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Şərq Qonşuluğunda Təhlükəsizlik: Avropa İttifaqının Ümumi Təhlükəsizlik və

Müdafiə Siyasətinin Effektivliyi

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Security in the Eastern Neighbourhood: The Effectiveness of the EU's Common
Security and Defence Policy

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Abstract

The research was conducted by Raul Qarayev, a master student in the field of European Studies at the Khazar University, and the topic of the research is “Security in the Eastern Neighbourhood: The Effectiveness of the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy”. This thesis investigates the European Union's security policy in the Eastern neighbourhood and examines whether the Common Security and Defense Policy is effective in the region. In the previous literature, the activity of the missions sent to the eastern neighbourhood of the EU under the mandate of the CSDP and the main factors hindering them were not investigated in detail. The thesis claims that a more empirical study of the subject is necessary in this direction. Thus, the main goal of the thesis is to empirically analyze the effectiveness of CSDP civilian missions in the eastern neighbourhood from the perspective of the European Union. Sources used show that Russia has seriously hindered the effective operation of CSDP's civilian missions. The thesis claims that Russia's close involvement in regional conflicts has undermined the EU's security policy.

Key words: European Union, common security and defence policy, eastern neighbourhood, Russia, effectiveness

Abstrakt

Tədqiqat Xəzər Universitetinin Regionşünaslıq ixtisası üzrə magistr tələbəsi Raul Qarayev tərəfindən aparılıb və tədqiqatın mövzusu “Şərq Qonşuluğunda Təhlükəsizlik: Aİ-nin Ümumi Təhlükəsizlik və Müdafiə Siyasətinin Effektivliyi”dir. Bu tezis Avropa İttifaqının Şərq qonşuluğunda təhlükəsizlik siyasətini araşdırır və Ümumi Təhlükəsizlik və Müdafiə Siyasətinin regionda effektiv olub-olmadığını öyrənir. Əvvəlki ədəbiyyatlarda ÜTMS mandatı altında Aİ-nin şərq qonşuluğuna göndərilən missiyaların fəaliyyəti və onlara mane olan əsas faktorlar detallı araşdırılmamışdır. Tezis bu istiqamətdə mövzunun daha empirik öyrənilməsinin lazım olduğunu iddia edir. Beləliklə tezis əsas məqsədi Avropa İttifaqı perspektivindən ÜTMS mülki missiyalarının şərq qonşuluğunda effektivliyini empirik təhlil etməkdir. İstifadə edilən mənbələr göstərir ki, Rusiya ÜTMS mülki missiyalarının effektiv fəaliyyət göstərməsinə ciddi mane olub. Tezis iddia edir ki, regional konfliktlərdə Rusiyanın yaxından iştirakı Aİ-nin təhlükəsizlik siyasətini sarsıtmışdır.

Açar sözlər: Avropa İttifaqı, ümumi təhlükəsizlik və müdafiə siyasəti, şərq qonşuluğu, Rusiya, effektivlik

Abbreviations

| | |
|-------|--|
| CSDP | Common Security and Defence Policy |
| EU | European Union |
| ENP | European Neighbourhood Policy |
| PSC | Political and Security Committee |
| EEAS | European External Action Service |
| EUMM | European Union Monitoring Mission |
| EUAM | European Union Advisory Mission |
| EUMA | European Union Mission Armenia |
| EUBAM | European Union Border Assistance Mission |
| DCFTA | Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area |
| ABL | Administrative Boundary Line |
| ESDP | European Security and Defence Policy |
| EUMS | European Union Military Staff |
| CFSP | Common Foreign and Security Policy |
| ESS | European Security Strategy |
| EUGS | European Union Global Strategy |

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Introduction

Following the Second World War and the consequential damage inflicted upon Europe, the European states commenced contemplating a novel framework for cooperation. Historical antagonisms among Western European states were supplanted by diplomatic negotiation and conciliation. Aspirations for a peaceful global order culminated in the establishment of the Western European Union, which subsequently evolved into the European Coal and Steel Community. The initial effort made by the European countries to create a security institution was through the formation of the European Defense Community. However, it failed to obtain ratification by France, primarily due to political opposition. In the 1970s, the European Political Cooperation (EPC) was established as a means of facilitating discussions between member states on their foreign policy positions, marking the first substantive steps towards the creation of a European foreign policy. The EPC was later transformed into the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in 1992, which expanded the scope of debates on European security issues.

The EU has been facing growing security challenges along its periphery, particularly in its eastern borders and Balkans. As a result, discussions on the EU's military capabilities have been reignited, with arguments being made for the need to develop such capabilities to effectively address security concerns and complement the existing soft security tools at the EU's disposal. The establishment of the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) represents the most significant endeavor towards building such a capacity. Main objective of the founding EU member states was to prevent war and foster peace in Europe, and as a result, military approaches were not initially embraced. Having mentioned this, the EU's security issues has largely relied on soft security mechanisms such as enlargement, stabilization, and neighbourhood policies. As a result, the majority of CSDP missions have been non-military in nature, even though the EU has the capacity to carry out military operations. The EU has initiated partnerships with its eastern neighbors to promote stability in Europe. In this regard, the Eastern Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is a significant aspect of the EU's regional foreign policy. Despite the existence of gaps and limitations in the intergovernmental and supranational structures of the European Union, the CSDP has been utilized to deploy civilian missions to address security concerns in the eastern neighbourhood following the proclamation of the ENP. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Russia's active engagement in all conflicts within the eastern vicinity of EU and the deliberate procrastination in settlement of these conflicts have raised questions regarding the efficacy of the civilian missions undertaken by EU on the mandate of CSDP. In the context of the Eastern neighbourhood, the effectiveness of CSDP missions in enhancing security has been variable, partly due to the absence of a comprehensive

strategic framework. These missions have predominantly been reactive and improvisational, reflecting the lack of a coherent strategic orientation. This situation has been aggravated by intra-institutional conflicts during the early stages of CSDP and disagreement among member states over how to deal with Russia.

It is believed that the European Union, as a security provider, positively evaluates the achievement of CSDP civilian missions in the eastern neighbourhood. At the same time, it is important to note that the CSDP missions were originally conceived and implemented within the strategic partnership framework that governed the European Union's relations with Russia up until 2014. They were adapted to the selective engagement paradigm that emerged in the aftermath of that period. During all of this period these missions have not effectively facilitated conflict resolution in the areas where they have been deployed. Conversely, it appears that Russia has leveraged ongoing conflicts in the Eastern neighbourhood as a means to exert influence over both the European Union and local governments. To achieve this, Russia has employed various political strategies, including issuing Russian passports in conflict-affected areas. The considerable energy dependence of the European Union on Russia has far-reaching implications for security policy in the Eastern neighbourhood. It can be argued that after the Ukrainian war in 2022, energy dependence on Russia has been eliminated to a maximum level, but assessing the effectiveness of CSDP missions requires considering previous periods.

In this thesis, the efforts of EU to ensure security on the eastern borders are discussed within the framework of the CSDP. In the thesis, first of all, historical evolution and institutional framework of CSDP will be examined which are the significant factor in order to comprehend internal situation of the security policy. Furthermore, taking into consideration key security challenges facing the eastern neighbourhood CSDP missions in the region will be discussed. Russian more penetration to the region has forced the EU to rethink assessing the effectiveness of these missions on the ground. That is why evaluating the effectiveness of CSDP civilian missions in the eastern neighbourhood of EU will be elaborated more detailed.

Relevance of research

The research topic concerns the evaluation of the effectiveness of CSDP's civilian missions in the Eastern neighbourhood of the European Union, given the dynamic security landscape brought about by conflicts within the region. Of particular concern is the potential impact of Russia's overt and covert intervention in these conflicts, which could undermine the success of EU's civilian missions. Given this context, it is imperative to prioritize the role of CSDP in the EU's security policy to effectively address the challenges in the Eastern neighbourhood.

Research questions

The EU's CSDP represents a significant aspect of the EU's external action, aimed at enhancing its ability to prevent conflicts and foster peace and security in crisis zones beyond its borders. The CSDP was established to address the evolving security environment, characterized by a security threats, and the requirement for a more synchronized and efficient response to these challenges. The Eastern neighbourhood, which is strategically important for the EU due to its proximity and the security obstacles it encounters, is one of the regions where the EU has been actively engaged in promoting security and stability. This research seeks to answer the following research question: **To what extent has the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy been effective in addressing the security challenges in the Eastern Neighbourhood?** Throughout the research, these secondary questions are addressed, as well: What are the specific objectives of CSDP operations in the Eastern neighbourhood, and how have they evolved over time? What are the main obstacles to achieving those objectives? How have CSDP operations contributed to the broader security environment in the Eastern neighbourhood, including relations with neighboring countries and regional stability?

Research Objective

The purpose of this research is to determine whether CSDP is effective in EU's Eastern Neighbourhood. Taking into account the problems of CSDP within the EU, the activity of the civilian missions which was deployed in the eastern neighbourhood is analyzed in the thesis.

Theoretical framework

To ensure a rigorous and well-grounded research, it is crucial to establish a solid theoretical foundation. Hence, this master thesis employs neoclassical realism as the most appropriate theoretical framework to thoroughly investigate and analyze the research topic. However, it is important to briefly examine other theories applied to the CSDP before moving on to neoclassical realism. Stephanie C. Hofmann's approach to the issue of the state in relation to the development of the CSDP challenges the prevailing perspective in international relations (IR) theory, which considers the state as a unified actor with externally given preferences as the central focus in analyzing cooperation, disagreement, or conflict in international politics. If intergovernmentalism were the dominant mode of cooperation within the CSDP, we would expect the CSDP to function solely as an instrument of states or national executives, where no other actors influence the nature of cooperation in this domain. In such a scenario, no national actor other than the executive would exert agency except within their limited autonomy. Bureaucrats, especially diplomats abroad, would primarily be connected to their national administration and would follow the instructions provided by the executive branch. However,

the dynamics of the CSDP cannot be adequately explained by interactions solely among national capitals. Instead, it is necessary to focus on the different levels of decision-making that exist within the CSDP policy space. Hofmann draws upon the analytical insights presented by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (1974) to provide a more nuanced theoretical framework for studying cooperation within the CSDP. Keohane and Nye argue that the international political arena is characterized by complex and interdependent relationships, and they identify various modes of cooperation through which not only national executives but also other actors relevant to international politics play a significant role (Hofmann, 2012).

Sven Biscop and Per M. Norheim-Martinsen have conducted an analysis on the role of the CSDP in shaping the EU's strategic actorness. Through their research, they also noted the presence of a certain degree of Europeaness within CSDP, which may contribute to the development of a strategic culture. The authors define strategy as the alignment of objectives and means to advance perceived political goals, with the aim of assessing whether the EU possesses the capability to formulate shared political objectives, generate relevant resources, and demonstrate the necessary determination or strategic culture to pursue these goals. They acknowledge the European Security Strategy (ESS) as operating at the strategic level; however, they view it as an incomplete strategy. Both national and EU officials frequently refer to the ESS when explaining the EU's global role to various audiences. External observers often regard the ESS as significant, given its unanimous adoption by heads of state and government and the inclusion of the term "strategy" in its title. Consequently, the ESS has played a role in shaping the EU's identity as an international actor. Nevertheless, it has not exerted sufficient influence on actual EU policies. To achieve comprehensive strategic actorness, a clearer definition of priorities and objectives is required, which would subsequently inform a specific military or civil-military strategy, commonly referred to as a "white book," for the CSDP. Concerning the CSDP, there is a missing connection between the vague ambition expressed in the ESS - to contribute to global security responsibilities and the practical implementation of CSDP operations and the development of capabilities (Sven Biscop and Per M. Norheim-Martinsen, 2012).

Fabian Breuer has built upon sociological institutionalism to advance his argument, which highlights a shift in decision-making processes within the CSDP framework. He observes a new style of decision-making that is increasingly influenced and governed by institutional rules and socialization processes. Breuer's reconceptualization of "Brusselisation" captures the transformation of CSDP from an intergovernmental policy domain to a more institutionalized governance system, where socialization processes and a sense of appropriateness play a pivotal

role. Decision-making in CSDP is progressively centralized in Brussels, leading to a transfer of competencies and expertise from national capitals to the EU's headquarters. The permanent CSDP bodies and the broader CSDP bureaucracy, operating within and between member states as well as in Brussels, foster socialization processes that promote the development of a European mindset in security and defense politics. This evolution includes the emergence of a shared identity and commitment among national and European actors involved, who increasingly strive for the effective implementation of CSDP and adapt their role conceptions accordingly. The traditional supranational-intergovernmental dichotomy is no longer applicable when analyzing CSDP, and the clear distinction between the logic of appropriateness and consequences is also challenged. Political actors are shaped by their interests, which inform their anticipation of consequences, as well as the rules embedded in their identities and political institutions. They engage in a nuanced interplay between calculating consequences and adhering to rules, with the relationship between the two often intertwined (Breuer, 2012).

According to Xymena Kurowska and Friedrich Kratochwil, the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) is not simply a reflection of a single social reality, but rather a contested and negotiated space involving various actors with differing levels of involvement in security politics. The redefinition of the security situation and the establishment and consolidation of CSDP hinge on the interpretation of "security," which plays a central role. CSDP draws upon the existing security discourse, allowing actors to employ a familiar language when communicating with both internal and external audiences, while also introducing new meanings. Kurowska and Kratochwil examine three interfaces where the contestation of security meanings and the construction of CSDP have taken place. The international role formation involves mapping the reciprocal expectations among the EU, the United Nations, and the United States. While Brussels consistently supports the UN as a proponent of effective multilateralism, CSDP acts as a catalyst for enhancing the UN's reputation and endorsing its declaratory policies. Simultaneously, CSDP enables the EU to establish a distinct profile for itself. This stands in contrast to the EU's stance toward the US or its protégé, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, where the EU faces the challenge of asserting its own position. Paradoxically, the EU's consistent positioning as a reconciling force countering US unilateralism adds a particular legitimacy to the EU's actions (Xymena Kurowska and Friedrich Kratochwil, 2012).

Neoclassical realism is a theoretical framework that merges the fundamental tenet of structural realism (neorealism), which assigns a preeminent role to systemic factors in shaping international outcomes, with an explicit recognition of the importance of domestic-level

variables in the context of foreign policy analysis, as outlined by Rose (Rose, 1998). This theoretical approach extends the interplay between state and society that is central to classical realism, without relinquishing the core premise of neorealism, which emphasizes the constraints of international politics and the causal dominance of the international system (Hyde-Price, 2012).

Realists perceive the EU as a body in which separate member states interact, rather than as an autonomous actor. According to this theory, the EU serves as a means for the collective interests of its member states (Hyde-Price, 2012: p.19). Realists argue that material interests are the primary drivers behind the emergence of the CSDP, and that decisions are made based on cost-benefit calculations, with the strongest states bearing the costs only when it can enhance their influence. In this regard, the most powerful states can shape and influence the external environment in accordance with their interests (Jacek, 2014). Realism suggests that the CSDP is a power project, but a vulnerable one, since it reflects the power of nation-states more than it projects the power of Europe to the world (Rynning, 2011).

Despite neorealism has had a significant impact on the theory of international relations and the broader analysis of international politics, its structural realist approach has had limited influence on the examination of the EU's security and defence policy cooperation. Neorealism is widely perceived to be state-centric, overly preoccupied with hard power and focused on the high politics of international security. For these reasons, it is seen as having little to offer the study of an atypical international actor which is not a state, possesses limited coercive power resources and which is primarily concerned with low politics (Hyde-Price, 2012: p.25).

The EU presents a distinctive and intricate case as an international organization that defies categorization as either a nation-state or a conventional intergovernmental organization. Its sui generis nature derives from the fact that it comprises 27 individual nation-states. The member states have divergent strategic objectives and interests, and operate in different geographic areas, resulting in varying geopolitical priorities. Neoclassical realism enables a nuanced analysis of the efficacy of the EU's CSDP in the Eastern Neighbourhood. As mentioned above this theoretical approach sheds light on the interplay between structural factors and domestic variables that shape state behavior. One such structural factor is the distribution of power in the international system, which acts as a crucial constraint on the EU's ability to pursue its security interests in the region. Russia's assertiveness in the area creates a complex geopolitical context that limits the EU's capacity to act independently. Furthermore, various domestic variables, including the decision-making process, the divergent interests of member states also impact the effectiveness of the EU's CSDP in the Eastern Neighbourhood. The EU's

decision-making process, which relies on consensus-building, can be ponderous and bureaucratic, rendering it challenging to respond quickly to security threats. Additionally, member states have diverse priorities and interests in the region, with some emphasizing economic cooperation with Russia, while others prioritize cooperation with NATO. These differing interests can lead to friction within the EU and restrict its ability to act cohesively.

In conclusion, neoclassical realism provides a comprehensive theoretical framework for examining the effectiveness of the EU's CSDP in the Eastern Neighbourhood. The distribution of power in the international system, domestic variables, and external and internal factors all play a crucial role in shaping the EU's ability to promote security and stability in the region.

Methodology

The aim of this research is to determine whether CSDP is effective in EU's Eastern Neighbourhood. There is a lack of empirical research on this study. The first chapter will analyze the historical evolution of the CSDP, its main objectives according to the 2003 European Security Strategy and the 2016 European Union Global Strategy, as well as the actors involved. The second chapter will focus on regional conflicts, which are the main security problems faced by the Eastern neighbourhood, the deployment of CSDP missions to the countries where the conflict exists, and the main factors that hinder their activities. This research will employ scientific methodologies including systematization, synthesis, and analysis to achieve its main objectives. The research strategy is based on qualitative research techniques, specifically content analysis utilizing an interpretive approach.

Literature Review

During the mid-2000s, researchers began to investigate the concept of neighbourhood policy, which was a relatively novel and noteworthy area of study. Notably, scholars examining enlargement policy were particularly interested in this policy. Despite the considerable academic attention devoted to analyzing the European Union's (EU) relations with the Eastern Neighbourhood countries, limited scholarly scrutiny has been directed towards the EU's operations in the area, specifically those carried out within the context of the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) of the union. CSDP has a vast body of literature, with various scholars offering diverse perspectives on the subject. Several academic scholars focus on the EU's foreign policy towards non-European nations or its domestic affairs. Scholars such as Michael Merlingen and Rasa Ostrauskaitė (2008), Daniel Keohane (2009) and Jolyon Howorth (2010; 2014) have specialized in the examination of the EU and its CSDP, formerly known as the European Security and Defence Policy. Howorth's book, "Security and Defence Policy in the European Union," is widely recognized as a standard text in the field of EU Security studies.

Ariella Huff argues that member states of EU will not deploy CSDP missions without an exit strategy in place, and member states are generally unwilling to contribute significant financial resources to open-ended missions, particularly in the current economic climate. CSDP missions alone cannot produce long-term structural reforms or resolve conflicts (Ariella Huff, 2011).

However, there has been an increasing interest in recent years in the topic of civilian missions carried out by the EU through its CSDP. In that case, it is possible to distinguish various perspectives concerning the effectiveness of the CSDP in addressing the security challenges in the Eastern Neighbourhood. The intricate and constantly evolving nature of the security landscape poses an additional challenge to assessing efficacy. Some scholars argue that the CSDP has been effective in promoting stability and security in the region, and that its operations have contributed to the security of Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova (Tracey Alman vø Andriy Tyushka, 2022). Others, however, question the effectiveness of the CSDP, arguing that its operations have been limited in scope and that they have not addressed the root causes of conflict in the region.

Sven Biscop states that EU is facing with a regional actor, Russia, which possesses significant power and aims to preserve and expand its influence within the region. Despite Russia's covert involvement and backing of separatist regions in Georgia and Moldova, the EU has implemented a cautious strategy that prioritizes monitoring and enhancing capabilities, rather than ambitious endeavors focused on resolving conflicts (Sven Biscop, 2010).

Maria Raquel Freire and Licínia Simão claim that despite the EU considerable progress in enhancing its defense capabilities since 2003 and its implementation of various CSDP missions, such as those in Georgia, its capacity to exert political leverage and employ diplomatic methods to influence the region was ultimately insufficient (Maria Raquel Freire and Licínia Simão, 2020).

The term "effectiveness" is characterized by a lack of clarity and a high level of complexity, particularly in the context of the European Union's external activities. As a result, assessing and analyzing its effectiveness poses a considerable challenge, rendering it an unpopular concept. This is primarily due to its notorious intricacy and difficulty in terms of measurement and evaluation (Hoffmann, N. and Niemann, A., 2018).

Distinguishing between evaluating the efficacy of CSDP missions from an organizational perspective that aligns with the EU's objectives, and a local perspective that focuses on the human level and societal impact of the mission is critical. These divergent objectives can complicate the interpretation of a mission's mandate and what constitutes its

success. Zarembo contends that it is significant to consider the host state's perception of the mission's effectiveness, as it affects the mission's collaboration with local partners, which ultimately influences its performance (Zarembo, 2017).

Meyer has pointed out that there is currently a lack of a comprehensive and objective assessment that can be used to determine the effectiveness of missions carried out under the CSDP (C. Meyer, 2020). This highlights the need for a systematic and rigorous approach to evaluating the success of such missions.

Assessing the effectiveness of the CSDP poses a formidable task for both academia and the policy community. This challenge extends beyond the confines of CSDP-focused studies and is also encountered by scholars examining international organizations in general. Scholars specializing in international organizations have identified a central methodological challenge, which revolves around endeavors to evaluate effectiveness, irrespective of the breadth, approach, and methodology employed. The objective assessment of effectiveness proves to be exceedingly arduous due to a multitude of factors. Firstly, the very notion of effectiveness lacks conceptual clarity and is susceptible to subjective interpretations. Furthermore, it becomes entangled with other related concepts such as effect, outcome, impact, consequence, and performance. The evaluation process encounters numerous challenges, including but not limited to, the establishment of an unambiguous standard against which effectiveness should be gauged, the unequivocal demonstration of a causal relationship between a specific action and its intended effect, and the definition of effectiveness itself. Moreover, in the context of international organizations like the EU and their policies, such as the CSDP, additional complexities arise from the dynamic and intricate nature of the environment in which they operate, coupled with broad mandates that lack precise criteria for assessing performance (Gutner and Thompson, 2010). Notable challenges in evaluating the effectiveness of the CSDP lies not only in the measurement process but also in the selection of evaluators. As effectiveness can carry different meanings for different individuals, it becomes imperative to address the equally problematic issue of determining whose criteria for effectiveness should be utilized. Thierry Tardy, a scholar affiliated with the EU Institute for Security Studies, emphasizes the significance of subjective perceptions in assessing the concepts of "success" or "failure" of a mission. Consequently, the identity of the evaluator, whether it be a member state, an EU institution, a host state, civil society, and so forth, becomes crucial as it shapes the outcomes of the evaluation process (Zarembo, 2017).

The CSDP missions' efficacy is challenged by the notable engagement of Russia in all conflict scenarios in the region. Despite researchers examining the techniques used to evaluate

the efficacy of the EU's CSDP in the Eastern neighbourhood, the region's dynamic security environment exposes gaps in the assessment. The purpose of this thesis is to identify and fill these gaps in the literature.

Chapter I. Background of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)

1.1. History and evolution of the CSDP

The origins of the European Union's security and defense date back to the aftermath of two devastating continental wars, which necessitated a collective defense approach for Europe. As a result, in 1948, the Treaty of Brussels was ratified by Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, committing the five signatory states to a collective self-defense obligation. Conversely, some scholars contend that the commencement of the common security matter occurred prior to the Treaty of Brussels, as early as 1947, with the signing of the Treaty of Dunkirk, also known as the Treaty of Alliance and Mutual Assistance. This agreement was concluded between France and the United Kingdom, establishing the groundwork for collective security and obligating both nations to collaborate in the face of any potential resurgence of German aggression. In the subsequent year, the Treaty of Brussels underwent expansion and was subsequently renamed as such. Nevertheless, following the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949 as a primary and consequential defense organization, the Treaty of Brussels was relegated to a secondary position (Jolyon Howorth, 2014: 4). The concept of establishing the European Defense Community (EDC) was introduced in 1950 with the intention of forming a supranational security entity, thereby constituting an ambitious political endeavor aimed at constructing a unified European army. In 1950, the suggestion for the establishment of the European Defense Community (EDC) was put forward by the French Prime Minister, Pleven (Koutrakos, 2013). This proposal resulted in the signing of the EDC Treaty of Paris in 1952. However, the initiative faced setbacks as the French Parliament declined to ratify the treaty in 1954, despite all six original members of European integration having signed it, thus bringing the process to a halt in Paris. The reason of non-ratification was that this would negatively affect countries' national sovereignty in the field of security and defense according to France (Howorth, 2013).

Europe's endeavors to enhance its security and defense capabilities have encountered persistent challenges, primarily due to the positions held by France and the UK. These two nations have impeded any attempts at European cooperation on security issues for approximately five decades, owing to their distinct perspectives on security and NATO relationships. The UK posits that Europe's demonstration of self-sufficiency in security matters would adversely affect its rapport with Washington, ultimately leading to isolation. Furthermore, the UK contends that Europe lacks the capacity to build an autonomous defense system. Conversely, France maintains that a more serious approach from Europe towards its defense capabilities would compel the US to take Europe more seriously, leading to enhanced

cooperation. However, these aspirations of France and the UK are primarily based on conjecture rather than strategic analysis (Howorth, 2014).

The 1970s marked a pivotal moment in the development of European foreign policy, as the European Political Cooperation (EPC) was established to facilitate the discussion and alignment of member states' positions, serving as a platform for their collective action. Primarily operating as a consultative entity, the EPC fostered closer cooperation among member states, underscoring the importance of a shared identity and positioning Europe as a proactive actor on the international stage (Michael Merlingen and Rasa Ostrauskaite, 2008).

The late 1980s witnessed a fundamental shift in the architecture and discourse surrounding security matters, prompted by the collapse of Communism and the end of the Cold War, which necessitated a broader and more comprehensive understanding of security. Against this backdrop, the Treaty on European Union, adopted in 1992, constituted a significant endeavor to elucidate the concept of security, by transforming the EPC into the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (Michael Merlingen and Rasa Ostrauskaite, 2008). This initiative, predominantly led by France and Germany, sought to establish a more cohesive and coordinated approach to foreign policy and security matters within the EU. The inception of the CFSP occurred concurrently with the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the continuation of hostilities, which defied the expectation of post-Cold War global tranquility (Howorth, 2014). The demise of the Berlin Wall led to a profound alteration in Europe's position within the security milieu. Following the Cold War, the bipolarity of security providers vanished, leading to Europe's transition from a security consumer to a security provider (Tardy, 2009). As such, Brussels aspired to assume the role of a peacemaker in the Balkans and enhance its influence and involvement as a security actor. The outbreak of violence in the former Yugoslavia and the EU's inability to prevent bloodshed in Croatia and Bosnia served as a catalyst that highlighted the limitations of the EU's capacity and effectiveness as a security provider. The operations conducted in the Balkans suffered from a dearth of professionally trained armed forces, a lack of shared strategic culture, and inadequate capacity for deploying sufficient forces overseas. The Balkan conflicts constituted a formidable challenge for Europe, which proved too substantial and premature to manage, surpassing the EU's diplomatic and political capabilities (Charillon, 2005).

The Petersberg Tasks were a significant move towards reinforcing the CFSP, as they outlined a comprehensive set of military and security priorities. These priorities encompassed humanitarian and rescue operations, peacekeeping and peacemaking endeavors, as well as the deployment of combat forces in crisis management. This initiative resulted in a more cohesive

security policy, along with more clearly defined Common Strategies of the Union (McCormick, 2015). Following the adoption of the Petersberg Tasks in 1997 through the Amsterdam Treaty, the EU was deemed a military actor in principle (Treacher, 2004). At large, a significant number of Union elites were already in consensus regarding the development and enhancement of their role in the new post-Cold War security landscape. This endeavor involved the strengthening of their military capacity and a shift towards a more self-sufficient European security system (Treacher, 2004). The inception of the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) aimed to facilitate the use of American military resources by European forces through NATO, particularly in instances where the US exhibited minimal or no involvement. The primary objective of ESDI was to enable the deployment of military assets by the European Union during events like the Bosnian war. However, due to the US's lack of interest, the EU lacked the resources to do so. As observed by Howorth, the European Security and Defense Identity arrangement was "separable but not separate" (Howorth, 2014). Despite the absence of military involvement following the Cold War, Member States did not find themselves in a military response. The contribution of the Union to the European security landscape was largely symbolic, motivated by the promotion of democratization and liberalization of markets, rather than military operations. The Union's power was constructed in the promotion of non-military dimensions of security, rather than military ones.

In 1998, the French and British governments instigated a significant shift in the European Security and Defense Policy through the Saint-Malo Declaration (Charillon, 2005, p. 522). The declaration was prompted by the Kosovo crisis, which intensified Franco-British concerns regarding the need for an EU military capability. The declaration proposed that the EU should have greater autonomy in its security and defense policies and be able to independently develop and implement its policies without American intervention. Additionally, the declaration called for the establishment of new institutions to facilitate policy development and implementation and emphasized the need for credible military forces that could be deployed when necessary. These changes led to the creation of the Common European Security and Defense Policy (CESDP), which was separated from the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) due to its enhanced decision-making capabilities and greater autonomy. However, the lengthy acronym led to the CESDP being renamed the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), which was later rebranded as the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) following the 2009 Lisbon Treaty (Howorth, 2014, p. 8).

Before moving on to the Lisbon Treaty, it is important to look at the European Union's Security Strategy. In December 2003, the European Council approved the European Security

Strategy (ESS), which represents the primary strategic document concerning the European Union's external activities. This document, titled "A Secure Europe in a Better World," provides a comprehensive framework for comprehending the Union's role in security matters. As such, it constitutes a significant landmark in the development of the EU's security policy. However, for it to function as a fully-fledged grand strategy, it needs to be completed and EU strategic thinking needs to be deepened, particularly in the area of security and defense (Biscop, 2013).

The CSDP is described in the Treaty of Lisbon, also known as the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which entered into force in 2009. More specifically, the workings of the CSDP are explained in Title V (General provisions on the Union's external action and specific provisions on the common foreign and security policy), Chapter 2 (Specific provisions on the common foreign and security policy), Section 2 (Provisions on the common security and defense policy) of the Treaty of Lisbon. Section 2 comprises five articles: Articles 42 to 46 (Fact Sheets on the European Union, 2022). Paragraph 1 of Article 42 explains the CSDP as follows: "The common security and defense policy shall be an integral part of the common foreign and security policy. It shall provide the Union with an operational capacity drawing on civilian and military assets. The Union may use them on missions outside the Union for peace-keeping, conflict prevention and strengthening international security in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. The performance of these tasks shall be undertaken using capabilities provided by the Member States" (Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union, 2012). The treaty includes both a mutual assistance and a solidarity clause and allowed for the creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS) under the authority of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs & Security Policy/ Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP). The two distinct functions of the post give the HR/VP the opportunity to bring all the necessary EU assets together and to apply a "comprehensive approach" to EU crisis management (eeas.europa.eu).

Since the Treaty of Lisbon, several developments have occurred regarding evolution of the CSDP. Most importantly, the "Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy" presented by former HR/VP Mogherini in June 2016 laid the foundation to develop CSDP further. Finally, the Strategic Compass (2022) provides a shared assessment of the strategic environment in which the EU is operating and of the threats and challenges the Union faces. The document makes concrete and actionable proposals, with a very precise timetable for implementation, in order to improve the EU's ability to act decisively in crises and to defend its security and its citizens. The Compass covers all the aspects of the security and

defense policy and is structured around four pillars: act, invest, partner and secure (eeas.europa.eu).

1.2. Objectives and principles of the CSDP

The objectives and principles of the CSDP are crucial in understanding how the EU seeks to address security challenges and contribute to global peace and security. To analyze the involvement of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law in crisis management operations, it is imperative to first identify the challenges and threats that the CSDP is addressing, along with the European Union's (EU) strategic security objectives. The European Security Strategy (ESS) document, which was adopted by the European Council in Brussels in December 2003 and titled "A Secure Europe in a Better World," underscores the existing global challenges and significant security threats while outlining the strategic objectives of the European Union (EU). The ESS report further examines the policy implications for the Union in response to these identified threats and objectives (Council of the European Union, 2003).

The European Security Strategy (ESS) marks the first endeavor by the European Council to provide comprehensive strategic direction for the Union's foreign and security policies (Muguruza, 2005). The ESS acknowledges that Europe must be prepared to share responsibility for global security and cooperate with the United States in creating a "better world." The ESS underscores the strong correlation between security, human rights, and the rule of law by affirming that "promoting good governance, supporting social and political reforms, combating corruption and abuse of power, establishing the rule of law, and safeguarding human rights are the most effective approaches to strengthening the international order (European Council, 2003)." To accomplish this, the strategy emphasizes the need to enhance activity, coherence, and capability, urging the union to align its objectives with its instruments, considering the various institutional reforms and ramifications of enlargement discussed in the European Convention and enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty.

The strategy document identifies several global challenges that may give rise to security concerns, while others are recognized as key threats. These key threats include terrorism, weapons of mass destruction proliferation, regional conflicts, failed states and organized crime. The document acknowledges that these factors, taken together, could pose a very radical threat to the European Union. In addition, the document identifies conflict, poverty, and diseases such as AIDS, competition for natural resources, and energy dependence as security concerns. In response to these challenges, the strategy sets out three strategic objectives: addressing the threats, building security in its neighbourhood, and promoting effective multilateralism (European Council, 2003). The geographic extent of missions and operations under the CSDP is a crucial aspect that requires consideration. While the ESS explicitly emphasizes the importance of ensuring lasting security in the EU's neighboring regions as one of its strategic

objectives, the actual implementation of CSDP missions and ongoing operations has demonstrated that the potential scope of these actions is not primarily limited to those specific areas. A notable trend since the early 2000s has been the expansion of both the regional and substantive scope of CSDP missions, indicating an increased necessity and external demand for CSDP engagement beyond the immediate neighboring regions of the EU (European Council, 2003). To achieve these objectives, the ESS outlines the need to enhance the EU's military and civilian crisis management capabilities through the CSDP, as well as the transformation of military forces. The 2008 report on the implementation of the European Security Strategy reaffirms the need for the EU to be more capable, coherent, and active, while also highlighting new challenges (consilium.europa.eu, 2008).

It is believed that European Union Global Strategy (EUGS), adopted in 2016, sets out the EU's vision and objectives for its external action, including the CSDP. From the perspective of the objectives of the CSDP, the EUGS provides a comprehensive framework for the EU to achieve its security and defence goals (eeas.europa.eu, 2016).

According to EUGS, one of the main objectives of the CSDP is to strengthen the EU's security and defence capabilities. The EUGS recognizes the need for the EU to develop more integrated and coordinated security and defence policies, including the development of a European Defence Action Plan. It also calls for greater cooperation between the EU and NATO to enhance security in Europe. Another important objective of the CSDP is to contribute to the prevention and resolution of conflicts and crises, both within and beyond Europe's borders. The EUGS underscores the importance of conflict prevention and the need for the EU to develop a more proactive and preventive approach to crises. It also highlights the need for the EU to play a greater role in crisis management, including through its civilian and military missions and operations .

The EUGS recognizes the need for the EU to be an active player in global security governance and calls for the EU to work with its partners to promote international peace and security. The EUGS similarly emphasizes the need for the EU to strengthen its partnerships, both with its immediate neighbors and with other regional and global actors. It also calls for the EU to engage in more comprehensive and strategic partnerships, including through capacity-building, joint exercises, and crisis response (eeas.europa.eu, 2016).

Another significant document is "A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence (2022)" which highlights several objectives and principles that are relevant to the CSDP of the EU. A Strategic Compass is a policy document released by the EU that outlines the EU's vision for security and defence. Strategic Compass underscores that it is important to strengthen the EU's

resilience and ability to respond to threats and challenges. The document points out the importance of ensuring that the EU's defence industry remains competitive, which is also relevant to the CSDP's goal of promoting defence cooperation and supporting the development of the European defence industry. In terms of principles, the Strategic Compass highlights the importance of a comprehensive approach to security, which is also a key principle of the CSDP (eeas.europa.eu, 2022). This involves addressing security challenges in a holistic manner, considering political, economic, social, and environmental factors. Furthermore, the Strategic Compass highlights the importance of EU's strategic autonomy. This involves strengthening the EU's ability to act independently, which is consistent with the CSDP's objective of enhancing the EU's capacity to act as a security provider. The CSDP also recognizes the importance of strategic autonomy for the EU in the field of security and defense. This involves developing the EU's own capabilities to act autonomously in crisis management and conflict prevention, as well as reducing the EU's dependence on external actors. Strategic autonomy enables the EU to respond more effectively to security challenges and contributes to the development of a more robust and resilient EU security and defense architecture.

Furthermore, since this study examines the effectiveness of CSDP civilian missions, an overview of their objectives is important. Initially, there were doubts among certain EU member states regarding the effectiveness of establishing civilian crisis management capabilities within the framework of the CSDP. However, the Nordic states, advocating for an EU capacity to deploy civilians on missions, have been vindicated by subsequent developments. The growth of civilian CSDP since 1999 has coincided with an increased demand for assistance in strengthening the rule of law in post-conflict states. The EU's civilian monitoring missions in Aceh and Georgia have demonstrated the effectiveness of relatively small, unarmed missions in supporting the implementation of peace agreements. Additionally, garnering support from member states for civilian missions has been relatively easier compared to military operations, as they are less expensive, less dangerous, and less controversial. The skepticism surrounding military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan has led to a growing recognition among EU states of the importance of state-building in achieving lasting peace and promoting development. Initial reservations held by certain EU member states regarding the establishment of a distinct civilian dimension of CSDP have been proven unfounded. On the contrary, the early history of CSDP has shown that civilian missions have been a valuable and adaptable instrument, enabling the EU to provide support for peace processes in ways that would have been challenging using military or other EU aid instruments. Civilian missions have now become the preferred tool for

member states when faced with internal or external demands to visibly address crises, assist post-conflict states in recovery, or tackle violent challenges (Gourlay, 2013).

To sum up, the CSDP is a crucial component of the EU's foreign policy, aimed at promoting peace and stability both within and outside the EU's borders. The objectives and principles of the CSDP highlight the EU's commitment to multilateralism, the rule of law, and human rights, as well as civilian-military cooperation and strategic autonomy. By promoting these values, the EU can make a significant contribution to global peace and security.

1.3. Institutional framework and main actors involved in the CSDP

For a policy domain to operate effectively, it necessitates not only a delineation of guiding principles, objectives, and responsibilities, but also an appropriate institutional framework and interconnecting mechanisms among its various stakeholders to ensure optimal functionality. From a legal standpoint, the Treaty on European Union's Article 24.1 outlines the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and its constituent Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) as a policy area that is "subject to specific rules and procedures (eur-lex.europa.eu, 2012)." This "specific" reference acknowledges that Member States have not transferred their sovereignty over security and defence matters to the European level. The European Council and the Council have been granted the highest decision-making power in this area. This decision-making process, which is based on unanimity voting, is in line with every non-supranational aspect and decision. According to article 42.4 of the Treaty, which pertains specifically to the CSDP, decisions "shall be adopted by the Council acting unanimously on a proposal from the High Representative (HR) of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy or an initiative from a Member State (eur-lex.europa.eu, 2012)." In other words, in addition to the European Council and the Council, the High Representative and the Member States constitute the principal actors shaping the CSDP.

When decisions concerning specific actions are made, several subordinate institutional bodies, agencies, and institutionalized mechanisms come into play. The institutional framework of the CSDP contributes to the planning, decision-making, and implementation of the missions and operations. These include the European Defence Agency (EDA), the European External Action Service (EEAS), the EU Special Representatives (EUSRs), the Political and Security Committee (PSC), and its associated entities, such as the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) and its civilian equivalent, the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) (Alexander, 2012).

The European Union Member States constitute the primary institutional actor in the CSDP framework, possessing complete sovereignty and control over their security and defence policies. Their crucial role in the CSDP is undeniable, as they hold individual veto power during the decision-making process and their collective consensus in the Council determines the possibility and method of external CSDP actions and the future trajectory of the policy field. Moreover, the Member States are also a driving force behind further integration steps in the CSDP, as outlined in Article 42.4 of the Treaty on European Union (eur-lex.europa.eu, 2012). However, their tendency to retain a significant level of sovereignty, particularly in sensitive

areas such as security and defence, is more pronounced than their sporadic efforts to propose new initiatives that can attain the unanimity threshold of the Council (Coelmont, 2013).

As the second high-level actor in the CSDP, the HR is responsible for the development, implementation, and execution of the EU's external actions related to security and defence (consilium.europa.eu, 2009). The HR does not only chair the Foreign Affairs Council in its role as the main coordinator of the CFSP and CSDP but is also the Vice-President of the European Commission (eur-lex.europa.eu, 2012). The HR's double-hatted role as both a supranational and intergovernmental actor affords them a unique position to carry out their duties as the primary coordinator of the EU's external actions comprehensively. As a result, the HR is able to exercise significant influence over the entire spectrum of EU external actions. Important supporting body of the HR is the EU Special Representatives. Despite originating separately from CFSP frameworks, the responsibilities of representatives are intricately linked to the management of crises under the CSDP. As special envoys, EUSRs are dispatched to advance and execute EU policies in areas or nations facing turmoil, and to engage in mediating efforts during conflict or post-conflict scenarios. Consequently, their proactive involvement on the ground holds significant importance in initiating and carrying out CSDP operations or missions.

The third and by far greatest differentiated actor is the Council and its associated institutional bodies. These institutional bodies include Political and Security Committee (PSC), European Union Military Committee (EUMC) Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) and Politico-Military Group (PMG).

The most important of these was, and still is, the PSC, which was enshrined in the Treaty of Nice, modified by the Treaty of Lisbon, under Article 25: *Political and Security Committee shall monitor the international situation in the areas covered by the common foreign and security policy and contribute to the definition of policies by delivering opinions to the Council at the request of the Council or on its own initiative (eur-lex.europa.eu). It shall also monitor the implementation of agreed policies [and] shall exercise, under the responsibility of the Council and of the High Representative, the political control and strategic direction of the crisis management operations referred to in Article 28B (Howorth, 2012).* PSC is responsible for managing all aspects of the CFSP/CSDP. However, according to interviews conducted with both current and former ambassadors, the PSC's most effective operations occur within its "core business," which pertains to the strategic planning, meticulous preparation, and thorough supervision of civilian or military missions (Sven Biscop, Richard G. Whitman, 2013).

The EUMC is the most prominent military entity of the EU. It is created within the Council and comprises officially of the Chiefs of the Defence Staff (CHODs) of the member

states, who convene no less than twice a year. However, in practice, their military representatives (MILREPs) usually attend, who commonly serve as both their nation's NATO representative and MILREP. This Committee quickly established itself as an essential mechanism in the policymaking procedure. Its primary purpose is to provide recommendations to the European Council. The EUMC is the designated 'forum for consultation and cooperation between the member states in the field of conflict prevention and crisis management'. Its advice and recommendations pertain to: *the evolution of the general idea of crisis management in relation to its military components; the management and direction of crisis management activities and scenarios through political control and strategic planning; the evaluation of potential crisis risks; the military aspect of a crisis situation and its consequences, particularly during its aftermath management; the development, appraisal, and revision of capability targets in accordance with established protocols* (Sven Biscop, Richard G. Whitman, 2013). The EUMC assumes a pivotal role in shaping decisions during crisis management scenarios by formulating and assessing strategic military alternatives, supervising the development of operational strategies, and scrutinizing mission operations. Furthermore, the EUMC is tasked with providing recommendations concerning the conclusion of an operation.

In parallel with the EUMC, the PSC is advised by a CIVCOM. This committee provides information, drafts recommendations, and expresses its opinion on civilian aspects of crisis management to the PSC (Hauser, 2013).

The PMG performs preliminary tasks pertaining to the CSDP on behalf of the PSC, which involves addressing the political dimensions of the Union's civil-military affairs, such as strategies, abilities, missions, and actions. The PMG provides suggestions to the PSC, drafts conclusions for the Council, contributes to policy development, and facilitates information sharing. Additionally, the PMG bears responsibility for the EU's partnerships. The PMG comprises delegates from the Member States and is overseen by a representative of the HR/VP (eeas.europa.eu, n.d.).

EEAS functions as the diplomatic arm of the EU, tasked with overseeing the Union's foreign and security policies while maintaining coherence and efficacy. The primary goal of the EEAS is to enhance the EU's global influence in these areas through strategic management of diplomatic relations. The inception of the EEAS came into effect in 2011, following its mandated creation in the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon. This diplomatic entity comprises various thematic desks staffed by adept personnel who have been transferred from other EU institutions. Additionally, it encompasses Union Delegations located around the world, functioning similarly to that of an embassy. The EEAS operates under the leadership of the High

Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who also serves as the Vice President. One of the main responsibilities of EEAS is ensuring security through the CSDP (Service, n.d.).

The European Union Military Staff (EUMS) serves as the primary source of multi-disciplinary military expertise within the EEAS. It is tasked with coordinating military instruments, particularly in relation to operations and missions that require military support, as part of an integrated approach. The EUMS is responsible for establishing military capabilities and overseeing the EU Operations Centre. Its activities encompass a wide range of tasks, including early warning, situation assessment, strategic planning, training, education, concept development, and partnership support. The EUMS operates under the overall authority of the High Representative/Vice President and is directed by the EUMC.

The Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) constitutes a permanent structure within the EEAS, designated to oversee the independent operational execution of civilian CSDP operations. The CPCC operates under the political supervision and strategic guidance of the Political and Security Committee and is subject to the ultimate authority of the High Representative. It is responsible for the efficient planning and implementation of civilian CSDP crisis management operations, as well as ensuring the appropriate execution of all mission-related duties.

The EDA came into existence in 2004 with the aim of facilitating the advancement of defense capabilities and military cooperation within the EU. Its main objectives include the promotion of research and development in defense, the encouragement of armaments cooperation, the prioritization and planning of capabilities in Europe, and the creation of a competitive marketplace for defense equipment. The EDA operates under the leadership of the High Representative/Vice President and its steering board comprises the defense ministers of the Member States (Fiott, D. & Bund, J., 2018).

Chapter II. The Effectiveness of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy in the Eastern Neighbourhood

2.1. Overview of the Eastern neighbourhood and key security challenges facing the region

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) has emerged as a prominent area of research within the realm of European Union (EU) external relations and analysis of European foreign policy, after its initiation in 2004 (Schumacher, 2018). The ENP has assumed a preeminent position as the most crucial and extensive foreign policy instrument of the European Union (EU) during approximately the preceding twenty years. ENP was originally conceived as a replacement for the enlargement process, with the primary objective of granting countries situated at the external borders of the EU, without any prospect of accession, with enhanced economic and political ties. The ENP, both as a practice and as a field of study, addresses a highly heterogeneous group of countries (Schumacher, 2018). The states located in the Eastern neighbourhood have been included in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) initiative, which has been offered since 2008. The countries covered by the Eastern Partnership are Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Belarus (Richard G. Whitman and Stefan Wolff, 2010). Poland proposed in May 2008 that the union with the six Eastern and Caucasian countries participating in the ENP should have closer ties. The EU's neighbourhood policy involved formulating a bilateral action plan in conjunction with each country, which was subsequently endorsed by both the EU and the Cooperation Council of the respective country. This plan was constructed in accordance with the principles espoused by the EU, which prioritized political dialogue, the implementation of reforms, the advancement of good governance, the transition to a single market, and collaboration on matters pertaining to justice and domestic affairs (Tuka, 2019). Ever since the launch of the ENP and the EaP Initiative, the EU has been seeking ways to make its policies more sustainable that is more effective and legitimate in the increasingly complex and contested environment of the eastern region (Korosteleva, 2018). However, for nearly three decades, the Eastern region has been plagued by territorial or separatist disputes, posing a challenge to the EU's efforts to effectively address them. The affected countries have grown accustomed to enduring such circumstances, while Russia has become involved in nearly all conflicts that have arisen within the region.

The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan was the original “frozen” conflict of South Caucasus. Commencing in the latter part of 1987, approximately four years prior to the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan gradually escalated, reaching a critical juncture after the declaration of independence of both states in the

early months of 1992. The scope of the conflict expanded beyond the borders of the Nagorno-Karabakh region and engulfed numerous adjacent territories, ultimately resulting in significant instances of ethnic cleansing throughout the territories of both nations (Cornell, 2017). European involvement in the region began in 1992–94, when the OSCE Minsk Group was created to seek a peaceful resolution to the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. Initially, the format originally allowed for a single chairman. However, the OSCE acknowledged that the 1994 ceasefire was established through Russia's concurrent and independent mediation, prompting its decision in December of the same year to establish Russia as a permanent co-chair of the Group. Subsequently, France and the United States were also designated as co-chairs in 1997 (Cornell, 2017). In 1994, the relationship between Russia and Western members of the Minsk Group deteriorated significantly. The Russian faction leveled allegations against the Minsk Group of actively attempting to impede the sole meaningful peace initiative, whereas the Western group accused the Russian delegation of obstructing the establishment of a more inclusive alternative strategy (Waal, 2003). Considering Russia's attempts to mediate in this issue, it can be inferred that the prolonged conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh had allowed Russia to exert its influence and consolidate its position in the South Caucasus region. Russia's involvement in the Minsk Group, which was established to mediate the conflict, gave it a platform to engage in regional affairs and demonstrate its diplomatic capabilities. Additionally, the frozen conflict has also enabled Russia to maintain a degree of stability in the region and prevent the emergence of any significant geopolitical shifts that could challenge its interests. It also can be argued that Russia has a vested interest in the persistence of the Nagorno-Karabakh stalemate and is likely to continue playing a significant role in the resolution of the conflict.

Despite the continuation of the negotiation process mediated by the Minsk Group, in April 2016, the conflict escalated again on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border. These events showed, the intensity of violent clashes arguably merits its inclusion in the group of ongoing violent conflicts (Baev, 2017).

On the 27th of September 2020, tensions between the opposing sides reached a critical point, leading to a significant escalation in hostilities and ultimately triggering the commencement of the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War. The November agreement stopped the war that had lasted for 44 days in and around Nagorno-Karabakh. In accordance with the agreement, the Russian peacekeeping contingent was deployed to the region. Russia, having signed the agreement and acted as its mediator, made significant contributions to the enforcement of the ceasefire through the deployment of peacekeeping forces (Hayk Smbatyan and Heydar Isayev, 2022).

The noteworthy level of Russia's engagement in the region even subsequent to the war necessitates emphasizing the region's importance to Moscow, thereby highlighting the centrality of the region to Russian interests. Armenia and Azerbaijan is of interest to Russia both in terms of ensuring Russia's security and in terms of its economy. Armenia separates Türkiye from its major ally Azerbaijan and most importantly Türkiye from Central Asia. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict represented a significant and stabilizing danger that exerts influence over both sides, particularly Armenia. Global and regional powers and other states as well are paying increasing attention to the region (Naumkin, 2002). Moreover, mineral resources of Caspian Basin have formulated the geopolitics of region. It means that Russia, as a major regional player, is always interested in maintaining its influence over Azerbaijan and Armenia, both in conflict situations and in the peace process.

EU has faced a persistent challenge concerning its approach to managing relations with Azerbaijan and Armenia. During the 1990s, the EU primarily relied on the deployment of Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs), which are comparable to the agreements the EU negotiates with nations on a global scale. In 1999, the EU signed PCA with both Armenia and Azerbaijan, which contained a similar phrase in the introductory section of their respective preambles: *recognizing in that context that support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of [Armenia/Azerbaijan] will contribute to the safeguarding of peace and stability in Europe* (Cornell, 2017). Moreover, EU appointed a Special Representative for the South Caucasus. In the case of Armenia–Azerbaijan, the only instrument available to the EU is the EU Special Representative in the capacity of assisting in conflict resolution. Through the Eastern Partnership, the EU offered the Azerbaijan and Armenia the opportunity to negotiate Association Agreements with the EU, which included Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTA). It is observed that the engagement of the European Union with Azerbaijan and Armenia was focused more on economic relations.

The European Union's role in resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict had been notably limited and inconspicuous. The action plans endorsed by the EU with Armenia and Azerbaijan contain two divergent principles: the principle of "territorial integrity" in relation to Azerbaijan and the principle of "self-determination of nations" for Armenia. This fundamental contradiction considerably had diminished the prospects for implementing a cohesive strategy towards resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (Huseynli, 2011). Nonetheless, the situation underwent a complete transformation following the Second Karabakh war. After the Second Karabakh war, the EU has tried to closely participate in the negotiations between Azerbaijan and Armenia regarding the peace process to be signed in the future. On the 6th of April 2022,

Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev and Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, met in Brussels. The summit, organized by the European Union and mediated by European Council President Charles Michel, was the third EU-arbitrated discussion of the Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders. The summit held in Brussels marked the first time that the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan visited the European Union (EU) for the sole purpose of discussing their dispute. This meeting carried significant political and symbolic implications, as it underscored the EU's expanding role in mediating the Armenian-Azerbaijani peace process and presented a viable alternative to Moscow's involvement (Huseynov, 2022).

During the 1990s, the other South Caucasus state, Georgia underwent prolonged conflicts with an ethnic dimension. From 1992 to 1994, Georgia engaged in battles with separatist movements in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. However, Georgia was defeated, resulting in Abkhazia and South Ossetia becoming de facto independent states that are only partially recognized (Kupatadze, 2016). Despite being recognized by only six countries worldwide, the Republic of South Ossetia is regarded as a region that falls within the territory of Georgia under international law. The conflict that originated in the capital of Tskhinvali in 1989 led to the Georgian Soviet Republic's adoption of severe measures, including the suspension of South Ossetia's autonomous status in 1990, thereby separating it from North Ossetia. Subsequently, the escalation of hostilities following South Ossetia's declaration of independence in 1992 prompted Russian military intervention in the region (Cvetkovski, Dennis Sammut and Nikola, 1996).

To fill a political void and safeguard its autonomy, the Abkhazian Supreme Soviet reinstated Abkhazia's 1925 Constitution on July 23, 1992. This document linked Abkhazia and Georgia through a Treaty of Union and proposed discussing a federal structure for a new state with Georgia. However, Georgia insisted on a unitary state without any autonomies and refused to commence political negotiations with Abkhazia. Instead, Georgia chose to use force to resolve the issue. On August 14, 1992, Georgian troops invaded Abkhazia and bombarded the Abkhazian Parliament. This marked the beginning of the Georgian–Abkhazian war. The war, which resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives on both sides over a brief period, persisted with intermittent fighting until the middle of the summer of 1993. The tides of war shifted back and forth, yet the pro Abkhazian forces failed to seize control of Sukhumi, despite concerted efforts. The Russian military played a significant role in the encirclement of Sukhumi, regularly employing its planes and heavy artillery to bombard Georgian positions. Before long, the already depleted military strength of both belligerents was exhausted, and a ceasefire was brokered by Moscow on July 27, 1993. The terms of the ceasefire entailed the demilitarization

of Abkhazia, the withdrawal of Georgian troops from Abkhazia, and the disarmament of Abkhazian forces (Souleimanov, 2013).

While the issues of South Ossetia and Abkhazia pertain to distinct regions and power dynamics, they have typically been addressed in the context of Georgia's territorial integrity. These territorial disputes, which preclude Georgia's admission to the EU and NATO, also serve as Russia's foremost means of exerting influence over Georgia. To enhance better understanding of Russia's efforts to exert its influence over Georgia, it is crucial to retrospectively analyze 2008 war the events that led to this war.

On January 4, 2004, an extraordinary presidential election was held, in which Saakashvili, running virtually uncontested, won 96 percent of the votes cast. Thus, the course of the emergence of a novel administration with a pro-Western inclination was chronicled in the annals of history as the Rose Revolution. The Rose Revolution and its subsequent aftermath sparked a surge of hopefulness among the Georgian populace. However, upon assuming power, the newly established government was confronted with formidable hurdles. The administration inherited dilapidated and corrupt state institutions, destitution, and a lack of control over a significant portion of the country's territory.

After 2004, Tbilisi initiated a campaign aimed at garnering global attention towards the imperative for resolving the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, endeavoring to replace Russia's monopoly on negotiations and peacekeeping with EU involvement. Tbilisi became progressively forthright in its censure of Russia's methodology for resolving conflicts and its backing of the separatist authorities, accusing the Kremlin of deliberately perpetuating the unrest and exerting greater control over Georgia's territories. According to Tbilisi, Russia was a partial participant in the disputes and harbored no interest in resolving them. The Georgian government believed that by enlisting other external stakeholders in the conflict resolution process, Russia's patent partiality towards the separatists could be neutralized. In order to secure active EU participation in the process of conflict resolution in Georgia, the government in Tbilisi embarked on a campaign to publicize the existence of unresolved conflicts in the immediate vicinity of the European Union's borders and the dangers they posed for the EU itself (Nilsson, 2009).

In August 2008, the Russians and their separatist allies in Abkhazia and South Ossetia orchestrated and carried out a war that caught the Georgians off-guard and unprepared. The war endured with Russia's complete supremacy. As the holder of the EU's rotating presidency during that period, French President Nicolas Sarkozy led the diplomatic initiatives to terminate the war. August 15th, both Russian President Dmitri Medvedev and Georgian President Saakashvili

had signed a six-point ceasefire (Bryon Moraski & Magda Giurcanu, 2013). Agreement envisaged cessation of hostilities, the initiation of international talks concerning the withdrawal of armed forces, particularly the Russian troops, and the establishment of security and stability arrangements for Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Nichol, 2009). Despite the withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgian territory, Moscow designated the captured lands as a buffer zone and signed military cooperation pacts with regions it recognized as independent, augmenting its military presence in both areas.

EU had established the position of an EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus in 2003, which entailed participation in conflict resolution initiatives in Georgia. Conflict resolution was a major priority in the ENP Action Plan which was signed in 2006, that Georgia negotiated with the EU. The Commission has executed projects in Abkhazia and South Ossetia based on the Action Plan and funded by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). These projects have primarily focused on post-conflict reconstruction, with particular emphasis on areas situated along the administrative boundary lines (Grono, 2010). In September 2008, the Council made a deliberate decision to designate a Special Representative exclusively accountable for the situation in Georgia. Due to the prominent role played by France in brokering the ceasefire agreement, it was evident to policy-makers in Brussels and European capitals that the EU had to continue its engagement in managing the conflicts in Georgia (Bergmann, 2020). Prior to the war, the EU had demonstrated some reluctance in engaging in conflict management activities, but the situation had shifted dramatically, positioning the EU at the forefront of global efforts to address the situation (Bardakçı, 2010). However, not all initiatives have yielded the desired results, and the EU's effectiveness has fallen short of Moscow's within the context of this issue. Moreover, the EU's adversarial relationship with Russia has impeded its capacity to play an active role (Grono, 2010).

In Moldova, separatism on the eastern bank of the Dniester River, like South Ossetia, originated from language disputes. The regions of Transnistria and Gagauzia in Moldova encountered challenges with Chisinau due to ethnic conflicts. The affirmation of Moldovan as the official language by the Supreme Soviet of the Moldovan SSR in August 1989 provoked protests in Transnistria, culminating in a local assembly of deputies declaring the establishment of the Transnistrian Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova a year later. The outbreak of armed conflict occurred in March 1992, with the involvement of the 14th Soviet Army stationed in the area leading to the defeat of government troops. Facing dire circumstances, the Moldovan government was compelled to enter into an agreement with Russia in July 1992, titled "On the principles of a peaceful resolution of the armed conflict in Transnistria", when the commander

of the 14th Army, the renowned General Alexander Lebed, threatened to move his troops to the capital, Chisinau. In accordance with the agreement, a trilateral peacekeeping force was established, comprising 12 battalions in total, equally split between 6 from Russia and 6 from the conflicting parties (Jafarli, 2021).

In the early 2000s, Russia withdrew most of its heavy armed equipment and military troops from the area but maintained a limited military presence (Martin Nilsson and Daniel Silander, 2016). In 2003, Dmitry Kozak, the deputy chief of Russia's presidential administration, formulated a memorandum aimed at resolving a conflict. Kozak's proposal entailed the federalization of Moldova, the transformation of Transnistria and Gagauzia into federal entities, the retention of Russian military forces for a period of twenty years to ensure stability, and Moldova's adoption of a neutral and demilitarized stance. Initially, Moldovan President Vladimir Voronin endorsed the plan, but on the night of November 24, 2003, when he was scheduled to sign the document, he reversed his decision at the eleventh hour. According to Russia, this about-face was a result of Western pressure (Jafarli, 2021). The EU has tried to address the Transnistria conflict by integrating the disputed territory with Moldova through the ENP, but this approach failed to make any progress. Instead, the adoption of the new ENP association agreement with Moldova triggered a resurgence of hostilities. The EU-Moldova association agreement, which sought to further integrate Moldova with the EU, intensified tensions between the EU, Moldova, and Russia over Transnistria. Russia reacted negatively to Moldova's decision to seek greater EU integration, while Transnistria sought closer ties with Russia. Various efforts were made during Moldova's path to an EU association agreement to resolve the conflict, including the 5+2 talks involving representatives from Transnistria, Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), with the EU and the United States serving as observers (Martin Nilsson and Daniel Silander, 2016). Additionally, Transnistria was incorporated as a challenge in the EU/Moldova Action Plan (2005) to institutionalize the issue (EU/Moldova Action Plan, 2005).

At present, the process of conflict resolution has come to a standstill. Despite Moldova raising the matter of the withdrawal of Russian troops and peacekeepers immediately after the election of the new president, Maia Sandu, Moscow has firmly indicated that it will not acquiesce (Komakhia, 2020). Furthermore, negotiations in the 5+2 format have not taken place since 2018.

Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, there have been persistent political tensions between the adjacent states of Ukraine and Russia concerning various issues. These include disputes over the status of Crimea, the apportionment of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet between

the two nations, the rights of the Russian Black Sea Fleet to utilize Sevastopol as a base, Russian usage of military facilities in Crimea, as well as the number and status of Russian military personnel on Ukrainian territory. Beginning in 1991, Moscow has clandestinely supported and directed the actions of Russian separatists in Crimea and has maintained a substantial contingent of its own civilian and military intelligence operatives. Presumably, Russian contingency plans for annexing Crimea were crafted as early as two decades ago and have been regularly updated ever since (Bebler, 2015).

In July of 1994, Leonid Kuchma was elected as the President of Ukraine, with the support of voters from the country's eastern regions. Kuchma's tenure saw a marked improvement in Ukraine's previously strained relationship with Russia, culminating in the signing of a Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership between the two nations in 1997 (Aslund, 2015).

Towards the end of 2004, the Orange Revolution emerged as a widespread demonstration opposing the purportedly deceitful presidential elections in Ukraine, allegedly manipulated by Viktor Yanukovych and his allies in a bid to secure his ascent to power. Subsequently, a fresh election was conducted and won by the democratically inclined western factions led by President Viktor Yushchenko and Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko (Aslund, 2015). By the end of the Orange Revolution in January 2005, it looked as though Ukraine had made a decisive turn westward (D'Anieri, 2019). Adrian Karatnycky argues at the time that it "set a major new landmark in the post-communist history of eastern Europe, a seismic shift Westward in the geopolitics of the region". Ukraine's revolution was just the latest in a series of victories for "people power"-in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia in the late 1980s and, more recently, in Serbia and Georgia. (Karatnycky, 2005).

The decision to annex Crimea at an advantageous moment was likely reached in 2008, soon after NATO, during its Bucharest summit, pledged future membership in the alliance to Ukraine. Plans for a military incursion were probably postponed temporarily after Victor Yanukovich was elected president of Ukraine. The infiltration of Russian nationals into high-level government positions, Ukraine's increasing financial reliance on Russia, and the enhanced integration of the two nations' military-industrial complexes have likely decreased the urgency of annexation. On February 22, 2014, the situation took a sudden turn when President Yanukovich and a cluster of high-level Ukrainian officials closely linked to the Russian security services abruptly departed from Ukraine, ostensibly due to concerns for their safety. The subsequent temporary power vacuum and prevailing disarray in Kyiv provided an optimal

opening for the Kremlin to implement the latest iteration of its emergency strategies for seizing control of Crimea (Bebler, 2015).

The EU's relations with the Russian Federation have deteriorated because of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sebastopol and the destabilization of eastern Ukraine (European Commission, 2015). In 2013, there was an abrupt deterioration in relations due to the European Union's negotiations with Eastern Partnership nations regarding their association agreements. Prior to this, Russia had not expressed any opposition to these negotiations. In March 2014, Russia annexed Crimea, in breach of international law, and allegedly fomented separatist uprisings in the eastern Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk (Russell, 2016). The EU and its member states perceived the annexation of Crimea as an endeavor to undermine European security. In April 2014, pro-Russian groups in Luhansk and Donetsk instigated a conflict with the objective of seceding from Ukraine and unifying with Russia through a public vote, like the referendum in Crimea. Despite Putin's denial until April 2015, there was clear evidence of Russian soldiers collaborating with the militants and receiving regular supplies of Russian weaponry (Tuka, 2019). The EU responded in July 2014 by implementing a set of sanctions against Russia. The EU justified its imposition of sanctions on Russia by citing its backing of separatist factions that jeopardize Ukraine's sovereignty, along with the unlawful annexation of Crimea in breach of international law.

The intensifying conflict in East Ukraine was initially addressed during the EU-Ukraine-Russia negotiations in September 2014. A ceasefire agreement was subsequently negotiated in Minsk, Belarus, yet it was not upheld. Five months later, Minsk II was established as a more comprehensive truce, but it proved to be unstable. As the second agreement failed to yield satisfactory outcomes, the armed conflict persisted in the region.

Yet, after the Russian annexation of Crimea and the war in Ukraine's Donbas region, EU member states disagreed over how to deal with Russia in the future. The 2016 Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy reaffirmed the expectation that Russia would comply with international law and adhere to the principles upon which the European security system is established, referencing the 1990 Charter of Paris and the 1994 Budapest Memorandum (Meister, 2022). At the same time, the union emphasized the agreement among member states to seek selective engagement with Russia that is, cooperation in areas of common interest.

On February 24, 2022, the latest wave of hostilities between Ukraine and Russia began when Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his troops to launch a major, multifaceted invasion of Ukraine. The extensive scale of the attack, labeled by Putin as a "special military

operation," indicated that Moscow's objectives were to rapidly seize Kyiv, likely ousting the government, and occupy a significant portion, if not two-thirds of the eastern half of Ukraine (Pifer, 2022). The EU and its member states strongly condemn Russia's brutal war of aggression against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions. They also condemned Belarus' involvement in Russia's military aggression (European Council, 2022).

Developments following the disintegration of the Soviet Union have generated new questions regarding the position of Belarus within the global community. Against the backdrop of a broader process of political democratization taking place throughout the region, Belarus has seemingly appeared in the opposite direction, towards a progressively oppressive form of executive governance. Such developments have led Western policymakers to label it as "the last remaining true dictatorship in the heart of Europe" (Roy Allison, Stephen White and Margot Light, 2005). Russia's relationship with Belarus is closer than that of any other post-Soviet republic. During the mid-1990s, a reintegration process was suggested, with the eventual aim of establishing a union state between Russia and Belarus, resulting in complete political, military, and economic integration. However, disagreements over the framework of the union, coupled with the uneasy relationship between Belarusian President Alexandr Lukashenka and Russian President Vladimir Putin, have hindered any meaningful advancement. Despite its military achievements, the Russia-Belarus union, which forms the foundation of Russia-Belarus relations, has been viewed as an overall failure (Ambrosio, 2006).

In the wake of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, the Kremlin has consistently sought to extend its influence over Belarus. However, this approach has backfired, as Belarusian government policy became progressively more independent during the period of 2014-2015. Both Russia and Belarus have expressed an interest in maintaining integration, although their commitment to this goal is often superficial or expressed in rhetoric rather than concrete action. Nevertheless, Russia views Belarus as politically and economically significant, and intends to keep Minsk within its sphere of influence for the foreseeable future. Meanwhile, Belarus depends on Russia for economic support and assistance in addressing its ongoing economic challenges and is not yet prepared for complete independence from its larger neighbor (Ryhor Astapenia and Dzmitry Balkunets, 2016).

To sum up Russia is analyzed as a former hegemonic power striving to sustain its dominance over its former imperial territories. Starting from demise of the Soviet Union, Russia's approach towards its former republics has been based on the notion that its security is closely linked to the fate of these nations. The concept of the "near abroad," firstly introduced

by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the 1990s, reflects the ambiguous relationship that has evolved between Russia and the newly independent nations of the post-Soviet region (Delcour, 2017). Russia and its policies in its 'near abroad' have often been portrayed as a security threat to Europe, especially after the war in Georgia in 2008 and certainly since the Ukrainian conflict of 2013. It is noticeable that the more assertive Russia is in the neighbourhood, the more the EU intensifies its security policies and actions towards the region (Licinia Simão and Vanda Amaro Dias, 2016). As indicated in the 2015 review of the EU's ENP, in line with the EU's comprehensive approach to external conflict and crises, all means available will be used, including – where necessary, CSDP missions and operations or the EU's Special Representatives – to support the management of crises and the settlement of protracted conflicts in the neighbourhood. The frameworks established within the EU's security and defense architecture provide a platform for the sharing of best practices, collaborative efforts towards shared objectives, and the development of capabilities. As such, these structures are expected to stimulate renewed cooperation in matters concerning the CSDP (European Commission, 2015).

2.2. CSDP Operations in the Eastern Neighbourhood

The EU's deployment of its CSDP mechanisms in its eastern neighbourhood must be interpreted considering both the ENP and the EaP, as well as in relation to significant political advancements occurring within the region. The establishment of the European Union Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) to Moldova and Ukraine, as well as EUJUST Themis in Georgia, occurred in 2005 and 2004, respectively, in the wake of the "colour revolutions" in Eastern Europe, which led to the ascension of reform-minded, pro-European governments. The creation of the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) to Georgia was a result of a similarly groundbreaking, yet largely negative, occurrence in the region: the August 2008 conflict between Russia and Georgia. After 2014 European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) to Ukraine was one of the EU's measures taken in response to the crisis in Ukraine (Dimitris Bouris and Madalina Dobrescu, 2018). Lastly, the EU established EUMA in response to an official request made by the Armenian authorities in December 2022 to deploy a full-fledged EU civilian mission on the ground (EU Mission in Armenia, 2023).

EUJUST Themis was the first rule of law mission deployed by the EU under the ESDP, and the first ever ESDP operation in the post Soviet space (Kurowska, 2009). Although the mission did not directly contribute to conflict resolution, its purpose was to demonstrate the Union's backing of Georgia's democratization efforts following the Rose Revolution and also aid in consolidating stability in the region (Dimitris Bouris and Madalina Dobrescu, 2018). Themis, as the inaugural operation carried out in the former Soviet Union, was seen as a crucial test for the European Union's (EU) relations with Russia (Helly, 2006).

The operative plan for the mission outlined a tripartite strategy that emphasized targeted objectives across three successive phases. These were the assessment of the Georgian criminal justice system, the drafting of a reform strategy and the formulation of a plan for the implementation of the reform strategy (Kurowska, 2009). The primary objective of Themis, which was to draft the criminal justice strategy, was beset with complications due to the postponement in creating the working groups and the persistent alterations in their membership. Frequent substitutions of the mission's counterparts led to sporadic convocations of the working groups and a general lack of dedication on the part of Georgian authorities to participate in the drafting process (Dimitris Bouris and Madalina Dobrescu, 2018). During the initial period of Saakashvili's administration following the Rose Revolution, the political environment was unstable and presented notable obstacles to the successful operation of the mission. Saakashvili's government undertook a comprehensive campaign against corruption, which included purging personnel within the public administration, judiciary, and prosecution who

were affiliated with the previous regime of Shevardnadze (Michael Merlingen and Rasa Ostrauskaitė, 2009). As a result, any significant reforms that could have reinforced the independence of Georgia's judiciary were thwarted.

The EUBAM to Moldova and Ukraine, being the EU's second mission to be deployed in the post-Soviet region, can be considered as a way of broadening the range of options available to the EU for civilian crisis management (Dura, 2009). It has an EUBAM Office in Moldova and five field offices – two on the Moldovan side of the joint border and three on the Ukrainian side. The present mandate of the EUBAM mission directs it to collaborate with Moldova and Ukraine in the process of aligning their border controls, customs and trade standards, and procedures with those adopted by EU member states. Additionally, the mission is required to enhance cross-border cooperation among the border guard, customs agencies, and other law enforcement bodies, as well as facilitate international coordinated cooperation. The mission is also expected to assist Moldova and Ukraine in fulfilling their obligations under the DCFTA as stipulated in their Association Agreements with the EU. Furthermore, the mission aims to contribute to the peaceful resolution of the Transnistrian conflict by implementing confidence-building measures and monitoring the Transnistrian segment of the Moldova-Ukraine border (Zaremba, 2017).

In the case of the EUBAM mission, it was apparent that there existed a competitive dynamic between the Council and the Commission. In technical terms, EUBAM is not a fully-fledged CSDP mission, but rather a hybrid operation, as it is managed by the European Commission rather than the European Council, which is the standard practice for CSDP missions. The European EEAS tends to categorize EUBAM along with other CSDP missions despite its hybrid nature. The process for establishing EUBAM followed a traditional CSDP mechanism, with a joint letter from President of Ukraine Viktor Yushenko and President of the Republic of Moldova Vladimir Voronin requesting the EU to create a mission to assist in providing customs control on the Transnistrian segment of the Moldovan-Ukrainian state border (Council of the European Union, 2005). Prior to its establishment, there was a debate between the European Commission and the European Council regarding the institutional affiliation of the EUBAM mission. This was due to the dual nature of the mission, which involved not only technical assistance, but also political and security issues related to the Transnistria conflict (Dura, 2009). Ariella Huff argues that the EU initially intended to deploy a CSDP mission to the Moldova-Ukraine border, but France and Germany were not willing to support a political CSDP project in the region (Huff, 2011). Thus, the mission's dual nature was reflected in its "hybrid" institutional structure, where the Commission is responsible for the mission's funding,

management, and execution, but closely cooperates with political oversight from the EU Council and its Member States. Being a purely advisory mission which lacks executive powers, EUBAM is not involved in the political negotiation process, but is expected to contribute to conflict settlement 'by strengthening border control and border surveillance in Moldova and Ukraine, thus reducing possible security threats emanating from this region' (Transnistria) (Dobrescu, 2015). The mission is expected to contribute to the peaceful settlement of the Transnistrian conflict by participating in the official international negotiation mechanism known as the 5+2 process and its related expert working groups. As interview within the EUBAM indicated that this task, as well as the overall scope and ambition of the mission, exceeded the general level of EU cooperation with eastern neighbors at the time of its launch in 2005, both within the framework of the ENP and the then-active bilateral Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) (Tracey German and Andriy Tyushka, 2022).

EUMM operates in a highly challenging political environment, having been deployed within less than eight weeks after the outbreak of the August 2008 war, to monitor the implementation of the ceasefire between Georgia and Russia (Dimitris Bouris and Madalina Dobrescu, 2018). President Sarkozy assumed the role of European mediator representing the French presidency of the EU during the negotiation of a ceasefire between Russia and Georgia. The outcome of the negotiation was a six-point peace plan: abstain from the use of force; cease hostility definitively; assure free access for humanitarian assistance; Georgian military forces should withdraw to their usual places of deployment; Russian military forces should withdraw to the lines preceding the outbreak of hostilities; and opening of international discussions on the modalities of security and stability in Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Maria Raquel Freire, 2015). The French Presidency of the EU organized an exceptional meeting of the European Council on September 1, 2008, in Brussels, where the six-point ceasefire agreement was endorsed, and the deployment of a CSDP mission was decided to oversee the implementation of the plan. The mandate of the EUMM was extensive and aimed to aid in stabilizing, normalizing, and building confidence, while also providing valuable insight into European policy that supports a long-lasting political resolution for Georgia. This was to be accomplished through the civilian monitoring of the parties' actions and ensuring full compliance with the six-point agreement (Council of the European Union, 2008). The leadership of the Council played a critical role during the French EU presidency. The mission was set up in a record time-frame, initiating its monitoring activities on 1 October 2008, as recommended by the Council of the European Union. Scholars have pointed out the deployment of EUMM as an example of how the intergovernmental dimension of the EU's CSDP may not hinder effective decision-making

and implementation (Maria Raquel Freirea and L cinia Sim o, 2013). It is important to note that the situation in Georgia was unique, as it involved several factors that led to a rapid consensus among EU member states to deploy a mission. According to one ambassador in the Political and Security Committee (PSC), these factors included the perception that the crisis was significant for the EU's neighbourhood, the effective leadership of the French presidency of the EU, the significant impact of the war on EU-Russia relations, Russia's acceptance of the EU as a crisis manager in the post-Soviet space, the inability of the US to act as a mediator, and pressure from European public opinion to address the crisis and demonstrate the EU's ability to manage crises and facilitate political settlements (Maria Raquel Freirea and L cinia Sim o, 2013).

The agreement that put an end to the 2008 war did not provide a clear identification of the exact demarcation line between the parties involved, and since then, Russia has been attempting to challenge the Georgian authorities through a process called "borderisation." This involves the installation of physical infrastructure such as fencing and barbed wire along the Administrative Boundary Line (ABL) that separates the territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, without the consent of the Georgian side (Kornely Kakachia, 2017). The process of 'borderisation' along the ABL between Abkhazia and South Ossetia involves multiple layers, including physical barriers like fences, trenches, and signs, increased surveillance through electronic and physical means, and the construction of infrastructure such as bases for Russian border guards. Since 2017, this process has intensified, resulting in the installation of at least 66km of fences along the South Ossetian ABL, according to the EUMM. Borderisation has had significant impacts on rural communities, dividing villages and families and hindering the free movement of people, animals, and goods, leading to destabilization of the area. The practice of borderisation in Georgia has not only resulted in security consequences, but also has symbolic implications. As Kakachia holds, it serves to demonstrate to the Georgian government and people that Russia has the power to exert more control over Georgian territory, thereby highlighting the inability of Tbilisi and the EU to counteract Russian dominance (Kornely Kakachia, 2017).

The Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) was set up in February 2009 with the aim of resolving day-to-day issues and taking practical steps to solve problems which occur along the ABL. The meetings are held in a tent on the ABL near the capital of South Ossetia, Tskhinvali, and are jointly chaired by the EUMM and OSCE, with logistical support provided by the EUMM. The EUMM has also established hotlines, where designated individuals can inform the mission of any incidents such as detentions or shootings. The EUMM

can then work with both sides for a resolution while maintaining its strict impartiality (Lewington, 2013). The preferential (mis)fit of the de facto regimes in South Ossetia and Abkhazia is shaped by their need for international recognition and legitimacy and by their total dependence on Russia, which explains the inconsistent and at times obstructive behaviour in the context of the IPRMs (Dobrescu, 2015).

The Ukrainian crisis between 2013 and 2015, which involved the illegal occupation of Ukraine's territory (Crimea) and its annexation to Russia, as well as the subsequent hybrid Russian aggression against Ukraine in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions, had significant implications for European and global security. The crisis represented the most significant threat to European security since the end of the Cold War. The Russian aggression against Ukraine, the occupation of Crimea, and the events in eastern Ukraine highlighted the inadequacy and ineffectiveness of the European and global security systems, raising questions about the possibility of sustainable development in the region (Gladyshev, 2016).

As the domestic discontent in Ukraine in November 2013 grew into an international conflict following Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014, the EU started considering the dispatch of a CSDP mission to Ukraine. This mission was essential in aiding the Ukrainian government in implementing important reforms in the civilian security sector (Council of the European Union, 2014). EUAM began its deployment on 1 December 2014, with an initial mandate of two years. Its objective was to collaborate with law enforcement agencies, including the police and border guards, as well as institutions that promote the rule of law. Although EUAM was not originally designed with a specific conflict resolution mandate, its deployment on the ground was intended to serve as a political statement of support to Kiev and as a strategy to provide a soft balancing approach towards Russia (Nováky, 2015). The deployment of EUAM is expected to challenge Russia's influence in two ways: firstly, by enhancing the Ukrainian state's ability to withstand domestic and external pressures, and secondly, by demonstrating political support for the Ukrainian government and people during their ongoing struggle.

EUAM has expanded its operations beyond Kiev to the Lviv region, where it maintains a full-time presence, and is increasing its activities in the Kharkiv region. However, the mission's limited size and budget, as well as Ukraine's size and potential for further geographic expansion, present significant constraints. Additionally, comprehensive reforms face resistance from ministers, which is a typical challenge for anticorruption measures and must be addressed if Ukraine is to "de-sovietize" its civilian security sector and achieve overall mission success (Jan Jakub Chromiec and Nicole Koenig, 2015).

In practice, despite imposing strong economic and political sanctions on Russia and providing financial aid to Ukraine, the EU has not taken much action as a community to address the Ukrainian crisis. The crisis has highlighted the EU's "expectations gap" in its CSDP (Bambals, 2015). As Menon and Rumer pointed out, it is important to recognize that the EU's support and commitment to Ukraine through the civilian mission, EUAM, may not be guaranteed in the future (Rajan Menon and Eugene Rumer, 2015). Indeed, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the EU has faced a new and serious challenge to its policy on the security of Ukraine. The war has put the EU's approach to Ukraine and the most significantly eastern neighbourhood under scrutiny, and there have been calls for a more robust response. The EU has responded by implementing additional sanctions on Russia and increasing its support to Ukraine (Bergeijk, 2022).

On January 23, the Council made public the establishment of the newly-formed EU mission EUMA as a component of the CSDP. EUMA's main goals include contributing to the stability in the border areas of Armenia and Azerbaijan, fostering trust, and supporting the efforts for normalizing relations between the two neighboring nations. The creation of the mission was prompted by the Foreign Minister of Armenia's invitation to Borrell for a civilian EU mission on December 27. EUMA's mandate spans two years, and its key duties consist of conducting regular patrols along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border, in addition to reporting on the situation, which will aid the EU in comprehending the situation on the ground (Aliyev, 2023).

Given that the EUMA has recently initiated its operations, at present, it would be sufficient to make a reference to the response of Russia towards the establishment of this mission. According to Russia, deployment of the EU monitoring mission in Armenia's regions that border Azerbaijan will "only bring geopolitical confrontation to the region and exacerbate existing contradictions (Teslova, 2023)."

2.3. Assessing the effectiveness of the CSDP in the Eastern Neighbourhood

The assessment of the efficacy of CSDP requires a comprehensive approach that takes into consideration both internal and external viewpoints. This approach enables the inclusion of the perspective of the intervening actor, the target, and the operation's objectives (Rodt, 2014). Due to the fact that this research focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of the CSDP in the Eastern neighbourhood, the evaluation should predominantly consider the viewpoint of the EU as the intervening actor. It is essential to assess the success of the policy implementation from the EU's perspective to understand the impact of the CSDP in achieving its goals. The research indicates that the efficacy of CSDP civilian missions deployed to enhance security in the Eastern neighbourhood is significantly impacted by the presence of Russia which in its turn leading to institutional discord within the European Union.

During the initial six-month period of EUBAM, the European Commission funded the operation through the Rapid Reaction Mechanism (RRM), which had a total budget of €4 million. Additionally, member states contributed personnel, mainly through the secondment of border guards and customs officials, and co-financed the mission in-kind (European Commission, 2005). Over time, the range of activities carried out by EUBAM has been substantially expanded, covering a wide spectrum of functions such as aiding in the reform of border and customs services in Moldova and Ukraine with a view to enhancing their modernization and efficiency. Additionally, EUBAM is engaged in the capacity building of these services, contributing towards the prevention of organized crime, combating corruption, and aiding Moldova and Ukraine to align their border and law enforcement standards with those of the EU, with a particular focus on the concept of Integrated Border Management (IBM) (Dobrescu, 2015). Even though the mission was tasked with addressing the Transnistrian conflict and making a constructive contribution towards its resolution, after several years of operation, it has not been able to make any significant progress in this regard.

Despite the CSDP mission's efforts to promote confidence-building, Russia has taken active steps in the Transnistria region that may undermine these efforts. In all conflict zones within the post-Soviet region where it has conducted peacekeeping operations, apart from Nagorno-Karabakh, Moscow has implemented a model that involves issuing Russian passports to the local population (Jafarli, 2021). There are specific cases where Russia has utilized citizenship as a means of achieving its political objectives in the region. The first case was in 2006. A referendum was held on September 17 of that year to determine if the residents of Transnistria supported its independence and its future integration with Russia. The outcome was overwhelmingly in favor of independence and future integration, with 98 percent of voters

supporting it. Three days before the referendum, on September 14, 2006, Russia established a registration center for Russian citizenship in Tiraspol with the aim of accelerating the issuance of Russian citizenship to local residents. The second case took place in 2011, five years after the first case. In contrast to the previous incident, Russia employed the citizenship factor to exert pressure on President Smirnov. On July 1, 2011, Russia made an abrupt announcement that it would no longer grant Russian citizenship in Transnistria. The intended outcome was to compel President Smirnov to participate in the negotiations aimed at settling the Transnistrian conflict (Nagashima, 2017). At that time, the Russian government under Medvedev was looking to establish joint security institutions with the EU. In June 2010, Russia and the EU signed the Meseberg Memorandum establishing the EU-Russian Political and Security Committee to promote an equal dialogue between them on key security issues. Rapprochement with the EU softened Russia's stance on the Transnistrian issue. Russia began openly denying the right of Transnistria to independence from Moldova (Devyatkov, 2012).

In the context of Transnistria, Russia employed the citizenship factor not to exert pressure on Moldova, but to influence the politics of Transnistria. By exploiting the high demand for Russian citizenship in Transnistria, the Russian government strategically accelerated or suspended the issuance of citizenship to manipulate Transnistrian politics in its favor.

EUMM in Georgia is crucial for promoting confidence-building measures and normalization, as well as for providing a neutral observation of events along the ABL and preventing further hostilities. As a neutral observer and mediator, the mission plays a critical role in maintaining stability and pursuing normalization for communities living around the ABLs. The EUMM's effectiveness in Georgia relies on its ability to carry out its mandate fully, which includes being granted access to Abkhazia and South Ossetia. However, adding a military component to the mission is unlikely to achieve significant progress. While it would demonstrate the EU's commitment and determination, it could provoke a strong reaction from Moscow and increase instability in an already volatile region. The lack of a long-term mandate affects the functioning of the mission, with periodic discussions about a possible exit strategy undermining long-term planning (Nana Macharashvili, 2017). It appears that the EUMM has been successful in maintaining a status quo between conflicting parties in Georgia, but a significant threat from Russia to the region persists.

The maintenance of the status quo in the two unrecognized republics in Georgia appears to have benefited Russia's interests in the region more than those of the European Union. Challenge for the EUMM is the inability to fulfil point five of the six point Agreement which

envisage the withdrawal of Russian armed forces to the line where they were stationed prior to the beginning of the hostilities. The EUMM has reported that "Point Five of the Agreement" remains unfulfilled, as Russian military personnel and equipment remain present in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which is considered a violation of this part of the agreement (The EUMM Monitor, 2016).

The population of Abkhazia before the war, according to the 1989 census was 525,061 people, from which, Georgians were 239,872, Abkhaz 93,267, Armenians 76,541 and Russians 74,914. During the war, due to the exodus, as well as the ethnic cleansing of Georgians, the population of Abkhazia decreased by approximately 85 per cent. However, according to the official local sources, in 2004, the population of Abkhazia was around 300,000 people, including approximately 47,000 Georgians who did return mainly to the Gali municipality. Russian citizenship was promoted in Abkhazia as a guarantee of security and "independence" and in 2008 almost the entire population had become Russian citizens (Thomas Hoffmann and Archil Chochia, 2019).

The population of South Ossetia, according to the 1989 census, was approximately 90,000 people, while after the war of 1992 it decreased to 70,000 people. According to the local authorities, by the end of 2007 some 97 per cent of the South Ossetian population held Russian passports. The law on citizenship of the Republic of South Ossetia is similar to that of Abkhazia, to which we referred above, and it allows the citizens of South Ossetia to have dual citizenship only if the second citizenship is that of the Russian Federation (Ibid). Shahin Jafarli argues that currently, it is estimated that a minimum of 95% of the population residing in South Ossetia holds Russian citizenship. In addition, out of Abkhazia's population of 245,000, approximately 140,000 people are Russian citizens, and the process of distributing Russian passports to the local population continues (Jafarli, 2021).

Passportization was employed by Russia in the two unrecognized republics in Georgia with the specific intention of deterring any military operations by Georgia against its separatist republics and maintaining the status quo in the region. Its use was not driven by aggressive motives to expand Russia's influence in the post-Soviet region or to fulfill its territorial ambitions, but rather as a reactive measure to preserve its sphere of influence which was under severe threat (Nagashima, 2017). It can be contended that despite the EUMM's efforts to uphold the status quo in Georgia, Russia still put under the question the effectiveness of this mission with its foreign policy.

EUAM in Ukraine reflects the EU Member States' position towards Russia, which is characterized by a soft balancing strategy and a desire to minimize direct confrontation with

Russia. The varying interests and policy priorities of individual member states have a discernible impact on the actions taken by the European Union with respect to Russia. Ukrainian crisis resulted in a division among EU Member States, as some sought decisive action to support Ukraine, while others preferred softer actions towards Russia and were hesitant to take sides in the conflict. Novoky referred to the former group of Member States as "hawks", which included Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, and the UK, reflecting their broader policy towards Russia. These Member States advocated for a broad scope, long duration, and large size of the EU mission. The latter group of Member States, referred to as "doves" by Novoky, included Finland, Germany, France, Ireland, Italy, and the Netherlands, and were more reluctant to take sides and sought to introduce softer actions towards Russia (Nováky, 2015).

It is significant to note that during the 2014 Ukrainian war the EU was heavily dependent on Russia for its energy needs. Russia had provided the EU with over 35 per cent of its crude oil imports and 30 per cent its natural gas imports. Interdependence was symmetrical, as both sides would face daunting costs if the energy relationship is severed or disrupted. In all, 78 per cent of Russian crude oil exports and over 70 per cent of Russian natural gas exports go to the EU (Krickovic, 2015). Interdependence of energy trade between Russia and the EU brought about a shift in paradigm which did not lead to significant repercussions for Russia despite its annexation of Crimea. Following the conflict in 2014, the EU had changed its approach towards Russia, shifting away from a strategic partnership to selective engagement (Tuka, 2019). The shift towards selective engagement by the EU after the 2014 war caused Russia to undertake certain actions that would undermine the efficacy of the EUAM in Ukraine. It was fact that in the EUAM's case, Ukraine repeatedly asked for a monitoring mission, first in Crimea and later in the East but got an advisory mission in Kyiv instead. Some member states of EU were strongly against sending the mission to Ukraine's eastern regions. Poland, Sweden, and the UK had suggested launching a civilian CSDP mission aimed at Ukraine's security sector capacity building (Zarembo, 2017).

While the EUAM was more constrained by the traditional intergovernmental CSDP mechanism, Russia utilized the issuing passports as a political instrument in the Donbass, like its strategy in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transnistria region. Prior to the annexation of Crimea, Russia had already started issuing passports in the region. In fact, in 2008, the Ukrainian Foreign Minister, Volodymyr Ohryzko, had reported that the Russian Consulate General in Simferopol had been distributing passports to Crimean residents. Presently, Russia is not engaged in a peacekeeping mission in the eastern Ukrainian conflict, but it continues to offer citizenship to the residents of the region (Jafarli, 2021). Since April 2019, individuals

residing in the separatist-controlled parts of Donetsk (DPR) and Luhansk (LPR) regions, backed by Russia, have been granted the opportunity to obtain Russian citizenship through an expedited procedure. This accelerated naturalization process, which previously took at least eight years, can now be completed in under three months, as per a presidential decree issued by Putin. To establish residency, individuals can present identification documents issued by the People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk, which Russia has recognized since February 2017. There is no authoritative source that can provide an exact estimate of the number of citizens who have been conferred Russian passports and therefore the potential size of the electorate. However, it is believed that as of mid-August 2021, approximately 530,000 people in the Donbas region have obtained Russian citizenship, with around 250,000 in the LPR and 280,000 in the DPR (Fabian Burkhardt, 2022).

In planning its invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the Russian leadership calculated that the EU was a weak regional and global actor. Notwithstanding the presence of the CSDP mission in Ukraine, the EU has exhibited mainly normative power in this region (Noutcheva, 2021). Decisive stance taken by the EU vis-à-vis Russia in the aftermath of the war has significant implications for security along the eastern borders. Von der Leyen holds that since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war on February 24, the EU has significantly reduced its energy dependency on Russia and made “enormous efforts” to successfully divert away from Russian fossil fuels towards reliable suppliers and invest in renewable energies (Szucs, 2022). Among the many significant geopolitical consequences of Russia's war against Ukraine has been the reinvigoration of the Middle Corridor. Russia's war has disrupted overland connectivity via the New Eurasian Land Bridge, also known as Northern Corridor, which passes through Russian and Belarusian territory (Eldem, 2022). With the increasing importance of the middle corridor, EU has opted to engage closely in the peace negotiations between Azerbaijan and Armenia by assuming a mediating role, and has also made the decision to dispatch a new CSDP mission to Armenia.

Prior to the 2022 Ukrainian war, there existed a divergence of perspectives within the EU concerning the CSDP missions. EU bureaucracies play a crucial role in the policy-making process, particularly during the agenda-setting phase. Given their involvement in CSDP operations from the outset, EU officials are in a prime position to shape the EU agenda in a manner that aligns with their interests. Their central role enables them to establish the parameters that will guide the mission. In the decision-making phase, EU officials continue to hold a prominent position, forming the core of the fact-finding mission and preparing key policy documents such as Crisis Management Concepts, Strategic Operations, and Council Decisions

(Dijkstra, 2013). However, these planning documents have to be approved by the member states, but the initiative is with the officials of the EEAS. This factor leads discord which has arisen in the ENP between the EU's focus on each partner's specificity and the need for the Union to tackle interstate and regional problems and to develop a region-wide approach in order to reach its security objectives.

To sum up, the EU's efforts to avoid provoking Russia in the Eastern neighbourhood have compelled the union to adopt a soft foreign policy approach. However, the Russian factor has also generated internal discord among EU member states. In cases where member states are unable to agree on the CSDP, the development of the policy is impeded at the institutional level. The lack of cohesion on CSDP within the EU, combined with Russia's considerable influence in the Eastern neighbourhood, has diminished the effectiveness of CSDP missions in the region.

Conclusion

The goal of this research was to investigate the effectiveness of CSDP civilian missions in the eastern neighbourhood from the perspective of EU and to determine empirically what kind of challenges these missions have encountered in the region. It also aimed to identify internal discrepancies among EU member states how to deal with security issues under the mandate of CSDP in the eastern neighbourhood. Research has suggested neoclassical realism is arguably the most effective theoretical framework for analyzing the effectiveness of the CSDP in the Eastern neighbourhood. This framework takes into account both external factors such as geopolitical tensions and internal factors such as domestic politics and institutional capacity, and considers how these factors influence the effectiveness of CSDP civilian missions in addressing security threats in the region. The research has attempted to answer this question: To what extent has the EU's CSDP been effective in addressing the security challenges in the Eastern Neighbourhood? It is revealed that although CSDP civilian missions have tried to keep status-quo in the region, lack of defined political goals and hesitant approach to Russia have undermined the effectiveness of these missions. Since the disintegration of Soviet Union, Russia has considered the region as its "near abroad" and has sought to maintain its influence by the instigating regional conflicts. Russia's practice of issuing passports to residents of disputed areas in the eastern neighbourhood, which was viewed in this research as a means of extending Russian influence and promoting secessionist movements, has complicated the EU's efforts to promote stability through CSDP civilian missions. At the same time, research contends that EU has not formulated overarching strategy regarding security threats which is emanating from eastern neighbourhood. The existence of divergent views among EU member states poses a significant obstacle to the activities of CSDP missions, particularly in terms of

the coherence of the EU's security policy. Throughout the research, it also became evident that despite the presence of an internal institutional decision-making mechanism governing the deployment of CSDP missions, ultimate authority over these decisions lies with the member states. To avoid antagonising Russia in the eastern neighbourhood, divisions of member states on the decision-making regarding how to deploy CSDP civilian missions on the ground have decreased effectiveness issue. In this research, the effectiveness question was analyzed from the perspective of EU but further research is required to assess the effectiveness of CSDP missions on the perspectives of all host states.

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