

The Future of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy: Scenario Analysis

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Anotace

Práce s názvem „Budoucnost společné zahraniční a bezpečnostní politiky EU: Analýza scénářů“ je studie, která analyzuje možné budoucí scénáře vývoje Společné zahraniční a bezpečnostní politiky (SZBP), které by se mohly objevit v následujících letech a které by mohly dramaticky ovlivnit tuto specifickou oblast evropské politiky. Toto téma je aktuální zejména v kontextu probíhající celoevropské diskuse o budoucnosti SZBP, zejména v debatě o využití hlasování kvalifikovanou většinou v zahraniční a bezpečnostní politice. Každý scénář bude doprovázen SWOT analýzou, která umožní určit konkrétní výhody, nevýhody, hrozby a příležitosti, které každá analyzovaná možnost přináší.

Abstract

The thesis titled “The Future of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy: Scenario Analysis” is a study that analyses the possible future scenarios of the development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) that might occur in the following years and that might dramatically influence this specific area of European policy. This topic is especially relevant in the context of the ongoing Europe-wide discussion about the future of the CFSP, especially in the debate about the use of qualified majority voting in foreign and security policy. Each scenario will be accompanied by a SWOT analysis which enables to determine specific advantages, disadvantages, threats and opportunities that come with each analysed option.

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Glossary

CFSP – Common Foreign and Security Policy

EC – European Council

ECJ – European Court of Justice

EP – European Parliament

EPC – European Political Cooperation

EU – European Union

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

HR/VP – High Representative/Vice President

QMV – Qualified Majority Voting

SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

TEU – Treaty on the European Union

TFEU – Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

1 Introduction

This Thesis deals with a topic heavily discussed within the European Union (EU) context, namely the future of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). This debate is highly relevant and essential for the future of the EU since a rising number of issues and security challenges around the EU have stressed the need for a more efficient decision-making process in CFSP (Diedrichs and Jopp 2003, Ehrhart 2002, Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet 2002, Schmidt 2015). This is demonstrated by the fact that even the current President of the Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, has called for Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) in certain CFSP domains, including sanctions and human rights (Latici, 2021, p. 1). If the EU does not improve the decision-making process in CFSP, its credibility could be negatively impacted (Nováky, 2021, p. 10, 19). The EU is well-aware of this challenge. That is clear not only from the previously mentioned calls for more efficient foreign policy but also from some explicit statements of high CFSP officials, as evident from the following quote by High Representative/Vice President (HR/VP) Josep Borrell *"If we are not able to do that, then I understand perfectly our credibility is at stake"*, which he made in 2020 when explaining to the press why the consensus on the sanctions against the Belorussian regime was not reached (Financial Times, 2020).

CFSP is nowadays a fully-fledged part of the EU structures, but the crucial aspect of unanimous voting in critical decisions has never changed. However, the current debate suggests that CFSP might stand on a cross path to determine its future (Latici, 2021). Do we need more communitarisation of CFSP, or has it already been enough, and some form of disintegration in this area might occur? Calls for changes have already appeared, and proposals have been put forward, but without any particular outcomes. That is why the main focus of this thesis will be on the future of CFSP.

Against this background, this thesis aims to identify, analyse, and compare the possible scenarios of the future development of the CFSP in terms of its voting system. To achieve this aim, the thesis seeks to answer two overall research questions:

- 1) What are the possible future development scenarios of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy based on the voting system?
- 2) How do the scenarios differ from each other in terms of their implications, strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities?

The primary method used in this thesis is the scenario analysis method. According to Nguyen and Dunn (2009, p. 3), scenario analysis has emerged as *“a tool for strategic planning when the future is perceived as surrounded by a high degree of uncertainty and complexity. Scenario analysis techniques characteristically synthesise quantitative and qualitative information, constructing multiple scenarios or alternative portraits of the future”*. Each scenario represents a direction the CFSP might take in the near future.

It is necessary to mention that most of this thesis was written in the autumn of 2021. Therefore, it takes into account events up to that date. The Russian aggression in Ukraine in 2022 puts the Belorussian 2020 crisis on the periphery of the current debate. Nonetheless, the relevancy of the topic has not decreased at all. Contrary to that, it has made the ongoing debate about the possible reform of the CFSP voting mechanism even more relevant and central in current European politics.

The structure of the thesis is as follows. After the introduction, a literature review chapter will discuss the current state of the literature on the CFSP and its future. Next, an in-depth methodological approach will be explained, including a description of the scenario analysis method and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis method and the selection and comparison process of the scenarios. Nonetheless, the theoretical background is an essential part of this discussion. Therefore, the theoretical chapter will dig deep into the theories of European integration, which serve as a base for each analysed scenario. Following these introductory chapters, four scenarios will be analysed and then compared to each other. Each scenario analysis chapter contains a SWOT analysis, revealing each scenario's strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities. The scenario analyses chapters themselves will be structured according to these four aspects. At the end of each analysis chapter, a table will briefly summarise the critical points discovered. In the final chapter, conclusions of the work will be presented.

2 CFSP future: a literature review

The topic of CFSP has been intensely covered by literature. Different authors have addressed various areas or issues connected to CFSP, like history, structure, the position of HR/VP, or the execution of the policy abroad. As this work focuses on the future of CFSP, the debate on the possible development of this policy must be the core of this literature review. At the same time, however, it is crucial to pay attention to the historical roots of CFSP, too, because they help understand why the discussion about its future is so limited by the long-lasting strict intergovernmental shape of this policy.

Naturally, CFSP did not fall from a blue sky. It developed from its much less formal and less famous predecessor - European Political Cooperation (EPC), founded in 1970, which functioned as an informal attempt to coordinate member states' foreign policies. While some authors evaluate the successes and failures of EPC retrospectively (Allen, Rummel and Wessels 2013, Øhrgaard 1997, Schneider and Seybold 1997), others already analysed the issues of this project in the period when EPC existed (Bulmer 1991, Pijpers 1991, Pijpers, Regelsberger and Wessels 1988, Salmon 1992, von der Gablentz 1979).

CFSP was officially introduced in 1992 by signing the Maastricht Treaty as a strictly intergovernmental pillar of the "Three Pillars of the European Union." This transformation process from EPC to CFSP caught the attention of several authors who discussed the ongoing changes that the newly formed EU's foreign policy might or should bring (Barbé 1995, Holland 1995, Lodge 1996, Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet 2002). Another issue that is sufficiently covered in the literature is the function of The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy created by the Amsterdam Treaty and further strengthened by the Lisbon Treaty, which made the High Representative also a Vice-President of the Commission (hence the abbreviation HR/VP). Whilst Crum (2006) and Melis (2001) debate the intensifying personification of CFSP after the position of HR/VP was created, other authors (Denza 2012, Duke 2011, Helwig 2017, Kaddous 2008, Rürger 2011, Zanon 2012) focus, especially after the signing of the Lisbon Treaty, on the fundamental role that HR/VP plays in formulating and executing the EU's foreign policy.

Let us now turn to the research on the future of CSFP, which is the main interest of this thesis. Discussions about needed reforms have been ongoing for many years, and again, they are generally well-covered in the literature. Authors differ in focus on particular issues, but the common theme of all works could be described as “What is wrong with CFSP?” and “Other reforms are needed”. Taking the chronological order into account, Ehrhart (2002) and Smith (1997) were some of the first authors to mention that even the transformation of EPC into CFSP did not fix all the institutional issues because member states were still afraid of any substantial progress. While Jensen, Slapin, and König (2007) address the partisan restraints on possible CFSP reform, Barbé (2004) considers a lack of democratic accountability, and Greco (2003) deals with the weakness in international relations.

Most importantly, the accent on reform in all sorts of ways is the common sign regarding the debate on CFSP’s future in basically all the writings. What is more, the literature is replete with suggestions. Diedrichs and Jopp (2003), Ehrhart (2002), Hill (2002), and Peterson and Sjursen (2005) offer several visions CFSP might take in the future. It makes one think that the failure of the proposed Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe and the successive adoption of the Lisbon Treaty could have been a significant moment in the debate. However, Algieri, Bauer, and Brummer (2005) suggest that the rejection of the Constitution was not a catastrophe for CFSP because essential changes could be implemented even without it. Alecu de Flers (2008) and Whitman and Juncos (2009) follow this opinion by arguing that in the area of CFSP, the Lisbon Treaty does not differ from the original Constitutional Treaty in any essential way, and more importantly, the imposed changes are more of a revamp than a revolution.

Lately, the role of parliamentary scrutiny in CFSP has been the focus of several scholars (Caballero-Bourdout 2011, Huff 2013, 2015) as well the contemporary issues like the refugee crisis (Schmidt 2015, Trauner 2016) or Brexit (Baciu and Doyle 2019, Cardwell 2017, Whitman 2016) and their connection to CFSP. However, only a few authors have looked at the general future development of CFSP in the current decade and beyond (Baciu and Friede 2020, Salmon 2019). Contemporary literature coverage of this topic dominantly examines other areas of the CFSP future, like the local impact in specific regions (Hillion 2019, Øhrgaard 2018, Whitman 2016). When it comes specifically to the question of QMV,

Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza (2018), Koenig (2020), Nováky (2021) and Schuette (2019) state that the implementation of QMV is an option. Not only do they describe the process of possible implementation, but they also offer alternatives to QMV adoption. Overall, there is a substantial gap that this thesis aims to fill. While other options have been described clearly, no one has yet done a complex analysis of the possible future development, should QMV be implemented fully, partly, or not at all. What impact would these alternative scenarios have on the shape of CFSP if they happened? That is precisely the question that this thesis aims to answer.

3 Methodological framework of the thesis

3.1 “Scenario” as a term

Scenario is a widespread word casually used in everyday language. In Mietzner’s and Reger’s words (2004, p. 50) scenario is a *“fuzzy concept that is used and misused, with various shades of meaning.”* The term is also often used to describe future events regarding a single variable, for instance, “in the global warming scenario of 3°C... “. In futurology, scenarios usually represent many more variables describing far more complex interactions. In such cases, scenarios may have different meanings. They might be understood as a comprehensive and detailed text, or scenarios might refer to modulations of a quantitative model (Kosow, Gaßner, 2008, p. 10).

As with many other scientific terms, a scenario has different definitions and proposals for understanding this term. Despite this, it is possible to identify common signs and principles of the term “scenario” shared by a vast majority of scientific literature and, ultimately, this thesis. Here are the four most significant ones:

1. A scenario is *“a description of a possible future situation (conceptual future) including paths of development which may lead to that future situation.”* (Reibnitz, 1991, p. 14). A scenario differs from a basic conceptual future because it states the hypothetical future affairs and describes developments, dynamics, and moving forces from which the future affairs emerge (Götze, 1993, p. 36).

2. Scenarios aim to predict future developments by observing chosen specific relevant factors. An important thing to note is that scenarios do not seek to provide a comprehensive image of the future but instead focus on framed reality segments (Kosow, Gaßner, 2008, p. 11). This is best defined by Kahn and Wiener (1967, p. 6) as *“hypothetical sequences of events constructed for the purpose of focusing attention on causal processes and decision points.”* During this process, factors and events are being included, and others excluded. The result is a composition in which the segments are related to each other.

Therefore, this process is also a construct because chosen factors and events are deliberately included or removed.

3. The construction of scenarios assumes the future. Thus, scenario analysis does not predict the “whole future” nor the future “as such” but only the possible development of certain key events (Kosow, Gaßner, 2008, p. 12).

4. Scenarios have no claim to reality and cannot give actual knowledge of the future. The correct terminology is that scenarios are only hypothetical, which means they are based on their standing present and past. They produce future developments that are possible, probable, or desirable (Kosow, Gaßner, 2008, p. 12).

Scenarios thus might lead to multiple outcomes depending on why we are using them. They allow seeing alternatives beyond casual paradigms (Greeuw, 2000, p. 7). Their unique contribution to science lies in their ability to combine quantitative and qualitative knowledge elements. (Greeuw, 2000, p. 9). Unlike other approaches, scenario analysis utilises long-term and system-oriented observations (Barré, 2004, p. 116).

For the requirements of this work, only the *explorative and knowledge function* of scenario analysis is relevant and, therefore, will be used. Using the explorative and knowledge approach reflects an attempt to deepen and systematise an understanding of the contemporary development of the CFSP and build upon it. On the one hand, it focuses on probable future development paths and possible eventualities. On the other hand, it provides knowledge and helps to reveal the limits of our knowledge, like ongoing gaps, potential dilemmas, or unclear, uncertain, or unpredictable events (Braun, Glauner and Zweck, 2005, p. 33). Thus, scenarios are seen in this thesis as a very effective tool to challenge conventional thinking because they widen our reflections of reality.

3.2 Selection of scenarios

This thesis aligns with the view of Tegart and Johnston (2004, p. 35), who claim that achieving the so-called “*transformation effect*” with scenarios is possible. Initially, there is an unknown future environment containing several possible developments. Tegart and Johnston (2004, p. 33) call it “*a range of futures.*” This “*range of futures*” could be transformed into a future environment where possible developments are put into scenarios where alternative futures can be recognised. This forms the core of this thesis. Possible developments of the future of CFSP will be organised into a systematised set of distinguishable and comparable scenarios. Scenarios usually tend to differ a lot in scope. Therefore, scenario analysis faces the constant challenge of reducing complexity to keep several factors simultaneously in view and order. Global scenarios cannot process thousands of factors and events simultaneously because it would be impossible to analyse them (Kosow, Gaßner, 2008, p. 35). The selection must be regulated. In terms of this work, CFSP is a vast and complex topic. Therefore, discussion about its future cannot include every factor that might influence it or every aspect that might be subject to change.

As already mentioned, many authors have realised that the possible implementation of QMV is now at the core of the debate about CFSP’s future (Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza 2018, Koenig 2020, Nováky 2021, Schuette 2019). Thus, this thesis will focus primarily on the voting system used in CFSP. In other words, the voting system has been selected as a crucial aspect that will shape CFSP’s future.

Article 25 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) states that CFSP shall be conducted by:

- (a) *defining the general guidelines;*
 - (b) *adopting decisions defining:*
 - (i) *actions to be undertaken by the Union;*
 - (ii) *positions to be taken by the Union;*
 - (iii) *arrangements for the implementation of the decisions referred to in points (i) and (ii);*
- and by*

(c) *strengthening systematic cooperation between the Member States in the conduct of policy.*

(Treaty on European Union, 2021).

The scenarios will analyse the impact of the voting system in terms of points (a) and (b). Since “*cooperation between the Member States*” has no direct connection to the voting system, point (c) is not considered relevant for this work.

Let us now move to the identification of the scenario types. Kreibich (2006, p. 3) mentions a chronological designation - *short-term* (up to 10 years), *medium-term* (up to 25 years), and *long-term* (more than 25 years) scenarios. In addition, we can differentiate between *static scenarios* (from a point in time onwards) and *dynamic scenarios* (more extended periods, observing numerous selected stages). CFSP is a very rigid European policy. Therefore, a short-term limitation might be insufficient for some of the scenario alternatives. On the other hand, this work aims to analyse the current relevant issue, and for that reason, a period of over 25 years might become irrelevant. Thus, a *medium-term* limitation of up to 25 years seems the best option since it negates both issues. This period is not too long, so it does not have to be divided into stages, meaning that the *static scenarios* technique will be used to observe the development of the CFSP from now onwards.

As to the geographic demarcation of the scenarios, four types of scenarios can be distinguished, based on Greeuw (2000, p. 9) - *the global level, the international and regional level, the national level, the sub-national and regional level*. For the purposes of this work, this limitation is irrelevant since this analysis will predominantly focus on the voting mechanism. By contrast, a thematic coverage limitation is fundamental for this work. Scenario analyses can focus on all kinds of themes, sectors, fields, or institutions. The topic of this work is best suited for the *issue-based* scenario type introduced by Van Notten (2003, p. 429), where a specific factor is observed - in this case, the influence of the voting mechanism on the future of CFSP.

With this in mind, this thesis will consider four scenarios in total. In practice, the selection of scenarios is based on two basic concepts of voting used in the EU - unanimity voting and QMV. However, this is just a base, and these options must be further extended.

Thus, each selected scenario has roots in one of the theories of European integration. The theories will be further explained in a standalone chapter. The list of scenarios is as follows:

1. Nothing changes
2. Abolishment of CFSP
3. One step forward
4. All at once

The first scenario will work with the current state of affairs as if nothing changes. It will, therefore, also serve as a description of the current functioning of CFSP. The other three scenarios are ordered from the most damaging development to the most positive from the pro-integration perspective. The second scenario will deal with abolishing CFSP altogether. The last two scenarios will analyse the possible introduction of QMV. However, each one in a different way and with different expected future development. The third one operates with a situation where QMV is introduced only in a specific area of CFSP, whereas the fourth scenario calculates with complete communitarisation.

3.3 Comparison of the scenarios

Creating the selected scenarios is, however, just the beginning of the actual analytical work. When they are made, they can be used further. To achieve that, Kosow and Gaßner (2008, p. 79) recommend a so-called “*transfer step*”. The transfer step is used as a form of a question which changes according to what we want to achieve with specific scenario analyses techniques (for example, “*How probable is which development?*”, “*What could happen if unexpected events enter the picture?*”, “*What do we want to achieve and with what steps?*”). As we aim to know the possible futures and then compare them, the “*What would it be like if...*” type of question (Kosow and Gaßner 2008, p. 98) will be the “*transfer step*” alongside an *impact analysis*, which asks the question of “*What opportunities and risks are bound up with the situation described in the scenario?*” (Kosow and Gaßner 2008, p. 79).

I consider the combination of these two questions as the most suitable option for the “*transfer step*” because it reveals the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative future CFSP development. As I see it, the advantages and disadvantages of specific scenarios are the most straightforward and most transparent factors to compare, although, to a certain degree, it is not possible to completely eliminate subjective views. Nonetheless, this “*transfer step*” needs to be done systematically. Therefore, a SWOT analysis will be applied to each scenario to highlight the critical points that make the difference between all the cases. The letters S, W, O and T stand for *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities* and *Threats* (Salar and Salar, 2014, p. 516). SWOT analysis is defined as “*an important decision-making support tool*” which is “*commonly used to systematically analyse the strategic situations and identify the level of organisations from their internal and external environments*” (Gao and Peng 2011, p. 796). SWOT analysis originates from business management but is commonly used in other areas, such as regional development or strategic planning. This approach is in line with the “*explorative function*” already described above because knowledge about the possible futures of CFSP is required to compare alternative scenarios. Now that the right questions are selected, it is necessary to choose the particular areas in which the different “answers to these questions” will be demonstrated.

As to the “structure” of each scenario, first of all, the general state of CFSP will be considered, especially in the sense of CFSP competencies granted to the EU based on Treaty provisions. This might seem minor, but the actual state of CFSP as an area of EU policies will differ dramatically across the scenarios. For example, the difference between “no CFSP at all” and “completely communitarised CFSP” will be evident at first sight. In contrast, with other scenarios, the differences in the structure of CFSP may not be that apparent but still significant. This first general part provides crucial contextualisation for the following phase, in which the alternative scenarios will be analysed in detail against the background of the infamous Belorussian crisis that the EU encountered in 2020 after the falsified election. In particular, the specific question reflected by each scenario will be: *What would the EU’s CFSP vis-à-vis the 2020 Belorussian crisis look like if this concrete scenario was a reality at that time?*

At this point, let me provide the brief necessary context about this crisis. A massive fraud that the Lukashenka regime committed during the 2020 presidential election and subsequent brutal repressions of the peacefully protesting Belorussian public ignited the Belorussian crisis. While Lukashenka was officially declared the winner with over 80 % of the votes, the EU refused to accept these results and eventually imposed new sanctions on the regime (Terzyan, 2020, p. 2, 4, 8, 10). Furthermore, many European leaders do not recognise Lukashenka as the President, which deepens the regime's isolation and undermines its legitimacy (Bedford, 2021, p. 816). The government tried to silence independent opposition voices even before the election. Opposition team members were arrested, domestic and foreign reporters were deported, and access to the internet was disrupted. After the election, tens of thousands of citizens went to the streets and expressed dissatisfaction. The police and army units reacted violently. Protesters were seriously injured, and over 3 000 people were detained (Freedom House, 2020). The crisis timeline will be explicitly described in the first "Nothing changes" scenario.

Several facts justify this event's selection to instantiate each scenario's reality. Firstly, as the thesis discusses a contemporary issue, a recent event is a reasonable choice. Secondly, the Belorussian crisis was a significant event in European politics discussed by politicians all over Europe. It is broad enough and important enough to demonstrate the differences and similarities across alternative scenarios. Finally, member states were far from united when reaching a unanimous approach to Belarus (Financial Times 2020, Rettman 2020). Thus, this makes the perfect opportunity to ask, "What would be different" if unanimity was not required or CFSP did not exist at all.

4 Theoretical framework of the thesis

This thesis's section provides a theoretical background for the selected scenarios and explains why these exact possible future developments could happen. Theories serve as the basis of the results expected in the actual analytical part of the work. In this thesis, it is crucial to stress that the selected scenarios of possible future development of CFSP did not come out of the blue sky. They can be understood as an outcome of certain theoretical preconditions. In the scientific field of European integration studies, several theories explain why European integration has been happening, why it started, and how the EU functions based on that knowledge. This chapter will introduce theories relevant to the selected scenarios, namely (liberal) intergovernmentalism, neofunctionalism, eurofederalism and postfunctionalism. Each scenario is guided primarily (not exclusively) by one of the theories - "Nothing changes" in (liberal) intergovernmentalism, "Abolishment of CFSP" in postfunctionalism, "One step forward" in neofunctionalism and "All at once" in eurofederalism. Still, it must be noted that the connection between a theory and a scenario cannot be strictly understood as one theory = one scenario, nor does it mean that other European integration theories cannot help to understand the potential future of CFSP. Such oversimplification is impossible because the theories have many common and distinct signs, and scenarios can possess multiple signs of different theories combined. However, as I see it, the theories chosen are the most suitable ones to predict, frame and explain the theoretical direction in which the alternative futures of CFSP might develop.

4.1 Liberal Intergovernmentalism

The intergovernmental approach has apparent roots in realism - a paradigm, a generally accepted worldview, and the most famous and influential international relations theory. Realism sees a nation-state as the fundamental unit in the international system and national security as the single most crucial issue a state must protect and defend to survive. The intergovernmental approach uses this state-centred approach to explain European integration. Intergovernmentalists believe that integration only occurs because states allow

so, and they maintain complete control over it without any substantial influence of supranational institutions. The new intergovernmental approach emerged in the 1960s, claiming that nation-states could not be destroyed or replaced using de Gaulle's veto to British accession as the main argument. Even later during this period, national governments made clear that they would not allow any gradual transfer of powers on the supranational level, and the decision-making process will continue to reflect the dominant position of nation-states. Intergovernmentalists saw this as evidence that neofunctionalists, as their main rivals, underestimated the role of a state and were proven wrong (Pollack, 2005, p. 360).

In the 1990s, famous professor Andrew Moravcsik felt like an "update" of the intergovernmental approach was needed, and therefore, liberal intergovernmentalism emerged as a significant revision. Since then, liberal intergovernmentalism has been one of the crucial theories of European integration. Liberal intergovernmentalism is based on the same realist core principles as the original intergovernmentalism mentioned above. However, some substantial differences are not to be missed. Moravcsik's approach could be described as a three-step model - liberal, intergovernmental and "creating institutions" (Moravcsik, 2020).

In the first step, the interests of domestic actors are aggregated inside the nation-state, and the state's leaders then articulate these interests on the European level. This is the "liberal" part of liberal intergovernmentalism. Domestic actors' preferences differ based on distinct economic conditions, current electoral attitudes, or the composition of political institutions. All these interests are being respected but only on the state level. Contrary to neofunctionalist beliefs, this aggregation of interests does not occur on the European level but is only transmitted there (Wallace, Pollack, Roederer-Rynning and Young, 2020, p. 17). In this aspect, liberal intergovernmentalism differs from the classical realist approach. According to Moravcsik, national interests are not fixed and unchangeable and can change based on mentioned conditions (Moravcsik, 2020, p. 2).

In contrast, the second intergovernmental step is a typical example of the realist approach. National governments bring their aggregated interests to the European level, where bargaining begins. The states are unequal, and the outcomes reflect the relative power

of each country. The supranational part of the integration, primarily represented by the Commission, is suppressed and has little to no influence. There is no common interest, and each state tries to pursue its interest against the others. From the realist perspective, national interests are different and often contradictory. Therefore, conflicts emerge. The role of bargaining about the distribution of the integration gains is crucial (Moravcsik, 2020, p. 5-6).

In the third step, Moravcsik explains why states are willing to create institutions despite the certainty of conflicts. The goal is not to establish any common interests. It is simply a rational choice to reduce the transaction costs of negotiations and strengthen the credibility of reached agreements. Institutions only allow states to monitor the behaviour of others more efficiently and potentially sanction the “rebels”. As a result, integration does not weaken nation-states but enhances their position. For Moravcsik, this is how the whole history of European integration can be explained (Moravcsik, 2020, p. 7-8).

It is necessary to point out one crucial aspect where liberal intergovernmentalism defects from its realist roots regarding foreign policy. Moravcsik (2020, p. 2) states that according to the liberal theory of international relations, a nation-state’s foreign policy (or European policy) priorities change based on varying pressure from domestic actors. Therefore, it does not have to be “national security first” all the time. That is a crucial difference compared to the classic realist approach in which state leaders always make rational decisions to maximise benefits for the state (Norwich University, 2017). As a result, the realist approach does not give importance to other domestic actors, whereas liberal intergovernmentalism acknowledges the influence of the domestic environment on the formulation of national priorities. This fact is essential for the possible future development of CFSP alternatives because it reveals that even the scenarios originating from (liberal) intergovernmentalism will differ in the interpretation of certain factors and events and, for that reason, will have different outcomes.

4.2 Neofunctionalism

In 1958, Ernst Haas developed a neofunctionalist regional integration theory as a reaction to the newly established European Economic Community and European Atomic Energy Community (Wallace, Pollack, Roederer-Rynning and Young, 2020, p. 15). Schmitter (2004, p. 2-3) defines neofunctionalism as *“a theory of regional integration that places major emphasis on the role of non-state actors – especially, the “secretariat” of the regional organisation involved and those interest associations and social movements that form at the level of the region – in providing the dynamic for further integration.”* He further acknowledges that states are still important actors who set the initial agreements. They cannot, however, completely control the direction and extent of the integration process. Neofunctionalists believe that regional integration is a conflictual process where democratic and pluralistic conditions constantly pressure national governments to resolve their issues by transferring more and more powers to the institutions they have created. This will result in increasing expectations in regional organisations. Thus, the likelihood that economic-social integration “spillovers” into political integration rises.

“Spillover effect” is a crucial concept of neofunctionalism. It means that the initial decision by states to put a particular sector under the control of supranational authority creates pressures to extend the competencies of such supranational authority to other similar policy areas. This is called the “functional spillover”, which can be seen in the case of coal and steel integration “spillovering” into the areas of taxes, exchange rates or wages (Wallace, Pollack, Roederer-Rynning and Young, 2020, p. 15). Later, Haas (1961) introduced a “political spillover” in which supranational and subnational actors generate additional pressures causing further integration. At the sub-national level, interest groups enjoy the benefits of integration and move their expectations, demands and loyalties to the new institutions. At the supranational level, the European Commission encourages it, promotes European policies and negotiates deals among the member states. Unlike the intergovernmental approach, neofunctionalism believes in the “common interest”, which will eventually make sectoral integration self-sustainable resulting in the creation of a new political entity, such as the EU.

However, applying neofunctionalist premises to CFSP is a massive challenge because a truly relevant question emerges. If the “spillover” effect works, why has CFSP not been communitarised yet and remains predominantly intergovernmental even after all the revisions of the treaties? Early neofunctionalists related the “spillover effect” primarily to “low politics”, while the “high politics”, such as foreign policy and security affairs, was unlikely to be affected. However, this argument is problematic because it is unclear where are the exact borders of “low” and “high politics” are. For instance, the state's internal security can be considered “high politics”. Suppose the “spillover effect” can clarify why the states are willing to give up some sovereignty in this area. In that case, it is difficult for neofunctionalism to explain why the same has not happened in external security (Risse, 2005, p. 301-302). Risse (2005, p. 303-304) further suggests that we might get to the answer to this issue if we do not conceptualise national security strictly as an objective reality but rather as a subjective social construct. National security is a social construct deeply rooted in the collective identity of a nation-state. Koenig-Archibugi (2004, p. 167) reveals that federal states are usually much more optimistic about the potential communitarisation of foreign and defence policies than unitary states. This might be the key to understanding the connection between social constructs, neofunctionalism and the yet unsuccessful communitarisation of CFSP. Federal countries accept the premise that sovereignty can be shared between several levels of governance. Thus, they are also willing to understand the supranational level of governance. When a country is ready to accept supranationalism over intergovernmentalism, then neofunctionalism returns. Next to the “functional” and “political spillover”, some sort of “ideational spillover” appears, and CFSP moves towards deeper communitarisation (Risse, 2005, p. 303-304).

Concerning the alternative scenarios, it is evident from this chapter that applying neofunctionalism to the future development of CFSP is not easy but not impossible either. Neofunctionalism cannot sufficiently explain why the “spillover effect” has not reached CFSP yet. However, it provides the necessary conditions under which it might happen. Once a move to QMV in one area occurs, it can gradually “spillover” to other areas, eventually resulting in the communitarisation of CFSP. The third scenario will primarily operate with this concept.

4.3 Eurofederalism

The relationship between federalist ideas and European integration is complex and complicated. The EU displays some obvious federalist traits, but it is easy to argue that the EU is not a federation, and there is no consensus that it heads towards becoming one. Generally, the EU has signs comparable and contrasting with federalism (Fossum and Jachtenfuchs, 2017, p. 467). Early eurofederalism was present in the debate even before European integration began. When it started, eurofederalists saw it as an alternative to the classical “international organisation” intergovernmental concept. From the eurofederalist perspective, European integration is an emerging federal system, and its development can be explained by the concepts and theories of federal state-building. However, eurofederalism in its early forms was considered a failure not only because it seemed more and more at odds with reality but mainly because many authors saw it as a political ideology rather than an analytical framework. For that reason, neofunctionalism defeated eurofederalism as the number one counterforce to the intergovernmental approach to European integration (Fossum and Jachtenfuchs, 2017, p. 471-472).

The eurofederalist vision of the EU’s future is creating a federal state from formerly independent units = member states where political elites will construct a constitutional framework for the newly integrated political Community. For eurofederalists, integration is explicitly a political process where economic integration follows the creation of a federal political system, not the other way around (Mutimer, 1989, p. 77). A eurofederalist Mackay (1961, p. 140) describes the eurofederalist approach clearly: *“We can hope for real economic and social integration in Europe only if there is a political authority with power to bring it about”*. It is, therefore, apparent that this is the critical difference between eurofederalism and neofunctionalism. Eurofederalists do not believe that integration will magically “spillover” from one area to another, starting as economic integration and eventually resulting in political integration. According to the eurofederalist approach, political integration must come first, and then the rest will follow. Unlike the neofunctionalist approach, it is not difficult to apply eurofederalism to CFSP. The basic principle is that the crucial political step must come first. CFSP should be federalised and, therefore, the

intergovernmental essence of it abolished. Practically, this means the complete elimination of unanimous voting in all areas. Only QMV is used. This is the base of the last scenario introduced in this thesis.

4.4 Postfunctionalism

A relatively new postfunctionalist theory is based on several factors like the politicisation of European integration, populist parties, public opinion or identity issues. The founders of postfunctionalism, Hooghe and Marks (2009), argue in their text that new aspects, including controversial referendums in the 1990s and early 2000s and the rise of Eurosceptic parties, require a new theory of European integration. Even though liberal intergovernmental and neofunctionalist approaches differed on many points, they agreed that interest groups driven by their interests are the key domestic actors. Postfunctionalists argue that this was probably true in the first decades of integration, but the Maastricht Treaty was a significant turning point. Since then, public opinion driven by identity issues changed its comfortable consensus in favour of integration to a much more disputed debate. Hence, the political elites are now limited in their approach towards ever-deeper integration. The controversies have started to appear because public support and political elites' support of European integration tend to differ more and more. Thus, not only is the public less supportive of European integration but their opinion is not anymore solely based on economic interests but now on identity issues as well. Unsuccessful referendums have proven that further loss of national sovereignty can be perceived negatively and, therefore, European integration becomes an increasingly relevant issue within domestic politics (Wallace, Pollack, Roederer-Rynning and Young, 2020, p. 25).

Hooghe and Marks (2009, p. 13) argue that politicisation has drastically changed European integration. They consider the rising Euroscepticism “*a brake on European integration,*” which every successful contemporary theory cannot overlook. Furthermore, the recent events in European integration seem to support the postfunctionalist views. First, it was the eurozone crisis followed by the migration crisis, then the subsequent formation of eurosceptic populist governments in Poland and Hungary and, in the end, the Brexit

referendum result. All these events provide a perfect example of voter mobilisation based on identity issues which led to a sudden rise of anti-European populist parties all over Europe. Except for postfunctionalism, all the other theories see European integration as a forward-moving process that has reached a stable settlement. Postfunctionalism has put this pro-European optimism into doubt. These new thoughts have been followed by the “differentiated integration” concept, where some areas have been integrated deeper than others. This is the case of CFSP in contrast to, for instance, the single market. Thus, it also brings the notion of disintegration into the picture (Wallace, Pollack, Roederer-Rynning and Young, 2020, p. 26-27). Postfunctionalism is the only one of the most significant theories of European integration that considers disintegration as an option for future development. Since disintegration in terms of the abolishment of CFSP is the crucial concept of the second scenario, the postfuncionalist theory might explain this phenomenon.

5 Scenario I: Nothing changes

5.1 General Overview

The first scenario mirrors the current state of CFSP into the future as if nothing changes. Since the rigid form of CFSP has already been described in previous chapters, this scenario might seem like the most likely option of the alternative scenarios because it does not “require” any change to occur. Thus, continuing on a set track would perfectly align with the history of CFSP so far. Initially, it is necessary to define how CFSP currently functions in terms of the voting system set up in the primary law. Concerning Article 25 TEU, points (a) “*defining the general guidelines*” and (b) “*adopting decisions*” (Treaty on the European Union, 2021) are conducted unanimously. Based on Article 31 TEU, decisions regarding CFSP “*shall be taken by the European Council and the Council acting unanimously, except where this Chapter provides otherwise.*” (Treaty on the European Union, 2021). The same Article also provides the exceptions where QMV shall be used:

- “*when adopting a decision defining a Union action or position on the basis of a decision of the European Council relating to the Union's strategic interests and objectives, as referred to in Article 22(1),*
 - *when adopting a decision defining a Union action or position, on a proposal which the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy has presented following a specific request from the European Council, made on its own initiative or that of the High Representative,*
 - *when adopting any decision implementing a decision defining a Union action or position,*
 - *when appointing a special representative in accordance with Article 33.*”
- (Treaty on the European Union, 2021)

In addition, Article 31 TEU states that if a member state opposes the adoption of a decision by QMV “*for vital and stated reasons of national policy,*” the vote shall not be taken. If a solution is not reached, Council may, by QMV, refer the matter to the European Council

(EC) for a unanimous decision (Treaty on the European Union, 2021). This instrument is called an “emergency brake” (Nováky, 2021, p. 7).

Article 31 reveals that QMV is already being used in precisely defined aspects of CFSP. However, only when the critical decision has already been made unanimously. Therefore, QMV is being used as an implementation tool, not a decision-making tool. Furthermore, all the decisions are being made by the EC and the Council, which means that any powers of the European Parliament (EP) or the Commission on the decision-making process are excluded. These facts again underline that the current “form and shape” of CFSP is strictly intergovernmental, and in the period of up to 25 years, this scenario does not expect any changes to that. This scenario is a clear outcome of the liberal intergovernmental theory. The nation-states maintain CFSP because it enhances their bargaining position by serving as an institution that only reduces the transaction costs of negotiations and strengthens the credibility of reached agreements, as Moravcsik (2020, p. 7-8) describes. However, at the same time, they keep complete control of it. The intergovernmental form lasts, which ensures that member states protect their national security.

5.2 Strengths

The first strength, which should not be overlooked, is that the unanimous voting system is particularly good at preventing fatal dissatisfaction with the outcomes (Latici, 2021, p. 6). That is the reason why the status quo is easy to maintain. Member states have different historical experiences, cultures, economies and threat assessments. These factors result in diverse national interests (Latici, 2021, p. 2). Satisfaction of the member states is crucial, and the significance of bargaining and negotiating is at the core of every debate between the member states, precisely as Moravcsik (2020, p. 5-6) describes. The final agreement is always a compromise between the member states. The essential outcome is that the eventual deal is achievable. Therefore, CFSP can exist and function without being threatened by potentially “rebellious” dissatisfied member states that could refuse to comply with the decisions (Schuette, 2019, p. 8).

Since the vote is unanimous, nobody can be outvoted. Vital national interests are always protected, as the realist paradigm claims they should be, because nation-states are extremely unlikely to give up their external security. When it comes to matters of war or peace, states do not share their sovereignty in foreign policy with anyone because that could endanger the state's survival (Morgenthau 1948, Waltz 1979). However, joint decisions of member states can still be achieved without endangering the national interests of member states. When all the member states agree upon a course, nothing is in the way of conducting a common foreign policy, but if a state feels endangered by the decision, nobody can force it to do so. This was demonstrated during the Belorussian crisis in 2020 when the EU eventually imposed joint sanctions on targeted individuals connected to the regime (Beaulieu, 2021). A joint and coordinated approach was achieved, but at the same time, the interests of member states remained protected. The Belorussian crisis would serve as a template for future similar encounters in the sense that any other future crisis similar to the Belorussian one would be approached in the same way.

5.3 Weaknesses

The unanimous voting system has an apparent “dark side” by providing ample space for blackmailing. When the votes of every single state are needed, everyone possesses great blackmailing potential, and any state can withhold the unanimous decision as long as it wishes (Giegerich, 2017, p. 400). That is usually the case until its demands are met, and a compromise is reached. As a result, it can take a significant amount of time to agree upon a common approach, which prevents the EU from acting quickly and decisively when needed. Nevertheless, it is necessary to mention that the outcome is a compromise of (currently) 27 member states which means that CFSP decision-making can be slow. The result can also be weak and inefficient (Ehrhart 2002, Horga and Nan 2013, Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet 2002).

The “real” course of the Belorussian crisis demonstrates how slowly CFSP works under this voting system and how weak the EU's response was (de Zwaan 2020, Duxbury 2020, Dzehtsiarou 2020). To understand why we can look at the timeline of the events. The falsified election took place on 9 August 2020. Five days later, EU ministers appealed to

Belorussian authorities to stop the violence and declared their support for the peacefully protesting Belorussian public. It took additional five days for EU leaders to claim that the EU does not recognise the officially presented election results. The first round of sanctions was imposed no earlier than 2 October 2020 (European Council, 2021). It took the EU almost two months since the election to agree on particular sanctions because some member states utilised their potential to delay and block unanimous decisions. For instance, Cyprus blocked action by insisting the EU should also decide on sanctions on Turkey before it gives the green light (Financial Times, 2020). That is a matter entirely unrelated to Belarus. Apart from that, Austria blocked sanctions on loans to Belorussian banks because of the interests of the Austrian banking sector (Rettman, 2020).

For these reasons, the outcomes of the unanimous approach tend to be weak. For instance, during the Belorussian crisis, Lukashenka himself was not added to the sanctions list until the second round of sanctions in November 2020 (European Council, 2021), as the EU wanted to remain “*in favour of an inclusive dialogue on Belarus.*” (Tidey, 2020). That is a prime example of a weak outcome. Blocking and delaying decisions bears signs of “Trojan horse” behaviour, which is an essential factor in “unanimous” CFSP described by Orenstein and Kelemen (2017). “Trojan horse” is a metaphorical label for the member states who divide the EU and undermine its policies from within to cultivate ties with external countries (Orenstein and Kelemen, 2017, p. 88).

5.4 Opportunities

The key opportunity associated with this scenario lies in the fact that the primary law offers other alternative options in CFSP. Since the blackmailing potential of a possible veto cannot be overcome, member states will be pushed to seek alternative solutions to avoid the issues they experienced during the Belorussian crisis. Even though QMV is off the table, calls for more efficient CFSP are unlikely to disappear. On the contrary, these calls will most likely grow stronger, as we already see today, and not surprisingly, especially from the representatives of the supranational European Commission, such as the former President Juncker (European Commission, 2018) or the current President von der Leyen (2020).

Article 31 TEU allows a so-called “constructive abstention”, under which a state can abstain from using its veto to enable a decision. That state then does not have to implement such a decision but shall not act against it (Treaty on the European Union, 2021). The second alternative is “enhanced cooperation in CFSP”. Under “enhanced cooperation”, at least nine member states can initiate a joint project using the EU’s procedures, bodies and instruments (Treaty on Functioning of the European Union, 2021).

These alternatives open an opportunity to achieve more effective CFSP even without implementing QMV. They require enhanced communication and mutual understanding. However, suppose member states learn to use “constructive abstention” and “enhanced cooperation” more. In that case, it could be an effective instrument to reach an agreement faster and without forcing the states that oppose the idea to implement such decisions. In the case of the Belorussian crisis, this would allow for more flexibility. Cyprus, for instance, could abstain from applying the sanctions instead of blocking the consensus. Apart from that, like-minded states participating in an “enhanced cooperation” project focused on imposing sanctions could implement such sanctions much more quickly if they wish to be more active.

Lastly, the EU institutions have the opportunity to develop closer relationships with member states to understand their attitudes, interests and limits better. CFSP’s priority is to stand for the interests of the whole EU. However, these interests have to be based on member states’ ones. Brexit negotiations should serve as a good example. The reason behind the EU’s unity during the negotiations was, among other things, Michel Barnier’s ability to communicate closely with member states. Regular meetings between EU institutions and member states reinforce a general sense of mutual involvement and respect, which is much needed in such sensitive areas as foreign policy (Kuusik, 2019).

5.5 Threats

The first noticeable threat is that using alternative instruments would convince member states that such options are sufficient and no further reform of CFSP is needed. That could quickly turn out to be a dead-end for the search for improvement. It is not guaranteed that

even the alternative instruments mentioned in the previous part would guarantee more efficient CFSP. Reality shows that “constructive abstention” has been only used once so far, and “enhanced cooperation” is yet to be applied in CFSP (Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza, 2018, p. 4). The problems are that, first, no one can force any state to abstain from the vote and second, there are legal constraints. Unlike other policy areas, “enhanced cooperation” in CFSP requires a unanimous vote in the Council and, therefore, the whole process can be stopped by a single veto of any state (Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza, 2018, p. 4).

Another threat is that the EU risks not only its public reputation but also credibility in front of other international actors, whether partners like the United States or rivals like Russia and China. These countries are undoubtedly global powers with a considerable influence on international affairs. The EU is expected to act globally as well. Article 21 TEU states that the EU shall, in the wider world, advance principles like “*democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law*” (Treaty on the European Union, 2021). However, this will be more and more difficult without a credible foreign policy. As Zaborowski (2006, p. 2) mentions, “*the EU is becoming a smaller part of a larger world.*” The fact that this is a real threat was demonstrated, for instance, by the heavy criticism directed at the EU by the media and also by the Belorussian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya during the Belorussian crisis. The EU was criticised for being too weak and inefficient in its foreign policy towards Belarus (Amaro 2021, Golubkova 2021, Zalan 2020).

Nevertheless, the weakness of the current CFSP will likely be revealed again in the future because, according to the intergovernmental approach, 27 states equal 27 different national interests. Therefore, conflicts will naturally emerge (Moravcsik 2020, p. 5-6). With every international crisis, some countries will always have their interests in play. If the EU is not able to demonstrate its credibility and ability to act decisively, the position of the EU as a global power will decrease. Key characteristics of the SWOT analysis of this scenario are summed up in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of the SWOT analysis of Scenario 1

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
The status quo is easy to maintain because it prevents potentially fatal dissatisfaction with the CFSP outcomes.	There is considerable space for blackmailing.	There is an incentive to increase the use of alternative instruments in CFSP.	Reliance on alternative instruments of CFSP could become a dead-end.
National interests of individual member states are not endangered.	Reaching a consensus is a slow and challenging process.	There is a possibility to achieve more flexibility in CFSP even without QMV.	Public reputation of the EU decreases.
It is still possible to reach a consensus among member states.	Outcomes tend to be weak.	It is an opportunity to develop closer relationships between the EU institutions and member states.	Credibility of the EU as a global power decreases.

6 Scenario II: The abolishment of CFSP

6.1 General overview

This scenario calculates with a straightforward premise - the end of CFSP. Before June 2016, this could have been labelled as a crazy and unrealistic development, but after the shocking result of the Brexit referendum, nothing should be considered impossible anymore. Member states might realise that the structural problems of CFSP are “too much to handle” and there is no way to overcome them. For that reason, an independent foreign policy of each member state will function better than the questionable attempt at the joint project. As arises from Hooghe and Marks (2009) and their postfunctionalist theory, as well as other authors (for instance, Rosamond 2016, 2019), we must now count disintegration as a possible development of European integration. It is now clear that a member state can leave the EU, so why should be other forms of disintegration ruled off? In particular, in CFSP, which has apparent structural issues already discussed many times in this work. If disintegration occurs in the EU, CFSP seems likely to be threatened by it. This would then be the case of *vertical disintegration*, defined by Webber (2017, p. 336) as “a decrease in the issue areas in which the EU adopts common policies.”

In the case of the CFSP abolishment, the description of the legal base is relatively straightforward. No Articles dedicated to CFSP are needed. Therefore, Article 25 TEU which states how CFSP shall be conducted (Treaty on the European Union, 2021), will be removed. Thus, no further analysis of the primary law changes regarding CFSP is required because CFSP does not exist anymore. The only substantial difference is that the position of HR/VP will run out of work. Therefore, the most logical thing to happen is that this position will also be abolished. All competencies connected to the conduct of foreign policy will return to the national level. However, how to deal with international affairs on the European level is still a relevant issue. Such a development drastically shakes the grounding of the EU itself, and in the extended period, the EU’s existence might be threatened. Still, in a period of up to 25 years, the EU can continue to exist even without CFSP. The issue is that the EU must still act as an international player but now without a common foreign policy. Before

the Maastricht Treaty founded CFSP, EPC was the instrument for coordinating member states' foreign policies (Bulmer 1991, Pijpers 1991, Pijpers, Regelsberger and Wessels 1988, Salmon 1992, von der Gabletz 1979). In this scenario, the EU's foreign policy will likely return to its historical roots and function under similar conditions as back then. The "European foreign policy" will exist but, once again, strictly outside the EU structures and in a much weaker form than CFSP.

Alongside the already mentioned signs of the postfunctionalist theory, this scenario can also be partially explained by intergovernmentalism in its original core form. The postfunctionalist theory sees the reasons for disintegration primarily in identity issues (Hooghe and Marks, 2009), while intergovernmentalism might see the end of CFSP in alignment with the basic realist premises that nation-states only allow integration as long as they wish to do so (Pollack, 2005, p. 360). If the states decide that they no longer want to share their sovereignty in foreign policy in a common project, even when it is under their complete control, it means the end of it. The state's survival is always the single crucial national interest (Morgenthau 1948, Waltz 1979).

6.2 Strengths

There are several strengths associated with the abolishment of CFSP. First, when the EU has fewer powers, there are also fewer things to blame the EU for. This is important in the contemporary EU because when we come back to the postfunctionalist theory (Hooghe and Marks, 2009), European integration is a politicised salient issue of domestic politics, and Eurosceptic voices have a strong representation in new populist parties (Wallace, Pollack, Roederer-Rynning and Young, 2020, p. 25-26). Although it must be mentioned that the EU can also be blamed for not acting, we can say that if there is no CFSP, then fewer international failures can be blamed on the EU. For instance, in the case of the Belorussian crisis, the EU would not be bashed for being too weak, slow and inefficient (Amaro 2021, Golubkova 2021, Zalan 2020) because the conduct of foreign policy is solely in the hands of nation-states. Therefore, this would deflect the potential hatred and dissatisfaction from the EU to the member states, which could ease off some Eurosceptic pressure the EU

constantly faces. This claim has an empirical base. Since disintegration in the form of Brexit occurred, positive views of the EU have risen (Fitzpatrick, 2020). This could be the case of the CFSP disintegration as well.

Furthermore, no CFSP means more space for each member state to conduct its foreign policy according to its wishes. During the Belorussian crisis, the positions of member states on the issue differed a lot. In the case of this scenario, countries like Austria can defend the interests of their banking sector and do not have to apply sanctions that would harm them (Rettman, 2020). In contrast, countries like Lithuania that are willing to conduct a stricter approach towards Belarus (Lithuanian National Television, 2020) could independently apply harsher sanctions much quicker. The substantial advantage is that both countries do not have to comply with the unanimous approach.

6.3 Weaknesses

The most apparent weakness is that the EU resigns from promoting its values in the broader world by giving up on a crucial policy area. By doing so, it endangers its security and contradicts its previous statements and positions. In its global strategy *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe*, revealed recently in 2016, the EU repeatedly labels itself as a responsible security provider, peace promoter and international actor ready to respond to current challenges (European External Action Service, 2016). Furthermore, the EU aims to guarantee the security of its citizens and territory. The EU admits that internal and external security are mutually dependent, and our home security depends mainly on peace in our neighbouring and surrounding regions (European External Action Service, 2016, p. 7). Challenges like terrorism, hybrid threats, climate change or energetic insecurity must be tackled inside and outside our borders. (European External Action Service, 2016, p. 9).

By abolishing CFSP, the EU negates its motto, “*United in diversity*”. What is more, it admits it failed in this area. CFSP was, after all, introduced as a project to bring foreign policies together (Barbé 1995, Holland 1995, Lodge 1996, Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet 2002). During the war in former Yugoslavia, member states realised they had minimal capacity to

act when confronted by a severe military conflict (Holland, 1995, p. 17). Furthermore, in terms of costs and resources, it does not make much sense for the Community to have multiple independent foreign policies with each “third” country in the world (Holland, 1995, p. 9). Such an integration failure has its consequences. Separate foreign policies of member states would have less influence on international affairs than a joint project.

Decisions made within CFSP have a substantial impact. When 27 countries make a decision, the economic and political capabilities of all the countries combine, which creates a powerful tool to use on the external countries. The EU as a whole is the third biggest economy in the world and accounts for almost 15 % of the world’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (O’Neill, 2021a) which makes the EU an economic superpower. Accordingly, sanctions can be used as a demonstration of the EU’s economic power. If the EU as a whole applies sanctions, their impact is felt. If only one country does so, the influence will be significantly less impactful (Bergmann and Brattberg, 2020). For instance, Germany shares only around 3.4 % of the world’s GDP (O’Neill, 2021b), and that is the EU’s biggest country. If we take a look at, for instance, Estonia, as the representative of smaller states, it shares only 0.04 % of the world’s GDP (O’Neill, 2021c). That alone hints that the impact of sanctions imposed by a single country will be significantly lower. Let me demonstrate this further with some statistical figures in the context of the Belorussian crisis. After Russia, the EU is Belarus' second leading trade partner, reaching almost €16 billion in trade volume in 2019. In the same year, it was only around €2 billion for Germany (Federal Foreign Office, 2020) and €140 million for Estonia (Embassy of the Republic of Belarus to the Republic of Estonia, 2020). From the Belorussian point of view, that is a significant difference between the economic importance of the EU as a whole and a single member state.

6.4 Opportunities

The abolishment of CFSP allows a complete restart of this policy area. All the old structures of CFSP are gone, and external issues are once again only coordinated in a regime similar to EPC. This could be an incentive to start building a new concept of common foreign policy from scratch. A different project that will attempt to avoid issues, such as slowness and

inefficiency that eventually brought down CFSP, might be better than trying minor changes in the old and problematic structure.

Such a thought is not entirely revolutionary and was partially insinuated by Zaborowski (2006, p. 3), who argued that maybe the EU should be less ambitious in its foreign policy and should not attempt to act globally at all costs. Instead, the EU should define its priorities only in the regional scope. It is better to do less properly than to attempt to do everything with little success (Zaborowski, 2006, p. 3). The new common foreign policy project could be restricted geographically or thematically, focusing solely on European issues or a particular area. For example, it could only focus on human rights issues. At the same time, regions like Africa or the Middle East or other areas such as security and defence could be left for the foreign policy of each member state, that is, without a joint European approach. Fewer ambitions mean less space for potential conflicts and, thus, less eventual disappointment.

Furthermore, without any CFSP restrictions and limits, member states can conduct their foreign policy projects with much more flexibility. Germany and France are well-known advocates of broader usage of majority voting in foreign policy and closer cooperation in security and military areas. They together addressed the issue in the Meseberg Declaration (Die Bundesregierung, 2018), where they revived the possibility of “flexible integration”, where only those willing and able participate in joint projects (Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza, 2018, p. 4). In this case, countries like Germany and France might initiate a more ambitious common foreign policy based on majority voting. The essential advantage is that it is entirely voluntary, and no state would be forced to participate if it thinks its foreign policy is better off being independent. If the project turns out to be beneficial, other member states might join in subsequently. As a result, a new and more efficient common foreign policy might emerge.

6.5 Threats

The first threat is that the position of the EU as a global power will be lost entirely. In the previous “Nothing changes” scenario, it was argued that if CFSP does not become more

efficient, the credibility of the EU as a global power will decrease. In the case of this scenario, this threat is multiplied. Since the EU cannot act as a united actor in global affairs, other international actors will be forced to deal with individual states and not the EU institutions.

One of the outcomes demonstrating the decline of the EU position could be the possible loss of a seat on Group of Seven (G7) summits of the world's largest advanced economies and wealthiest liberal democracies. G7 sets the global agenda because decisions taken by the world's most significant powers have real impacts and a strong political influence. The EU is included in all political discussions on the agenda (European Commission, 2021). The Presidents of the Commission and the EC represent the EU at the summits (G7 Research Group, 2014). Since three EU members (Germany, France and Italy) are members of the G7 on their own, it might become redundant to keep the EU seat if it does not have a proper tool to influence international affairs.

Furthermore, disintegration in the form of the abolishment of CFSP could be the next step to the break-up of the EU. After the common foreign policy is gone, other crucial areas of the EU like the Economic and Monetary Union, Common Commercial Policy, European Union Customs Union or European single market could be next in line in the following years. Indeed, it has already been mentioned that in a more extended period, the global position and even the existence of the EU could be threatened by the development of this scenario because of the "domino effect". This is an example of applying the postfunctionalist theory by Hooghe and Marks (2009), which introduced the concept of disintegration. Such development was suggested, for instance, by Meyer (2018, p. 1), who argued that Brexit was the first piece falling. Subsequently, the rise of Eurosceptic parties all over Europe and constant attacks on liberal democracy in some East European member states followed. Matthijs (2017, p. 2) argued in his highly critical post-Brexit text that the EU has already taken too many powers from nation-states, and if the EU wants to save itself, it must return at least some of them. However, it could turn out that the opposite is true. The more the EU "fuels" disintegration, the more its existence will be in doubt. Key characteristics of the SWOT analysis of this scenario are summed up in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of the SWOT analysis of Scenario 2

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Fewer issues can be blamed on the EU.	The EU's security is endangered.	A complete "restart" might be a better option than attempting only minor changes.	The EU is not a global power anymore.
Euro-scepticism might decrease.	Abolishing CFSP contradicts previous statements and positions.	It is an opportunity to create a better-functioning foreign policy.	The EU might lose its privileges, such as a seat at G7 summits.
There are no "EU" restrictions on the conduct of the foreign policy of each member state.	Independent foreign policies of each member state have minimum influence on international affairs.	It is a possibility to utilise "flexible integration" in common foreign policy.	Continued disintegration might threaten the existence of the EU.

7 Scenario III: One step forward

7.1 General Overview

“One step forward” means that member states finally decide to move forward and introduce QMV in CFSP in one area - more specifically, in the area of human rights, including imposing sanctions for their breach. It is no surprise that it is precisely this area because it has been specified by several documents and statements (for instance, European Commission 2018, Latici 2021, von der Leyen 2020) that human rights and imposing sanctions for their breach should be the area to start with because the recent crisis in Belarus has once again proved how challenging the unanimous approach could be. This change means that the EU can now adopt positions on human rights regarding CFSP by QMV and establish a sanctions regime for their breach by QMV.

This scenario might be best explained by the neofunctionalist theory (Haas 1961, Schmitter 2004). Some form of foreign policy integration has already occurred because the original EPC has transformed into CFSP, and CFSP has developed throughout the years further. For instance, the Lisbon Treaty has increased the position of HR/VP by making him a Vice-President of the Commission (Crum 2006, Kaddous 2008, Melis 2001, Rürger 2011). Now, the rising pressure from some member states (Die Bundesregierung, 2018) and the supranational Commission (European Commission 2018, von der Leyen 2020) has caused an “ideational spillover”. CFSP moves again towards a more communitarised structure because more efficient CFSP is member states’ “common interest” (Risse, 2005, p. 303-304).

A change in the voting system means only a few but crucial adjustments in the legal base. Point (a) of Article 25 TEU, “*defining the general guidelines,*” is not affected and remains conducted unanimously. Implementing QMV in human rights affects point (b) *adopting decisions* (Treaty on the European Union, 2021). Therefore, a formulation stating: *adopting decisions on implementing sanctions based on the breach of human rights* (or similar) will be added to Article 31 TEU which explicitly names the exceptions from unanimous voting where QMV shall be used (Treaty on the European Union, 2021). The

critical difference is that the political decision itself regarding human rights will now be subject to QMV, not only its implementation.

7.2 Strengths

The most apparent strength of QMV compared to unanimous voting is faster CFSP in the area of human rights. This is because QMV serves as a strong incentive for member states to search for common ground. After all, unlike the unanimous vote, a single state or a small group of member states can be outvoted on the issue. Therefore, it is better to negotiate an acceptable compromise than risk a defeat for your country's interests. This argument is stressed further by the current HR/VP Josep Borrell (2020a), who argues that such a change forces member states to move forward and allows the EU to make smoother decisions on essential topics, even if not everyone agrees.

The Belorussian crisis provides a perfect example of how much more efficient CFSP could be if QMV is applied, at least in the area of human rights. Cyprus nor Austria would be able to block a joint approach (Financial Times 2020, Rettman 2020). If they still intended to do so, they could be simply outvoted. The point is especially apparent with Cyprus, which in 2020 blocked the sanctions against Belarus for reasons unrelated to the issue. Cyprus just utilised its blackmailing potential to pursue its interests elsewhere. QMV does not eliminate the blackmailing possibility entirely, but it significantly reduces it. A group of states can still stop the action if it has enough votes, but a single veto is no longer destructive.

Furthermore, a partial move to QMV is not as radical as it might initially seem. QMV is rarely used to outvote others. Even in cases when QMV is sufficient in the Council, around 80 % of decisions are ultimately taken unanimously (Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza 2018, p. 2). HR/VP Josep Borrell (2020a) explains this phenomenon by the spirit of unity embedded in the EU. Using trade policy experience as an example, QMV facilitates common solutions and serves as a *“powerful catalyst to engage all actors”* without breaking the consensus (European Commission, 2018, p. 3). When economic interests diverge, member states usually prefer to decide unanimously. This practice allows the EU to *“fulfil its*

potential on world trade”, and the Commission believes that the same could be applied to CFSP (European Commission, 2018, p. 4).

7.3 Weaknesses

The first weakness is that the legitimacy of a decision made by QMV is weaker than a unanimous decision. While QMV might provide quicker decisions, the unanimous approach permanently pushes member states to unite and work together (Michel, 2020). The EU’s strength lies in unity, and all the countries are committed to the consensually adopted decision. In the words of the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, political confrontations on foreign policy are *“an indispensable part of the process of democratic debate”* (Michel, 2020). When using QMV, the approval of all member states is not needed. Abolishing the principle of unanimity means a significant change to the generally accepted status of sovereignty of member states and the EU as a whole (Schuette, 2019, p. 2). In addition, as argued by Kuusik (2019), QMV will not fix the issues in CFSP but rather *“kill off the EU’s unique selling point on the world stage: its size...and QMV in foreign-policy matters would fragment this.”*

Another weakness lies in the fact that QMV takes away the protection of national interests in foreign policy. QMV marginalises smaller member states’ positions because it is easier for larger member states to achieve the needed majority (The Economist, 2020). For that reason, giving up on their national veto, even just in the area of human rights, is especially problematic for small member states because the veto serves as an emergency brake to protect their national interests. Since the larger member states can reach the QMV threshold in fewer numbers, there will always be a shadow of dissatisfied smaller member states on the voting system (Latici, 2021, p. 6).

In the case of the Belorussian crisis, we can argue that Austria and Cyprus, both smaller countries themselves, had every right to defend their national interests, even if it was against everyone else, and it delayed reaching a necessary consensus. For Cyprus, the vital interest was imposing sanctions also against Turkey due to a dispute over gas drilling in the eastern Mediterranean (Financial Times, 2020). For Austria, it was the case of their banking

sector interests in Belorussian banks (Rettman, 2020). As the intergovernmental approach stresses, bargaining about conflicting national interests is crucial in European politics (Moravcsik, 2020, p. 5-6).

7.4 Opportunities

First, a partial move to QMV is an opportunity to continue the trend of the so-called “normalisation” of CFSP described by Pomorska and Wessel (2021, p. 353), which could lead to more efficient CFSP. Let me explain what “normalisation” means. In the present era, it is accepted that CFSP is a policy that produces norms just as any other public policy (Saurugger, 2015, p. 1). Therefore, “normalisation” in this sense is a general development pointing out that CFSP is not an “odd” policy anymore and *“has in fact become part and parcel of the EU’s overall external relations machinery.”* (Pomorska and Wessel, 2021, p. 353). It has become a rightful part of the EU’s external action. This argument is further supported by several judgments of the European Court of Justice (ECJ), in which the Court underlined and clarified its role and the role of the EP in CFSP, which is another sign of the “normalisation” trend (Pomorska and Wessel, 2021, p. 353).

Furthermore, the “normalisation” trend could trigger a “domino effect”: QMV gets initially introduced just in the area of human rights but subsequently gets expanded to other areas of CFSP (Latici, 2021, p. 5). Such a “domino effect” is just the application of the neofunctionalist theory (Haas 1961, Schmitter 2004) in practice. Further use of QMV proves to be efficient and, thanks to additional pressures from the Commission and interest groups, “spillovers” to other areas (Wallace, Pollack, Roederer-Rynning and Young, 2020, p. 15). Following this pattern, CFSP could eventually become more communitarised (Risse, 2005, p. 303-304) and arguably more efficient.

Lastly, there is an opportunity to improve the previously discussed issue of legitimacy coming from the move to QMV by reinforcing the competencies of the EP in CFSP and thus extending its involvement in the area. More substantial control of CFSP by the EP could secure the weakened legitimacy of decisions because the EP is the only EU institution elected directly by the people. Some experts suggest that the EP should be given

the mandate to communicate with HR/VP closely, and the Interparliamentary Conference for CFSP needs to be strongly reinforced (Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza, 2018, p. 6-7). Apart from that, the EP could have ex-post powers to inquire about the implementation of decisions and make recommendations on future policy (Schuette, 2019, p. 11).

7.5 Threats

There is a real threat that after the communitarisation of this area, integration in CFSP gets stuck again if QMV is applied only to one area. The neofunctionalist theory (Haas 1961, Schmitter 2004) operates with the “spillover” effect as a fact that will occur. However, what if it does not? Risse (2005) underlined the issue that, in reality, the “spillover effect” had not reached CFSP yet, and the neofunctionalist theory itself has very little relevant explanation for it. Thus, even if QMV is introduced in the area of human rights, there is no guarantee that it “spillovers” to other areas of CFSP even though calls for it are likely to appear.

Another threat is that resistance against any progress in further integration in CFSP is expected primarily in some specific member states. Logically, in those countries where Eurosceptic parties lead the government, transferring additional powers to the EU would be against their ideological beliefs. This is especially true for countries that tend to deviate from liberal democracies towards authoritarian tendencies, such as the current governments in Poland or Hungary (Schuette, 2019, p. 10). Moreover, even the partial move to QMV in CFSP is likely to cause disturbances in the EU, especially in the sense of uncertainty whether the “defeated” member states will comply with the decisions (Schuette, 2019, p. 8). Historically, when the EU first attempted to practise QMV in a susceptible area, it caused almost a fatal crisis. I am referring here to the 1960s when the French President de Gaulle opposed a move to QMV on matters such as grain prices and movement of capital as an illegitimate breach of French sovereignty, which resulted in the infamous “empty chair crisis” (Schuette, 2019, p. 8). Naturally, there is a great deal of uncertainty about how all member states will react to the new practice in CFSP when they can be outvoted on the issue.

Finally, the EU risks the loss (or weakening) of all legitimacy of CFSP decisions altogether. Varying worldviews and strategic cultures between member states are still apparent in foreign policy more than in, for instance, economic policies. What is more, two fundamental conditions should be fulfilled to secure the legitimacy of a decision. First, it must be ensured that the outvoted minority can accept the majority decision (Schuette, 2019, p. 8). Second, vital national interests, as the intergovernmental approach underlines (Moravcsik, 2020), must be protected to avoid “*the majority steam-rolling over core interests of the minority*” (Schuette, 2019, p. 8). It is questionable whether the push for QMV in CFSP will not violate these two principles. Key characteristics of the SWOT analysis of this scenario are summed up in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of the SWOT analysis of Scenario 3

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
CFSP is faster and more efficient in the area of human rights.	Legitimacy of a majority decision is weaker than a unanimous decision.	A move to QMV continues the trend of “normalisation” of CFSP.	Integration in CFSP might get stuck again.
The blackmailing potential is significantly reduced in the area of human rights.	The position of smaller member states is weakened.	QMV can eventually “spillover” to other areas of CFSP.	A move to QMV is likely to cause disturbances in the EU.
The change is not as radical since QMV is rarely used to outvote others.	National interests are not protected in all cases.	The stronger role of the EP could improve the weakened legitimacy of decisions.	The EU risks losing all the legitimacy of CFSP decisions.

8 Scenario IV: All at once

8.1 General Overview

The “All at once” scenario calculates with a communitarisation of CFSP, which means a complete abolishment of the unanimous voting system and, therefore, an introduction of QMV to all the areas of CFSP. At first, this might seem somewhat similar to the previous scenario. However, there is one crucial difference. The “One step forward” scenario describes a single move to QMV in one area with the possibility of gradual development towards further communitarisation in the future. In contrast, the “All at once” scenario introduces a development where the whole CFSP gets communitarised in a single move to QMV in all the areas simultaneously. Thus, this development does not originate from the “spillover effect” of the neofunctionalist theory (Haas 1961, Schmitter 2004) but rather from the eurofederalist approach (Fossum and Jachtenfuchs 2017, Mackay 1961, Mutimer 1989).

As Mutimer (1989, p. 77) argues, political integration comes first, and the rest will follow. In this case, political integration means a contradiction of the realist premises that nation-states would never give up their sovereignty in foreign policy (Morgenthau 1948, Waltz 1979) and a confirmation of the eurofederalist notions that a fully-communitarised CFSP as an embodiment of “*a political authority with power*” (Mackay, 1961, p. 140) is the future of the European integration. For that reason, we can assume that if even CFSP, a policy with such a long intergovernmental history, is now communitarised, it means that the EU is developing towards becoming a proper federation.

In terms of the legal base, there are several crucial changes for CFSP. Points “(a) *defining the general guidelines*” and “(b) *adopting decisions*” of Article 25 TEU stating how CFSP shall be conducted (Treaty on European Union, 2021) are both impacted by the change and are now conducted by QMV. The crucial difference occurs in Article 31 TEU which originally states that “*Decisions under this Chapter shall be taken by the European Council and the Council acting unanimously, except where this Chapter provides otherwise.*” (Treaty on European Union, 2021). In this scenario, the wording of this sentence changes to “*Decisions under this Chapter shall be taken by the European Council and the*

Council acting by qualified majority” (or similar). The list of exceptions is not needed anymore because, under communitarised CFSP, there shall be no unanimous voting.

8.2 Strengths

The first apparent strength is the increased speed and efficiency of the whole CFSP, not just in one area like in the previous scenario. Even though, in general, the link between QMV and effectiveness has to be further researched, we can assume that the same positive aspects of introducing QMV in the area of human rights are valid for the use of QMV in the whole CFSP (Pomorska and Wessel, 2021, p. 354). Let me expand on that thought. The communitarisation of CFSP allows for expanding CFSP even beyond the area of human rights. More specifically, the European Commission identified three areas in which QMV is needed: *EU positions on human rights in multilateral fora*, *Adoption and amendment of EU sanction regimes* and *Civilian Common Security and Defence Policy missions* (European Commission, 2018, p. 11-12) and I do consider all of them suitable candidates for introduction of QMV.

Nevertheless, speed and efficiency are also connected to minimalising the already-mentioned blackmailing potential. The issues of unanimous voting were not apparent just in the Belorussian crisis discussed throughout the whole work. There are many other examples of when some member states blocked, delayed, or watered down the joint approach, such as the adoption of the yearly annual priorities on Human Rights by the EU in the United Nations fora in February 2018, a blocked renewal of the arms embargo against Belarus in February 2017 or a blocked adoption of targeted EU restrictive measures against Venezuela in summer of 2017 (European Commission, 2018, p. 5-7). In this scenario, the EU can also decide by QMV in international fora, such as the United Nations Human Rights Council (European Commission, 2018, p. 11), on all sanctions regimes, such as against Venezuela in 2017 for severe violation of international law (European Commission, 2018, p. 6, 12), or when launching and deciding on the implementation of civilian missions, such as in the Sahel mission in 2018 (European Commission, 2018, p. 6, 12).

Another strength is a significantly reduced risk of so-called “Trojan horses” mentioned in the first scenario. “Trojan horses” typically present themselves with positive attitudes towards Putin’s Russia (Orenstein and Kelemen, 2017, p. 87). Russia and China have repeatedly used such a “divide and rule” strategy by bribing or pressuring individual member states against the EU. For instance, Hungary and Greece, which receive large amounts of Chinese money, watered-down the 2016 EU statement on the China-Philippines conflict in the South China Sea (Schuette, 2019, p. 5). Adversarial third countries took advantage of bilateral relations with a single member state because the unanimous voting system allowed it. With QMV used in the communitarised CFSP, that is no longer possible.

8.3 Weaknesses

First, communitarised CFSP has issues with democratic legitimacy on multiple levels. First, national parliaments lose even the little democratic control over the CFSP they currently possess. In the previous scenario, I mentioned the risk of losing the legitimacy of decisions. When QMV is introduced to the whole CFSP, the problem becomes even more substantial. As was stated above, decisions are still being taken solely by the EC and the Council. Therefore, the only democratic legitimacy of such decisions comes from the veto available to national governments accountable to their national parliaments. However, with the veto abolished, this “*chain of legitimacy*” gets broken (Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza, 2018, p. 6), which further deepens the democratic deficit.

Nevertheless, the role of the EP as the only EU institution elected directly by the people is wholly suppressed in CFSP. In other EU policies, the weakening of democratic control by national parliaments due to the expansion of QMV is compensated by the increased role of the EP (Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza, 2018, p. 6). However, in CFSP, we do not see that happen. Since Article 31 TEU clearly states that in CFSP, “*The adoption of legislative acts shall be excluded.*” (Treaty on European Union, 2021), the EP and the Council are nowhere near being equal partners as they are in the *ordinary legislative procedure* described in Article 294 TFEU (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, 2021). Since the lack of democratic legitimacy is not compensated, CFSP leaves out

the EU citizens' voice, which is essentially a "*source of democratic legitimation that is independent and separate from the EU member states.*" (Papadopoulos, 2016, p. 572).

What is more, CFSP is weak in terms of the legal base for enforcing taken decisions. That is problematic because when QMV is used to make all the decisions, conflicting national interests clash (Moravcsik, 2020, p. 5). Since member states can be outvoted, there could be winners and losers and, for that reason, dissatisfied member states (Schuette, 2019, p. 8). In other areas of European policy, if a country refuses or fails to implement a decision, the Commission can take action and start a procedure which can impose sanctions in conjunction with the ECJ. However, CFSP has no such instruments because, with a few exceptions, it is formally outside the ECJ jurisprudence (Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza, 2018, p. 6). Article 275 TFEU states that "*The Court of Justice of the European Union shall not have jurisdiction with respect to the provisions relating to the common foreign and security policy nor with respect to acts adopted on the basis of those provisions.*" (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, 2021). The consequences of such issues will be discussed later in this chapter.

8.4 Opportunities

The first opportunity is that the expansion of QMV could be accompanied by assigning co-decision powers to the EP (Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza, 2018, p. 6) and by increasing the jurisprudence of ECJ in CFSP (Papadopoulos, 2016, p. 582). This would not only significantly increase democratic accountability but also solve the potential issue of non-complying member states. The phrase in Article 218 TFEU, which does not grant the EP a right to consult or consent to international agreements if they relate "*exclusively or principally to the common foreign and security policy*" (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, 2021), could be removed. The EP would then, for instance, possess a formal role when the EU adopts sanctions against third countries (Papadopoulos, 2016, p. 571-572), such as during the Belorussian crisis. Next, in Article 275 TFEU (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, 2021), the role of ECJ would not have to be excluded

from CFSP. ECJ would then be allowed to review CFSP decisions, including sanctions on third countries (Papadopoulos, 2016, p. 573).

Furthermore, generally faster and more efficient CFSP could positively impact transatlantic relations, which the EU considers “*important and unique*” (European External Action Service, 2021). The significance of transatlantic connection is stressed in the strategic vision “*Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe*”, in which the EU also admits that “*A more credible European defence is essential also for the sake of a healthy transatlantic partnership with the United States*” (European External Action Service, 2016, p. 20). Since the strategic attention of the USA continues to shift away from Europe, there is a need for the EU to step up as a global actor and bear more of the burden of protection from security threats (Bergmann and Brattberg, 2020). Communitarised CFSP opens space to achieve this goal.

Finally, the communitarisation of CFSP is an opportunity to get closer to the EU’s “strategic autonomy”. “Strategic autonomy” is repeatedly mentioned as a must in today’s EU (Borrell 2021, European External Action Service 2016) and is best defined as “*the capacity to act autonomously when and where necessary and with partners wherever possible*” (Borrell, 2020b). According to the EU Global Strategy, it is a necessity to “*promote the common interests of our citizens, as well as our principles and values...and to promote peace and security within and beyond its borders*” (European External Action Service, 2016, p. 4, 9). Thus, in the pursuit of developing the EU’s “strategic autonomy”, it has become less acceptable when a member state deters a decision for unrelated reasons (Pomorska and Wessel, 2021, p. 353), such as Cyprus did during the Belorussian crisis (Financial Times, 2020), because it undermines the EU’s ability to achieve the set goals mentioned in the vision.

8.5 Threats

The first threat is that the communitarised CFSP disturbs the existing “code of conduct” in the Council, used when member states are negotiating foreign policy issues since the EPC. “Code of conduct” means that under unanimous voting, everyone is aware that any single

veto can stop the whole process, and that is why sometimes the vote does not even happen when it is clear that the agreement will not be reached. QMV changes not only the formal decision-making process but also the informal norms applied when building a consensus, such as taking everyone on board and explaining your position if it stands against the will of others. When a new member state joins the EU, it is quickly socialised into these norms (Pomorska and Wessel, 2021, p. 354). Abolishing these norms is a risky step.

Relatedly, there is an emerging threat that some member states will refuse to comply with the decision, and the EU will get stuck. In the previous scenario, this threat was rather theoretical since QMV was applied only to the area of human rights. However, this issue is highly likely because QMV is also used in all the other sensitive areas. In the *Council Decision (EU) 2015/1601* (Council of the European Union, 2015), the “code of conduct” was broken, and against the will of several countries, the EU set up a mandatory mechanism to relocate incoming refugees. Poland, Hungary and Slovakia challenged the decision. Even though ECJ ruled in favour of the relocation mechanism, these countries, alongside the Czech Republic, refused to accept the verdict and comply with it (Schuette, 2019, p. 8). Rebellious member states combined with a weak jurisprudence of ECJ could become a deadly mix for CFSP.

Furthermore, CFSP might weaken or lose its external credibility in front of other international actors. It is so because some member states might feel that QMV decreased ownership of their foreign policy (Pomorska and Wessel, 2021, p. 354), which is problematic because European integration is nowadays a salient and politicised issue that cannot be overlooked (Hooghe and Marks, 2009, p. 13). Therefore, if member states feel ignored, they might refuse to collaborate. It is questionable what significance foreign policy would have without these member states on board. For instance, Pomorska and Wessel (2021, p. 355) ask whether it is imaginable to have a policy on Russia without the Baltic states or a policy on Cuba without Spain. Speaking with one voice is a crucial feature of CFSP. If some member states are publicly outvoted on critical decisions such as the USA, Russia or China policies, the EU’s external credibility will suffer (Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza, 2018, p. 7). Key characteristics of the SWOT analysis of this scenario are summed up in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of the SWOT analysis of Scenario 4

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
CFSP is faster and more efficient in all its areas.	National parliaments lose even the little democratic control over the CFSP they currently possess.	It is an opportunity to increase the powers and competencies of the EP and ECJ.	Communitarisation of CFSP disturbs the existing “code of conduct.”
The blackmailing potential is significantly reduced in all areas.	Since the EP’s role is suppressed, the EU’s citizens’ voice is left out.	Faster and more efficient CFSP can have a positive impact on transatlantic relations.	Outvoted member states might refuse to comply with the decision.
The risk of “Trojan horses” is significantly reduced.	CFSP is weak at enforcing decisions.	The EU has an opportunity to get closer to “strategic autonomy.”	The EU risks weakening or losing external credibility in front of other international actors.

9 Conclusion

This thesis has discussed the possible future development of CFSP with a particular focus on the voting system and its changes. It aimed to fill the gap of a missing complex analysis of the possible future development, should QMV in CFSP be implemented fully, partly, or not at all. I used the scenario analysis method combined with a SWOT analysis as the core methodological approach of this work to set the analysed scenarios and reveal their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. At the same time, I applied several crucial theories of European integration that serve as a theoretical base for the selected scenarios.

In answering the first research question (*“What are the possible future development scenarios of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy based on the voting system?”*), the thesis has identified four possible future developments represented by four analysed scenarios: 1. Nothing changes 2. Abolishment of CFSP 3. One step forward 4. All at once. The simplest option is that there will be no change and CFSP remains unanimous (scenario 1). Such development would perfectly align with the change-resistant nature of CFSP so far. The second option is the introduction of QMV to the area of human rights (scenario 3). We can assume so because such a possibility is the core of the ongoing debate in the EU (European Commission 2018, Latici 2021, von der Leyen 2020) and among many authors in the extant literature (Bendiek, Kempin and Ondarza 2018, Koenig 2020, Nováky 2021, Schuette 2019). However, we cannot exclude even more “radical” possibilities. Since this analysis uses a chronological limitation of up 25 years, there is space for future developments, such as the abolishment of CFSP guided by the concept of disintegration from the postfunctionalist theory or the core realist principles of intergovernmentalism (scenario 2) and complete communitarisation of CFSP originating from eurofederalism (scenario 4).

In answering the second research question (*“How do the scenarios differ from each other in terms of their implications, strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities?”*), the thesis has shown that each scenario is a trade-off between several positive and negative aspects described in the analysis. However, this thesis has come to a broader generalising conclusion. We can state that the “Nothing changes” scenario represents a symbolic centre

of possible future developments. Diverging from the centre is another trade-off between risks and rewards. The further CFSP diverges from the status quo, the higher the stakes for risks and rewards. Let me explain what I mean by that.

The risks and rewards in the “Nothing changes” scenario are reasonably balanced. It avoids most of the issues of all the other scenarios. It is arguably easy to maintain, and CFSP can keep functioning this way without threatening its existence. Democratic legitimacy is secured by the veto available to national governments, and national interests are always protected. At the same time, however, this scenario is unlikely to improve CFSP's slowness, efficiency and issues with blackmailing “Trojan horses”. It also undermines the EU’s position as a capable global actor. Whether it is realistically possible to avoid these issues without moving away from unanimous voting and relying only on alternative instruments is questionable.

Importantly, if the EU decides to change the CFSP voting mechanism in a crucial way, such as abolishing it wholly or altogether communitarising it, the rewards could be significant. The “Abolishing CFSP” scenario offers the opportunity to restart the whole project and build a new, better-functioning one. None of the other scenarios possesses this opportunity. Each member state has its independent foreign policy, which means no European restrictions on its conduct. The “All at once” scenario means faster and more efficient CFSP with reduced risk of “blackmailing potential” and “Trojan horses” in the whole CFSP. QMV allows the EU to reach its often-promoted foreign policy goals, such as moving closer to “strategic autonomy” or being a relevant global actor with sufficient credibility and public reputation.

On the other hand, the risks are substantial as well. In the “Abolishing CFSP” scenario, the EU contradicts the development of CFSP and its set foreign policy goals, giving up on being a global power, which means that individual member states have a significantly weaker influence on international affairs. The communitarised CFSP in the “All at once scenario” in which QMV gets expanded to all the areas carries even more weaknesses and threats, especially in democratic legitimacy. It is unclear how member states would react to a voting defeat when their national interests are not protected anymore. Everyone is used to a “code of conduct” based on consensus decision-making. It is in doubt how the EU would

react if a member state refused to comply with the decision since the jurisprudence of ECJ is almost non-existent in CFSP.

The partial move to QMV in the “One step forward” scenario lies in between the status quo of the “Nothing changes” scenario and the complete communitarisation of CFSP in the “All at once” scenario. Therefore, risks and rewards are more significant than in the first but smaller than in the latter. CFSP is faster and more efficient, just in the human rights area. The issues with legitimacy and potentially rebelling member states are not as extensive as in the “All at once” scenario. Unlike the “Nothing changes” scenario, this is a step forward, which might or might not “spillover” to other areas of CFSP.

Regarding specifically the Belorussian crisis, which served in this thesis as a background, the “Nothing changes” scenario symbolises the actual course of events. The EU’s response was slow and arguably weak. However, it must be noted that, in the end, the consensus was reached, and CFSP produced the expected outcomes. Both “One step forward” and “All at once” scenarios would allow considerably faster reactions with possibly more substantial outcomes since a single member state would not be able to blackmail others and delay or block the decision. Hence, based on the analysis, both scenarios would prevent a decrease in the EU’s credibility and public reputation. An enormous amount of uncertainty lies in the “Abolishment of CFSP” scenario. Every member state could choose its approach to the crisis independently of the others. That means possibly faster individual reaction and harsher sanctions, however, with a significantly weaker effect. In this scenario, it is difficult to predict whether the overall impression of the EU’s response would be better or worse than in the actual course of events.

In terms of limitations of this work, the scenario analysis method operates with only hypothetical developments of framed reality segments (Kosow, Gaßner, 2008, p. 11-12). This means, in the case of this work, the scope of the analysis is limited chronologically (up to 25 years) and thematically (a voting mechanism). Therefore, since this method cannot predict the future and cannot include every potential influencing factor, CFSP may take other developments outside the range of the suggested scenarios. Even though the selection of scenarios is based on a relevant and ongoing debate and has a firm theoretical ground, different possible scenarios are imaginable. In addition, this thesis aimed to organise

possible future developments of CFSP into a systematised set of distinguishable and comparable scenarios. I desired to analyse the scenarios by applying the SWOT analysis, not recommending any of them as a preferable choice. Therefore, other researchers can build upon this work using different scenario analysis methods with a similar focus. For instance, an actor analysis (Kosow and Gaßner, 2008, p. 79) and the interpretation of scenarios according to their desirability can be researched 1) to determine which scenario would be the best choice for the EU's future and 2) to reveal what meaning these possible developments have for those actively involved and the constellations of such actors. This would be based on evaluating the positive and negative aspects of individual scenarios and the preferences of actors such as different member states or/and EU institutions.

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