)



Source: Handout/Getty

Photo 2: French President Jacques Chirac (in office 1995-2007)



Source: Reuters

Photo 3: French President Nicolas Sarkozy (in office 2007-2012)



Source: Reuters

Photo 4: French President François Hollande (in office 2012-2017)



Source: Reuters

Photo 5: French President Emmanuel Macron (in office since 2017)



Source: Reuters