



**Master of Arts Thesis
Euroculture**

Uppsala Universitet

Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci

July 2020

**The European Union's First Steps on the Ice
An Analysis on EU Policymaking on the Arctic**

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Abstract

When fading into the background after the end of the Cold War, the Arctic gained renewed attention in the beginning of the 21st century. Climate change and the possibilities this brings for faster shipping routes and obtaining the region's untapped resources has made the Arctic an area of significant importance. The European Union (EU) tends to aim at playing a role as a normative geopolitical actor and this makes that the Arctic is an area of importance for the EU. This study therefore examines policymaking done by the European Commission, European Council, European Parliament and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Looking at the period 2008-2019, with support of Nathalie Tocci's theory on 'Normative Foreign Policy', this analysis portrays if the EU has been able to make clear and coherent Arctic policy in the years following up 2007. This study highlights the difficulties that the EU institutions encountered in creating policy and it also zooms in on the conflicting normative role of the EU as a foreign policy actor, as the Union's *core* and *minor* norms tend to be conflicting in certain situations.

Keywords:

European Union, Arctic, policymaking, normative foreign policy actor

Table of Contents

Abstract	3
List of abbreviations.....	6
List of figures	7
Introduction	9
1.1. The recurring importance of the Arctic.....	9
1.2. Europe in a changing world	13
1.3 Thesis structure.....	15
Theoretical Framework and Methodology.....	17
2.1 Normative Power	18
2.2. Normative Foreign Policy.....	21
2.2.a. Normative Goals.....	22
2.2.b. Normative Means	23
2.2.c. Normative Impact.....	25
2.3. Foreign Policy Types.....	26
2.4. Methodology	31
Development of European Union Arctic Policy: a decade + 1.....	36
3.1. Before EU Arctic Policy.....	36
3.2. 2008: Commission & HR Joint Paper: <i>Climate Change and International Security</i>	39
3.3. 2008: European Parliament Resolution on <i>Arctic Governance</i>.....	41
3.4. 2008: European Commission Communication: <i>The European Union and the Arctic Region</i>	45
3.5. 2009: Council Conclusions on <i>Arctic Issues</i>	51
3.6. Recapitulation 2008-2009	53
3.7. 2011: European Parliament Resolution on a Sustainable <i>EU Policy for the High North</i>	54
3.8. 2012: Joint Communication: <i>Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: Progress since 2008 and next steps</i>.....	57

3.9. Recapitulation 2011-2012	62
3.10. 2014: European Parliament Resolution <i>on the EU strategy for the Arctic</i>	63
3.11. 2014: Council Conclusions <i>on developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region</i>	65
3.12. Recapitulation 2014	67
3.13. 2016: Joint Communication: <i>An Integrated European Union Policy for the Arctic</i>.....	68
3.14. 2016: Council Conclusions <i>on the Arctic</i>	73
3.15. 2017: European Parliament Resolution <i>on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic</i>.....	75
3.16. 2019: Council Conclusions <i>on the EU Arctic Policy</i>.....	79
3.17. Recapitulation 2016-2019.....	80
<i>Conclusion</i>.....	82
<i>Bibliography</i>	85
<i>Annex One: Euroculture Master Thesis Assessment Form 2018-2020</i>	91

List of abbreviations

A5	Arctic Five (Canada, Denmark/Greenland & Faroe Islands, Norway, Russia and the U.S.)
A8	Arctic Eight (Canada, Denmark/Greenland & Faroe Islands, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the U.S.)
AC	Arctic Council
BEAC	The Barents Euro-Arctic Council
CDA	Critical discourse analysis
Commission	European Commission
Council	European Council
EEA	European Economic Area Agreement
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
HR	High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
ND	The Northern Dimension
OCT	Overseas Country and Territory
TEU	Treaty on European Union
TEC	Treaty Establishing the European Community
UK	United Kingdom
UNCLOS	The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
U.S.	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

List of figures

- Fig. 1:** Image of the Arctic region from which the definition of “The Arctic” used in this study derives.
- Fig. 2:** Own complication to display the *core* and *minor* norms as described by Ian Manners that form the normative base of the EU.
- Fig. 3:** Display of the different types of Foreign Policy Actors as described by Nathalie Tocci.
- Fig. 4:** Display of the possible Foreign Policy Outcomes as described by Nathalie Tocci.
- Fig. 5:** Own complication to display to possible Foreign Policy Outcomes as described by Nathalie Tocci to establish a framework to comprehend EU Arctic policy.
- Fig. 6:** Own overview of the EU Arctic policy documents from 2008 until 2019 to be analysed in this study.
- Fig. 7:** Own complication based on Nathalie Tocci, used for the analysis of the Commission and HR *Joint Paper on Climate Change and International Security* (2008).
- Fig. 8:** [...], used for the analysis of the EP Resolution *on Arctic Governance* (2008).
- Fig. 9:** [...], used for the analysis of the Commission Communication: *The European Union and the Arctic Region* (2008).
- Fig. 10:** [...], used for the analysis of the Council Conclusions *on Arctic Issues* (2009).
- Fig. 11:** [...], used for the analysis of the EP Resolution *on a Sustainable EU Policy for the High North* (2011).
- Fig. 12:** [...], used for the analysis of the *Joint Communication on Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: Progress since 2008 and next steps* (2012).
- Fig. 13:** [...], used for the analysis of the EP Resolution *on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic* (2014).

- Fig. 14:** [...], used for the analysis of the Council Conclusions *on developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region* (2014).
- Fig. 15:** [...], used for the analysis of the Joint Communication: *An Integrated European Union Policy for the Arctic* (2016).
- Fig. 16:** [...], used for the analysis of the Council Conclusions *on The Arctic* (2016).
- Fig. 17:** [...], used for the analysis of the EP Resolution *on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic* (2017).
- Fig. 18:** [...], used for the analysis of Council Conclusions on the EU Arctic Policy (2019)

Introduction

1.1. The recurring importance of the Arctic

The Arctic is ‘hot’. Ever since 2007 it gained renewed attention due to climate change and the possibilities this brings for e.g. faster shipping routes and obtaining the region’s untapped resources. However, the Arctic is difficult to define as there is no commonly agreed upon definition attached to the region and, as shown in the figure below, there are multiple definitions used to indicate the Arctic. According to Archer, considering the Arctic’s simply a geographical delineation is not enough to truly understand what ‘The Arctic’ encapsulates.¹ Although there is no accurate definition of the Arctic, more often than not, the Arctic Circle is (66°32’N) is used as the regional delimitation, defining the geographical area north of it as ‘the Arctic’.² Therefore whenever ‘the Arctic’ is mentioned in this thesis it will imply the area above the Arctic Circle

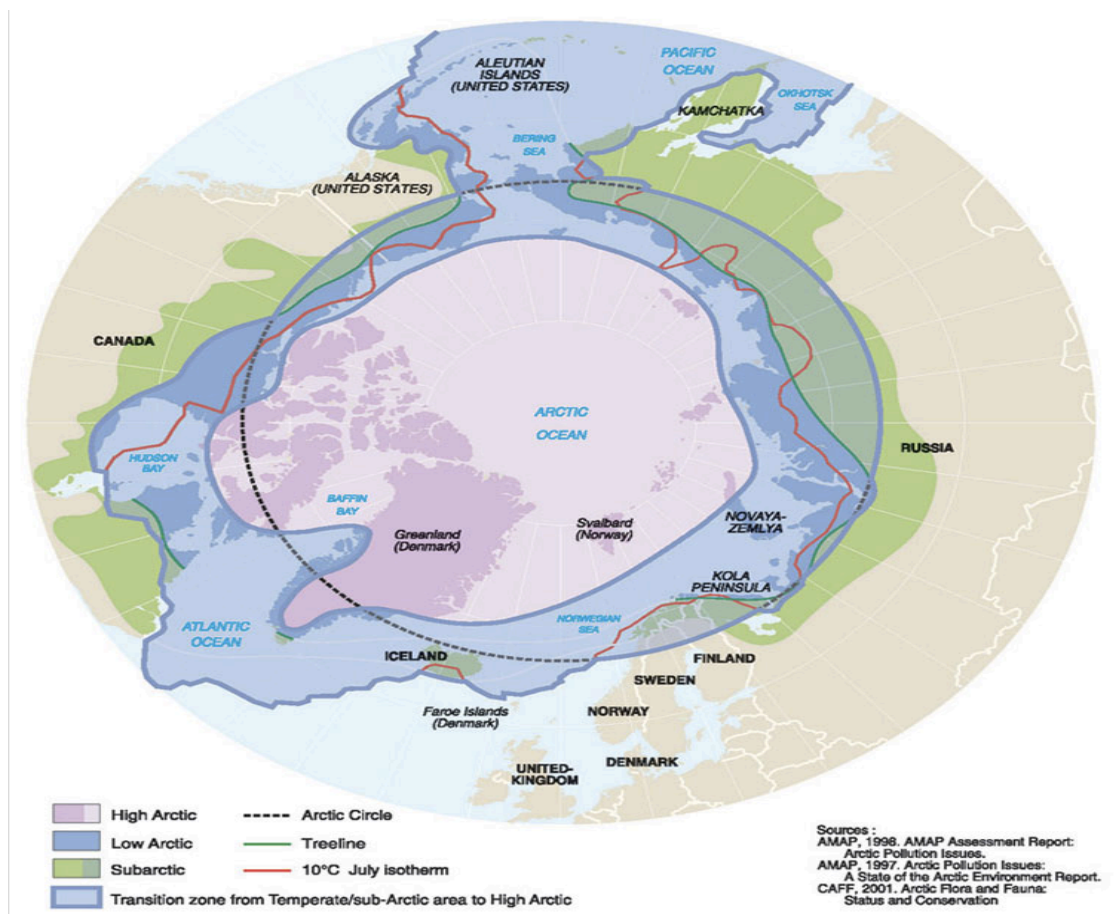


Fig. 1: Definition of “The Arctic”, Source: Arctic Centre, University of Lapland

¹ Andres Raspotnik, Andreas Raspotnik, *The European Union and the Geopolitics of the Arctic* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2018), part 3, Kobo Desktop.

² Ibid., part 1.

that covers parts of the so-called Arctic Eight (A8) being Canada, Denmark, in relation to Greenland and the Faroe Islands, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States. With two continents, eight countries and many islands within its borders, the Arctic is an interesting geopolitical landscape that could provide as an example for both cooperation and stability or for conflict and hostility between the eight states involved.

How important the Arctic will turn out to be in the years to come is disputed amongst political analysts, politicians and scholars,³ but looking back at the history of the Arctic, it has proven to be important. This vast, inaccessible plain carried enormous geostrategic significance during the Cold War as it acted as a barrier between the United States (U.S.) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Throughout the Cold War the Arctic functioned as battleground for the nuclear standoff between the U.S. and the USSR and therefore the Arctic became “one of the most militarized regions of the world.”⁴ With the Cold War ending, the Arctic lost most of its geostrategic importance as it was overshadowed by emerging threats and crises, notably the wars on the Balkans and the Middle East, and the fight against international terrorism.⁵

In 1996 with the formal establishment of the Arctic Council (AC) the Arctic focus, being previously on military and nuclear issues, shifted towards economic and sustainable development in the region. The A8 declared in The Ottawa Declaration that the AC is established as a high level forum to provide a means for promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States, with the involvement of the Arctic Indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues (not related to military issues), in particular issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic.⁶ With this declaration the A8 sought to build an area of peace and stability that would follow up on a time of animosity and instability and make the Arctic a cooperative environment for the Arctic States, non-

³ Sergei Lavrov and Jonas Gahr Støre, “Canada, take note: Here's how to resolve maritime disputes,” <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/canada-take-note-heres-how-to-resolve-maritime-disputes/article4326372/>, accessed May 5, 2020.

⁴ Rob Huebert, “A new Cold War in the Arctic?! The old one never ended,” *Arctic Yearbook*, (2019): 2.

⁵ Kristine Offerdal and Rolf Tamnes, “Introduction” in *Geopolitics and Security in the Arctic: Regional Dynamics in a Global World*. (Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2014):1.

⁶ “Declaration on the Establishment of the Arctic Council,” https://oaarchive.arctic-council.org/bitstream/handle/11374/85/EDOCS-1752-v2-ACMMCA00_Ottawa_1996_Founding_Declaration.PDF?sequence=5&isAllowed=y, accessed May 5, 2020.

Arctic States, intergovernmental and interparliamentary organizations and non-governmental organizations.

During the aftermath of the Cold War the Arctic lost its significant importance and faded further into the background. This changed by the end of the 2000's, as it became more evident that the Arctic was facing dramatic climate and environmental changes. This in itself represented tremendous policy challenges to Arctic States. At the same time, climate change makes areas rich in natural resources more accessible.

More actors – states, regional authorities, industrial actors and NGOs included – engaged in Arctic politics and invested resources with a view to overcoming future challenges and benefiting from opportunities in the region.⁷

As more attention was given to climate change, the Arctic became more in the limelight and 2007 can be seen as the turning point for the Arctic making its reappearance onto the world stage. It began with visits from politicians from the European Union (EU) and several Member States to Greenland to experience global warming and the melting of Greenland's ice sheet first hand.⁸ Later during that 'summer of climate tourism', the Arctic was triggered by an event that caused international attention, the planting of a small and titanium Russian flag on the seabed of the North Pole.⁹ Additionally to this, 2007 also showed a record, 38% above average in the melting of sea ice in the Arctic.¹⁰ These events caused the Arctic to become significantly more important and the term 'Arctic geopolitics' grew in popularity, although the meaning of the term is rather unclear as many different non-Arctic actors started to contribute to the definition.¹¹

It is also since 2007 that the EU started to show more interest in the Arctic and in 2008 the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR) and the European Commission (Commission) issued their first, joint policy document that stated:

⁷ Kristine Offerdal, "Interstate Relations: The Complexities of Arctic Politics." in *Geopolitics and Security in the Arctic: Regional Dynamics in a Global World*, (Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2014): 73- 74.

⁸ Raspotnik, *The European Union*, part I.

⁹ Offerdal and Tamnes, "Introduction," 1.

¹⁰ "Record Arctic Sea Ice Loss in 2007," <https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/8074/record-arctic-sea-ice-loss-in-2007>, accessed May 5, 2020.

¹¹ Raspotnik, *The European Union*, part I.

The rapid melting of the polar ice caps, in particular the Arctic is opening up new waterways and international trade routes. In addition, the increased accessibility of the enormous hydrocarbon resources in the Arctic region is changing the geo-strategic dynamics of the region with potential consequences for international stability and European security interests.¹²

This statement shows the first steps towards more engagement in the Arctic and underlines the importance for the EU of being involved in the Arctic. With plenty of changes going on, such as the rapid melting of the sea ice and the Russian territorial claim, it is significant for the EU to create policy concerning the Arctic region. But what role can the EU play in the Arctic, as many have questioned whether the EU has and, perhaps more importantly, should have, any role in the Arctic.¹³ Looking through a geographical lens with the Arctic Circle as the most southern border, the role of the EU is distinct but not extensive: its only Arctic territory is the northernmost parts of two member states, Finland and Sweden. Although Denmark, also a member state, has sovereignty over Greenland, Greenland withdrew from the then EEC after a 1982 referendum.¹⁴ Therefore Greenland is seen as an Overseas Country and Territory (OCT) and not as part of the EU. As Iceland and Norway are no member states, their relation with the EU is based on the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement.¹⁵

Because the EU as a relative newcomer to the Arctic has been questioned for being not geographically connected enough and for lacking knowledge and competence when it comes to Arctic governance, this study seeks to look at the clearness and coherency of EU Arctic policies from 2008 to 2019. Has the EU proven to be an actor of significant importance in the Arctic due to its engagement and its policymaking? By taking a diachronic approach, this study will answer the question, 'Has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008-2019?'

¹² The High Representative and the European Commission, *Climate Change and International Security*, S113/08 (Brussels, 2008): 8.

¹³ Timo Koivurova et al., "The Present and Future Competence of the European Union in the Arctic." *Polar Record* Vol. 48, no. 4 (2012): 361.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 362.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

1.2. Europe in a changing world

With the collapse of the USSR in 1991 the world broke away from a relatively bipolar order and steadily shifted towards an epicentre of power became that was centred in the Western hemisphere. According to Michael Cox it was normal after 1991 to refer to something called the West. By “the West,” we mean the transatlantic order security community, embodied as it is in the Atlantic alliance.¹⁶ This Atlantic order predates the end of World War II, but it was really only after 1945 that it took on its current shape. It has security, economic, political, and ideational dimensions. It has institutions and norms that reflect a functioning— if loosely organized—political order.¹⁷ When after the Cold War the focus of power was being shifted towards the West, a deeper, more strategic partnership between the U.S. and Europe arose. This shift westward allowed Europe and the EU to start playing a more prominent role on the international stage, next to the U.S. However, the end of the Cold War did not result in a return to a multipolar distribution of power but rather reinforced U.S. dominance. The United States started the 1990s as the world’s only superpower, and it grew faster than the other major states during the decade.¹⁸ In 1990, just before the collapse of the USSR, Charles Krauthammer wrote an article named “The Unipolar Moment”. In this article Krauthammer described the post-Cold War world, as a place where unipolarity would prevail and if a country wanted stability it had to construct it. According to Krauthammer, the most striking feature of the post-Cold War world is its unipolarity. “No doubt, multipolarity will come in time. In perhaps another generation or so there will be great powers coequal with the United States, and the world will, in structure, resemble the pre-World War I era.”¹⁹ He predicted that the world was not ready for multipolarity and that it would take several decades to be ready for the moment of multipolarity. During this period of unipolarity where the U.S. expanded its power and created a liberal order, its Western allies, such as Europe, backed the U.S.

As Krauthammer already suggested, time has come for multipolarity as American hegemony is declining. In the book “Of Paradise and Power” by Robert Kagan, Kagan

¹⁶ Michael Cox, "Beyond the West: Terrors in Transatlantia." *European Journal of International Relations* 11, no. 2 (2005): 209.

¹⁷ John G. Ikenberry, “Explaining Crisis and Change in Atlantic Relations,” in *The End of the West?: Crisis and Change in the Atlantic Order*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015): 6.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁹ Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1 (1990): 23 - 24.

states how European principles are of greater commitment to world order than those of Americans but that on the other hand Europeans are less willing to acknowledge another truth: that their hostility to unilateralism is also self-interested. This, Kagan argues, is because the EU lacks the capacity to undertake unilateral military actions, either individually or collectively as “Europe”. It is natural that they should oppose allowing others to do what they cannot do themselves.²⁰ This is why the attractiveness of multilateralism has more of a practical face for Europe.

Amongst others, the cooling of the relationship between the U.S. and Europe and the rise of China and others caused a vacuum that leaves room for other countries. Because of the filling of this void the liberal order is facing severe challenges, threatening ultimately to lead to its demise. In terms of external challenges the growing influence of rising great powers is particularly notable. Countries such as China or Russia do not share values that are important to the West, such as democracy and Human Rights, and are openly defying established principles of international cooperation by advocating alternative world orders.

A period without major internal and external challenges for the EU is thus reaching the end and this has its consequences. Because the world is subject to changes such as increased globalization, nationalism and populism, the current world order endures transitions. This causes global power structures to transform, they are affecting Western leadership and they put it at risk for losing the *status quo*.

Where the epicentre of power used to be the axis between the U.S. and Europe, it is now shifting towards other places in the world. As the beating heart of international affairs is moving from the Atlantic to the Pacific in the beginning of the twenty-first century, it have been argued that Europe needs to fundamentally rethink its place and role in the world.²¹ What will this shift of power mean for Europe, and especially the EU? The more we move towards a multipolar world, the more Europe will need to offer a united front, which can only be embodied by the EU.²² To maintain this unity has proven to be

²⁰ Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise And Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Vintage Books, January 2004), 38.

²¹ Thomas Renard and Sven Biscop, *The European Union and Emerging Powers in the 21st Century: How Europe can Shape a New Global Order* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), xv.
doi:10.4324/9781315616414.

²² Thomas Renard and Sven Biscop, *The European Union*, xv.

hard for the EU in recent years, as it had to deal with a steep increase of populism in almost all her member states, the Eurozone crisis that was quickly followed by the 2015 migration crisis, caused by an enormous influx of migrants. On top of that, the EU experienced a huge defeat when the United Kingdom (UK) voted to leave the Union in 2016. With the UK scheduled for departure and the rising political polarisation in other Member States, the 26 European countries are slowly but certainly undermining the normative value basis of the EU.²³ With cohesion currently being a problem in the EU, the traditional European approach of “muddling through” is no longer possible for a declining Europe in a less Eurocentric world. According to Renard and Biscop Europe’s problem is not one of capabilities but rather one of articulating them together in an effective manner and directing them at clear objectives and priorities.²⁴ Communicating the Union’s clear objectives and priorities has proven to be a weakness during the Covid-19 crisis. Therefore, if the EU wants to be a power of significant importance, it needs to aim more for establishing clear objectives and priorities. The EU needs to strengthen its policies in certain areas where emerging powers such as China and Russia are paying a lot of attention. The Arctic can be considered to be such an area. As pointed out in the previous subchapter, the Arctic has proven to be an area of rising importance and therefore the EU needs to act accordingly. With the return and rise of geopolitical tensions the EU can no longer afford to postpone strong leadership and it needs to step and own up if it wants to play a role on the global stage. “Muddling through” may have worked when the world was relatively stable. But, ever since stability is not a certainty anymore, “muddling through” is no longer an option.²⁵ To see how the EU is reacting to the opening up of the Arctic, this thesis will look into EU Arctic policy-making and if the EU has been able to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008-2019.

1.3 Thesis structure

This study will start by setting the stage for the recurring interest for the Arctic and the changing world order and what role the EU will play in this. It will outline a brief introduction on the A8, the AC and the events that took place in 2007 that put the Arctic

²³ Katja Creutz et al., *The Changing Global Order and its Implications for the EU* (Helsinki: FIIA, 2019), 13.

²⁴ Renard and Biscop. *The European Union*, xvii.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 106.

back on the radar and what implications this had for the EU. Furthermore the first chapter will elaborate on the changing global context in a post-Cold War era in which the Arctic is rising to importance. The second chapter will consist of a theoretical framework where the normative character of the EU will be described, this by using the theory of Nathalie Tocci on ‘Normative Foreign Policy’ as an outline. Deriving from this, a later analysis on EU policy in the Arctic will be established. This will be done by elaborating on the potential normative *goals*, *means* and *impact* used by the EU as foreign policy actor.

Chapter 3, being the most substantial part of this study, will focus on analysing the development of EU Arctic Policy in the period 2008-2019. This part will be preceded by a brief history of EU participation in the Arctic before the actual policymaking started. This brief outline will point out different partnerships, such as the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Northern Dimension (ND) between the EU and other actors. This will show that even before 2008 the EU played a role in the Arctic. However, due to environmental and geopolitical changes the EU intensified its presence in the Arctic. This brief outline will be followed by the analysis of EU Arctic policy from 2008 to 2019. The style of policymaking by the EU is by Raspotnik compared with a game of ping pong.²⁶ This is due to the reciprocal exchange of policy documents between the four bodies: The European Commission (Commission), European Council (Council), European Parliament (EP) and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR). Chapter 3 will consist of the analysis of the various documents such as Commission communication, Council conclusions and EP resolutions. A more detailed description of these documents will also be provided in this chapter.

Finally, the conclusion will focus on answering the research question that was raised in the beginning of the study, concerning the clearness and coherency of EU Arctic policy from 2008 to 2019. In order to be an actor of significant importance in a certain region, the actor needs to begin with the establishing of clear and coherent policy in order to play a significant role. Therefore, this study will look at if it can be said the EU has proven to be an actor of significant importance in the Arctic due to its engagement to the Arctic and its policymaking?

²⁶ Raspotnik, *The European Union*, part IV, 5.2.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

It is important to look at the broader picture of the role of the EU and the overall setting in which EU Arctic policymaking occurs. The context is important in order to find consistency in the documents and see if the EU has managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy. Since the establishment of the EU, the Union has traditionally been considered as a distinctly ‘different’ type of international actor.²⁷ Different as the Union does not qualify as a state actor since it is not a state. Although the EU is the representative of several states it also does not qualify as a non-state actor and therefore the somewhat indefinite notion of what the EU stands for makes that it is often considered as a ‘different’ type of international actor. Because of the EU’s unique outlook, the role of the EU has been in flux over the past decades and throughout the years the EU has been depicted by scholars as being a ‘civilian’, ‘soft’ and ‘normative’ power. Firstly, this chapter will illustrate the concepts of ‘civilian’, ‘soft’ and ‘normative’ power. Thereafter, the role of ‘normative’ power will be linked to foreign policy and this will show the criteria important for being a normative foreign policy actor.

The concept of the EU being a ‘civilian power’ by Duchêne concerns the devaluation of purely military dominance, which provides more opportunity to a civilian form of influence and action. Europe should aim for a shift from a military to a political emphasis to apply only essentially civilian forms of power.²⁸ According to Duchêne, the EU can only make the most of this shift if it stays true to its inner characteristics, which are primarily based on ‘civilian ends and means, and a built-in sense of collective action, which in turn express, however imperfectly, social values of equality, justice and tolerance.’²⁹

‘Soft power’ by Nye is about the attractiveness of a state relative to other states or non-state actors. With ‘soft power’ it is about getting the other to want the same outcomes

²⁷ Nathalie Tocci, “Profiling Normative Foreign Policy: The European Union and its Global Partners,” (CEPS, Brussels, 2007), 1.

Rikard Bengtsson and Ole Elgström, “Conflicting Role Conceptions? The European Union in Global Politics,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8, no. 1 (2012): 93.

²⁸ F. Duchêne, “The European Community and the Uncertainties of Interdependence,” in M. Kohnstamm and W. Hager (eds), *A Nation Writ Large? Foreign Policy Problems before the European Community* (London: Macmillan, 1973), 19.

²⁹ Ibid.

that you aspire but without the use of coercive behaviour. An actor may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics as other actors admire its values, following its example, aspire to the level of prosperity and openness.³⁰ In this sense ‘soft power’ is more about a foreign policy that is built upon cooperation and attractiveness instead of the coercive use of inducements (“carrots”) or threats (“sticks”).³¹ If the EU proves able to establish an Arctic policy that is appealing to other (Arctic) actors, the EU might see other actors in the region will follow their path. In other words, the EU needs to set a normative scene in the Arctic that is alluring enough for others to follow.

2.1 Normative Power

Most often, the EU is described as a ‘normative power’. When depicting the EU as a ‘normative power,’ Manners pointed out that ‘norm’ tends to be overlooked, as it is primarily taken to be an ‘abbreviation for normal.’ Therefore, an international norm is probably best understood as being a shorthand way of expressing what passes for ‘normal’ in international relations, with all the contradictions that it provokes. Normative power, as understood by Manners, is therefore “the ability to shape or change what passes for normal in international relations, and which will undoubtedly have utilitarian, social, moral, and narrative dimensions to it, just as it will undoubtedly be disputed.”³² What this implies for the EU is that when it is seen as a ‘normative power’ it is able to outline policy, based on European norms, values and rules. By doing so it can set the scene for others to follow. The broad normative basis of the EU has been developed over the past fifty years through a series of declarations, treaties, policies, criteria and conditions.³³ According to Manners it is possible to identify nine norms of which five are considered as *core* and four are considered as *minor*.

³⁰ J. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 5.

³¹ Nye, *Soft Power*, 5.

³² Ian Manners, *Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?* (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, 2000), 32.

³³ *Ibid.*, 32.

<i>Core Norms</i>	<i>Minor Norms</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace • Liberty • Democracy • Rule of law • Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social solidarity • Anti-discrimination • Sustainable development • Good governance

Fig. 2: Own compilation based on the EU's Normative Basis by I. Manners.

Together these norms form the Unions *acquis communautaire* and *acquis politique* and they are set out in the Copenhagen Criteria, Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), Article 2 of both the Treaty Establishing the European Community (TEC) and TEU, Articles 6 and 13 of TEC and the Draft Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.³⁴ These norms as defined in the several declarations and treaties have provided the EU with a normative base and a source to derive the Union's values from. The five *core* norms as defined by Manners (peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms) were established in a post-war period, which made it important to create a context of peace and stability that would follow upon a period of war and instability. It was not enough for the EU to stay merely focussed on economic gain for the Union but it had to create an identity that would construct the EU's legitimacy as being more than a state. "The reinforcement and expansion of distinctive norms allowed the EU to present and legitimate itself as being more than the sum of its parts."³⁵ Thus the establishment of a comprehensive basis of norms and values made the EU a more legitimate actor and a great international power.

However, a comprehensive basis does not automatically mean that the EU will succeed as a great power as its influence may not be perceived as such by other actors. A conflicting self-perception and the perception of others can cause ambivalence when it comes to foreign policy. According to Bengtsson and Elgström, "incoherence between self-perceptions and others' perceptions of EU actions may create tensions that influence the interaction between the parties and that hinder EU efforts to spread values

³⁴ Manners, *Normative Power*, 32,

³⁵ *Ibid.*

and norms.”³⁶ Meaning that there is a possibility that the normative character of the EU is not acknowledged by other powers and therefore its leadership role can be undermined. It is not the case that all actors that strive to be normative great powers are also seen as such by other actors. “An actor attempting to be a normative great power may hold a role conception as ethically and normatively superior, but this need not be mirrored by others’ role expectations.”³⁷ The attachment to a certain perception of its own normative character can become damaging when it is in the way of attempted effective and efficient leadership and policymaking. As Michalski and Nilsson point out, this perception of the EU seeing itself as a normative power has “blinded its awareness of structural changes in the international system and their consequences for the EU as an international actor.”³⁸ As is described in chapter 1, changes in the international system with the emerging of powers can be threatening for the EU. As the world order is shifting towards something more multipolar, it seems if the EU remains static and lacks action for change. Thus, because of the EU’s static behaviour, its normative power is being challenged by emerging powers such as China and Russia. According to Michalski and Nilsson, there are:

A number of inconsistencies in the EU’s role as a normative actor, often conceived of as a mismatch between what it claims to *be* and what it *does*, as well as whether it possesses enough “stateness” to be a foreign policy actor at all.³⁹

Another factor that causes the EU’s normative identity to be contested is the deep-rooted tension between the Union and its Member States. On the one hand there is the pursuit for a united Union and a European identity. But on the other hand Member States still strive for as much independence and self-government as possible. This allows for inconsistencies when it comes to EU foreign policy. These inconsistencies undermine the normative outlook of the EU and impair its role as a great power.

³⁶ Bengtsson and Elgström, “Conflicting Role,” 94.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 95.

³⁸ Anna Michalski and Niklas Nilsson, “Resistant to Change? The EU as a Normative Power and its Troubled Relations with Russia and China,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* (2019) 15, (2019): 433.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 434.

2.2. Normative Foreign Policy

Because the EU is *sui generis* and it does not qualify as a state, it is not able to partake in the AC, the high-level, intergovernmental collaboration forum for the Arctic. As mentioned before, the role of the EU in the Arctic has been questioned due to its lack of geographical connection and lack of knowledge and competence. Since this study will look at the EU's engagement in the Arctic and if the EU has managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy, it is important to look at the EU's foreign policy behaviour. By using Tocci's theory on 'Normative Foreign Policy' it will be possible to analyse EU Arctic policy in a framework of normative foreign policy and thus see if the EU, through its performance in the Arctic, has established clear and coherent policy.

Tocci points out that "in order to ascertain what characterises a normative foreign policy actor, we must first define what we mean by 'normative.'"⁴⁰ Firstly, there is a distinction between the ways the concept of normativity can be understood. The concept of normativity can be understood in a 'neutral' and a 'non-neutral' manner where the first is linked to objectivity and the latter to subjectivity. Norms can become closely associated to power, which makes it easy for international actors to form and control what they believe is considered 'normal' and this would make that "all major international actors would have 'normative' foreign policies by definition, in that they all contribute to determining and shaping the 'norm' in international affairs."⁴¹ This means that the notion of normativity is highly context dependent, depending on actor and country. As previously mentioned, the EU has certain values that are believed to be the foundation of its legitimacy. However, this does not automatically mean that these values are equal to those of other actors as they might pursue other, in their belief, values that are seen as 'normal'. This makes it hard to define whether or not an actor can be defined as a normative actor.

On the other side is a non-neutral understanding of normative foreign policy where there are risks of falling for "subjectivity and presumed universality."⁴² When we would correlate normative foreign policy with subjective terms, such as 'excellent' or 'bad', Tocci states that this would not only be "problematic in and of itself, but would also

⁴⁰ Tocci, "Profiling Normative," 2.

⁴¹ Sjursen, in Tocci, "Profiling Normative," 2.

⁴² Tocci, "Profiling Normative," 3.

lead us back to a definition of normativity which is inextricably tied to power and power-based relations.”⁴³

In order to find a definition of normative foreign policy that, “while being non-neutral in ethical terms, must be based on set standards that are as universally accepted and intimate as possible.”⁴⁴ To establish these standards, Tocci considers three dimensions of normative foreign policy: what an actor wants (its *goals*), how it acts (the deployment of its policy *means*) and what it achieves (its *impact*).⁴⁵

2.2.a. Normative Goals

When looking at the EU in the Arctic and what it wants (*goals*), this can either be normative or non-normative based. As portrayed in the figure based on Manners’ *core* and *minor* norms, values form the base for the EU’s normative character and therefore goals based on values are categorized as normative goals. Whenever the goals are interest based, Tocci categorizes them as non-normative.

Following the normative foreign policy theory, all-encompassing values such as ‘democracy’, ‘peace’, ‘justice’, or ‘order’ can be interpreted in a myriad different ways by different actors at different points in time.⁴⁶ The exact interpretations given to values and the way in which they are hierarchically ordered have to a large extent to do with the motivating interest of the actors involved. As interests of actors is susceptible to change due to circumstances, such as melting of polar ice, what is considered ‘normal’ can change as a result of this particular circumstance. In turn, values might (slightly) change as a result of shifting interest and this might lead to a change in the normative character of an actor. Also, the pursuit of different values can contradict one another in specific circumstances or over time. This is the case as “normative goals would include the promotion of peace, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, international law and sustainable development; strategic goals would include the protection of commercial interests, migration management or energy security.”⁴⁷ The contradiction of values and with this the normative character of the EU, is something that will become evident

⁴³ Tocci, “Profiling Normative,” 3.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 4.

during the analysis of EU Arctic policy when looking at the dispute between Canada and the EU on the ban on seal products.

Tocci follows up on Wolfers' definition of 'milieu' goals and possession goals in order to establish an own definition of normative goals. 'Milieu' and possession goals are contradicting, as the former are "those which, while indirectly related to a particular actor's specific interests, are essentially concerned with the wider environment within which international relations unfold."⁴⁸ On top of that, milieu goals are practiced constantly over time and this is not the case for possession goals. The latter, possession goals, are according to Wolfers linked to national possessions and, when an actor targets its foreign policy to attain its possession goals, "a nation is aiming at the enhancement or the preservation of one or more of the things to which it attaches value."⁴⁹ But, in order to offer a more comprehensive definition, "normative foreign policy goals are those which aim to shape the milieu by regulating it through international regimes, organisations and law" is added to Wolfers definition. It is also stressed that it is essential to add that "a normative goal is one that pursues international regularisation in a manner that binds the behaviour of all parties, including that of the actor in question. It is particularly important to add this condition since international law is also the product of international power relations and not a magic formula that perfectly objectivises and universalises norms."⁵⁰

Tocci's definition of foreign policy goals as described so far will be used during this study as it provides a clear and coherent description of what is attempted to outline, concerning EU policy in the Arctic.

2.2.b. Normative Means

"To be normative, foreign policy must pursue normative goals through normative means."⁵¹ Meaning that if an actor's actions are to be normative, they should be grounded on a basis of values from which they acquire their normative, that what is considered 'normal' character. To reach normative goals, an actor can make use of a variety of normative means but the determination of what makes these certain means

⁴⁸ Tocci, "Profiling Normative," 4.

⁴⁹ Wolfers in Tocci, "Profiling Normative," 4.

⁵⁰ Tocci, "Profiling Normative," 4.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 5.

normative can be contradicting. This is because, depending on the situation, certain normative means can turn out to be even more damaging and therefore less normative than non-normative means. When looking at economical and military means, it would be plausible to assume that military means are the ones being non-normative and more harmful. But when economical means are being used as a method of pressure; in the form of economic sanctions, it would mean that the targeted population could be harmed as severely or even more severe than when the population would suffer from the conduct of war. Therefore, the use of a normative means with the emphasis on economics could turn out to be non-normative as it loses the foundation of certain normative values. Thus, depending on the way it is used in foreign policy, means can either be normative or non-normative. This is why, to define the ‘normativeness’ of means used by actors, it is more important to look at *how* rather than *which* policy instruments are used in order to determine if certain foreign policy means are considered normative. To underline this the theory relates back to Nye’s definition of soft power, “as power that relies on cooptation rather than coercion.”⁵²

But the line between the usage of soft power in relation to normative and non-normative means appears to be thin when used in practice. Tocci states that “some authors have classified soft methods based on joint ownership, engagement, persuasion and cooperation as more ‘normative’ than coercive methods such as conditionality, sanctions or military action.”⁵³ But as mentioned it turns out that in fact there is a contradiction between soft methods and the usages of soft power and that they not always align. “It is awkward to argue that cooperation with an authoritarian regime is more ‘normative’ than punishment-based incentives towards it.”⁵⁴ This makes that is more commonsensical to look at the *how* rather than the *which* as normative means are not always as clear-cut as they might seem. For this study, it will be important to look at the use of normative, value based means and non-normative, interest based means. This is since means are subjected to change throughout specific situations in EU Arctic policymaking. The way the EU uses incentives or disincentives means differs depending on which actor is involved or what goal the EU foresees and this influences

⁵² Nye in Tocci, “Profiling Normative”, 5.

⁵³ Tocci, “Profiling Normative,” 5.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 6.

their role as normative actor in the Arctic and the way in which their policy is seen as clear and coherent.

Finally, to come to a definition for normative foreign policy means, it should be defined as:

Instruments (regardless of their nature) that are deployed within the confines of the law. While far from a perfect guide to normative action, in such situations the law ensures that choices are not crude reflections of political contingency, but rather are made within the boundaries of legally permissible acts.⁵⁵

Although this study makes use of a theory on normative foreign policy, the definition provided to normative foreign policy means will not be adopted one-on-one as this definition includes a judicial dimension that is focussed on law, something this study will not look further into. Therefore normative foreign policy means are seen in this study as instruments used by foreign policy actors that are based on a foundation of values important to the actor in question. When mentioning non-normative means, this means that the instruments are not based on values but arise from interest.

2.2.c. Normative Impact

The last variable described in the theory focuses on the results of normative foreign policy. This since “studies on foreign policy tend to place primary emphasis on declared intent rather than on actual results.”⁵⁶ However, it should not be overlooked that external impact of a foreign policy actor is as equally as important as the actor’s internal aim. This because when there would be a focus on the results, the objectives of an actor can be tested and this would make sure that there is no discrepancy between the results and the objectives of the foreign policy actor. In this way it can be verified if a normative foreign policy actor is pursuing its normative *goals* through normative *means* and by doing so accomplishing the normative *impact* it strived for. It can however also turn out that a normative foreign policy actor pursued its *goals* but the *means* turned out to be non-normative and therefore its *impact* does not qualify as normative.

⁵⁵ Tocci, “Profiling Normative,” 6.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Tocci's definition for a normative impact is:

One where a traceable path can be drawn between an international player's direct or indirect actions and inactions (or series of actions) on the one hand and the effective building and entrenchment of an international rule-bound environment on the other.⁵⁷

This definition of the normative impact of foreign policy as described so far provided a good starting point to define a definition that is somewhat more focused on what will be looked at in throughout this study. Therefore, the normative impact is seen in this study as the value based direct or indirect action by a normative foreign policy actor that leads to impact that is based on the aforementioned values of the actor. However, it needs to be added that an overall picture of the impact that EU Arctic policy has had throughout the eleven years that is looked at in this study, might be difficult to chart. This as it might not be possible to see the impact of all the issues raised and perhaps executed by the EU. Nevertheless, it is believed that is important to look at the normative impact that the EU has had by engaging and establishing policy concerning the Arctic and therefore this study will try to include the normative impact as much as possible.

Recapitulating the first half of this chapter, this part defined what the normativity for the EU as a foreign policy actor means. To act normative, an actor should pursue so-called normative *goals, means and impact*. Taking into account the 'Normative Foreign Policy' from Tocci, definitions on *goals, means and impact* are either confirmed or adjust in a way they amplify this study. The second half of this chapter will zoom in on the different types of foreign policy types and if the various ways they can act. A figure is established that portrays the various outcomes for the four types of foreign policy actors as they pursue their own *goals, means and impact*.

2.3. Foreign Policy Types

As mentioned, this study will use a diachronic approach, meaning that this study will look at the development of a EU Arctic policy over time, how changes have occurred during this period and the like by using EU policy documents from the period 2008-2019.

⁵⁷ Tocci, "Profiling Normative," 7.

It rarely occurs that a foreign policy actor can only be categorized as one specific type during an entire period. Therefore, this study will show that the EU pursues different goals and values in the Arctic that can be seen as contradictory. This is why the EU can be categorized as different types of foreign policy actors throughout time. Because international actors can fit several boxes, Tocci uses a set of combinations with normative and non-normative *goals* and *means*. The outcome of this combination offers a stylisation that displays four different types of foreign policy and can be categorized as follows:

		<u>Legitimation of foreign policy goals</u>	
		Normative	Non-Normative
<u>Foreign policy means</u>	Normative	Normative	Status Quo
	Non-Normative	Imperial	Realpolitik

Fig 3. Foreign policy types⁵⁸

The four different foreign policy types distinguish themselves as normative, realpolitik, status quo and imperial. In this study, a normative foreign policy type is seen as “one which satisfies both conditions (goals and means) and it thus justifies its foreign policy actions by making reference to its milieu goals that aim to strengthen international law and institutions and promote the rights and duties enshrined and specified in international law.”⁵⁹ All of its actions are done in respect by internal and international legal requirements.

Diagonally opposite of the normative foreign policy type, there is realpolitik.

The Realpolitik does not move in a foggy future, but in the present’s field of vision, it does not consider its task to consist in the realization of ideals, but in the attainment of concrete ends, and it knows, with reservations, to content itself

⁵⁸ Tocci, “Profiling Normative”, 7.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

with partial results, if their complete attainment is not achievable for the time being. Ultimately, the Realpolitik is an enemy of all kinds of self-delusion.⁶⁰

This study views Realpolitik as a way of doing politics in which the costs and benefits of a certain policy are examined in a clear-headed, phlegmatic way and where the normative goals and means are omitted from the consideration. For the most part, Realpolitik has been used interchangeably with “realism,” “realist,” or “raison d’état.”⁶¹

The more moderate alternatives in the figure are *Status Quo* that is regarded in this study as an actor that values accepting the existing international system. As an actor, it “operates in the international system and pursues its policies in respect of its domestic and international legal obligations and, where relevant, it operates within the context of international organisations.”⁶² However, as it is categorized as a *Status Quo* foreign policy type, it is not driven to pursue normative goals and it will remain operating in a framework of “existing laws and rules without wishing to pursue their further development in different regions and issue areas.”⁶³

Diagonally opposite of the *Status Quo* foreign policy type, there is *Imperial*. This study sees the *Imperial* type as one that favours the involvedness of power and direct territorial acquisition by gaining political and economic control of other areas.⁶⁴ “The imperial type does not view itself as bound by existing law. It shapes the normative milieu by abrogating existing rules, promoting or preventing the adoption of others, and playing a dominant role in creating others still in order to regulate its subjects in a manner that best serves its interests.”⁶⁵

Another layer can yet be added to the foreign policy type figure and this layer depends on the impact the *goals*, *means* and *results* have. Therefore the four described foreign policy types can have either an *intended* or an *unintended* impact. According to Tocci, “an intended outcome is one in which the goal reflects the impact regardless of whether they were normative or otherwise and an unintended impact is where the goals are

⁶⁰ John Bew, *Realpolitik: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 15.

⁶¹ Bew, *Realpolitik*, 5.

⁶² Diez and Manners in Tocci, “Profiling Normative,” 8.


⁶³ Tocci, “Profiling Normative,” 8.

⁶⁴ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Imperialism,” <https://www.britannica.com/topic/imperialism>, accessed May 23, 2020.


⁶⁵ Tocci, “Profiling Normative,” 8.

normative but the impact is not, or vice versa.”⁶⁶ This definition of *intended* or *unintended* impact as described will be used during this study as it provides a clear and coherent description of what is attempted to outline. The added layer in combination with the four foreign policy actor types is portrayed in the coming figure:

Type of actor	Normative		Realpolitik		Imperial		Status Quo	
	Intended	Unintended	Intended	Unintended	Intended	Unintended	Intended	Unintended
Goals								
Means								
Impact								



Non-normative



Normative

Fig 4. Foreign Policy Outcomes 1⁶⁷

As mentioned earlier, it rarely occurs that a foreign policy actor fits perfectly into a described foreign policy type. Meaning that it can occur that in different regions; in different policy areas and at different points in time, the same international actor can display characteristics of the four foreign policy types mentioned.⁶⁸ Additionally, it is not rare to notice an evolution in the actor’ traits when looking at a specific topic over a longer period of time. Evolution in traits can be related to possible changes in internal and external factors. For this reason, the figure above might be somewhat too extensive for this study and will not be used in this capacity.

If the EU aims at establishing efficient foreign policy it is important to be consistent and fit the boxes of normative *goals*, *means* and *impact*. “Empirically, meeting all three

⁶⁶ Tocci, “Profiling Normative,” 8.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 9.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 10.

conditions fully is arduous and may only rarely be achieved.”⁶⁹ Therefore Tocci raises a question regarding if ticking off all the requirements is *essential* for being a foreign policy actor. But in order to pinpoint what this ‘essentialness’ means, it is important to analyse individual cases as essential can differ in context or definition. Depending on which type of foreign policy the EU is categorized, the *goals, means* and/or *impact* can turn out to be either *intended* or *unintended normative* or *intended* or *unintended non-normative*. The figures that will be used to describe the type of foreign policy in combination with their *goals, means* and *impact* is has a wide range of options and these combinations can all be made with the portrayed figure:

Type of actor	Normative		Realpolitik		Imperial		Status Quo	
	Intended	Unintended	Intended	Unintended	Intended	Unintended	Intended	Unintended
Goals								
Means								
Impact								



 Non-normative	 Normative
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Fig 5. Possible Foreign Policy Outcomes 2⁷⁰

Because of the wide range of combinations, this figure will function as the framework that offers the possibility to construct tailor-made analyses for what type of foreign policy actor the EU resemblances during its process of establishing Arctic policy throughout the past eleven years. However, “the challenge is thus to identify under

⁶⁹ Tocci, “Profiling Normative,” 9.

⁷⁰ Own compilation based on the Foreign Policy Outcomes by N. Tocci.

which conditions and circumstances an international player is normative (as opposed to realpolitik, imperial or status quo).”⁷¹

2.4. Methodology

In order to find an answer to the research question of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in period 2008 - 2019?’ an qualitative analysis will be conducted on the EU’s ability to formulate and ascertain clear and coherent policy concerning the Arctic. As a means of achieving to find an answer to this question, this study will be conducting an analysis based on critical discourse analysis (CDA) and therefore several policy documents, such as Commission communication, Council conclusions and EP resolutions will be used. As different types of texts “can be read on several levels, at the level of words, sentences, paragraphs, chapters, or whole publications; as literary works or discourses; or as concepts, frames, issues, plots, genres,” it is interesting to use CDA for this study as it aims to understand the discourse in and behind the texts.⁷² The data collected originates from the official communication platforms of the various EU institutions and has been chosen as it provides a comprehensive overview of the EU’s endeavours in the Arctic from 2008 until 2019.

The analysis of different types of discourse has grown and evolved rapidly and so reached a wide disciplinary diversity and, “it is no surprise that the terms *discourse* and *discourse analysis* have different meaning to scholars in different fields.”⁷³ This is due to its disciplinary diversity. Discourse analysis, can be seen as an umbrella term that covers various forms of specific types of analysis on certain topics one of these being CDA. “Whatever discourse is, and however concretely or abstractly the term is used, there will at least be agreement that it has focally to do with language, meaning and context.”⁷⁴ For example, for International Relations, where foreign policy is part of, the meaning behind analysing discourse is the interest of the meaning behind it in world politics and the discourse of different actors and their relations.

⁷¹ Tocci, “Profiling Normative,” 11.

⁷² Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology*, 2.th ed. (Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage, 2004), 84.

⁷³ Deborah Tannen, Heidi Ehemberger Hamilton and Deborah Schiffrin, *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis. Second; 2nd. ed.*, (Malden, MA: Chichester, West Sussex: Willey Blackwell, 2015), 1.

⁷⁴ Adam Jaworski and Nikolas Coupland, *The Discourse Reader*, 2nd ed. (London; New York;: Routledge, 2006), xi.

There are several matters when it comes to the methodology of CDA. When looking specifically at CDA, according to Meyer & Wodak, “it is generally agreed that CDA must not be understood as a single method but rather as an approach, which constitutes itself at different levels.”⁷⁵ They also point out that:

Although there is no consistent CDA methodology, some features are common to most CDA approaches: firstly they are problem oriented and not focused on specific linguistic items. Yet linguistic expertise is obligatory for the selection of the items relevant to specific research objectives. Secondly theory as well as methodology is eclectic: both are integrated as far as it is helpful to understand the social problems under investigation.⁷⁶

As linguistics and hermeneutics play an important role in CDA, it does not mean that “topics and contents play no role at all, but that the core operationalizations depend on linguistic concepts such as actors, mode, time, tense, argumentation, and so on.”⁷⁷ However to provide a conclusive list of all the language concepts that would be or could be of any importance for CDA cannot be given. This has to do with the wide range of topics for which CDA can be used. CDA does not need to be as extensive and point out every linguistic detail in a specific discourse. “For instance many CDA scholars regularly use actor analyses as a means of focusing upon pronouns, attributes and the verbal mode, time and tense.”⁷⁸ By focusing on certain specific linguistic features, the linguistic aspect of CDA is still important but it is not as necessarily extensively present. For this study it will be important to look at the clearness and coherence of the text in the EU policy documents. Is the EU doing what it is said it will do, or are there inconsistencies in their wording and their *goals, means* and *impact*? This study will look at language that indicates active and passive behavior by the EU and whether this corresponds with the *goals, means*, and *impact* proposed by the institutions. Looking at active and passive language can assist highlighting whether or not the EU’s wording can directly be translated into *goals, means* or *impact*. Passive terms such as, aim, consider, or possible, and more active terms such as, addressing, conducting, or promote will be highlighted in relation to the context. Attention will also be directed towards if the

⁷⁵ Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer, *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (London: SAGE, 2001), 14.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁷⁷ Wodak and Meyer, *Methods of*, 25.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 16

institutions are using more accommodating language or more provoking language towards other Arctic actors. These terms and ways of expressing will expectantly indicate the coherence between the EU's intentions and their actions. Looking at the development of the EU Arctic policy over time, coherence can be found internally, temporally or externally. The most important forms of coherence throughout this study will be internal and external. This since it is looking at the developments in policies from the same institutions and the overall coherence in time between the policies from the different EU bodies.

To gain a better understanding of the discourse behind EU Arctic policymaking in the period 2008-2019, this study will be a qualitative research based on 12 different EU policy documents in the period 2008 until 2019. This timespan is picked as 2008 was the year when the EU started to engage with Arctic policy after the previous year, 2007, had been a turbulent year for the Arctic and it became a renewed area of importance for several great powers, such as China, Russia and the U.S. The year 2019 is picked as this is hitherto the last moment that the EU has published policy concerning the Arctic. As a critical discourse analysis is conducted, it is important to look at the language used by the EU in their policy documents throughout these years, how this changed over time and in which context this took place. Context is of especial importance in CDA as it assumes that "all discourses are historical and can therefore only be understood with reference to their context."⁷⁹ This crucial emphasis on context includes "social-psychological, political and ideological components and thereby postulates an interdisciplinary procedure."⁸⁰ As this study is looking at political documents, it is important to bear in mind the context in which politics operates.

Politics operates not only in a context of disagreement and conflict, but also in conditions of uncertainty, incomplete information and risk, where what is often required is an immediate decision in response to some problematic situation, all of these constraints can affect the rationality of the decisions that are made.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Wodak & Meyer, *Methods of*, 15.

⁸⁰ Ibid

⁸¹ Norman Fairclough and Isabela Fairclough, *Political Discourse Analysis*, (New York: Routledge, 2012), 34.

So depending on the context of the situation, it is possible that the EU is not always able to make the most rational decision which could lead to unclear and incoherent policy. Additionally, because of the three EU institutions that work together on creating policy concerning the Arctic, it can occur that there will be disagreement on the course of the policy what in turn will lead to conflicting statements in different policies put forward by the different EU institutions. However according to Fairclough and Fairclough, “the decision will be reasonable as a result of the procedure by which it has been arrived at, even though it may not always be the ‘best’ decision (given unavoidable time and information limitations and other constraints).”⁸² In order to reach a decision and so establish policy, it is of high importance that there is “a variety of relevant considerations, and ideally with other, in a democratic setting where a wide range of viewpoints can be expressed and taken into account.”⁸³ This will overall enhance the decision-making behind the produced policy.

Looking critically at the discourse behind EU Arctic policymaking will help to find out if the EU makes use of clear and coherent language in their policies concerning the Arctic. Here the communication between the four bodies, the Commission, Council, EP, and the HR, will be an important part of the analysis as conflicting languages can cause incoherent and unclear policy. For understanding the discourse behind foreign policymaking, “a core impetus has been the desire to increase the quality of decision making by discovering an optimal organizational structure.”⁸⁴ As this is not always the case for the four bodies analysed in this study, it is interesting to look at the communication and interaction between them and its resulting discourse. In order to get an overview of how the different policies incorporate the EU’s *goals, means* and *impact*, the figure portrayed earlier on the possible stylisation of different types of foreign policy actors and the unintended/intended will be used. By incorporating the line argumentation of the various documents in these figures, it will provide an indication of how the EU is perceived as foreign policy actor and if its *goals, means* and *impact* are in line with the normative character of the EU. It can however be argued that discourse analysis can be subjective as to the way it is interpreted. On top of that, “discourse analysis approaches seem to elude important methodological issues raised by

⁸² Fairclough & Fairclough, *Political Discourse*, 34..

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Jean A Garrison et al., "Foreign Policy Analysis in 20/20: A Symposium." *International Studies Review* (2003) 5, no. 2 (2003): 159.

a focus on ideas and values as the latter heavily rely on the actors themselves and their discourse. Discourse is a key source of information, yet a source which needs to be analysed in itself rather than being taken for granted.”⁸⁵ Thus since discourse analysis may not be the most objective type of conducting analysis, it will be used in this study because it is still believed to provide insight in the discourse of EU Arctic policy in the period 2008-2019.

⁸⁵ Sébastien Loisel, “Discourse Analysis and Foreign Policy Analysis: Introducing Speech Act Theory in European Foreign and Security Policy,” *ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops* (Grenada, Paris, 2005), 11.

Development of European Union Arctic Policy: a decade + 1

3.1. Before EU Arctic Policy

As stated in chapter 1, this part of the study will contain the most substantial part on EU Arctic policymaking throughout 2008-2019. Starting with a general overview on the EU's endeavours in the Arctic prior to 2008, this introduction will be followed by the diachronic, chronological analysis of the various policy documents.

EU interest in the Arctic had already begun before the turbulent year of 2007. However, after the events that took place in that year, the EU realized that it had to establish its own Arctic strategy if it wanted to start playing a role of any significant importance in the fast changing Arctic. This is because “by early 2008, the Arctic was not prominently put on comprehensive European policy feet and has only been a marginal note in EU foreign policy - a periphery of the periphery.”⁸⁶ This introductory chapter will provide a brief outline on how the EU was already involved in the Arctic before they decided to start making their own Arctic policy. Because of the EU's ‘regional-building trend’ in 1993 the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, including the northernmost parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia grew in importance⁸⁷ “The Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) is the forum for intergovernmental cooperation on issues concerning the Barents region.”⁸⁸ This partnership was made official with the Kirkenes Declaration, which was signed by Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the European Commission. During the Cold War the Barents region had been an area of military confrontation and it had been part of one of the most militarized regions in the world. Therefore, the underlying meaning of this cooperation was to “secure political long-term stability and reduce possible tensions.”⁸⁹ Nowadays, the main focus of the BEAC lies with sustainable development.

The BEAC is a cooperation between three EU Member States, two EFTA states, Russia and the European Commission and was initially set up to link the East and the West

⁸⁶ Raspotnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.1.

⁸⁷ Jens Petter Nielsen, "Russian-Norwegian Relations in Arctic Europe: The History of the "Barents Euro-Arctic Region," *East European Quarterly* 35, no. 2, (Summer, 2001): 163.

⁸⁸ “BARENTS EURO-ARCTIC COUNCIL,” <https://www.barentscooperation.org/en/Barents-Euro-Arctic-Council>, accessed May 26, 2020.

⁸⁹ “ABOUT US,” <https://www.barentscooperation.org/en/About>, accessed May 26, 2020.

after the Cold War and to “involve Russia in European cooperation,”⁹⁰ the Northern Dimension (ND) has a broader range of sectors and it was directed to “the most sacred values of the EU: peace and stability safety and wealth.”⁹¹ The cooperation aims at “supporting stability, well-being and sustainable development in the region by means of practical cooperation.”⁹² One of the ND’s main objectives was to enhance the Union’s external relations and to make the EU a “more efficient operator at the world level.”⁹³ It was set up to be more extensive than the BEAC and therefore the ND covers a wider range of topics and sectors than the BEAC. This wide range of sectors includes “the environment, nuclear safety, health, energy, transport, logistics, promotion of trade and investment, research, education and culture.”⁹⁴ On top of that is the cooperation with the Barents Sea region and the Baltic Sea region of high importance and also the cooperation with the Arctic States Canada and the U.S.

However, although there are several forums for Arctic cooperation, the leading and most important intergovernmental one in terms of promoting cooperation and coordination in the Arctic is the AC. Nevertheless here lies a problem for the EU, namely it is neither a member nor a permanent observer to the AC. The AC consists of the A8, six permanent participants in the form of the Arctic’s Indigenous Peoples’ organizations and several observers in the form of Non-Arctic states, Intergovernmental and interparliamentary organizations and Non-governmental organizations. The EU has tried to achieve the AC observer status ever since 2008 but because of disputes with Canada over the ban of seal products and with Russia over the annexation of Crimea; the EU has been denied observer status. This simply means that the EU as institution is being side lined in the most important intergovernmental Arctic forum. In order to play a role of any importance in the increasingly important Arctic, the EU needs to establish its own Arctic policy and so becomes an important actor in the region.

Before starting with the EU Arctic analysis it is important to distinguish the difference between the different policies this study covers. The various types that will be used are

⁹⁰ Markku Heikkilä, *If we lose the Arctic: Finland’s Arctic thinking from the 1980s to present day*, (Rovaniemi: The Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, 2019), 16.

⁹¹ Heikkilä, *If we*, 24.

⁹² “The Northern Dimension (ND),” <http://www.northerndimension.info/northern-dimension>, accessed May 27, 2020.

⁹³ Heikkilä, *If we lose*, 24.

⁹⁴ “The Northern Dimension (ND),” accessed May 27, 2020.

communications, conclusions and resolutions. Communications by the Commission are non-binding policy documents that set out the Commission's opinion on a certain topical issue. In this case, the communication published was a so-called *joint communication* that was created in cooperation with the HR and focuses on the area of common foreign and security policy and external action. The conclusions by the Council are the non-legally binding but unanimously expressed political agreements by all the Member States on a certain topical matter. The resolutions by the EP are also non-binding and they function as political statements in order to give political impulse to the legislative and political process.⁹⁵ In the coming chapters the policies as shown below will be analysed.

Year	Institution(s)	Policy Type	Document Title
2008 - 14 March	Commission & HR	Joint Paper	<i>Climate Change and International Security</i>
2008 - 9 October	EP	Resolution	<i>Arctic Governance</i>
2008 - 20 November	Commission	Communication	<i>The European Union and the Arctic Region</i>
2009 - 8 December	Council	Conclusions	<i>Arctic Issues</i>
2011 - 20 January	EP	Resolution	<i>A Sustainable EU Policy for the High North</i>
2012 - 26 June	Commission & HR	Joint Communication	<i>Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: Progress since 2008 and Next Steps</i>
2014 - 12 March	EP	Resolution	<i>EU strategy for the Arctic</i>
2014 - 12 May	Council	Conclusions	<i>Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region</i>
2016 - 27 April	Commission & HR	Joint Communication	<i>An Integrated European Union Policy for the Arctic</i>
2016 - 20 June	Council	Conclusions	<i>The Arctic</i>
2017 - 16 March	EP	Resolution	<i>An Integrated EU Policy for the Arctic</i>
2019 - 9 December	Council	Conclusions	<i>On the EU Arctic Policy</i>

Fig 6. Own compilation based on EU Arctic policy

⁹⁵ Rasputnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.2.

3.2. 2008: Commission & HR Joint Paper: *Climate Change and International Security*

In 2008 the political debate concerning the Arctic began and the year is seen as “the official starting point for the Union’s distinctive Arctic storyline.”⁹⁶ This first paper published by the Commission and the HR is a reaction to the Council’s request to provide a joint report on the impact of climate change. Therefore this paper’s main focus lies with the impact of climate change, the security threats as a result of it and how the EU should respond to these changes. Although the Arctic is not this paper’s main topic, the region is explicitly and implicitly mentioned in nearly every section. Under the second subsection of effects and threats of climate change, six out of the seven points are relatable to the Arctic. This includes conflict over resources, loss of territory and border disputes, environmentally induced migration, situations of fragility and radicalization, tension over energy supply and pressure on international governance.⁹⁷ Under the third subsection ‘geographical examples,’ the impact of climate change is mentioned as the cause for the geopolitical changes in the Arctic region. Here the paper explicitly mentions the Russian flag-planting incident in 2007 to highlight the growing importance for the EU to address issues that are connected to climate change and the resulting, interlinked security issues.

In this first steps towards putting the Arctic back on the EU’s political agenda it is evident that the EU is advocating for a multilateral response with international negotiations to climate change. The paper states that the EU aims at retaining their active role when it comes to combat climate change, aims at working together with major emitters and emerging economies, aims to establish coherent EU actions plans based on further studies and aims at “addressing the different dimensions of the responses required to address the impact of climate change on international security in a comprehensive and effective manner.”⁹⁸ What becomes clear in this first policy is that the EU has not found words to express itself in an active and strong way. It is looking for possible action that it can take but it takes cautious stances and sees which way the wind shall blow in the areas being at risk of being impacted by climate change. Here the words from Hix are suitable as he states that “EU foreign policies are essentially


⁹⁶ Raspotnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.2.

⁹⁷ High Representative and European Commission, *Climate Change and International Security*, Joint Report S113/08, Brussels: 14 March 2008, 4-5.


⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

reactive rather than proactive: responding to global events rather than shaping them.”⁹⁹ Under the fourth subsection ‘conclusions and recommendations,’ the paper states possible actions the EU can take in order to enhance capacities at the EU level in order to gain more knowledge on the topic of climate change. This is followed up by “an improvement in the prevention of, and preparedness for early responses to, disasters and conflicts,”¹⁰⁰ promote a EU led multilateral response to climate change and aim for possible cooperation with third countries. With addressing these possible actions, the EU is not so much aiming for new actions, as they seem to build upon ‘further integration’, ‘further looking’, ‘intensify’ and ‘promote’ already existing research or cooperation.

Type of actor	Normative	
	Intended	Unintended
Goals		
Means		
Impact		



Non-normative



Normative

Fig. 7: Analysis of the Commission and HR Joint Paper on Climate Change and International Security (2008).

When taking into account the question that was raised at the beginning of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008-2019?’ can it be said, in response to the first Joint communication, that the Commission and HR published a clear and coherent document?

As this paper is a first draft towards establishing coherent EU action plans, it is not yet quite clear what is meant by coherent policy as the Commission and HR simply phrase their words in a rather passive way and so ‘aim’ and ‘address’ towards ‘possible’ actions that ‘could be’ developed. Looking at the *goals*, *means* and *impact* of this Joint paper, it is not yet clear what these will be. Goals are set by the Commission and the HR

⁹⁹ Hix in Raspotnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.2.

¹⁰⁰ HR & Commission, *Climate Change*, 9.

but the language that is used is still rather passive and does not provide a clear view on how the goals will be reached. Because of this, the figure above shows no signs yet on the EU being anything else than a normative actor, as it does not deviate from the EU's normative basis. This is since the paper really is a first step in trying to establish a path for creating coherent Arctic policy and not much happened yet. The impact of the paper is clear in a sense that it sparked the beginning of the EU creating Arctic policy but that is it. Therefore it can be said that the impact of this paper can be interpreted as both normative and non-normative. In the coming policies it will become more visible how the EU is engaging in the Arctic through its policymaking and the impact its decision have on the cooperation in the Arctic region.

3.3. 2008: European Parliament Resolution on Arctic Governance

What becomes clear in this EP resolution is that the EP shares the concerns pointed out by the Commission and the HR about climate change and the growing geopolitical and strategic importance of the Arctic. In addition, the EP states that it:

Awaits with great interest the forthcoming Commission communication on Arctic policy, and hopes that it will lay the foundations for a meaningful EU Arctic policy; calls on the Commission to address, at least, the following issues in its communication.¹⁰¹

Here the resolution refers the Commission to the following issues as looking at the adoption and state of play in relation to climate change in the Arctic region, policy options with respect towards the Arctic's Peoples populations and their livelihoods, cooperation with the EU's Arctic neighbour on cross-border and maritime safety issues and any potential options for future cross-border political or legal structure for protecting future sustainability in the Arctic. They also suggest that:

¹⁰¹ European Parliament, *Resolution of 9 October 2008 on Arctic Governance*, P6_TA(2008)0474), Brussels: 9 October 2008, 7.

The Commission should be prepared to pursue the opening of international negotiations designed to lead to the adoption of an international treaty for the protection of the Arctic, having as its inspiration the Antarctic Treaty ...¹⁰²

The most noteworthy statements in this resolution deal with respect towards Indigenous Peoples and the suggestion for a new international treaty that deals with the international protection of the Arctic. This as the statement on Indigenous Peoples is conflicting with the in 2006 written declaration by the EP wherein they request the Commission to ban seal products in the EU.¹⁰³ Although the MEPs acknowledge that this regulation should not impact the traditional ways of hunting for Indigenous Peoples, the declaration conflicts with respect towards the Arctic's Indigenous Peoples populations and their livelihoods. This as the seal hunt and the commercial activities that result from this, are part of the Indigenous Peoples cultural heritage. The declaration on the ban on seal products was eventually adopted in 2009 and entered into force in 2010. This law seems to be at odds with the EU's normative character, as its *goals, means and impact* are not aligned. On the one hand the declaration on seals supports EU's norms when it comes to animal welfare but on the other hand it disrespects the traditional ways of living for the Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic, which is a violation of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. Although the EU is not banning the action of seal hunting it itself, it is however still a violation in the sense that the Indigenous Peoples are not able to make money of products that derive from their traditional livelihood.

The second noteworthy statement in this resolution concerns the EU's need to establish a new, multilateral agreement that, in essence, would be based on the in 1959 signed Antarctic Treaty. The Antarctic Treaty, which was signed in 1959 and entered into force in 1961, was motivated by series of worldwide conflicts during the Cold War. In this treaty it was recognized that international relations in Antarctica should be regulated, scientific research should prevail, military activity of any kind should be forbidden on the whole of Antarctica and by doing so the continent should become an area of

¹⁰² EP, *Resolution of*, 15.

¹⁰³ "MEPs adopt written declaration on banning seal products in the EU," <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=IM-PRESS&reference=20060901BRI10216&secondRef=ITEM-011-EN&language=EN>, accessed June 9, 2020.

peaceful cooperation among the participating governments. The treaty states that “recognizing that it is in the interest of all mankind that Antarctica shall continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene or object of international discord.”¹⁰⁴ As the Arctic is slowly becoming the scene of international discord, it is in the EP’s interest to ask for the establishment of a new multilateral agreement, which is broadly based on the Antarctic Treaty. A clause in any future agreement that would resemble the Antarctic Treaty’s Article IV, 2, could be beneficial in the maintaining of peace in the Arctic region as this article states that:

No acts or activities taking place while the present Treaty is in force shall constitute a basis for asserting, supporting or denying a claim to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica or create any rights of sovereignty in Antarctica. No new claim, or enlargement of an existing claim, to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica shall be asserted while the present Treaty is in force.¹⁰⁵

On top of this, when adopting the peaceful purposes of the Antarctic Treaty as stated in Article I, into a multilateral agreement concerning the Arctic, the overall outlook of the Arctic region would change as it shifts away from having a more military purpose as it would not any longer be allowed to “establish military bases and fortifications or carry out military manoeuvres, as well as the testing of any type of weapon.”¹⁰⁶

Although the EU proposed to establish a new, international treaty based on the Antarctic Treaty, it is important to mention that the EU does acknowledge the current intergovernmental structure of the Arctic and the status of the AC as the most important forum for cooperation in the region. However, the EU does favour a new convention in which the A8 or the Arctic Five (A5), Canada, Denmark/Greenland & Faroe Islands, Norway, Russia and the U.S. play the most significant roles. By the establishment of a new multilateral agreement on the Arctic, the EU could have more influence in the region than it has today. As the rights of the A5, in a way were questioned by the EU by proposing a new international treaty for the Arctic, it is not peculiar that this


¹⁰⁴ “The Antarctic Treaty,” https://documents.ats.aq/keydocs/vol_1/vol1_2_AT_Antarctic_Treaty_e.pdf, accessed June 12, 2020.

¹⁰⁵ “The Antarctic Treaty.”


¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

proposal was rejected by all the Arctic states, as it was not in line with respect for the rule of law.

Type of actor	Imperial	
	Intended	Unintended
Goals		
Means		
Impact		



Non-normative



Normative

Fig. 8: Analysis of the EP Resolution on Arctic Governance (2008).

When taking into account the question that was raised at the beginning of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008 - 2019?’ can it be said, in response to the resolution, that the EP published a clear and coherent document?

In this subsequent publication regarding EU Arctic policy, it becomes already clearer what the EU aims for in their policy, but the EP does not mention the need for future Arctic policy to be coherent. Where the first joint paper contained more passive language, this resolution is already more active in voicing the EP’s deep concerns about the Arctic and what the Commission needs to do in order to tackle some of the issues detected and raised by the EP. The languages used by the EP that show the engagement in the region can be traced back to it being ‘deeply’ and ‘very concerned,’ underlining and emphasizing the ‘significance’ and drawing the ‘attention’ to the various topics mentioned throughout the resolution. As the EP touched upon two controversial topics, the seal hunt and the banning of seal products and the establishing of a new, multilateral framework for Arctic governance, it seems that the EU might overplayed its hand before it really got engaged in Arctic politics.

Looking at the *goals, means* and *impact* of this resolution, the goals should be shaped in respect to international regimes, organisations and law, and with questioning the existing legislation; the EU crossed a line that is not compatible with its normative character. Also the goal of banning seal products from the European market is contradicting with the EU's normative character. The means are more non-normative as they are more interest based. Establishing a new Arctic framework is not in line with good governance and derives from an interest basis. The impact is also not aligned with the normative basis of the EU as the proposed means are against the normative values of respect for human rights, rule of law and good governance.

Therefore, where in the first figure it was not yet possible to extract a figure on the (non)-normative role of the EU, here we see that the *goals, means* and *impact* can be interpreted as non-normative as they do not align with the definitions set out earlier in this study. The proposed actions in this resolution are in a lot of cases in conflict with the normative *core* and *minor* norms as used by Ian Manners. Therefore, figure 8 shows the EU as a more imperial foreign policy actor since it tries to gain political power in the Arctic region. As it makes and proposes new law it does not view itself as bound by the existing law.

3.4. 2008: European Commission Communication: *The European Union and the Arctic Region*

The third policy on Arctic governance is a communication issued by the Commission, which was launched “at a difficult timing” if taking into account the cold reactions the EU received from Canada and Russia after releasing its previous resolution.¹⁰⁷ As mentioned in the analysis of the EP resolution, these cold reactions are the results of the EU's stances on banning seal products that are in conflict with the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the proposal for erecting a new, multilateral treaty concerning Arctic governance.

In the communication, the Commission tries to underline the importance of the EU in the Arctic and how they can contribute by own their own policy. The document itself is formulated around three main policy objectives that contain a combination of close to

¹⁰⁷ Raspotnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.2.

50 proposals that try to underscore this ostensible need of EU presence in the Arctic. This three main objectives being:

1. Protecting and preserving the Arctic in unison with its population
2. Promoting sustainable use of resources
3. Contributing to enhances Arctic multilateral governance¹⁰⁸

While scrutinizing the first main policy objectives, it becomes evident that the Commission is keen on stressing that the EU is “a leader in fighting climate change and in promoting sustainable development”; seeing rights of Indigenous Peoples as a “thematic priority” and is, together with its Member States and the European Community, “major contributors to Arctic research.”¹⁰⁹ However, the proposals for action as outlined under the first sub objectives are not as concrete and therefore they do not clearly illustrate how the EU is planning to achieve the proposed objectives through its proposals. Therefore the propositions seem rather vague and intangible. When for example looking at some plans under 2.1. and 2.2. on enhancing dialogue, the Commission tends to leave out ‘the how’ which should show the concrete action to reach their goals. The EU aims to “promote permanent dialogue with NGOs on the state of the environment in the Arctic region.” “Engage Arctic indigenous peoples in a regular dialogue.” and “Conduct dialogues with indigenous Peoples and other local communities traditionally engaged in the hunting of seals.”¹¹⁰ Yet, how this ‘conducting’, ‘engaging’ and ‘promoting’ of dialogue will be attained is not described under the first main objective. This makes it unclear to conclude what the EU is aiming for in terms of creating clear and coherent Arctic policy.

Also this communication mentions the possible ban of seal products onto the European market as a result of the growing concerns on animal welfare in the EU. In this document, the possible ban seems to be at odds with the sub objective of “support to indigenous peoples and local population”. The communication states: “this [*the ban*] should not adversely affect the fundamental economic and social interest of indigenous

¹⁰⁸ Commission of the European Communities, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: The European Union and the Arctic Region, COM*”, 763 Final, Brussels: 20 November 2008, 3.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 3-5.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

communities traditionally engaged in the hunting of seals.”¹¹¹ However, the sub objective starts with underlining the importance of Indigenous Peoples in the European Arctic and how their rights are protected under European Community Law; how their rights are a priority as they are stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and how the hunt of marine mammals is a crucial aspect of Arctic Indigenous Peoples livelihood ever since prehistoric times and therefore, the Commission “clearly recognizes” that Indigenous Peoples should have “the right to maintain their traditional livelihood.”¹¹² These two statements which, on the one hand promote and respect the Indigenous Peoples way of life and acknowledging their rights to maintain this, and on the other hand considering to ban the seal hunt and the export of seal products, one of the main aspects of the ways to continue the Indigenous Peoples livelihood seems utmost contradicting.

The second main policy objective concerns the promoting of the sustainable use of reserves, as the Arctic is a source of already discovered and undiscovered, alleged natural resources. Because of this richness present in the Arctic, the EU advocates for these resources to be exploited sustainably. The Commission highlights four sub objectives, hydrocarbons, fisheries, transport and tourism. Tourism being the one that is the least emphasized.

Hydrocarbons, fisheries and transport are of dissimilar importance for the Commission. The first sub objective is of the EU’s interest as it is in accordance with its role as leader in fighting climate change and promoting sustainable development. As the exploitation of hydrocarbons will be likely to pose challenges and risks for the environment due to the challenging and harsh conditions of the Arctic region, the EU states that: “the exploitation of Arctic hydrocarbon resources should be provided in full respect of strict environmental standards taking into account the particular vulnerability of the Arctic.”¹¹³ But as this sub objective is in line with the normative basis of the EU, the proposals for action are as not strongly formulated to support this. Again, the Commission uses rather passive wording as ‘assess possibilities’, ‘encourage’, and ‘promote further’ to express their proposals for action.

¹¹¹ Commission, *The European Union*, 5.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 4.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 7.

Looking at the second subject under the second sub objective, fisheries are important for the EU as it is “among the most important consumers of Arctic fish.”¹¹⁴ However, only fishermen from the European Community catch a small amount of this; meaning the rest of the fish is caught by Arctic coastal states and third parties and exported to the EU. With climate change causing the retreat of Arctic sea ice, the water of the Arctic Ocean is likely to become more appealing for fisheries and, as there is no overarching, international jurisdiction for the entire Arctic high seas, unsustainable and unregulated catching might result from the current lack of regulation. This is why the Commission insists on “a regulatory framework” that will ensure the regulation of the parts of the Arctic high seas not yet covered by any form of international regulation. This framework will be an extension of the already existing mandate of the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission, as this is desired over constructing a completely new regulatory framework. Everything should be in line with the EU’s normative norms and therefore be in line with sustainability and respect for the livelihoods of local Arctic coastal communities. As the Commission proposes a more detailed plan for action, it shows the relevance of regulation in the Arctic high seas. That the EU aims to regulate these waters is not merely because of fisheries but has, to a larger extent, also to do with the third subject of importance: transport. “EU Member States have the world’s largest merchant fleet”¹¹⁵ and a large amount of this fleet uses oceanic transportation routes. Since the Arctic Ocean is retreating, opportunities arise when it comes to new and faster ways to navigate around the North Pole. As these changes are not only appealing to the EU, “it is in the Union’s interest to defend the freedom of navigation and the right of innocent passage in the to-be-opened routes with discriminatory practices to be avoided.”¹¹⁶ Concerns about freedom of navigation are based on the possibility of the A8 appropriating Arctic waters as they entitled themselves in the Ottawa Declaration as the actors in charge of the Arctic. As it is not sure what will happen to commercial transportation in the Arctic, it is important for the EU not to be side-lined by the A8. In order to prevent this, the Commission is keen on promoting the “full implementation of existing obligations concerning navigation rules, maritime safety, routes system and environmental standards in the Arctic,” and exploring the “support for designating some Arctic navigation routes as particularly sensitive sea areas under IMO rules, if proposed

¹¹⁴ Commission, *The European Union*, 7.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹¹⁶ Raspotnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.2.

by any of the Arctic coastal states.”¹¹⁷ The EU already committed on improving their “maritime surveillance capabilities in the far North” so it can assure itself of playing an important role in the future of the Arctic.

The third objective on contributing to enhanced multilateral governance in the Arctic deal with concerns already mentioned in previous points, being that there is no existing, tailor-made treaty for the entire Arctic. This makes that governance in the Arctic region is fragmented as no actor(s) has sovereignty in the region. The Commission puts forward that:

The main problems relating to Arctic governance include the fragmentation of the legal framework, the lack of effective instruments, the absence of an overall policy-setting process and gaps in participation, implementation and geographic scope.¹¹⁸

The Commission emphasises having a fragmented legal framework in the Arctic as a problem, it does not go as far as the Parliament in the previous resolution and it does not suggest the construction of a new, comprehensive “Arctic Treaty.” Instead, the Commission believes that “the EU should promote broad dialogue and negotiated solutions and not support arrangements which exclude any of the Arctic EU Member States or Arctic EEA EFTA countries.”¹¹⁹

Type of actor	Normative (Sustainable development, good governance)		Imperial (Multilateral governance)	
	Intended	Unintended	Intended	Unintended
Goals				
Means				
Impact				



Non-normative



Normative

¹¹⁷ Commission, *The European Union*, 8-9.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

Fig. 9: Analysis of the Commission Communication: The European Union and the Arctic Region (2008).

When taking into account the question that was raised at the beginning of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008-2019?’ can it be said, in response to the communication, that the Commission published a clear and coherent document?

This communication is a little bit of everything and is not clear and coherent. It differs from the previous documents and therefore a coherent and consistent line is lacking. On top of that, the word ‘coherent’ is not mentioned once throughout this document. It shows however, that what is most important for the Commission as it points out three main policy objectives but it is not clear what the means of achieving the goals will be. Splitting the objectives up, we again see the contradiction between the support of Indigenous Peoples and the proposed ban on seal hunting, which is part of the Indigenous Peoples livelihood. The difficulties around a more comprehensive legal framework in the Arctic and more control for the EU, as proposed by the EU and the Union’s aim for sustainable development in the Arctic.

Looking at the *goals*, *means* and *impact* of this communication, it can be concluded that these are not quite aligned. But not all the objectives can be measured by the same standards. Therefore it has to be said that the sustainable development objective of the Commission seem more thought out since the communication uses active words, such as ‘establish’, ‘include’ and ‘launch’. Looking at the other two objectives, it can be said that their goals, means and impact are conflicting. Although the Commission states that the seal ban should be seen an improvement of animal welfare, it goes in against the rights of Indigenous People and the EU’s values of anti-discrimination. The objective concerning contributing to enhanced Arctic multilateral governance is not in line with the current legal status of the Arctic and therefore the EU’s normative value of good governance.

In the previous picture the EP was portrayed as an imperial foreign policy actor as a result of the controversial statements made on governance and seals. However, the Commission tend to have a more normative approach when it comes to sustainable development as their actions are in line with the Union’s normative character.

3.5. 2009: Council Conclusions on Arctic Issues

That so far no clear and coherent EU Arctic policy is established is apparent from the Council stating that it “welcomes the gradual formulation of a policy on Arctic issues to address EU interests and responsibilities (...).”¹²⁰ *Gradual* meaning that the formation of a EU Arctic policy is still an on-going process. The Council supports the three main policy objectives laid out by the Commission and believes that any future Arctic policy should be based on five main elements: 1) effective implementation of adequate measures to mitigate climate change, 2) a reinforcement of multilateral governance, 3) The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and other relevant international instruments, 4) formulating and implementing policy that respects the unique characteristics of the Arctic, 5) maintaining the Arctic as an area of peace and stability and the sustainable development of its economic opportunities.¹²¹

“In order to take a next step towards the formulation of an overarching approach to EU policy on Arctic issues”¹²² the Council sums up 23 steps that aim at providing a base for this next step towards clear and coherent Arctic policy. Compared to previous policy documents, this conclusion’s main focus lies with environmental and climate changes related topics in the Arctic and is not as outspoken on certain matters as the other institutions. Throughout the conclusion it becomes clear that the Council aims at creating a stable environment for cooperation in the Arctic:

The Council believes that the EU should actively seek consensus approaches to relevant Arctic issues through cooperation also with Arctic states and/or territories outside the EU, Canada, Greenland Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation and the United States, as well as with other relevant actors with Arctic interests.¹²³

A big step towards accomplishing a cooperation friendly environment is the Council’s recognition of the AC as the “primary competent body for circumpolar regional

¹²⁰ Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on Arctic Issues*, 2985th Foreign Affairs Council Meeting, Brussels: 8 December 2009, 1.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 2.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 5.

cooperation.”¹²⁴ This as the AC is seen is the leading intergovernmental forum for promoting cooperation in the Arctic. When the EU would not acknowledge this, cooperation in the Arctic would be virtually impossible. Besides the Council being explicit on recognizing the AC, the rest of the conclusion is more implicit and not as forthright as some documents by the Commission or the EP. Concerning the seal ban, the Council does not explicitly communicate its point of view but it does however write more broadly about supporting the sustainability of Indigenous Peoples livelihoods and the importance of including Arctic Indigenous communities into high-level dialogues. Also, however the Council is not as critical as the Commission and the EP towards the current legal status of the Arctic and it not explicitly mentions the support for a new regulatory framework for the Arctic, it stresses the importance of innocent passage and regulated fishing in the Arctic high seas. Here the implicitness of the conclusion is more apparent as it underlines the, for the EU important matters but enclosed in language that aims at creating a sustainable and cooperative environment in the Arctic for not only the A5 or the A8.

Type of actor	Normative (Sustainable development, good governance)		Status Quo (Multilateral governance)	
	Intended	Unintended	Intended	Unintended
Goals				
Means				
Impact				



Non-normative



Normative

Fig. 10: Analysis of the Council Conclusions on Arctic Issues (2009).

When taking into account the question that was raised at the beginning of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008 - 2019?’ can it be said, in response to the conclusions, that the Council published a clear and coherent document?

¹²⁴ Council, *on Arctic Issues*, 4.

The role of the Council can be seen as a combination of a normative and a status quo foreign policy actor. Since the Council aims at operating in the international system and within the width of existing laws and rules, it can be seen as a status quo actor. But, as the Council does not put anything forward that would interfere with the normative character of the EU, it also partially qualifies as a normative actor. In this conclusion it becomes clear that the Council aims at the sustainable development of the Arctic region and takes into account the importance of including Arctic Indigenous Peoples in this process. The Council does not mention the controversial seal ban and all the proposed steps are in line with respect for the human rights of Indigenous Peoples. Besides this, the Council is not willing to interfere with the current legal status of the Arctic but is implicitly states that it is importance to strive for good governance in the region and, when ready, consider a regulatory framework that can be beneficial for the Arctic.

Although this conclusion is somewhat implicit on certain matters, the document provides a more specific line on what should be of importance for the EU when making policy and engaging in the Arctic. The conclusion took over the main objectives proposes by the Commission and narrowed down the Unions ambitions in order to make it more clear and coherent. However, as the Council sometimes uses implicit wording, it is not yet clear if the European institutions have one, coherent approach towards the Arctic. The 23 steps taking in this conclusion seem like a first step to ease to current tensed situation that arose after the controversial seal ban proposed by the Commission and the EP.

3.6. Recapitulation 2008-2009

What has the EU accomplished after circa two years of Arctic policymaking? In terms of coherent and clear policy it did not achieve much. What the EU did accomplish is mainly antagonizing the Arctic states with their appearance in the Arctic region. The EU tried to lay down the law on certain topics, such as the ban on hunting seals and the erection of a new regulatory framework in the Arctic. The Arctic states and the Arctic Indigenous Peoples did not warmly welcome both stands, as they were either an attack on their sovereignty or an infringement of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The EU's endeavour in the Arctic can be said to have a bit of a rocky start. Looking back at the two years of policymaking, the conclusion that can be drawn is that hopefully the

future looks brighter as the past cannot become much darker due to the EU's over-deploying. Throughout the documents so far, this study has portrayed the EU institutions as a mix of different foreign policy types. So far the EU can be seen as a *normative*, *imperial* and *status quo* type of actor since it exhibits behaviour that supports the definitions laid out earlier in this study that matches those three types of foreign policy actors.

3.7. 2011: European Parliament Resolution on a Sustainable EU Policy for the High North

The Commission communication constitutes a formal first step towards responding to the European Parliament's and call for the formulation of an EU Arctic policy; whereas the Council Conclusions on Arctic Issues should be recognised as a further step in the definition of an EU policy on the Arctic.¹²⁵

This EP resolution is an elaboration on the documents issued by the Commission and the Council and it recognizes the steps taken by the two institutions. However it takes a more economical approach than the previous Council conclusion, it adjust previously made statements and it tries to include a wider range of actors to become more active in the Arctic.

Where the Council's main focus was on environmental and climate changes related topics, the EP tends to lean more towards the Commission and points out a perspective for the EU in the Arctic that has a more economic undertone. It discusses the 'new world transport routes' and 'natural resources' in a sense that they are viewed as the positive effects of climate change. Meaning that opportunities for economic enlargement arise due to climate change. As the EU is the main consumer of Arctic natural resources, the EP requests the Commission to ensure the highest standards for the governance of Arctic resources. "As economic activities in the Arctic will increase, (*the EP*) calls upon the EU to promote the principles of sustainable development

¹²⁵ European Parliament, *Resolution of 20 January 2011 on a Sustainable EU Policy for the High North*, (2009/2214(INI), Brussels: 2009, A*.

* (Letters and numbers used in the footnotes of this policy analysis are no indication of the appropriate page number but the an indicator of the right section.

therein.”¹²⁶ This promotion of sustainable development supports the EU’s normative character.

In the section on ‘governance,’ the EP comes back from its remarks made in the 2008 resolution on a possible “Arctic Treaty” for a new way of governing the Arctic region as it:

Recognises the institutions and the broad framework of international law and agreements that govern areas of importance to the Arctic such as UNCLOS (including the basic principles of freedom of navigation and innocent passage), the IMO, the OSPAR Convention¹, the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), CITES and the Stockholm Convention as well as the existing numerous bilateral agreements and frameworks, in addition to the national regulations in place in the Arctic States.¹²⁷

By recognizing the current legal framework of the Arctic, the EP does not regard the Arctic region as a “legal vacuum, but as an area with well developed tools for governance.”¹²⁸ However, the EP is aware of the challenges that increasing economic growth due to climate change in the Arctic region can bring along and therefore it is of significant importance that the “existing rules need to be further developed, strengthened and implemented by all parties concerned.”¹²⁹ As EU policy on the Arctic slowly is being formulated, this policy should be: “based on the recognitions of the existing international, multilateral and bilateral legal frameworks (...) of importance to the Arctic.”¹³⁰

This resolution is the first document that mentions China as an actor with growing interest in the region. Besides this, the applications from other non-Arctic Member States, such as South Korea and Italy to the AC, highlights the emerging geopolitical attention for the region. This growing interest from non-Arctic states and the thus far unsuccessful application from the Commission to the AC makes that the EP calls for the involvement of several, non-Arctic parties in the region.

¹²⁶ EP, *Sustainable EU Policy*, 21*.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 42*.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, G*.

Although States play a key role in governance in the Arctic, other players – such as international organisations, indigenous and local people and sub-state authorities – also have important roles; (*the EP*) points out that it is important to increase trust among those with legitimate interests in the region by taking a participative approach and using dialogue as a way of developing a shared vision for the Arctic.¹³¹

Although the EP recognizes the AC, it is confident that the AC “will continue to broaden the basis for decision-shaping processes to include non-AC actors.”¹³² This statement is somewhat contradicting with the EP recognizing the current legal framework that applies in the Arctic States. It seems that by involving more non-Arctic actors into the region and pressuring the AC into further developing the process of Arctic decision-making, the EU does not need a new “Arctic Treaty”.

As the EP “recognises that the challenges facing the Arctic are global and should therefore include all relevant actors,”¹³³ it creates an environment in which more actors want to have influence on the on goings of the Arctic. In this respect, the EU benefits from a growing group of non-Arctic players obtaining involved in the Arctic as it automatically provides them with more influence. Relevant influence in the Arctic is something that the EU is lacking, as they are still side lined by the AC as a permanent observer.

Type of actor	Normative		Status Quo	
	Intended	Unintended	Intended	Unintended
Goals				
Means				
Impact				



Non-normative



Normative

Fig. 11: Analysis of the EP Resolution on a Sustainable EU Policy for the High North (2011).

¹³¹ EP, *Sustainable EU Policy*, 43*.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 50*.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 56*.

When taking into account the question that was raised at the beginning of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008 - 2019?’ can it be said, in response to the resolution, that the EP published a clear and coherent document?

The EP aims at developing a “coherent, coordinated and integrated policy approach across key policy areas relevant to the Arctic.”¹³⁴ But as some of the EP’s stands are not in line with the words of the Commission and the Council, it does not seem that this resolution can be viewed as coherent or coordinated. The EP is also withdrawing the support to the Commission on the seal ban, as it is not mentioned throughout the document. Just the opposite happened as the EP is more keen on the strengthening of human rights of the Arctic Indigenous Peoples. The EP acts as a combination of a normative and a *status quo* foreign policy actor. The EP can be seen here as a normative actor since it explicitly strives for the protecting of the EU’s norms when it comes to sustainable development or the inclusion and protection of Indigenous Peoples. The *status quo* aspect of this resolution deals with the EP accepting the existing international system and operates in respect towards international regulation. However it implicitly limits the power of the AC through addressing the challenges in the Arctic as global issues and therefore should not only of importance to Arctic States but also to non-Arctic actors. The creating of awareness for the Arctic is in a way not in line with the normative character of the EU as it is undermining the idea of good governance.

3.8. 2012: Joint Communication: *Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: Progress since 2008 and next steps*

This Communication reviews the EU’s contribution to the Arctic since 2008, and sets a path for future engagement with Arctic partners. Taking a comprehensive approach to Arctic issues, this new Joint Communication underlines the need for a coherent, targeted EU approach towards the Arctic, building on the EU’s strengths, promoting responsible development while

¹³⁴ EP, *Sustainable EU Policy*, 56*.

engaging more extensively in dialogue and cooperation with all Arctic stakeholders.¹³⁵

Four years after the previous document, the Commission releases a new joint communication on the Arctic region. In this ‘progress report’ the Commission follows up on their communication from 2008 and responds to the Council (2009) and the EP (2011). The document consists of an introductory summary and two parts in which the Commission sets out their three new objectives and provides an overview of the tangible results that resulted from the in 2008 proposed policy objectives.

Part 1 Meeting the challenge: the Way Forward

In the previous communication (2008), the Commission set out three main policy objectives: 1) Protecting and preserving the Arctic in unison with its population, 2) Promoting sustainable use of resources, 3) Contributing to enhances Arctic multilateral governance.¹³⁶ Now, in 2012, the Commission believes that these objectives are still the ‘cornerstones’ of EU Arctic policy but they are not enough to cover all of the EU Arctic intentions.

However, given the evident speed of change in the Arctic, the time is now ripe to refine the EU's policy stance towards the region, take a broader approach, and link it with the Europe 2020 Agenda for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth while continuing to support every effort to ensure the effective stewardship of the fragile Arctic environment.¹³⁷

In order to further develop the EU Arctic policy, the Commission introduces three new ‘words’ that should “set out the way forward”¹³⁸ for the EU in the Arctic. ‘Knowledge’, ‘responsibility’ and ‘engagement’ are aimed to be bite-sized *umbrella*'s that should be easier to remember what the EU's intentions in the region are. “In order to sustainably

¹³⁵ High Representative and European Commission, *Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: progress since 2008 and next steps*, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council {SWD(2012) 182 final}, {SWD(2012) 183 final}, Brussels: 26 June 2012, 4.

¹³⁶ HR & Commission, *Developing*, 3.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.

develop the region (responsibility), research (knowledge) is needed, embedded in a legally and institutionally cooperative framework (engagement).”¹³⁹

This joint communication needs to be seen in a setting in which the Commission was for the second time applying for a permanent observer spot at the AC. Therefore the language used by the Commission is rather obliging and it shows the EU’s

Unwillingness to step on the toes of any of the Arctic states by remaining largely unspecific, pushing back against the perception of [being] a “super regulator” and [almost only] concentrating on environmental, climate change and research issues.¹⁴⁰

Under the header ‘knowledge’, the Commission is more oncoming towards (non-) Arctic actors as they want to “step up cooperation with Arctic partners”¹⁴¹ by working together and have ‘enhanced dialogue’ that would be beneficial to the development of the understanding of the Arctic region.

With ‘responsibility’, the EU puts emphasis on the ‘strong links’ the EU has with the Arctic, something that was questioned by Arctic actors in the beginning of EU Arctic policymaking. The Arctic is important to the EU, “not only from historical, economic and geographical perspectives, but also as an importer of natural resources and through its wider concern and responsibility of the global environment.”¹⁴² The communication accentuates the European Arctic as an important part of the whole Arctic and the sustainable role the EU can, and needs to play in order to sustainably develop the region. As there are many shared interests in the Arctic, here again, the Commission mainly stresses them wanting to work together through ‘strengthened partnership’ and ‘enhanced dialogue’ in order to “contribute responsibly to the Arctic.”¹⁴³ Also, the Commission is not as outspoken about the seal dispute with Canada and they say that they respect the outcome of any legal procedures against the EU.

¹³⁹ Raspotnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.2.

¹⁴⁰ Keil and Raspotnik in Raspotnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.2.

¹⁴¹ HR & Commission, *Developing*, 7.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

Looking at the third objective ‘engagement,’ the Commission seems to be more aware of the role it plays in the region and points out that: “the EU intends to refine its developing Arctic policy in close cooperation with its Member States, the five non-EU Arctic states as well as local inhabitants, including indigenous peoples.”¹⁴⁴ It is here more aware than in the previous communication of the importance of indulging Arctic actors in their policymaking. Also, the Commission is more positively opinionated about UNCLOS and recognizes this as the basis for the legal status of the Arctic. The rest of the objective is mainly formulated around the EU wanting to become a permanent observer to the AC and because of this, they are not as outspoken as in the previous communication. Here the explicit focus is on showing the A8 that the EU is willing to ‘cooperate,’ ‘engage,’ and ‘strengthen partnerships’ with the states that are already part of the AC, in the best interest of the Arctic. “Maintaining good international cooperation in the Arctic region and supporting the region’s stability is a key interest of the European Union.”¹⁴⁵

Part 2 Summary of the EU’s contribution to the Arctic since 2008

The second part of this communication “highlights the increasing range of activities the EU is already undertaking in the region and reviews the issues outlined in the Commission Communication (2008).”¹⁴⁶ The most has been achieved within the first objective on protecting and preserving the Arctic in unison with its population. The EU’s main focus mainly dealt with environmental and climate change related issues and the inclusion of Arctic Indigenous Peoples into dialogue. Both topics are handled by the EU in a sense that the commitment to reduce greenhouse gasses has been incorporated into law and the Commission “has entered into a regular dialogue with the indigenous communities of the Arctic.”¹⁴⁷ Also, the EU provided a substantial amount of money in order to fund “various initiatives to indigenous groups and local populations.”¹⁴⁸ Looking at the third objective concerning ‘international cooperation,’ the main goal was for the EU to establish Arctic policy that would be coherent and comprehensive.

¹⁴⁴ Commission, *The European Union*, 10.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.


¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*


Since 2008, the EU has substantially increased its involvement in Arctic cooperation, notably through its engagement with the Arctic Council and Arctic Council members. The Arctic Council remains the most important forum for international cooperation in the region.¹⁴⁹

As the AC is the most important forum in the Arctic, it is of significant importance to the EU to gain the permanent observer status to this council. Therefore the Commission underlines the effort that was taken by the EU since 2008 to stress that the AC should reconsider granting the EU permanent observer status to the AC.

Type of actor	Normative	
	Intended	Unintended
Goals		
Means		
Impact		



Non-normative



Normative

Fig. 12: Analysis of the Joint Communication on Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: Progress since 2008 and next steps (2012).

When taking into account the question that was raised at the beginning of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008 - 2019?’ can it be said, in response to the joint communication, that the Commission and HR published a clear and coherent document?

This communication is different from the previous one (2008) as this one is more structured and it looks as if the Commission has a clearer view on what their goals will be in the Arctic. Something that was not yet clear in 2008. The EU underlines in this document the importance of establishing “a coherent, targeted EU approach,”¹⁵⁰ puts emphasis on the for the EU most important themes such as climate change and research

¹⁴⁹ Commission, *The European Union*, 7.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.

and formulates this in a way it would most likely not provoke the A8. Because of the accommodating languages used by the Commission:

The document is less forward looking and rather served as the requested progress report to clearly highlight the various dimensions of the Union's regional presence, aimed at creating distinct Arctic credibility and legitimacy.¹⁵¹

Thus, as this communication needs to be seen in the setting in which the Commission was applying for a permanent observer spot at the AC, it is clear why the EU is not using strong languages or comes up with new proposals, but mainly focuses on their achievements in the Arctic since 2008 and their willingness to work with Arctic actors for the sustainable development of the Arctic region. When the EU would provoke the A8 on certain matters, as when they did with the ban on seal products, chances of being granted permanent observer status would decrease. As the Commission is not challenging any of its normative norms and does not intervene with the current legal status of the Arctic, it can be said that the Commission in this communication acts like a *normative* foreign policy actor. Looking at the *goals*, *means* and *impact* it can be concluded that they are more aligned, clear and more coherent and they fit the EU's normative character better.

3.9. Recapitulation 2011-2012

It can be argued that the EU has accomplished more in years 2011-2012 than in the year prior to 2011. In terms of coherent and clear policy it achieved more than in the last recapitulation as it narrowed down its areas of interest and made them more specific. The EU also toned down its language. This is the result of the antagonizing attitude showed by the EU in previous documents. It came back from the strong statement on seal hunting and also the controversial statement regarding a new, multilateral framework for the Arctic was taken back. The EU still has not been accepted to the AC as a permanent observer but it seems that with this less outspoken policies it really aims at becoming a member of the AC as soon as possible. Looking back at the two years of policymaking, the conclusion that can be drawn is much brighter than the last one. The EU adjusted or taken back several of the most controversial statements from the 2008-

¹⁵¹ Keil and Raspotnik in Raspotnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.2.

2009 period. It also seems if the EU is more aware of its role in the Arctic region and therefore it becomes less outspoken on several issues. The development of policy documents showed the EU the more focus on striving for normative goals. Therefore it can be concluded that the EU institutions have taken on a more *normative* role as foreign policy actor throughout the past years.

3.10. 2014: European Parliament Resolution on the EU strategy for the Arctic

After six EU Arctic related policy documents, the EP releases a new resolution in 2014. This document is succeeding the communication by the Commission and HR (2012) that aimed at proposing ‘a set of building blocks’ for the EU’s future endeavours in the Arctic. The EP welcomes this document therefore as “an important building block in ensuring the continuous development of the EU’s Arctic policy.”¹⁵² As the previous communication is seen as simply a ‘building block’ and does not comprise the intentions of a complete strategy, the EP:

Reiterates its call for a united EU policy on the Arctic, as well as a coherent strategy and a concretised action plan on the EU’s engagement on the Arctic, with a focus on socio- economic and environmental issues; believes that this strategic choice is integral in ensuring legitimacy and local support for the EU’s Arctic engagement.¹⁵³

The EP explicitly repeats the call for ‘a united policy’ several times throughout the resolution and this underlines the lack of coherence in EU Arctic policy so far and it stresses the need for establishing coherent policy.

This resolution needs to be understood in the aftermath of the second application by the Commission to be given a permanent observer status to the AC. The EU was again not granted with the role of permanent observer and therefore the EP “highlights the need for an active engagement of the EU in all relevant working groups of the Arctic

¹⁵² European Parliament, *EU strategy for the Arctic*, Resolution P7_TA(2014)0236, Brussels: 12 March 2014, 1.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 2.

Council.”¹⁵⁴ The EP is sending a explicit message towards the AC and the Commission by saying that the EP:

Urges the Commission to follow up on the outstanding seal products ban issue with Canada and to duly inform the European Parliament regarding that process; regrets the effects which the EU regulation relating to the ban on seal products has produced for sections of the population, and in particular for indigenous culture and livelihood.¹⁵⁵

With this statement regarding the ban on seal products the EP urges the Commission to resolve any issues between Canada and the EU. But more importantly, it aims at showing the AC that it should still consider the EU, represented by the Commission, as a potential permanent observer after they resolved the tension with Canada.

Type of actor	Normative	
	Intended	Unintended
Goals		
Means		
Impact		



Non-normative



Normative

Fig. 13: Analysis of the EP Resolution on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic (2014).

When taking into account the question that was raised at the beginning of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008 - 2019?’ can it be said, in response to the resolution, that the EP published a clear and coherent document?

In a way this resolution resembles the previous resolution (2011) as it still long and often formulated in fluffy language that is not consistent. But this resolution also shows

¹⁵⁴ EP, *EU strategy*, 19.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

a more normative side of the EP as it emphasises compliance with EU's norms by making a statement on the lingering seal issue and trying to establish good governance between the Arctic states and the EU. When there are lingering disputes, good cooperation is obviously hard to achieve.

But can it be said that this resolution is clear and coherent? As the EP is calling for the Commission to come up with a more coherent communication in which it states concrete action, it can be said that there still is no clear and coherent Arctic policy. The previous documents provide 'building blocks' but they lack one, tangible strategy to establish a European Arctic policy. The *goals* and *means* are well aligned in this resolution but the impact is somewhat unclear as the EP is not so much clarifying how it will reach its goals.

3.11. 2014: Council Conclusions on developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region

This conclusion is not as extensive as the previous documents published by the Commission or the Parliament and contains only 3 pages. Additionally, the language used is not as opinionated or controversial as in other policy documents. In contrast to the EP, the Council is not calling for a 'strategy' but it does call the Arctic "a region of growing strategic importance"¹⁵⁶ and therefore the Council believes that the EU's contribution in the Arctic should be further enhanced. The main focus of the Council concerns the effects of climate change and sustainability.

Rapid climate change, a major concern and cause of fundamental changes in the Arctic, combined with increased prospects for economic development in the Arctic region call for the EU to engage actively with Arctic partners to assist in addressing the challenge of sustainable development in a prudent and responsible manner.¹⁵⁷

As mitigating climate change and sustainability in the Arctic are of significant importance to the Council, they explicitly mention these themes throughout the

¹⁵⁶ Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region*, Conclusion Foreign Affairs Council meeting, Brussels: 12 May 2014, 1.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

conclusion. With this the Council is the institution that shows the most interest in these topics.

When taking the aftermath of the EU failed bid for permanent observer to the AC into account, the Council makes an interesting request towards Canada as they urge them “to use the current positive momentum in EU-Canada relations to help resolve the remaining issue.”¹⁵⁸ This issue concerns the on-going dispute between Canada and the EU that resulted from the ban on seal products. That the Council is redirecting itself towards Canada is interesting as it tries to find a different angle of support for the third application by the Commission for the AC. Later in 2014, it becomes clear that Canada and the EU have reached an agreement that solves the dispute and with this solution, Canada lifted its veto against the EU to become a permanent observer to the AC.¹⁵⁹

The conclusion ends with the Council’s request to the Commission and HR:

To keep it regularly informed on the progress in implementing the Communication of June 2012. The Council furthermore requests the Commission and the High Representative to present proposals for the further development of an integrated and coherent Arctic Policy by December 2015. As part of this exercise, the Council encourages the Commission to ensure effective synergies between the various EU funding instruments in the Arctic region.¹⁶⁰

Just as the EP in the 2014 resolution, the Council interprets the previous communication by the Commission as a ‘building block’ that will help to further develop ‘integrated and coherent’ policy for the Arctic. The Council’s requests the Commission to create coherence to produce a policy that will have more effect than merely the sum of its different parts or objectives.

¹⁵⁸ Council, *the Arctic Region*, 5.

¹⁵⁹ Adam, Stepień, *The Changing Arctic and the European Union: A Book Based on the Report "Strategic Assessment of the Development of the Arctic: Assessment Conducted for the European Union"*. Vol. 89. (Leiden, Boston: Brill Nijhoff, 2016), 36.

¹⁶⁰ Council, *the Arctic Region*, 5.

Type of actor	Normative	
	Intended	Unintended
Goals		
Means		
Impact		

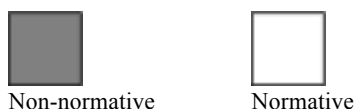


Fig. 14: Analysis of the Council Conclusions on developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region (2014).

When taking into account the question that was raised at the beginning of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008 - 2019?’ can it be said, in response to the conclusions, that the Council published a clear and coherent document?

It is noticeable that all three the institutions say broadly speaking more or less the same. However, the documents are not overlapping to the extent that it is possible to call it already a clear and coherent EU Arctic policy. The Council seems to be the most clear about the *goals*, *means* and *impact* but there are still some loose ends. The role of the Council can be depicted as normative all throughout the conclusion. This as they emphasis the need for sustainable development in the Arctic, democracy and good governance by working with the AC, respecting UNCLOS, the freedom of innocent passage and social solidarity by including and intensifying dialogue with Indigenous Peoples. These emphases underscore the normative values on which the EU is based.

3.12. Recapitulation 2014

What has the EU accomplished after circa two more years of Arctic policymaking? Where the previous period really showed a transition in the EU’s stances, this past years seem more passive as not much has changed from the previous recapitulation. The different institutions are shifting their focus to more specific areas of the Arctic but there is still no clear and coherent image of what the EU strives for. It points out main policy objectives or it stance really from in the implantation of normative values, but it

all goes slow and uncoordinated. The EU is still not a permanent observer to the AC and therefore it still lacks some legitimacy for when it comes to having a say in Arctic governance. The positive note is that the EU seems even more aware of its role in the Arctic and is trying to establish policy that can support this instead of antagonizing Arctic actors.

3.13. 2016: Joint Communication: *An Integrated European Union Policy for the Arctic*

The Commission and the HR were requested by the Council to publish proposals to further develop EU Arctic policy by December 2015. However, this communication was released in April 2016. “The short delay might be partially reasoned by the aim to include the agreement reached at the UNFCCC’s Conference of the Parties (COP) 21 in Paris in November/December 2015 and its related Arctic consequences.”¹⁶¹

The Commission and HR introduce the communication as a document that:

Sets out the case for an EU policy that focuses on advancing international cooperation in responding to the impacts of climate change on the Arctic's fragile environment, and on promoting and contributing to sustainable development, particularly in the European part of the Arctic.¹⁶²

The policy objectives that the Commission presented in 2008 are in this communication replaced by three ‘priority areas.’ Also the three ‘umbrella’ terms presented in the 2012 communication are not as explicitly mentioned in this document. The shift from policy objectives to areas of priority can be explained as several Member States have formulated their own, national Arctic plan. Because of this, the Commission was incited to “develop an integrated policy on Arctic matters, and to develop a more coherent framework for EU action and funding programmes.”¹⁶³ The Commission and HR define the priority areas as followed:

1. Climate Change and Safeguarding the Arctic Environment;

¹⁶¹ Raspotnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.2.

¹⁶² High Representative and European Commission, *An integrated European Union policy for the Arctic*, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council, JOIN(2016) 21 final, Brussels: 27 April 2016, 2.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 4.

2. Sustainable Development in and around the Arctic;
3. International Cooperation on Arctic Issues.¹⁶⁴

These priority areas share similarities with the earlier proposed policy objectives and ‘umbrella’ terms knowledge, responsibility and engagement. In these areas, the EU “should attach particular importance to research, science and innovation which will play a key role across all three priority areas.”¹⁶⁵ With the emphasis on research, the EU underlines their aim to become the global leader in science, especially when it comes to the Arctic region.

This communication was released later than requested since it in all probability wanted to include the outcome of the Paris Agreement. The Commission therefore states that:

For the European Union, the Paris Agreement represents an ambitious, balanced, equitable and legally binding agreement and marks a decisive turning point towards comprehensive and collective global action against climate change.¹⁶⁶

Thus, any action that will be taken by the EU in the proposed priority areas should be in line with the outcome of the Paris Agreement, that “sets out a global action plan to limit global warming to well below 2 °C” and “should contribute to the implementation of Agenda 2030 and be in line with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in September 2015.”¹⁶⁷ With this commitment the EU underlines its role as frontrunner and leader in combating climate change. When the EU would implement the Paris Agreement as intended, actions taken “will accelerate the transition to a climate resilient, climate neutral global economy.”¹⁶⁸

1. Climate change and safeguarding the Arctic environment

Climate change poses a significant risk. Its effects are tangible in the Arctic, with the summer sea ice having decreased by more than 40 % since 1979.¹⁶⁹

When looking at the first priority area it becomes clear the Commission accentuate the

¹⁶⁴ HR and Commission, *An integrated*, 4.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 3.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 4.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 3.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 5.

harm already caused that this will continue in the future. They also highlight the fact that climate change in the Arctic will affect the global environment and that “the preservation of biodiversity and the viability of ecosystems in the Arctic will remain a global challenge.”¹⁷⁰ With underlining the importance of the Paris Agreement, the EU shows that it takes on the role as leader to combat climate change on a global scale. They show this by listing the action the EU is already taking or is aiming to take in the near future. For the Commission, research in the Arctic is of significant importance in order to better understand the developments in the region. As the Commission is merely listing EU achievements and goals for the Arctic, it is unclear how the EU will integrate everything into one coherent and comprehensive EU Arctic policy.

2. Sustainable development in and around the Arctic

Sustainable economic development faces specific challenges in the Arctic region. Compared with other parts of Europe, the European part of the Arctic has a sparse population spread over a wide area and is characterised by a lack of transport links, such as road, rail or east- west flight connections.¹⁷¹

What is remarkable in this part of the communication is the Commission’s focus is mainly on ‘the European part of the Arctic.’ Although this wording is not new, it was never as explicitly phrased as throughout this communication. Formerly, the Commission mainly spoke about the Arctic region or the High North as a whole and did not divide it into subcategories. By explicitly addressing the geographical focus of the ‘European’ Arctic, the EU shows that it aims at developing a part of the Arctic region that would be most beneficial for the EU and that it takes a step back in trying to develop and regulate the entire Arctic. For the EU, “the European part of the Arctic also has significant potential to support growth in the rest of Europe.”¹⁷² In order to strengthen this significant potential, the EU needs to work closely with its (Arctic) Member States and the Arctic members of the EEA and Greenland, representing the Arctic part of Denmark. The Commission believes that:

The EU can play an influential role in shaping the future development of the European part of the Arctic through the application of EU rules relevant for the

¹⁷⁰ HR and Commission, *An integrated*, 5.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 9.

EEA and the deployment of financial instruments.¹⁷³

The most concrete action that the Commission describes concerns combatting underinvestment in the Arctic through establishing “an annual Arctic stakeholder conference in the European Arctic region.”¹⁷⁴ However, in the rest of the communication, the Commission merely lists agreements, funding and policies that are already aimed at the Arctic and therefore lack tangible action. It is lacking the explanation on how the EU is planning to incorporate and intergrade these existing agreements, funding and policies into a coherent Arctic policy. It seems that the EU by listing its current activities in the Arctic only shows the engagement towards the region and not so much what they want to achieve with these agreements, funding and policies.

3. International cooperation on Arctic issues

The challenges affecting the Arctic, and the solutions required to address them, require a joined-up response at regional and international level. Wider geopolitical dynamics may add further complexity to the changes affecting the region.¹⁷⁵

In this third priority area the Commission, again, mainly sums up what the EU already does when it comes to international collaboration in the Arctic. It is essential to the EU that they are able to continue their cooperation with Arctic and non-Arctic parties since the Arctic is of significant importance to the EU and it will be subject to vicissitudes in the future. But as already mentioned in the previous areas of importance, the Commission does not take the extra step in showing how their policy responses will benefit a coherent policy for the Arctic. Because the EU sees itself as “a global leader in science,”¹⁷⁶ they strive to communicate their normative values, as described by Manners, in order to consolidate this role.

¹⁷³ HR and Commission, *An integrated*, 9.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

Type of actor	Normative	
	Intended	Unintended
Goals		
Means		
Impact		

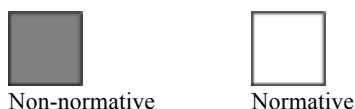


Fig. 15: Analysis of the Joint Communication: An Integrated European Union Policy for the Arctic (2016).

When taking into account the question that was raised at the beginning of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008 - 2019?’ can it be said, in response to the joint communication, that the Commission published a clear and coherent document?

The title of communication is “An Integrated European Union Policy for the Arctic.” However, it seems like the Commission is basically listing the action or activities in which it is already involved in the Arctic. Therefore, this communication lacks the extra step that should clarify how the Commission wants to integrate their newly formulated areas of priority into a coherent EU policy on the Arctic.

To put it simply, the scope and number of Arctic-relevant issues is too broad, their diversity too great and the position of Arctic affairs in EU policymaking too marginal for a coherent policy to emerge, i.e. one that produces synergies (with different Arctic-relevant actions supporting one another) between different Arctic-relevant actions. And the idea of “integration” could indicate an even more ambitious policy undertaking, making Arctic policy something more than just a sum of its parts.¹⁷⁷

In a sense, this joint communication contains the same input as previous documents but is wrapped in a new guise to not offend any Arctic actors. The Commission can

¹⁷⁷ Andreas Raspotnik and Adam Stępień, *The EU’s New Arctic Communication: Not-so-integrated, Not-so-disappointing* (Rovaniemi: Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, 2016), 4.

therefore be seen as a normative foreign policy actor since it aims to stay true to their normative values. The *goals, means* and *impact* are in keeping with each other but the impact of this joint communication is still not as strong as the document is not clear and coherent.

3.14. 2016: Council Conclusions on the Arctic

This conclusion by the Council is once again not as extensive as documents released by the Commissions or the EP. It shows a recapitulation of the previous joint communication (2016) with mainly a supporting message without any critics towards the Commission and the HR. The conclusion takes off with an emphasis on international, regional and multilateral cooperation. The Council believes that “many of the issues affecting the region can be more effectively addressed”¹⁷⁸ when there is well-coordinated cooperation between the EU and (non-) Arctic actors. Therefore the Council encourages the Commission and the HR to:

Close cooperation between EU institutions and Member States in the context of Arctic challenges. In regional and multilateral frameworks as well as bilateral cooperation and political dialogues with Arctic partners and other partners engaged in Arctic affairs.¹⁷⁹

Close cooperation with the A8, local and Indigenous communities and the ‘civil society organisations and business representatives’ is for the Council of substantial importance. It is the first time the Council is this explicitly about cooperation within the wider context of different Arctic stakeholders.

Just as in the previous conclusion (2014) the Council explicitly stresses the importance of acting on climate change and safeguarding the Arctic environment. As the Arctic is a ‘delicate environment’ with ecosystems of significant importance for the rest of the world, the Council urges to “reduce and prevent the significant risks posed by climate change and environmental impacts in the Arctic region caused notably by global

¹⁷⁸ Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on the Arctic*, Conclusions 10400/16, Brussels: 20 June 2016, 3.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

activities.”¹⁸⁰ In order to do so, it is important that the EU establishes “an ambitious cross-spectrum and well-coordinated Arctic policy.”¹⁸¹ When the EU implements a well-rounded Arctic policy, it will be able to more effectively contribute to engagement in the “increasingly strategically important region.”¹⁸² Thus far the EU has not accomplished an effective policy for the Arctic region and this is detrimental to the EU as a foreign policy actor.

Another request by the Council that is rather unique is about the “firm support for freedom of research in the Arctic region.”¹⁸³ As the EU positions itself as a global leader in science, it is important for the EU to have this freedom of research. The Council’s call for freedom of research in the Arctic is reminiscent of the Antarctic Treaty on which, the EU formulated its idea for a new regulatory framework for the Arctic, a proposal that was badly received by the Arctic Member States.

The conclusion ends with the invitation to the Commission and the HR to:

Continue to actively implement and follow-up on the commitments highlighted and to closely monitor climatic, environmental, maritime and socio-economic developments in the region and to report to the Council regularly.¹⁸⁴

This is different from the previous conclusion where the Council requested a report on the progress made in the Arctic region. It therefore seems that there is less pressure behind the formulation of a concrete policy for the Arctic region.

Type of actor	Normative	
	Intended	Unintended
Goals		
Means		
Impact		

¹⁸⁰ Council, *On the Arctic*, 6.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 12.

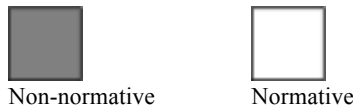


Fig. 16: Analysis of the Council Conclusions on The Arctic (2016).

When taking into account the question that was raised at the beginning of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008 - 2019?’ can it be said, in response to the conclusion, that the Council published a clear and coherent document?

This conclusion is in a lot of cases emphasising what it already said in previous conclusions and therefore it is not as surprising. It can be said that it is clear as the Council evidently points out what it wants the Commission to do. However, it comes up with a request that might be not well received by other actors as it might be to closely linked to the Antarctic Treaty. The length of this document shows that the Council is the one European institution that is the least involved in the Arctic, and therefore can act brief and concise. The conclusions became shorter since the first conclusion in 2009, which made them more coherent as the Council, throughout these documents, not much deviate from their line of action in the Arctic.

Looking at the *goals, means* and *impact* of this document, it can be concluded that the Council is not putting forward how action in the Arctic need to be executed. Therefore the impact of this conclusion is not as clear as it lack the right means for concrete action. This makes that there is a bit of a blurred line between the *goals, means* and *impact*. However, the EU can still be characterized as a normative foreign policy actor as it stays true to the EU’s normative value base.

3.15. 2017: European Parliament Resolution *on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic*

With this 2017 resolution, the EP:

Welcomes the joint communication as a positive step towards an integrated EU policy on Arctic matters, identifying specific areas of action, and towards developing a more coherent framework for EU action with a focus on the European Arctic; stresses the need for more coherence between the EU’s

internal and external policies as regards Arctic matters; calls on the Commission to establish concrete implementation and follow-up measures for its communication; reiterates its call for a comprehensive strategy and a concretised action plan on the EU's engagement in the Arctic, wherein the aim of preserving the vulnerable ecosystem of the Arctic should be the starting point.¹⁸⁵

By putting forward this statement, the EP still sees the Commission and HR joint communication as a 'building block,' just as it did in the 2014 resolution, and it asks the Commission for more coherence, concreteness and a comprehensive strategy when it comes to the Arctic region. The resolution itself draws mainly from the three priority areas, climate change, sustainable development and international cooperation, which were set out by the Commission and HR in the joint communication of 2016. When looking at international cooperation, the EP "underlines the importance of UNCLOS" and "advocates a strong role for the EU in promoting effective multilateral arrangements and a global, rules-based order" which should be achieved by the EU through "the strengthening and consistent implementation of relevant international, regional and bilateral agreements and frameworks."¹⁸⁶ Here the EP is explicitly underlining the importance of the EU retaining its role of being a normative actor in the Arctic through good governance. But how the EP foresees the Commission complying with their requests stays rather vague. It does not state clearly what it means with 'coherence', 'concrete' and 'comprehensive'. Looking back the previous resolutions, the EP already requested the Commission for a strategy that would be 'coherence', 'concrete' and 'comprehensive' but it lacked a definition. "Maybe the EP would be well advised to refrain from holding on to the term "strategy" as the usage could be understood as the Arctic being a major policy project for the EU, which clearly it is not."¹⁸⁷

Another topic in this resolution where the EP is rather vague deals with fishing in "icy waters." This issue deals with promoting "strict precautionary regulatory standards in the field of environmental protection and safety for oil exploration" and calls for

¹⁸⁵ European Parliament, *An integrated EU policy for the Arctic*, Resolution P8_TA(2017)0093, Brussels: 16 March 2017, 1.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁸⁷ Andreas Raspotnik and Adam Stępień, *The European Parliament heading towards Icy Arctic waters - Again* (Rovaniemi: Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, 2017), 6.

banning the drilling of oil in “the icy Arctic waters of the EU and the EEA.”¹⁸⁸ This statement is somewhat contradictory as not all European waters in the Arctic region are covered with ice. By the addition of ‘icy’, the EP “basically excludes all marine areas in the European Arctic, as the exclusive economic zones of both Iceland and Norway are hardly ice-covered due to the influence of the Gulf Stream.”¹⁸⁹ The part of the EU and the EEA that can be considered as ‘icy’ is the area around Svalbard. However, “Norway already bans drilling operations in ice-covered waters,”¹⁹⁰ so it is not logical for the EU trying to promote a ban that already exists.

The EP puts in this resolution also more emphasis on the Chinese and Russian role in the Arctic.

With the climate, environmental and regional development sections repeating much of the ‘same old’, the EP took a more outspoken stance - as compared to the previous joint communication or conclusions - on hard security risks, in particular on the expansion of military capabilities in the Russian North.¹⁹¹

Looking at Russia, the EP emphasizes the importance of more engagement with Russia, as they are not content with the increased Russian activities in the Arctic. Here regional cooperation is of significant importance for the EU, especially in the Russian border regions. Dialogue is needed, as there is “increase in the stationing of Russian military forces in the region, the building and reopening of Russian military bases and the creation of a Russian Arctic military district.”¹⁹² The increase in militarization in the Arctic is worrisome as the AC calls the Arctic a region of cooperation and peaceful development.

Looking at China, the EP seems less worried as China is not militarising the region. Since China does not possess Arctic territory, China is keener on the economical benefits of climate change in the Arctic and therefore the EP “stresses China’s growing interest in the Arctic region, especially as regards access to shipping routes and the availability

¹⁸⁸ EP, *An integrated*, 14.

¹⁸⁹ Raspotnik and Stepień, *Icy Arctic waters*, 3.


¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Raspotnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.2.


¹⁹² EP, *An integrated*, 30.

of energy resources”¹⁹³ Also the renewed and strengthened Chinese relations with Iceland are worrying the EP and therefore they ask the Commission “to monitor closely the effects this may have not only on the sustainable economic development of the Icelandic part of the Arctic region, but also on the EU’s economy and internal market.”¹⁹⁴

Type of actor	Normative	
	Intended	Unintended
Goals		
Means		
Impact		



Non-normative



Normative

Fig. 17: Analysis of the EP Resolution on an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic (2017).

When taking into account the question that was raised at the beginning of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008 - 2019?’ can it be said, in response to the resolution, that the EP published a clear and coherent document?

The 2017 Resolution does not put forward any unexpected statements and rather follows the general tone on Arctic matters that has been developed in the policy hallways in Brussels over the last few years.¹⁹⁵

This resolution can be seen as an unsurprising successor to the previous resolution (2014). In several cases the EP is rather vague on what it aims for and how this will be accomplished. With not explicitly expressing how its proposals will be executed, it seems that it is more important for the EP to show the engagement of the EU in the Arctic rather than it achieves concrete, tangible result, ensuing from action taken by the EU. The new proposals and the more intensified focus on China and Russia feel as if

¹⁹³ EP, *An integrated*, 61.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Raspotnik and Stępień, *Icy Arctic waters*, 1.

the EP wants to strengthen the EU's presence in the Arctic. Raspotnik and Stępień point out the lack of specific Arctic knowledge as why parliamentary conclusions are often a mishmash of different topics that lack coherence. Because of this “the resulting text is therefore often more a collection of unrelated paragraphs rather than a coherent policy statement, with the 2014 Resolution being a prime example.”¹⁹⁶ The EP can still be seen as a normative foreign policy actor as it acts in line with the normative values of the EU. However, it also slightly tends towards an imperial foreign policy actor as it wants to secure Arctic land for it not to be taken by the Chinese or the Russians. But since it has no concrete action towards these two actors, the EP cannot be fully perceived as an imperial foreign policy actor.

Yet, it was correctly pointed out that the 2016 Joint Communication is a “positive step towards an integrated EU policy on Arctic matters” – a policy that still lacks coherence between EU internal and external policies as regards Arctic matters; a policy that has come a long way since 2007/2008; a policy, however, that eventually focuses more on the areas closest to the Union's core without forgetting the challenges of the broader circumpolar North.¹⁹⁷

3.16. 2019: Council Conclusions *on the EU Arctic Policy*

The fourth conclusion by the Council is by far the shortest document published and this one-page-document entails no surprises. However, the Council does not as explicitly mention the three priority areas that were brought forward by the Commission and HR in the 2016 joint communication. The Council's main focus is on effectively addressing international cooperation since “many issues affecting the region.”¹⁹⁸ Because of the rapid pace of issues and challenges in the Arctic region, it is important for the Council that “The European Union needs to ensure that its own policy approach would take account of relevant developments.”¹⁹⁹ Because of the circumstances, the Council would

¹⁹⁶ Raspotnik and Stępień, *Icy Arctic waters*, 3.


¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁹⁸ Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on the EU Arctic policy*, Conclusions 14952/19, Brussels: 9 December 2019, 3.


¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

like to be informed on a regular basis by the Commission and HR and “looks forward to an update of the EU Arctic policy”²⁰⁰, which was embarked on the 2016 communication.

Type of actor	Normative	
	Intended	Unintended
Goals		
Means		
Impact		



Non-normative



Normative

Fig. 18: Analysis of the Council Conclusions on the EU Arctic Policy (2019)

When taking into account the question that was raised at the beginning of this study ‘has the EU managed to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy in the period 2008 - 2019?’ can it be said, in response to the conclusion, that the Council published a clear and coherent document?

As this conclusion is extremely short, it is hard to provide a comprehensive image. It is clear in a way that it points out what it wants the other institutions to do but it does not contribute to the establishment of a coherent EU Arctic policy. This as the Council is not emphasizing the words of the Commission or the EP as such. This can be explained as the Councils lacking engagement towards the Arctic. As it not denies the normative values of the EU, the Council can still be seen as a normative foreign policy actor.

3.17. Recapitulation 2016-2019

What has the EU accomplished in the thus far final period of Arctic policymaking? Where in the beginning of the EU’s Arctic endeavour the institutions aimed high on several topics, they started to tone down in the years after 2008. In this past period between 2016 and 2019 it becomes evident that the EU is rippling on without making any grand statements or causing commotion because of their policy. The different

²⁰⁰ Council, *on Arctic*, 5.

institutions are more focussed on specific areas of interest and EU policy is narrowed down even further. However, the EU is still not a permanent observer to the AC and therefore it still lacks some legitimacy for when it comes to having a say in Arctic governance. The EU seems to be increasingly aware of its role in the Arctic and conforms itself too it. Where several types of foreign policy where detectable in the period leading to 2016, after this is it can be said that the EU is primarily a *normative* foreign policy actor.

Conclusion

In 2007, the EU started to realize that it needed to step up its engagement in the Arctic due to several events that had taken place in the region. Arctic sea ice retreated which made land and water more accessible, Russia embedded a titanium flag and it became clear that the Arctic held a large amount, not yet quarried, hydrocarbons. These events triggered the EU's interest in the Arctic and laid the foundation for an Arctic policy although the EU was often criticized for not having enough Arctic knowledge and not having the right geographical connection to the region. Though the policymaking already started in 2008, it was not until the 2014 resolution that the EP explicitly called for the making any sort of policy for the Arctic "united" and "coherent" and "concrete."²⁰¹

Before, and even after 2014, the EU's approach in policymaking for the Arctic can be seen as several incoherent and unclear 'shopping lists', which contained the most important topics for the Commission, the Council and the EP. The period from 2008 until 2019 can be characterized as a wave motion. In the beginning the EU institutions lacked knowledge on the complexity of the Arctic, aimed high and wanted to establish firm EU policy on the Arctic. As this antagonized the A8, the EU toned down after the period of 2008 and started to revise its policies in order to become an actor of significance in the Arctic. In the years prior to 2019, a more compact policy is accomplished but the EU institutions still differ in the priority areas. Where the focus of the Council is mainly on environmental and climate changes related topics, the EP tends to lean more towards the Commission and points out a perspective for the EU in the Arctic that has a more economic undertone. As these stands differ in order of importance for the institutions, it has been more difficult to find common ground that lays the foundation for an overall clear and coherent EU Arctic policy. The incoherency of the EU as an actor in the Arctic can also be highlighted as they have fulfilled several foreign policy types. In the beginning years there were shift detectable between the EU acting as a *normative*, *imperial* and *status quo* actor.

Looking back at the beginning of the EU's Arctic adventure, it can be said that the EU started off on the wrong foot with the A8. This rocky start was the result of the EU

²⁰¹ EP, *EU strategy*, 4.

wanting too much too soon. Mainly due to the controversial ban on seal products and the proposal to create a new multilateral framework for Arctic governance, the EU “was perceived as an aggressive outsider wanting to enter the Arctic stage.”²⁰² With these controversial proposals, the EU antagonized the Arctic states and the Arctic Indigenous Peoples that rely on the hunt and export of seals. This rocky start has also influenced the coherency of EU Arctic policy. As the EU had alienated the A8 in the beginning of its endeavour, it had to revise its policy and adjust it in a way they would not be cast as an outsider in the Arctic.

In general, it may be said that the initial EU responses to the changes in Arctic governance fairly rapidly became more nuanced, which was visible already in the Council of the European Union 2009 Conclusions.²⁰³

There is a considerable difference between the early policy periods as compared to the most recent one. The EU quickly realized that the Arctic actors were resentful because of EU actions and demands, and that this got in the way of their aim to gain the status of permanent observer to the AC. “The status is often seen as a symbolic acknowledgement by the Arctic states of actor’s legitimate Arctic interest.”²⁰⁴ Without this legitimization the EU can still propose action and make policy that focuses on the Arctic but it will not have the same impact as when the EU is a permanent observer. Simply claiming to be an actor in the region by basically listing intended action and achievements already accomplished “has not been crowned with circumpolar acceptance, as the mixed institutional signals have rather led to many sceptical depictions of the EU’s regional role”²⁰⁵ Until 2020, the EU still has not obtained the status of permanent observer to the AC.

When taking into account the different foreign policy actor types that were portrayed throughout this study, it can also be concluded that the EU institutions did not have a coherent line in their policy papers, especially in the beginning. In the period that was looked at in this study, the EU institutions have shown different types of actors depending on their published documents. This shift in foreign policy actor types can be

²⁰² Raspotnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.3.

²⁰³ Adam, Stepień, *The Changing Arctic*, 20.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

²⁰⁵ Bailes, in Raspotnik. *The European Union*, part IV, 5.4.

seen as an indicator of incoherence. The EU has been depicted as being a *normative*, *imperial*, and *status quo* type. Since the *goals*, *means*, and *impact* of the documents were often not in line with each other, this resulted in a mixed image of the EU as different types of foreign policy actor. The institutions shifted from assertive language without any concrete action to more passive and accommodating language without any concrete action. This accommodating language was also the result of the two negative outcomes of the Commission's bid for permanent observer to the AC. This learning process in term of finding the right language has been an obstacle for the institutions to establish clear and coherent Arctic policy. The EU needed to find a balance between action, language and its own normative values. This has proven to be a difficult task since not every document is in line with the normative values as described by Manners. Mainly the norms respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, good governance, rule of law and sustainable development have proven to be contradicting at times which also caused EU Arctic policy not being able to become coherent.

Although the EU has experienced a learning process on how to make efficient policy for the Arctic, it still cannot be said that EU Arctic policy after more than a decade is clear and coherent. This conclusion is confirmed by the last EP resolution (2017) in which the EP welcomes the previous joint communication by the Commission (2016) as a 'positive' step but still requests a "more coherent framework for EU action with a focus on the European Arctic."²⁰⁶ Three years after this resolution, there has been only one Council conclusion, which did not contribute to coherence and clearness and lacks any new document published by the Commission and HR. Although the institutions narrowed down its areas of interest and made them more specific, there is still no concrete, clear and coherent policy for the Arctic. Throughout this study it has not become clear what the EU strives for in the Arctic after publishing twelve policy documents in which it EU mainly pointed out its objectives or stances without concrete action. Therefore, the conclusion of this study is that the EU has not been able to establish clear and coherent policy over the period 2008-2019.

²⁰⁶ EP, *An integrated*, 1.

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Annex One: Euroculture Master Thesis Assessment Form 2018-2020



Name of Student:

Thesis Title:

University of the 1st semester:

University of the 2nd semester:

Name of Supervisor / University:

*In this report, please consider the following, by answering the following questions.
Please add a short explanation instead of simply answering 'yes', 'no' or 'partly':*

1) Content: Problem statement, method and theory:

a) Is the topic of the thesis clearly presented and motivated?

- b) Are the aims and objectives of the thesis clearly identified and explained?
- c) Is there a well formulated problem statement and is it of sufficient complexity for an MA level? Briefly explain?
- d) Has the student convincingly explained the relevance of the research?
- e) Has a suitable methodology and theoretical frame been taken to solve the stated problems?
- f) In case where empirical research has been conducted: is there a suitable research design and has the research been conducted adequately?
- g) Does the conclusion provide convincing answers/proof to the initial questions/hypotheses?
- h) Does the research constitute a contribution to knowledge in this field or domain?

2) Structure:

a) Is the thesis coherently structured in chapters and sections?

b) Are concepts clearly introduced and explained, and critically and consistently applied?

3) Sources (primary and secondary):

a) Has (enough) relevant (primary and secondary) literature been adequately interpreted and integrated into the thesis?

b) Is the bibliography/list of references complete and accurate?

4) Stylistics:

a) Is the use of language (English) acceptable and of the required standard (i.e. no spelling mistakes and typos, range of vocabulary, grammar)?

b) Are references in the text given in a coherent and consistent manner (either intext or as footnotes)?

5) Format:

a) How is the thesis presented (i.e. consistency in lay-out, choice of fonts, headings, tables and graphs)?

b) Does the thesis contain all required elements (title page, declaration, table of contents, bibliography, etc.)

6) Quality of writing process:

a) To what degree has the student been able to work independently?

b) Have recommended revisions been executed to a satisfying degree?

c) Any other relevant comments (e.g on planning and commitment of the student).

7) Possible questions for thesis defence (only if this thesis is to be defended orally):

(National) Grade:

Suggestion for corresponding converted grade

according to the other university's (national) grading scheme:

Date and place:

Signature: