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Demand and Supply of European Defence: A Quantitative Analysis of Citizens' Perceptions and Institutional Convergence.

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"If Europe were once united in the sharing of its common inheritance,
there would be no limit to the happiness, to the prosperity and
glory which its three or four hundred million people would enjoy...
We must build a kind of United States of Europe."

— Winston Churchill, speech at the University of Zurich, 19 September 1946.

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Abstract

This Thesis explores the factors influencing both the demand and supply sides of European defence integration within the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Combining theories of European integration, particularly Intergovernmentalism and Neo-functionalism, with public opinion research, the study investigates how citizens' support for further EU defence cooperation has evolved, and how institutional emphasis on defence-related themes has developed over time. The empirical strategy is based on an original mixed-methods design. On the demand side, Eurobarometer data from 1990 to 2024 is used to examine individual support for the CSDP, testing the effect of threat perception, regional identity (East vs. West), and Euroscepticism. On the supply side, a novel text-as-data approach is applied to official documents to measure relative issue emphasis on defence matters by supranational and intergovernmental EU institutions. A custom defence-related dictionary is employed to quantify defence salience, allowing for a time-series analysis and comparison between EU institutional actors since 2003.

The Thesis formulates and tests five core hypotheses: (HD1) Demand for defence integration has increased over time; (HD2) Threat perception increases support for CSDP; (HD3) Eurosceptics are less supportive of CSDP; (HD4) Eastern Member States show lower support than Western ones; (HS1) Institutional supply has increased over time; (HS2) Supranational and intergovernmental supply have converged. The results largely corroborate these hypotheses. Support for the CSDP has grown steadily and is strongly affected by both threat perception and Euroscepticism. Conversely, Eastern EU citizens seem to be more in favour of further CSDP integration than their Western counterparts. Additionally, the textual analysis confirms a rising trend in institutional supply, with growing convergence between supranational and intergovernmental institutions in their emphasis on defence-related issues, especially during or right after periods of geopolitical instability.

These findings highlight the dynamic interplay between public opinion and institutional output in shaping the trajectory of EU defence integration. The research contributes to the broader debate on the future of EU foreign and security policy, offering evidence that both citizens and institutions are increasingly aligned in their recognition of a stronger EU role in defence.

Keywords: CSDP, EU, Demand, Supply, Security, Supranational, Intergovernmental, Issue Emphasis

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1. Introduction

1.1 Relevance of the Research

Thomas Paine, the illuminist intellectual and philosopher, once said, “it is not in numbers, but in unity, that our great strength lies” (Paine, 1776). This significant quote helps better frame the object of this work as it hints at the importance of cooperation in the field of security and defence at the EU level to achieve, firstly, more efficient use of resources and, secondly, further integration towards a closer achievement of the “European project”. More specifically, this Thesis investigates Europeans’ demand for closer integration in defence and security policies and the variables affecting such a choice, the supply offered by key EU institutions such as the Commission, the European Parliament, the EU Council and the Council, and the possible convergence of the latter between supranational and intergovernmental organs.

However, to perform such tasks successfully, it is necessary to highlight how Member States have approached matters related to security and defence since the end of the Cold War. More specifically, it is essential to focus on the security initiatives, the coordination of different procurement policies, the various operations, and the military-industrial cooperation between Member States since the 1990s. A first glance is given as to how states participated in OSCE, UN, Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) or NATO-led operations and the implications that could be drawn from such data. Secondly, the efforts and limitations in coordinating different procurement policies are presented to highlight the relevance of these topics for today’s European defence cooperation. Finally, the level of military-industrial collaboration between states since the 1990s shows the significance they attribute to the autonomy they are still willing to maintain in the management of national weapon industries.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), created in 1995 as an evolution of the 1970s Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), provides Member States with a forum to enhance cooperation between different security instruments supportive of non-military solutions for the de-escalation of international crises and tensions (Bieri & Nünlist, 2018). One key area of interest has always been conventional arms control and

confidence-building measures between European armed forces. Despite the loss of emphasis put on these last two elements of interstate security concerns after the fall of the Berlin Wall, OSCE still remains a key actor in the field of security and defence. Proof of this is the 1990 Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) between NATO and Warsaw Pact countries, which decreased the probability of military confrontation and increased trust and willingness to collaborate between East and West. The logic behind OSCE's work in the 1990s is to be found in the effort to create a "web" of obligations such that, even if one agreement was found faulty or lacking, all the others could contribute to not deeming the whole system as decayed and useless (Bieri & Nünlist, 2018). Although it is important to highlight the difficulty found by OSCE to cope with the upcoming military and security challenges emerging from the Balkan and Chechen Wars (Lachowski, 2004, p.15), the 1990s still represented a golden age for arms control, with more flexibility and efforts to participate in this framework by Russia too.

However, after 1999, the OSCE's arms control regime steadily lost its grip. The extending influence of both NATO and the EU eroded the leverage OSCE gained in the previous years, and the need for arms control regimes in Europe was not felt as it was in the past. The 1990s' "peace dividend" logic decreased states' military expenditures, hence bringing down the risk of conventional warfare in the Old Continent, leading countries to neglect the topic of arms control and, therefore, OSCE's role.

This somewhat peaceful mood was fiercely put to the test in 2014 when Russia occupied Crimea. As some argued that arms control regimes had achieved their mission in Europe, Putin's occupation proved that conventional warfare was still possible in Europe, at least on a (sub)regional scale. After the crisis's breakout, OSCE's leadership emphasised once again how Confidence and Stability Building Measures (CSBM) and political dialogues are key to regaining stability or, at least, predictability in international affairs. However, Russian denial of on-site inspections and the use of hybrid means of warfare (special forces "black ops" or cooperation with irregular militias) proved that OSCE's norms had to be reformed. For instance, any future arms control regime must include new systems such as tactical nuclear weapons, drones, unmanned vehicles, and cyberattacks. Notwithstanding this undeniable need, states still seem unwilling to cooperate in this regard with an actor they no longer consider trustworthy, Russia, and the willingness of the first military power in the world, the US, to participate in such a regime is waning.

Thus, OSCE's role in Europe after the Iron Curtain fell sustained as fast an ascent in the 1990s as a descent in the 2000s: nonetheless, the aims of the Organisation did not change, although the means have to be realigned to the needs of contemporary warfare. However, the willingness of Member States to dialogue has proved vital in achieving these objectives, and the latest developments in the international arena are unlikely to be bearers of further collaboration in this framework.

Hence, the relevance of highlighting how Member States approached matters of security inside OSCE in the last decade is of vital importance to the aims of this Thesis: in fact, it could be expected that, on the one hand, the supply of further defense integration at the EU level decreased in recent years as states found the agencies dealing with arms control less responsive as in the past and chose to deal with those needs on their own. On the other hand, it could be argued that for exactly this reason, EU Member States turned to the Union's institutional framework to answer the security needs that international organisations could no longer attend to. Whether the former or the latter assumption is correct does not constitute one of the objectives of this work, but reaching a definitive answer is of the utmost importance for future research on European defence and security integration.

Stemming from a more "institutionalised" role that signatories play in OSCE's framework concerning security issues, it is now essential to highlight Member States' participation in UN-mandated peacekeeping missions. In the early 1990s, a plethora of European armed forces sent thousands of troops around the globe to carry out such missions: more specifically, to Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda, and the Western Balkans (Gowan, 2018). However, the 1995 failure of UNPROFOR, the UN Protection Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Srebrenica convinced some governments to reduce their participation in peacekeeping missions: in fact, the UN-mandated field operations (mostly) in Africa since 1999 did not raise particular participation. For instance, in the same year, KFOR, NATO's Kosovo Force, was responsible for military security in the country, while UNMIK, the UN Interim Administration, had executive policing functions. After an ethnic violence surge in 2004, UN and NATO officials "blamed each other for the failures" (Human Rights Watch, 2004, p.23), which contributed to decreasing European participation in UN-mandated missions. Instead, the operations in Congo, Mali, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Sudan seemed to

sanction the success of the EU-UN cooperation. Still, very few Member States were willing to send troops in short-term or small-scale UN deployments.

Nonetheless, with the scaling down of NATO operations in Afghanistan, the main focus of European deployments under UN command became, in the mid-2010s, Mali (Gowan, 2018). As a potential hub for transnational terrorist jihadist groups and a crossroad for sub-Saharan migration towards Europe, in 2013, Paris intervened to impede secessionists from arriving at the capital, Bamako, and soon the Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Ireland and the Nordic countries offered support. However, European Member States made clear the mistrust they showed towards their non-Western colleagues and the UN chain of command. European states considered UN-mandated field operations as an option of last resort, where power politics or regional dynamics ruled out other possibilities, and since these suspicions still show a strong grip upon Member States, their participation in future UN missions seems ever decreasing. However, the operations European states took part in have, firstly, tested their attitudes to dealing with small-scale wars and insurgencies through the use of force, and, secondly, provided them with the opportunity to interact with non-NATO partners in active operational environments, which often led to clashes of different military cultures (Gowan, 2018).

Thus, European engagement in UN-mandated operations could be considered as another sign of Member States' retrenchment from dealing with security issues in supranational or international environments. Nonetheless, if OSCE's case is important to highlight how European states changed their approach towards arms control or confidence-building measures, the loss of UN-missions' "appetite" concerns more the operational deployment of Members' forces in international contexts. Whether this assumption could be applied to the Europeans' elites' involvement in security cooperation is key to understanding EU defence integration.

From what has been stated in these paragraphs, it could be argued that NATO's operations are the ones the European Member States are more willing to commit to; however, not analysing the approach to such missions and the different objectives they aimed at would provide an incomplete overview of the issue. NATO's operations after the collapse of the USSR shifted from static territorial defence of the Alliance's Eastern border to expeditionary missions against less-defined actors on the conflict spectrum (Sperling & Webber, 2018). NATO's strategy after 1991 rotated around three main propositions: firstly, the Alliance faced an unpredictable security

environment: secondly, that environment required more flexibility and an accelerated evolution of its military structure: and, thirdly, NATO should be able to operate "where possible and when necessary", including spaces well beyond the signatories' territories (NATO, 2010, para. 20). These three objectives were made clear in the 1990 London Declaration, where the Alliance identified former adversaries, if not enemies, with potential partners, if not allies, and which helped set the scene for a period of enhanced cooperation to better respond to international crises and conflict prevention.

For instance, through NATO's peacekeeping mission to Bosnia in 1992, Member States expected to support other international organisations' peacekeeping operations, such as the UN. However, at the 1997 Madrid Summit, NATO stated that the responsibility to respond to conflict management and regional crises went hand in hand with the core function of collective defence. This commitment was made clear in the Alliance's 1999 Strategic Concept (SC), which gave more prominence to crisis management and crisis response missions in NATO's attitude.

Notwithstanding this flexible development in NATO's strategic approach, the events of 9/11 and the invocation of Article 5 by the US cast into doubt the Alliance's geographic reach and its competence in counterterrorism operations and expeditionary warfare. An answer to these questions was given in the 2010 Strategic Concept, where the Allies made clear that NATO possessed a set of political-military instruments able to effectively counter any crisis, from pre- to post-conflict, and from military to civilian approaches (Sperling & Webber, 2018, p.4). However, not so different from what happened for OSCE, the Russian annexation of Crimea made NATO step back from expeditionary missions and "return to Europe". Hence, the Alliance had to come back to balance a strong and effective deterrence policy with the need to avoid any unnecessary escalation of confrontations. Collective defence and Article 5 obligations re-emerged and occupied most of the Alliance Defence Ministers' priorities. This is confirmed, *inter alia,* by the increasing number and size of Allied military exercises aimed at achieving greater deterring power and unity among NATO's armed forces and closing the "exercise gap" with Russia.

Moreover, completed NATO missions account for 29 between 1992 and 2014, ranging from humanitarian assistance, maritime and aerial surveillance, logistical support, territorial defence, sanctions enforcement, and military training (Sperling & Webber, 2018, pp. 7-15). Furthermore, this aims to expose the inconsistency of the relatively common accusation that Europeans were/are

free-riding on the US' deterring power: instead, as Sperling & Webber (2018) argued, European Member States devoted a large number of resources to NATO's missions within Europe, while the Americans behaved the same way outside Europe. Thus, they conclude, "the European allies have, in other words, collectively made contributions in excess of what would be expected in terms of the GDP share" (Sperling & Webber, 2018, p.36). The same reasoning goes when considering the significant exercises performed in 2015, where US contributions were disproportionately low and European ones were disproportionately high (Sperling & Webber, 2018, p.37). Other signs of EU Member States' willingness to cooperate further, between themselves and with NATO, in matters of defense and security are the vast number of sanctions the EU placed on Russia after its occupation of Crimea in 2014, and the 74 measures aimed at advancing the integration between the Union and the Alliance (Zandee, 2019, p.21).

Summing up, the number of NATO-led operations since 1990, the over-participation and contribution of European Member States in exercises and missions within Europe compared to the US, and the increased momentum gained by the collaboration between the EU and the Alliance are all indicators of a greater governmental attitude to be more effective and integrated in a system of collective defence. Whether this sentiment originates from national pressures or is structured by intergovernmental rather than supranational mechanisms and institutions is the concern of the next chapters. Nonetheless, it seems clear that Member States attribute to NATO, more than OSCE or the UN, special competence when it comes to dealing with international crises or conflicts: their participation in Alliance-mandated missions, not exclusively military, appears as a recognition of the competent political and military institutional structure NATO possesses. The relevance of this fact is that having a specialised organisation for defence and security integration in Europe may overshadow or divert any efforts to advance the same process at the EU level towards the Alliance. However, to check whether this assumption is empirically based, it is necessary to investigate the military operations carried out under the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

Although CSDP operations are still young, they are swiftly becoming an essential instrument of Europe's projection of power and influence around the globe (Krotz & Wright, 2018). While the mandate, scope, objective, and Member States' participation in each mission vary according to different factors, CSDP operations will remain a vital mechanism of European politics. Furthermore, exactly because such missions entail the use of military force and physical

engagement, they represent one essential feature for the process of European integration as a whole, and the increasing number of requests for the Union's intervention in international crises is an indicator of their success. Nonetheless, it is important to highlight the limitations in scope, size and ambition of such operations.

Since the first mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2003, by 2017, CSDP operations accounted for 17, 6 of which had a prominent military component. As is highlighted in the following section, from Maastricht to Lisbon, a series of institutional changes impacted the mechanisms through which the EU could exercise its foreign policy. More importantly, with the extension of the Petersberg tasks in 2009, CSDP operations could then include disarmament, humanitarian tasks, military training, conflict prevention, peacekeeping, crisis management and post-conflict stabilisation. Since then, the number of operations, both military and civilian, has risen steadily, with a concentration on the African continent (Krotz & Wright, 2018, p.14).

However, political disagreements between Member States and time-consuming decision-making processes have constrained the ambitions of CSDP operations. Hence, Common Security and Defence Policy missions have largely, if not entirely, remained an intergovernmental matter. Furthermore, such operations saw their mandate assigned not in the world's most dangerous conflict zones and, above all, not at the height of hostilities. The decision-making process hinders the EU's ability to act swiftly and respond to international crises. Sensitivity to casualties and "mission creep" remains high (Krotz & Wright, 2018, p.19).

Thus, it is difficult to predict whether CSDP operations will continue to lag behind events due to their procedural limitations. However, their role in providing Member States with a way to project the EU's values and objectives beyond its borders and outside NATO or the UN, especially considering the difficult evolution of defense and military cooperation in Europe, is a vital achievement for the process of integration and a significant aspect to highlight for this work.

However, the number, size and mandate of military operations carried out by European Member States are not the only way to measure their security and defence cooperation. Arms procurement policies, defence industrial cooperation, and export controls are other indicators of the integration process. The former refers to states' policies aimed at ensuring the security of supply related to arms and weapon systems required by their armed forces. Two interrelated

mechanisms lie at the core of this process. Perceiving this policy field as crucial for states' sovereignty, EU countries try to ensure the security of supply by protecting their national defence industries and their technological benefits. This reasoning led to the establishment and protection of Member States' Defence Technological and Industrial Bases (DTIB) (Uttley, 2018). However, the increasing costs and technological advancements made in weapon systems' developments, together with decreasing defence expenditures since the 1990s, rendered the process of arms acquisition far from entirely nationally based. This technology-driven inflation dynamic results in states' capacity to afford only a lower number of increasingly complex and advanced military systems. As a response, competitive defence industries internationalised their supply chains to reduce production costs and created partnerships, if not merged, with others to share R&D investments. This development raised new concerns among European Member States and the survival of national DTIBs: should they cooperate even in matters of defence procurement, or should they aim at maintaining their autonomy (Bond, 2014, p.2)? While arms-producing companies have become more internationalised, they are far from being transnational: that is because national governments are still wary of ceding control over such an important matter, and hence, they continue to shape defence production within national boundaries. Thus, Member States are reluctant to leave their roles as monopsony buyers and, consequently, give away the power to determine the size of national defence industries (Uttley, 2018, p.3).

This reasoning helped produce significant fragmentation, duplication, and inefficiency in EU arms production. Increased coordination between Member States would be more profitable from an efficiency point of view: resources would be better spent, and cooperation among arms-producing countries would foster the European integration process of core state powers. For exactly these reasons, the Commission tried to render the defence market more integrated and competitive, where arms-producing companies could operate freely in all Member States while ensuring the security of supply in Europe. Notwithstanding the evident losses in efficiency, diversification, and interoperability, the "cost of non-Europe" seems to be bearable by Member States if compared to a potential loss of sovereignty and control over their national defence industries (Ballester, 2013, pp. 82-83). Thus, states exercise significant agency in arms procurement to the extent that DTIB protection still prevails over further integration and cooperation. Hence, today's sovereignty concerns seem to trump states' cost-benefit analyses in

coordinating at the EU level and fuel, instead, economically unsound retrenchments in autarchy-like systems of arms production.

However, this may not necessarily be entirely accurate. Moreover, transformations in defence economics and technology led firms to increase their level of market integration, a choice that some European governments followed to reduce procurement costs (Weiss, 2013). This mechanism was mirrored at the supranational level by an active Commission, which, based on ECJ case law, increasingly came to regulate the exercise of defence procurement as a core state power. For instance, the adoption of the 2009/81/EC Directive by the European Parliament and Council in 2009 precisely fits into this logic. This legal act amends previous regulations by giving Member States the possibility to invoke Art 346 of the Lisbon Treaty, allowing them to take the necessary measures to protect their defense and security connected with the production or trade in arms, only if the application of European law could undermine the state's security (Weiss, 2013, p.31). Through regulations such as the one mentioned above, the Commission tried to establish an EU-wide competition within the arms sector, not so different from the one present in other markets, to decrease inefficiencies and increase cooperation. Furthermore, the initiative by the Commission to supply new regulations dealing with EU defense procurement was significantly reinforced by another ECJ case law: for instance, the 2009 Agusta ruling provided that dual-use goods, so for both civilian and military purposes, procurement does not fall within Lisbon's Article 346 (Weiss, 2013, p.39-40). Hence, this interpretation strongly restricts the legitimate application of the exemption clause to very few acquisitions, and the favouring of domestic firms and authorities would be more difficult if cheaper or better goods could be found in other markets. Thus, armaments' procurement integration proceeds thanks to regulation by stealth rather than publicity (Weiss, 2013, p.28). Hence, although Member States' concerns are of vital importance when discussing EU defence and security integration, the intergovernmental setting in which both the CFSP and the CSDP were anchored seems not to prevent supranational bodies, such as the Commission, from carrying the process forward. Whether this statement can be empirically proved is extremely relevant for the literature dealing with European integration theory, and it is one of the aims of this Thesis.

Defence industrial cooperation between Member States is another way in which security and military integration could be measured at the European level. Whenever national governments decide to provide their armed forces with military capabilities, they can choose between three

paths to pursue: buy from domestic firms, import from foreign industries, or a combination of the two (Weiss & Biermann, 2018). Today, defence-industrial cooperation has turned out to be almost the default choice for Member States; however, there is still significant variation among the governments that decide to pursue such a road, the specific defence sector in which to collaborate with others, and the sources of cooperation. On a general note, an increasing preference for collaboration in the European defence sector can be observed. Since the early 1970s, projects' participation and activities increased at a higher-than-constant rate. Nonetheless, it is important to highlight that Europe's major military powers (France, Germany, and the UK) drove this process. Despite this fact, in recent years, even medium and lesser powers have turned more and more towards an increased effort at cooperation, especially since the 1990s (Weiss & Biermann, 2018, p.5). In addition to that, collaborative defence equipment procurement spending observed an upward trend from 2005 to 2011 (Weiss & Biermann, 2018, p.7). Although major powers are drivers of this trend too, the declining one for medium and lesser powers in the last years of the 2000s' first decade could be explained by the need to divert funding and expenditure to the measures dealing with the 2007-2008 Global Financial Crisis and the Sovereign Debt one (SDC) swiftly after.

Furthermore, there is an observed shift from government-induced defense-industrial cooperation toward an industry-induced one, where the latter achieved 9 out of 10 projects in 1995 (Weiss & Biermann, 2018, p.6). This is compatible with the reasoning made in the above paragraphs, where arms-producing firms came to deal with increasing costs of production and a decreased government's appetite for weapon systems, thus leading to mergers and increased cooperation within the defence industry. This line of thought could be applied to another important feature of defence industrial cooperation between Member States that deals with the specific military field chosen for such collaboration. More specifically, the more technologically demanding, hence, more costly, sectors such as aircraft, electronics, and missile systems saw the highest level of cooperation. Hence, it could be argued that capital intensity is one major driver of further defence industries' integration.

The challenges European Member States faced in the 1990s, namely decreasing military budgets due to the end of the Cold War, the consolidation of American defense industries, and the increasing costs per unit of advanced weapon systems' production, led the European governance

of the European Defense and Technological Industrial Base (EDTIB) to increasingly gain importance (Weiss & Biermann, 2018, p.11). As was stated above, the aims of the EU's "intervention" in states' core powers' matters were to enhance the competitiveness of European firms, increase integration, and make the EDTIB more sustainable. Nonetheless, the principle of *juste retour*, meaning that national industry policy criteria determined the work distribution among Member States rather than quality and costs, complicated this process (Weiss & Biermann, 2018). In 1996, some governments created the Organisation Conjointe de Coopération en matière d'Armement (OCCAR) to address this problem, but the results remained modest. As was stated above regarding arms procurement, increased integration in the field of defence industrial cooperation among Member States was a result mainly mirroring the efforts of the EU Commission (Weiss & Biermann, 2018, p.12). Notwithstanding the difficulties encountered along the way, a positive trend in military-industrial cooperation among EU partners can be observed. Therefore, Member States' concerns for sovereignty significantly influence collaboration among partners. However, recent trends suggest that defence-related issues, such as industrial cooperation, are increasingly driven by industries, with a greater influence from supranational institutions too. This fact represents a key aspect that must be grasped if a complete picture of the European defence framework is wanted.

Finally, one last factor analysed in this work related to the realm of defence integration among Member States is export control policies. Governments employ different policies to control the international movement of military goods and dual-use instruments. They represent a way in which states can exercise their monopoly over the use of force, and traditionally, governments have been reluctant to give up national control over the matter (Bromley, 2018). Nonetheless, since the 1990s, the EU has tried to increase the level of coordination and convergence in the field of arms export control, which created significant policy tools highly valued by Member States. Firstly, a few years after the end of the Cold War, a series of scandals related to export licensing procedures involving all major European arms-producing firms incentivised governments to delegate to the EU more control over particular aspects of export-control policies. Then, to streamline export efforts and facilitate cross-border cooperation, the European arms industry developed a keen interest in this delegation (Bromley, 2018, p.3). Thirdly, the EP strongly pushed for the

development of common export-control policies to better address the respect of human rights regulations in the recipient countries.

The EU began to use arms export controls under its emerging CFSP through arms embargoes, and given that CFSP is one area of special EU competence outlined in Lisbon, its measures are binding (Bromley, 2018, p.4). However, it is necessary to highlight that Member States are free to determine the mechanisms of implementation of such measures and that the EU lacks the necessary powers to sanction non-compliance. One important CFSP measure was the 1998 Code of Conduct, which was transformed into a Common Position in 2008. This mechanism aimed at developing criteria to regulate further arms-export control, specifically by ensuring that any trade in weapons was not fueling human rights violations, enhancing ongoing armed conflicts or being used aggressively towards a neighbouring state. In addition to that, the 2009 ICT Directive simplified processes for the transfer or trade of arms to certain recipients within the EU (Bromley, 2018, p.5). Being part of the EU's internal market measures, an area of "shared compliance", it's legally binding, and the EU has sanctioning power.

Although these accomplishments represent tremendous efforts from the EU to continue the process of integration, it could be argued that Member States' willingness to take an active part in it may be losing its momentum (Bromley, 2018). However, one aspect of export-control policy has instead gained more traction since the early 2000s: arms embargoes. This fact highlights the increased preponderance of Member States to coordinate more at the EU level. Nonetheless, it wouldn't be entirely incorrect to suggest that they often act in their interest when a decision benefits them. Hence, there is still some jealousy that Member States feel for their military and defence sectors, and a very careful analysis is performed whenever supranational regulations try to enter perceived (exclusive) national matters.

Hence, this research fits exactly into the complex and growing field of EU defence integration literature. More specifically, by highlighting the increasing trend of Member States' participation in OSCE, NATO, CFSP, or UN-mandate operations, as well as the cost-benefit analysis they perform when deciding whether to cooperate more closely among partners, and the EU institutions' greater willingness to promote such a process, these pages prove how relevant the analysis contained in this work could be. Moreover, shedding light upon the last thirty years'

evolution of states' approach to defence and security matters constitutes the foundations, together with the historical evolution contained in the following pages, of this Thesis. The analysis it aims to perform, hence, clearly provides answers as to whether citizens' demand for further integration has increased or decreased since 1990 and due to which factors, whether EU institutions supply of them behaved the same, and, finally, whether there is a convergence between the "offer" stdmming from intergovernmental or supranational institutions. The implications that can be derived from this work are, therefore, relevant to this field.

1.2 Historical Background and Literature Review

Since the 2014 occupation of Crimea and the latest Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the matter of European defence and rearmament has reacquired a predominant space in EU political discussions. From increases in defence budgets, a more coordinated response framework, and propositions of further integration among EU and NATO Member States on key weapon systems, European security has achieved a level of emphasis that seemed to pertain to the past. According to this logic, European defence integration has been addressed in scholarly literature from a plethora of different stances: economic feasibility, sovereignty implications, and supranational/intergovernmental coordination issues (Fabbrini, 2015; Woźniakowski, 2022; Bauer & Becker, 2014). Furthermore, other studies have concentrated on the level of Europeans' support for closer defense and security cooperation and the variables affecting it (Mader et al., 2023; Gavras et al., 2022), the influence supranational institutions hold on different Member States according to their "leverage" (Lundgren et al., 2016), the presence of a "European Strategic Culture" (Becker, 2021) and the decision-making process in the EU (Thomson et al., 2012). In addition to that, another stream of research concentrated on the specific initiatives and topics related to the EU defence and security framework, such as the European Defence Fund (EDF), Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and analysed them individually (Haroche, 2019).

However, before delving into pre-existing literature on European integration and both the CFSP and CSDP, as well as defense issue emphasis, it is necessary to provide an accurate and precise

overview of the European defense system inside the EU and its evolution since WWII. The literature review follows swiftly after.

As the scars opened by the Second World War were slowly closing, Europe seemed to face a wide range of challenges: political uncertainty, social unrest, reconstruction, economic turmoil, forced displacement, and security concerns were just some of the major issues pressing on the Old Continent's political elites. Furthermore, the Western Allies emerging victoriously from the war were facing an additional threat closing in from the East: the USSR. In the effort to "contain" both possible Soviet incursions and to offset the risks of future German rearmament and hostile *realpolitik*, the UK, France and the Benelux countries took part in a project aimed at strengthening the Atlantic Front by signing the Treaty of Brussels in 1948. This agreement, which established the Western Union (WU), represented a major stepping stone for the advancement of European cooperation in defence and security and an important check on whether states were able and willing to increase their level of integration.

However, knowing that the combined deterring power of WU's Member States was not of great concern to the immense military capabilities of the USSR, in 1948, negotiations started to involve the US and Canada in a European framework of collective security, and the following year, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was born (Henrikson, 1980). As this landmark for European security took its roots, the importance of deepening cooperation with other states previously excluded from the Brussels Treaty was felt. Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway and Portugal were also invited to join the Alliance. NATO's emergence as both a security guarantee and an opportunity for closer integration among European states played an almost immeasurable role in ensuring peace and stability on a continent so often touched by war and conflict. However, it is important to mention that NATO, with time, occasionally came to be employed by Member States as an excuse to promote their unwillingness to cooperate more on defence matters and oppose deeper security integration inside the EU in favour of the Alliance, as will be mentioned in the chapters below.

Following this will for deeper and closer cooperation among European states, the Pleven Plan of 1950 constituted the first attempt to form a pan-European army as a way to integrate further national militaries and standardise procedures, weapons, ammunition, and increase

efficiency and interoperability (Hyde-Price, 2018, p.2). Furthermore, it proposed the creation of a supranational European Defence Community (EDC) entrusted with the management of a common army (Klemm, 2016, pp. 107-108). In 1952, a year-long negotiation culminated in the signing of the Treaty of Paris, which translated the goals of the Pleven plan into objectives within reach. Germany, France, Italy and the Benelux countries further deepened European defence integration by entrusting a supranational body, consisting of a common budget, institutions and armed forces, with the role of collective security (Koutrakos, 2013, p.8). However, this ambitious effort crumbled on its feet when the French National Assembly refused to ratify the Treaty establishing this institution in August 1954.

Despite this halt in the process of European defence integration, in the same year, the signatories of the Brussels Treaty decided to invite Italy to its membership in both the Atlantic Pact and the Western Union. After the UK reassured France about its fears of a possible German rearmament, the same assembly that rejected the EDC ratified the agreements, and in the October 1954 Paris Council, the Western European Union (WEU) was established. The newly formed WEU differed from the once-proposed EDC as it did not set itself the objective of creating a common supranational military structure. However, a Council and a military structure were established to bring together the different stances among European states (above all France and the UK), and harmonise the relations with the losing powers of WWII (Germany and Italy) in matters of collective security (Kayser, 1954, p.99). Notwithstanding this ambitious effort, the WEU soon entered a period of stagnation, when Germany staggered behind its objectives of rearmament and the Union itself found little space for manoeuvre compared to NATO's predominant stance on security and defence policy.

However, the difficulty for states to establish a clear defence and security cooperation framework outside the US-led NATO did not prevent European governments from further deepening the economic and political process of integration. 1957 marked the signing of the two Treaties of Rome, which established both the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM). Furthermore, in February 1961, the first summit meeting of WEU's Heads of Government took place in Paris, aimed at ensuring the intergovernmental direction of cooperation among Member States, strengthening collaboration in foreign policy and drafting a text for a future agreement. In addition to that, the meeting at the Quai

D'Orsay sanctioned the birth of the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Union, which "would be free to review a range of initiatives to strengthen foreign-policy coordination and to suggest institutional means to that end" (Teasdale, 2016, p.15). Furthermore, the French-born Fouchet Plan, which proposed a new "union of states" along the already affirmed European Community but with new competencies in matters of defence and security cooperation, seemed to follow the efforts of the previous years to increase European integration and walk a step closer to the Founding Fathers' model. However, crafting this proposition in an intergovernmental mould is what spurred fierce opposition from Belgium and the Netherlands. The Fouchet Plan reached a stalemate from which it was never able to exit, and that led to its abandonment in 1962. The deterioration of diplomatic relations between EEC Member States following this *debacle* halted European integration efforts for almost a decade.

In 1970, EEC Member States formed the European Political Cooperation (EPC) by adopting the Davignon Report, which laid the foundations for today's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). At the heart of the matter was the effort to ensure continuous and constant collaboration on international politics and a greater harmonisation of stances and actions (Fulci, 2001, p.32). This achievement represents the recognition by the Member States that the process of European economic cooperation could not proceed on its own, as was proven by the levy of the French veto on the UK's admission to the EEC in 1972. This enabled the only other nuclear power in Europe to participate in key security discussions, leading to the formation of the European Defence Council, or Eurogroup, which was an informal meeting of NATO's Member States' Defence Ministers.

From the late 1960s and early 1970s, the EEC kept setting goals to achieve closer cooperation and integration, which led European states to reflect upon the possible reformation of the EEC's founding treaties to expand its competences in defence and security matters. One attempt was the Genscher-Colombo initiative, coming from the German and Italian Foreign Affairs Ministers in 1981. This proposition aimed at developing a security and defence framework inside the institutional settings of the EPC, enabling it to further strengthen the harmonisation of different stances, centralise them into one and reinforce citizens' common European conscience (Hyde-Price, 2018). Despite the Stuttgart Declaration of 1983 rejecting such a level of integration, it revived discussions about the reforms needed to increase cooperation and contributed to the approval of the 1986 Single European Act (SEA).

The SEA, in fact, saw the mention of security and defense matters included in primary law for the first time. While the document only referred to the economic and political aspects of security, it reiterated the need to develop a European identity in Foreign Affairs and external relations through deeper integration and coordination among Member States. However, states' concerns about sovereignty and "core state powers" proved to be difficult to budge, leading them to reject any centralization process, even in an intergovernmental setting (Koutrakos, 2013, p.13-14). Nonetheless, the Single European Act served as an effective "icebreaker" for security and defense matters, which saw their mentions increased in institutional discussions in the following years.

The 1991 signing of the Maastricht Treaty (TEU) represents one of the most important evolutions for the European project: it established the European Union and the pillar structure. Moreover, the EU's "pillarisation" created three distinct pillars with differing decision-making procedures and institutional prevalence. More importantly, the first one concerned monetary union and common market, which saw the prevalence of supranational institutions such as the Commission, with its functions closely related to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), EURATOM, and the EEC. Instead, the second pillar, dealing with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), saw the institutional weight of the Council prevail over the role of the Commission, the EP and the ECJ. Similarly, the third pillar, justice and home affairs, was conceived too as an "intergovernmental arena next to the supranational logic of the Community method" of the first one (Christiansen et al., 2012, pp. 687-689). Thus, it could be argued that a clear intergovernmental setting of the EU emerged from Maastricht. Analysing how this milestone event affected European institutions and politics is not the scope of this research. However, it is necessary to highlight the framework it provided for security matters to just hint at the major repercussions it had on Member States. For instance, as was said above, the TEU established the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which had at its heart not only the security of the Union but of its Member States as well. However, the Treaty did not create new institutions or agencies entrusted with the implementation of defence operations; instead, this role was entrusted to the WEU. Furthermore, it is fair to mention the decision-making procedure decided for the CFSP and its repercussions on the effectiveness of its operations. Most of the CFSP voting was decided on consensus rather than majority voting in the Council because foreign policy was not a matter of exclusive EU competence

(Wessel et al., 2023, pp. 5-6). Nonetheless, Maastricht incentivised Member States to close the distance between them in matters of foreign, security and defence policy by enhancing the effectiveness of institutions already present. Proofs of this are several projects aimed at increasing integration between states, such as the Eurocorps, or Franco-German Army Corps, and the definition of the "Petersberg Tasks". The latter broadened the WEU's activities, consisting now of territorial defence, humanitarian missions, peacekeeping operations, crisis management, and peace enforcement.

Another important milestone for European integration studies is the signing of the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997. Related to its impact on matters of security and defense, it tried to smoothen the CFSP's decision-making process by introducing the concept of constructive abstention, which enables Member States to not apply the Council's decision at the national level, but binding them to recognize that the Union instead is committed to it, hence, reducing their veto power and their possibility of blocking initiatives. Furthermore, Amsterdam allowed the Commission to play a more decisive role in CFSP decisions, as it provided that the expenditure linked to them had to be approved by the supranational body. This could be interpreted as another indicator of Member States' power in CFSP decision-making pre-Amsterdam, and that the 1997 Treaty tried to overcome this *impasse* by balancing it with a renewed role of the Commission. Another important development stemming from the Treaty of Amsterdam is the institution of the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, whose role is to assist the Council in the formulation, preparation and implementation of policy decisions and its relations with third parties. By providing the CFSP with a centralised and recognisable figure, it was hoped that the EU could gain a larger diplomatic presence and a greater role in the management of international affairs.

A step towards enhanced cooperation between Member States in matters of security and defence was the 1998 Saint Malò Summit between France and the UK. Despite the bilateral character of the meeting, the two nuclear powers came to reconcile their historically different positions regarding European security and realised that the EU had to be able to play a greater role in international relations. Hence, to achieve this end, it had to have autonomous action capacity, credible military forces, and the capability to swiftly decide whether to use them or not and to what extent. This declaration called for a stricter defense integration process at the EU level, and it contributed to removing the "taboo" of working to define a clear institutional setting for a European

collective defense system and set the base for a future Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) (Krotz & Wolf, 2018).

Thus, following this Anglo-French input, the 1999 European Council held in Cologne introduced the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) to attain the ends contained in the St. Malò agreement. The ESDP aimed at achieving the operations assigned to the CFSP by the Petersberg tasks by overcoming the shortcomings and limitations of the WEU. In addition to that, the key relationship between the ESDP, the EU and NATO was reiterated, and the dual usability of the former's mechanisms for EU or NATO-mandated missions was restated. The effort to provide the CFSP with an effective instrument for crisis management, namely the ESDP, was further enhanced in the Helsinki Council the same year. More clearly, the Summit launched the "Headline Goal", an attempt to give the EU a European Rapid Reaction Force (ERRF) consisting of 50,000 – 60,000 men, able to be deployed in under 60 days and equipped for at least one year.

Within the optic of enhanced cooperation, the 2003 ratification of the Treaty of Nice would have provided both the CFSP and ESDP with more flexibility and freedom of movement. In fact, the new framework could have allowed eight Member States to participate in a process of enhanced cooperation without having to fear the unwilling others to postpone the decision to act to the unanimity requirement of the Council. However, the enlargement of this principle of enhanced cooperation to the area of defence was fiercely opposed by some Member States, among which the UK, which vetoed the proposal together with the one of extending the Petersberg tasks to other matters related to international crisis management. Nonetheless, this objective was partially reached with the 2008 adoption of the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) Report, which enabled the ESDP to deal with issues such as cybersecurity, climate change and energy security.

One important agency in the collective defence sector is the European Defence Agency (EDA). Established in 2004, the EDA mediates Member States' relations in military matters, provides a defence and research hub for innovation, and contributes to the improvement of European defence capabilities in international crisis management (Platteau, 2018). Above all, it fosters scientific, industrial and technological cooperation in security matters (Hyde-Price, 2018).

All these developments towards an ever-more integrated and cooperating European Union led, eventually, to the last major agreement in recent EU history: the Lisbon Treaty. Its entry into force in 2009 substantially changed the European institutional framework. It abolished

Maastricht's pillar structure to simplify and streamline processes and enhance unity and cohesion. However, not much was changed regarding common security and defence. The intergovernmental setting of the CFSP and ESDP, the unanimity voting procedure, and the strong decision-making capacities of the European Council were left untouched. However, the ESDP changed its name to Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and saw its tasks extended to disarmament, conflict prevention, post-conflict stabilisation and counter-terrorism operations. It is also important to highlight that the EU tried to make the Union's external operations less dispersed and its setting clearer compared to previous reforms: in fact, Lisbon brought different provisions relative to common security and defense under a shared set of aims and objectives (Koutrakos, 2013, p.31-33). Furthermore, the principle of enhanced cooperation was further extended to defence matters, trying to increase the level of swiftness and effectiveness that CSDP operations require. More specifically, Lisbon introduced the possibility for Member States to establish a Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in military or defence matters decided by the Council through qualified majority voting after the High Representative's approval (Hyde-Price, 2018).

PESCO, as well as the European Defence Fund (EDF) and the Coordinated Annual Review of Defence (CARD), were initiated in 2017 to enhance the EU's strategic autonomy and increase European defence integration. While the EDF provides capital coming from the Union's budget to support financial defence cooperation through an EU framework, thus enabling the Commission to have decision-making power (Haroche, 2019), CARD instead enables Member States to identify projects and provides an assessment system that the EU lacked before (Zandee, 2019). The close interplay by these institutions, together with agencies such as the EDA and with others in the EU setting, represents integrative efforts of Member States in security and defence matters' decision-making, which is slowly stripping this field of its intergovernmental feature (Brøgger, 2024).

Once an overview has been given on the evolution of states' cooperation concerning security and defense matters, it is now necessary to illustrate the literature review related to the main theories of European Integration, the differentiation between "high and low politics", empirical studies on voters' support and institutions' supply of said integration, the presence of a European strategic culture, and issues emphasis to correctly frame the statistical analysis contained in the pages below.

Stemming from assumptions closely intertwined with realist international relations theories, Intergovernmentalism was first developed as an answer to the Neofunctionalist school of thought. More specifically, Intergovernmentalist scholars argue that states, through governments, leaders, or representatives, behave in international settings following national interests, hence determining the outcome of the integration process (Verdun, 2020, p.1). In other words, integration stands in contradiction to national diversity, and when the two collide, national differences are likely to prevail (Hooghe & Marks, 2019, p.115). Seen as plausible in the 1970s and 1980s, it regained persuasive power in the 1990s when Liberal Intergovernmentalism was presented by Moravcsik (1991). Furthermore, intergovernmental theories gained further ground when the EU was facing the harsh consequences of the Great Recession and the Sovereign Debt Crisis in the 2010s.

The first scholar to conceptualise Intergovernmentalism was Stanley Hoffmann in the early 1960s. He argued that Member States can "stop, can majorly derail, and are in the driver's seat of European integration" (Verdun, 2020, p.2). During the decade in which Hoffmann's theory was formulated, Intergovernmentalism seemed to closely represent the ongoing behaviour of European states. In fact, France's President De Gaulle first halted the UK's entry into the EC, and, second, provoked the 1965 "empty chair crisis", when the General recalled its representatives from the Commission once the latter proposed an extension of the Community's budget and the change to qualified majority voting. After a brief attention pause in the 1970s due to various international crises, Intergovernmentalism picked up momentum in the late 1980s and early 1990s with a new twist: Moravcsik's Liberal Intergovernmentalism (Moravcsik, 1991). According to its developer, this stream of Intergovernmentalism was characterised by a Liberal connotation because it drew on "domestic" factors such as economic interest, relative power, and credible commitments, which can predict states' preferences (Verdun, 2020, p.6). Thus, the level of integration emerging from cooperation problems will vary depending on the issue at hand (Hooghe & Marks, 2019, p.116). However, some criticisms were made toward this logic as it was unable to account for the contribution made by supranational institutions and to highlight how preferences are formed.

Another stream of Intergovernmentalist thought emerged in the mid-2010s when Bickerton (2015) proposed a "New" approach: he argued that while European integration had expanded to an unprecedented degree, the corresponding level of Supranationalism had failed to emerge, even

in areas such as Justice and Home Affairs, where the Community's presence is stronger. Furthermore, he highlighted the instruments used to respond to the SDC crisis, such as the intergovernmental decision to establish the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) and the Fiscal Compact, and how they represented citizens' opposition to keep providing a "permissive consensus". This was due to the transformation in Europe from nation-states to Member States, when the relation state-society evolved so much that political parties have become less representative of the citizens they govern and more reliant on regional integration as a source of legitimacy (Bickerton, 2015, p.51). Hence, he concludes, Member States became more powerful yet cautious about their participation in European policymaking.

A related but still different argument is made by Fabbrini (2017, p.581). He argues that in the competencies given by Maastricht to the EU, such as foreign, defense and security policies, Member States exercise a predominant decision-making role through both the Council and the European Council, which is not counterbalanced by supranational institutions such as the Commission, that in turn creates a "legitimacy vacuum". Hence, the collegiality of the EU's national governments has become the new centre of European (high) politics (Fabbrini, 2017, p.588). Furthermore, he insists that although the measures adopted by the Council between 2010 and 2012, such as new intergovernmental treaties, are of an unprecedented magnitude, they failed to provide effective and, above all, legitimate solutions to the SDC (Fabbrini, 2013, p.1003). Instead, the Intergovernmental approach to crisis management faced important difficulties in providing solutions to collective action's dilemmas.

A similar direction is taken by Christiansen (2015), who uses an institutionalist approach to highlight the process of an increasing transfer of competencies since Maastricht, amplified by the SDC, not in favour of supranational institutions, but rather to *ad hoc* intergovernmental agencies or institutions. The Commission and the EP were sidelined in dealing with the SDC's consequences, and the main decision-making actors were instead identified with the Eurogroup and European Council (Christiansen, 2015, p.91). Furthermore, he refutes the idea that the previously applicable distinction between "high" and "low" politics is still of use in today's debates. Issue emphasis might vary over time and across countries, leading Member States to consider some topics more important than others, which transforms the problem into being capable of understanding which issues are being (de) politicised and how (Christiansen, 2015, p.96). Thus, he

concludes that given the central role played by the European Council and its greater flexibility in Treaty reform, New Intergovernmentalism is well-equipped to shed further light on European politics in the future.

Concerning New Intergovernmentalism and CSDP operations, Smith (2015, p.112) argues that the Member States' role in the Council and the requirement of consensus for major decisions, as well as the limited role played by the Commission, the CJEU and the EP, make this environment strictly intergovernmental. Furthermore, a process of experiential learning was employed by governments in CSDP settings to deal with matters of foreign and security policy. This mechanism played on the EU's CFSP and CSDP experiences after 2003, which led Member States to predict the role the Union could play in international affairs. Hence, operational experience and deliberate reflection upon them are preferred by governments rather than delegating foreign and security policy choices to supranational institutions or the use of majoritarian voting rules in the Council (Smith, 2015, p.118).

Similar arguments are shared by Puetter (2015), who emphasises the centrality of the European Council in providing long-term political guidance for the EU in matters of foreign and security policy. Furthermore, it emerged as a powerful crisis manager in *ad hoc* summits, which spurred European integration more than any other institution since 1992 (Puetter, 2015, p.165). The increasing number of formal and informal meetings, as well as the predominant role played in these by foreign policy matters, testify to the importance this institution plays in EU politics and integration. Furthermore, while the Commission was endowed with significant agenda-setting powers in Maastricht, it has internalised far more modest ambitions than predicted in the early 1990s (Peterson, 2015, p.185). In addition to that, the institution became more intergovernmental and presidential in character, which led its officials to appear more dubious about the European project. However, he argues that the Commission is almost always essential to achieve cooperation, and even in areas where its formal powers are weak, it mostly keeps working towards closer integration, which might shed a shadow upon the New Intergovernmentalism paradigm (Peterson, 2015, pp. 203-207).

While Intergovernmentalism makes assumptions about states' interests, Neo-functionalism

argues that the state is the arena where societal actors operate to realise their interests and goals (Hooghe & Marks, 2019, p.1114). Hence, it considers international relations as the output of social relations between different societal actors. In turn, if these groups of actors believe that supranational institutions are more promising than national governments in achieving their interests, then further regional integration is expected. Furthermore, although crises may delay the process of integration, policy spillover and supranational activism will bring the process back on track, which has a clear direction. Thus, path dependence is key for Neo-functionalism: that is to say that the progressive advancement, albeit slow oftentimes, towards more integration at the EU level slowly erodes the number of options that future policymakers may be able to pursue should integration be demoted from European politics' agenda. Sunk costs render the change of course difficult and expensive (Hooghe & Marks, 2019, p.1115). However, scholars hoping for increased integration consider this argument dangerous for the European project, as it suggests that further alignment and cooperation between Member States is the only option rather than the best, which in turn fuels Euroscepticism (Fabbrini, 2019).

Notwithstanding this cost-related emphasis on the (im)possibility of turning back towards less integration, Neo-functionalism thought is more closely interrelated with the concept of a Supranational Union, which represents a multinational political union where power is delegated by national governments to an independent authority that should behave in the interests of the community (Zaharia & Pozneacova, 2020, p.48). Supranational institutions in the EU are identified with the Commission, European Parliament, and ECJ, while the Council represents clear Intergovernmental assumptions.

However, once a brief introduction was provided for both theories, it is possible to identify the prevalence of one over the other at different times and in terms of the roles performed by them related to core state functions, such as legislative, executive, and judicial (Tsebelis & Garrett, 2001, p.357). More specifically, the Council and the EP are mostly legislative institutions, and before Amsterdam, the prevalence of the former over the latter was clear: in fact, the EP had no effective influence over legislation until the 1986 SEA. However, after 1999, most new legislation in the EU requires the support of a qualified majority in the Council and a simple or absolute majority in the European Parliament, depending on the stage of the legislative process. Furthermore, while the ECJ is the EU's judicial authority, the Commission could instead be considered both a legislator and an

executor. More specifically, it has a monopoly over the drafting of bills and the bureaucracy in charge of implementing legislation approved by the EP and the Council. The balance of power between these four institutions has changed along with the various treaty reforms the European project has seen since Rome (Tsebelis & Garrett, 2001).

Firstly, between 1958 and 1987, the ECJ was the primary mover of European Integration, which was then spurred by this supranational institution's broad interpretative powers on the Treaties (Tsebelis & Garrett, 2001, p.359). This was due to unanimity voting in the Council, which often brought the institution to a gridlock and consequently blocked the role of the Commission to implement legislation. Secondly, between the 1986 SEA and 1992 Maastricht, the moving grids of the Council legislative functions slowly gained speed when unanimity was replaced by Qualified Majority Voting (QMV). As a consequence, the role of the ECJ as the main engine behind European integration was curtailed. However, a supranational preponderance was still maintained, as the increasing workload of the Council was mirrored by a greater influence of the Commission: in fact, the removal of Member States' vetoes in the Council made the Commission the primary mover of European cooperation. However, this powerful role diminished after 1999 in Amsterdam when the Commission's legislative agenda-setting powers were far more limited. Notwithstanding this direct limitation to the EU's executive, the gridlock caused by the interaction between the EP and the Council freed valuable space that the Commission took advantage of to implement legislation the way it preferred to and that the ECJ to adjudicate disputes in coordination with it (Tsebelis & Garrett, 2001, p.359).

Furthermore, Lisbon built a four-sided institutional framework for governing EU policies related to the single market with a bicameral legislature, the EP and the Council, and a dual executive branch, the EU Council and the Commission (Fabbrini, 2013, p.1006). However, the major role played by Member States in Intergovernmental settings to better deal with the crises that hit Europe between 2007 and the mid-2010s overshadowed the Supranational contributions to the process of European Integration in other policy fields. For instance, regarding European security and defence cooperation, the Commission launched the European Defence Fund (EDF) in 2017, aimed at enhancing greater collaboration between Member States on defence research and projects through the EU's budget (Haroche, 2019, p.2). As a consequence, even in an area traditionally identified with core state powers such as CSDP, supranational institutions have *de*

facto been able to influence decisions and processes (Riddervold, 2016, p.353). Hence, the preponderance of supranational institutions in matters of "low" politics, and the one of Intergovernmental actors in "high" politics, as well as the impossibility of the former to enter the realm of core state powers, represents a differentiation that is no longer accurate (Menon, 2013). Thus, Neo-functionalism and the "intrusion" of the Commission in areas that were often identified with Member States' sovereignty can explain decisions in the EU's foreign and security policy domain.

Furthermore, another area of interest to Supranational studies was the differentiated influence these institutions exercise over Member States and which factors come into play within this process (Lundgren et al., 2024, p.840). The analysis found that Supranational institutions exercised more influence when Member States were more dependent on European policy solutions and were less attractive as partners to others. Thus, it could be built upon this logic that if the right amount of emphasis is put on security and defence issues related to the inefficiency of non-cooperation, a higher degree of European integration in this field could be expected.

In the 1990s, scholars shifted attention to the effectiveness and legitimacy of EU governance, and its consequences on domestic institutions. Behind this focus' change was the conviction that the process of European integration had reached a stable equilibrium which left the EU in charge of the Union's economic and social space and kept national governments in control over their core state powers (Genschel, 2013, pp.2-3).

The differentiation between policies related to core state powers, namely foreign and security policy or "high politics", and the ones more linked to non-core state powers, such as the common market or "low politics", is of paramount importance to understanding the different degrees these two sectors experienced concerning European Integration. According to Rittberger et al. (2013), these different results are to be attributed to the interaction between the depth of integration and the specific features of a certain policy area. More specifically, for matters states perceive not to be too infringing on their sovereign powers, national governments are less likely to "opt out" of specific policy regimes, hence causing a lower level of internal differentiation. The opposite goes for core state power policies: in fact, significant incentives stemming from identity issues or functional motives lie at the core of a fiercer opposition to further integration in these

matters (Rittberger et al., 2013, p.191). Thus, the threat to national sovereignty, felt more in the possible delegation at the EU level of core state powers, is more likely to activate Eurosceptic cleavages and critical reactions. 2010 data seems to agree with these arguments, as the level of internal differentiation in matters of foreign and security policy is present (Rittberger et al., 2013, pp. 193-194). This empirical fact can also be due to the politicisation of issues in the realm of core state powers, which are less likely to be integrated into Eurosceptic countries and, hence, attract more opposition. Furthermore, integration is opposed even more decisively on these matters if the recipient of these powers' delegation happens to be supranational (Rittberger et al., 2013, pp. 196-197). Thus, integration of core state powers is more likely to be opposed, notwithstanding the institutional recipient of such delegation of powers; however, it tends to be more observed in cases where supranational institutions are involved.

Despite this, the field of CFSP seems to be the least differentiated policy field pertaining to core state powers, presenting a relatively high degree of uniform integration with only Denmark opting out, although characterized by strong intergovernmental features (Rittberger et al., 2013, p.206-207). However, cooperation in this field saw much more fertile ground in NATO rather than in the EU.

Other scholars instead shed light upon a paradox related to defense policy and integration:, while a strong demand for greater cooperation among Member States can be observed, national governments have clung to their jealousy, thus limiting regulation, capacity-building, and, ultimately, integration (Menon, 2013, p. 66-67). More in detail, burden-sharing and blame-shifting in a more integrated and intergovernmental setting would provide governments with both material and non-material benefits from deeper cooperation. Instead, Member States have entrenched their actions around their opposition to more integration, excluding supranational institutions such as the ECJ or the Commission from dealing effectively with CSDP policies. Thus, national governments dominate CSDP decision-making, also in newly created agencies such as the EDA, considering its intergovernmental character (Menon, 2013, pp. 72-73). Furthermore, the high political relevancy of foreign and defense matters is not built on different data or number interpretations as could be the case in common market policy: states' differences in this realm are deeply rooted in their contrasting world views, often constructed in decades, which are more difficult to reconcile and

which lead to harder cooperation processes. Thus, "the Union remains a long way from exercising any form of control over this core state power" (Menon, 2013, p.82).

Of differing opinion are Mérand & Angers (2013, p.46-47), who argue that, although the EU indeed plays a modest role in armed forces' integration in Europe, its efforts are not inconsequential and irrelevant: more importantly, the Union carried out some regulation "by stealth", or under the radar, through the Council, meaning that the supranational supply referred to in the lines above actually exceeded, although partially and with humble results, the weight of states' sovereignty concerns. The collaboration on joint procurement strategies, shared projects, the increasing unit costs of advanced weapons systems, as well as the decreasing defence budgets, will keep bringing European militaries closer to each other. More specifically, while the EU has had little success in furthering deeper integration in defence policy, the increased military cooperation between Member States proves that the "exercise of core state powers is no longer a purely national affair" (Mérand & Angers, 2013, pp. 62-63).

Notwithstanding these developments in CSDP, the efforts to spur more integration in this policy field count little if there is not a parallel construction of a shared European Strategic Culture. In other words, this process entails, *inter alia*, the gradual reduction of governments' divergent patterns such as Atlanticists or Europeanists, power projection or territorial defence, allies or neutrals, military or civilian instruments, weapon-producing or weapon-consuming states, and nuclear or non-nuclear powers (Howorth, 2002, p.88). Culture is intended by the author as "the functional connotations of situation assessment, approaches to problem-solving and policy-making, and strategic objectives" (Howorth, 2002, p.89). Without an agreement, or at least convergence on the major objectives of security and defence integration at the EU level, further cooperation in this field would seem blind and less enticing to Member States. Furthermore, the reduction of differences will not be enough to permit the advent of a proper European might: a socialization process will have to occur among the officials in Brussels concerned with policy-making, further agreements on when, how, and if to mix political-economic means with military ones, and the exact long-term and size of the EU's military power (Howorth, 2002, p.90). A historical project such as this one will not only require a "negative" process of divergences' reduction, but it will also need "positive" measures, initiatives, and active participation from Member States if a credible autonomy in matters of defence and security at the EU level is wanted.

Policy-makers and leaders have the vital function of constructing a discourse that not only explains why this is necessary, but also how this achievement can fit with traditional norms and values (Howorth, 2002, p.104).

Although this objective seems to be full of obstacles, and it is, some authors point out that some dynamics increase the convergence of national strategic cultures towards the formation of a common European one (Meyer, 2005, p.525). Given that the concept of Strategic Culture can be unpacked in its aggregators, convergence in attitudes toward humanitarian intervention abroad can be expected due to the lower perceived threat from external attacks after the Cold War and an enhanced agreement by Member States on the non-use of force vis-à-vis foreign civilians. Furthermore, a convergence between high and low-threshold states for intervention is observed due to the almost everywhere shared belief that international authorisation to intervene is required. In addition to that, today's international political arena may incentivise European states to "rally around the flag" in defence and security matters, considering partnerships' fluctuations and rivals' audacity (Meyer, 2005, pp. 550-553). This latter argument could be the engine behind a European Strategic Culture: the volatility of international relations, coupled with political uncertainty and increasing weapon costs per unit, might instil a growing attachment to the EU as the appropriate forum for defence integration.

However, not all literature agrees with the last statement. For instance, some scholars argue that NATO instead should be the framework encompassing a renewed European effort for defence and security cooperation. By analysing means and standard deviations of Atlanticism and International Norms' variables, it is observed that there has been less volatility in NATO's opinions since the early 2000s compared to the 1990s (Becker, 2021, p.10). On the other hand, International Norms' respect when force is employed carries a lower volatility than the emergence of a NATO Strategic Culture. However, the former seems to be more susceptible than the latter to international events, crises or interventions. Whether or not international events are sources of instability for citizens' demand for European security mechanisms is one of the objectives of this research.

Issue Emphasis, or Saliency Theory, is one of the most widespread instruments to analyse political communication and party behaviour (Budge, 2015, p.761). Its main assumption is that parties, politicians, or other political actors define their rhetoric by giving more weight to certain

issues than others. It is considered Salience when public attention is attracted by one particular element of a given speech or document, receiving disproportionate focus and consideration compared to the other information. Thus, Issue Emphasis is a property of stimuli (Namboodiri et al., 2014).

Born in the 1930s, Saliency theory achieved its greatest development in the 1970s, with Robertson as its pioneer (Budge, 2015, p.763). This stream of literature is strongly entrenched and concentrated on political parties' issue emphasis through the analysis of party manifestos, political speeches, declarations, or leaders' interviews in the effort of framing the party's position on a traditional left-right scale or a GAL-TAN one. Hence, once this passage is complete, one could identify some parties to "own" certain issues more than others, meaning that their political representatives establish a connection with a specific topic so profoundly that the public increasingly considers them the sole "suppliers" of a certain policy. Consequently, when that issue becomes popular in the mainstream media, the party that owns that issue is expected to gain more popular support (Budge, 2015, p.763). Conversely, if a party does not have a long history of "issue ownership", in the effort to gain more voters' support, it could try to "ride the wave", meaning that it could frame the popular issue of the moment in such a way that could be beneficial (Wagner & Meyer, 2014, p.1021).

However, this research does not encompass an analysis of political parties' issue emphasis related to defence and security matters: instead, it aims to provide a complete and thorough assessment of both the EU institutional supply for further integration and the public political demand for it.

Analyzing defense and security issues emphasis at the EU level implies the identification of strategy papers, reports and documents produced by European institutions and the trends of saliency levels over time or across countries. Different approaches to such an analysis are possible.

One example is Gavras et al.'s work (2022) on EU and Member States' strategy papers since 1994 on the development of security and defence preferences within the Union. In carrying out their analysis, they used a dictionary-based approach, which consists of creating a set of keywords related to the field of security and military affairs and counting how many times these appear in specific documents to compare them with the emphasis put on the same issues by national strategy papers. They found that the only two strategy papers published by the Union at the time of analysis,

namely in 2003 and 2016, seem to belong to an independent actor adding its stance to the cacophony of Member States' security strategies (Gavras et al., 2022, p.673). More specifically, the EU emphasises security threats and terrorism much more than most national documents, and although it mentions Russia not as much, the Union does not represent a gravitational centre towards which Member States are drawn. It is fair to mention that, according to their analysis, the level of emphasis put by the EU on issues such as Multilateralism and Europeanization increased from 2003 to 2016. However, it is of the utmost importance to highlight that the scope of their research was not merely to analyse the level of salience the EU posited on defence and security matters; instead, they aimed to investigate the difference between Member States' strategic objectives and the Union's one. This aim slightly differs from the goals of this research, which points to discovering a discernible trend, if present, of increased or decreased issue emphasis on defence and security matters, not limited to the EU's strategic papers.

A similar investigation was carried out by Thomson et al. (2012), who gathered data on both the most salient issue per each legislative proposal between 1996 and 2008, and the outcome favoured the most by different actors at the EU level, such as the Commission, the EP and the Council. In analysing 125 legislative proposals and questioning 349 key informants with semi-structured interviews, they created a dataset that helped researchers test hypotheses on collective action theory, decision-making procedures, differentiated integration, and issue emphasis on specific policy fields by different EU institutions (Thomson et al., 2012, p.604). However, one shortcoming of this Dataset is that it only analysed controversial legislative proposals to better understand the mechanism behind the resolution of different stances on the same topic by multiple actors. Nonetheless, this work is closely linked to the method of analysis contained in the next Chapters.

Another stream of research instead focused on the difference between supply and demand of further integration in the CFSP and the possible reasons behind it. In fact, despite the widespread support for further cooperation in this policy area, little progress has been made (Angelucci et al., 2024, p.2). From a supply-side point of view, the authors suggest that limited integration at the EU level took place because politicians fear that proposing such an initiative would provoke a significant amount of public opposition and would lead to increased support for radical parties and a threat to their incumbency (Angelucci et al., 2024, p.5). Thus, a "politicisation trap" prevents

national leaders from furthering their citizens' latent preferences for increased integration in matters of CFSP due to the fear that the electorate's permissive consensus might become constraining dissensus.

A similar investigation was carried out by Isernia et al. (2022), who focused on both public demand for CFSP and elites' supply from 2007 to 2014 in six major European countries. They found that a substantial number of political elites believe that the Europeanization of the CFSP should go even further and that the trend over time has remained more or less unchanged. Furthermore, the most popular alternatives among surveyed political actors were either having a single European Army or having both common and national armed forces (Isernia et al., 2022, p.27). Thus, the question, at least stemming from political elites' surveys, is not "whether" to pursue such a road, but rather "to what extent". However, the analysis presented mixed results on questions about NATO, its relationship with a possible Common European Army, and the US (Isernia et al., 2022, p.34).

Another study focused on political parties' salience and positioning on CFSP issues, concentrating instead on their electoral manifestos. Although results stemming from political speeches and discourses vary in significant ways from the written means of politics, Puleo (2022) analysed the level of foreign and defence issues' salience present in six European countries from 2000 to 2020. The results point to the fact that areas such as internationalism or military issues have not been the objects of particular political elites' attention in their manifestos (Puleo, 2022, p.2). Furthermore, the level of emphasis put on the same issues between the period of analysis and the period 1970-1980 decreased. However, it is important to mention that nowadays' politics, and the means used to perform it, are infinitely different from the ones employed in the 1970s and that major international events, developments, and changes have re-shaped, firstly, how political actors present themselves in the political arena, and, secondly, how citizens' create and maintain their preferences.

However, elites' supply is just one side of the equation: the following paragraphs analyse the existing literature on citizens' demand for further integration in European defence and security matters.

A recent study involving citizens' perceptions towards the EU's CFSP and CSDP in seven countries tried to provide a brief overview of voters' demands. It showed that Europeans favour

not only increasing military might at the national or NATO level but at the EU one too. Furthermore, there seems to be a willingness to achieve greater autonomy in defense and security policies from the US and to delegate more foreign policy decisions completely to the Union's institutions (Wang & Moise, 2023, p.1680). In addition to that, the research aimed to investigate possible factors influencing the public's opinion in matters of European defence and security policy. More specifically, the paper analysed the role of threat perception, both long and short-term, EU identity and political orientation as possible independent variables affecting voters' policy support. In detail, they found that higher-threat perception leads to a higher probability of supporting increasing defense capabilities, but not at the EU level (Wang & Moise, 2023, p.1689). Instead, those who already possess a strong European identity are more likely to support a "Europeanization" of defence and security policy than more nationalistic supporters. Finally, centre and left-wing respondents are far more likely to support an enhanced effort in defence integration at the EU level compared to right-wing voters. Thus, the research concludes that the War in Ukraine, among other factors, has led to higher approvals for a more prominent EU role in foreign and security policy, hence, supporting the theory that "bellicist" collective security of war is a causal impetus for EU polity building from the demand side" (Wang & Moise, 2023, p.1680).

Following the same theoretical bases, Mader et al. (2023) examine 40,000 public opinion surveys on European defence and security policy integration from 24 EU Member States. He concludes that perceived threats produce divergent results: in fact, they could unite or divide the public opinion on this issue for certain groups of voters and could lead to both the divergence and convergence of citizens' beliefs (Mader et al., 2023, p.1). More specifically, results show that foreign threats are associated with greater support for European integration in matters of defence and security policy. Interestingly, this correlation is as strong among Europhiles as it is for Eurosceptics. Thus, this astonishing result may point to the fact that threat perception may trump the logic of attitude formation among voters, at least temporarily.

A similar finding is contained in Angelucci et al.'s work (2024). Although European integration in matters of defence and security has been under attack since the 1970s from both the radical right and left, the surveys he analysed show that voters are more receptive to arguments than ideological affiliation, at least in this domain (Angelucci et al., 2024, p.26). Hence, well-crafted arguments seem to shape the public's opinion on security and defence integration much more than

ideology. Furthermore, the research found that between 1970 and 2020, EU initiatives in this field almost always sustained wide and stable public approval, and they grew in the 2000s (Angelucci et al., 2024, p.10). In addition to that, ambivalent support for both an EU and NATO-level integration and the creation of a common army emerged. More specifically, Eastern European countries seem to support more easily a NATO-led enhanced integration in matters of defence and security, while Western ones are more prone to get behind a greater role of the EU in military affairs (Angelucci et al., 2024, p.11). However, the most important results of this work lie in the importance of crafting well-constructed arguments more than ideology in shaping Europeans' opinions in matters of security and defence and that the proportion of supporters of further integration in this field overwhelmed the one calling for less of it.

Another study focused on the different wording of survey questions presented concerning citizens' support for European integration in matters of foreign and security policy over the years. Overall, irrespective of this difference in syntax, the large majority of EU citizens support both a common foreign and a common defence and security policy (Isernia et al., 2022, p.38). More in detail, in almost all countries under investigation, the support shown by voters for the former is slightly lower than that for the latter. This finding could be consistent with the "bellicist" assumption made above, which entails that the threat perception posed by the Russian invasion of Ukraine or other international crises might spur more defence rather than foreign policy integration. However, a *joint* European foreign policy seems to attract more support than a common European defence policy (Isernia et al., 2022, p.41). Nonetheless, as was stated above, European support for a common foreign, security and defence policy grew above normal standards in the first decade of the 2000s, possibly caused by the straining of transatlantic relations with the US (Isernia et al., 2022, p.46). However, when asked instead about the formation of a possible European army, citizens tend to be more careful in expressing their consensus: while still a majority of Europeans believe that forming a European common army should be in the aims of EU policy-makers, the variation across countries and the possible use of this institution is larger (Isernia et al., 2022, p.48). This finding was also corroborated by other research carried out through focus groups (Mingardi et al., 2022, p.17). Furthermore, there seems to be more consensus on the assertion that the matter of European defence should be taken at the EU level, together with greater

autonomy from the US in this field (Isernia et al., 2022, p.56). Hence, this analysis, too, showed the overwhelming support for an enhanced European integration in matters of defence and security.

Finally, another work investigated, *inter alia*, citizens' support for greater European integration, with particular attention posed to the voting procedure in both CFSP and CSDP and the creation of a common European army (Borri et al., 2024, p.30). More in detail, the survey, performed in 6 key European countries, showed that there is strong support for the shift from unanimity voting in the Council to majority rule. Furthermore, the analysis highlighted significant support for greater defense capacities at the EU level; nonetheless, the majority of respondents were unwilling to sacrifice their national armed forces for the creation of a European common army (Borri et al., 2024, p.32). In addition to that, the majority of respondents agree that the EU should play a prominent role in international relations, although the extent of such ambitions varies across countries: in fact, the sample is almost evenly divided between more "globalists", who consider the EU to possess the prerequisites to aim at being one of the most influential actors in world politics, and "regionalists", who instead believe that the Union should concentrate on regional influence and ambitions (Borri et al., 2024, p.18). Moreover, most Europeans believe that military power has increasingly become important in international relations. However, the support for the use of force is constrained to the field of preventing armed aggression rather than employing it as a tool of conflict management (Borri et al., 2024, p.16). Summing up, while respondents believe, on average, that the EU should be more integrated in several policy fields and expressed preferences to achieve greater integration in this one too, Europeans seem to remain skeptical about a fully federalized Union in matters of security and defense (Borri et al., 2024, p.32).

1.3 Research Questions and Objectives

As the complex historical background European defense integration has sustained since the end of WWII, as well as the relevance of the topic for today's international politics illustrated, this Thesis falls right into the framework of investigating the trend of this project. More importantly, to clearly define the bounds of the statistical analysis contained in the Chapters below, it is mandatory to specify the main questions and objectives lying at the heart of this work.

Firstly, concerning voters' demand, citizens' surveys are used to gather data on Europeans' support for further integration in matters of defence and security, hoping to highlight a clear trend over time. Furthermore, a regression analysis is performed to better investigate the role of factors, such as threat perception, Euroscepticism, and geography, in shaping citizens' preferences. As highlighted in the paragraphs above, this objective aims to answer the question: How has European voters' demand for further integration in matters of security and defence evolved since 1990? First and foremost, it is imperative to clearly state what "demand" means in this work. More clearly, citizens' demand is intended here as Europeans' willingness to sustain further defence integration at the EU level, notwithstanding the factors that might influence such a choice.

Although some clear trends in this regard were identified in the previous section, this Thesis aims to corroborate the path that Europeans' support for further integration has not waned in recent years. More specifically, and as was hinted in the pages above, the recent developments in the international arena might have opposite effects on voters' choice; for instance, the Russian occupation of Crimea in 2014, and Putin's invasion of Ukraine eight years later might spur European citizens in sustaining a full-scale EU defense integration to better deal with the volatility of international politics. On the other hand, these same events may retrench citizens' demand for more security within national boundaries, fueling Member States' need to address the matter individually and with the methods and policies they deem most fit. The aim of this Thesis, among others, is to investigate whether the former or the latter assumption is preferred by European voters, hence highlighting the level of demand they possess. In performing such a task, the analysis considers citizens' surveys at the EU level and hopes to provide a clear trend in this regard. However, a clearer conceptualisation of the Hypothesis extracted from this interrogative, as well as from relevant theoretical assumptions, is contained in the following Chapter.

Secondly, and related to the previous question, this Thesis aims to investigate the role of different reasons that might influence citizens' demand. In fact, what are the factors shaping citizens' support or opposition to further integration? In light of the literature review contained above, Europeans' support for such a project might originate from the level of threat they perceive. Voters might feel uneasy when international instability and conflicts increase. Hence, they might identify the EU as the main, or sole, provider of security in the Old Continent, spurring their demand for further defence integration at the Union level. However, and similarly to the reasoning

above, the level of threat perception might have the opposite effect: more clearly, it could instead lead citizens to support national policies they believe could provide them with the same reassurances EU defence integration might entail. One objective of this Thesis is to reach a clear answer on whether international instabilities fuel voters' demand for further or decreased integration.

Instead, voters might sustain such policies at the EU level simply because of their political ideology. For instance, convinced Eurosceptics may oppose this process simply because it would imply a further delegation of powers to the Union. On the other hand, ardent Europeanists could support said integration for exactly the same reason. As the literature review above highlighted, it seems that different factors, such as well-crafted arguments, might influence the role played by political ideology concerning CFSP or CSDP. Although this work does not aim at investigating these micro effects, Euroscepticism is one independent variable considered in the statistical analysis contained in the following pages.

Finally, another reason Europeans might support EU defence integration could be anchored in geography. As the Section above showed, support for further cooperation in matters of security and defence is widespread almost all over Europe. However, the institution that voters identify with the role of recipient in this delegation of powers changes according to the latitude and longitude of their Member State. More specifically, it can be expected that Eastern European voters might support a level of defence integration within NATO rather than in the EU, whereas the opposite goes for Western European citizens. Whether this differentiation has significant statistical results is one of the objectives of this Thesis.

Thirdly, what is the level of supply of defence and security integration offered by key EU institutions? This research identifies "supply" not with initiatives or operations originating from said institutional bodies; instead, it refers to the willingness of the Council, EU Council, Commission and EP to deal with matters related to defence and security. More specifically, the time and space dedicated to these topics in research papers, documents, declarations and other official material stemming from those institutions. This objective aims to achieve an overall understanding of the level of salience the Union poses upon such topics. To achieve this end, this work measures defence and security issues emphasis in institutional documents stemming from key EU institutions. As was clearly explained above, Saliency theory is an effective instrument that helps understand the

level of salience attributed to specific topics, which enables researchers to count both the absolute and relative weight of certain keywords related to the entirety of the documents taken into analysis. Hence, it is of the utmost importance for this work to understand whether or not there was a clear and discernible trend in the EU institutional supply of defence integration over the years and whether it increased or decreased since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Fourth and finally, is the level of European supply for such integration stemming from Intergovernmental or Supranational institutions converging or diverging? In line with the literature review above, it can be argued that Intergovernmental and Supranational institutions have different weights in CFSP and CSDP decision-making. However, it can also be argued that the level of salience these bodies give to matters of defence and security might not be strictly related to the institutional power they possess. Instead, one could expect the opposite: more clearly, exactly because Supranational institutions were sidelined in the decision-making procedure of both CFSP and CSDP, the Commission could choose to address issues in that field more often to offset the predominance of the Council and increase its perceived competence in those topics. Hence, whether the emphasis is put on security and defence issues, or EU institutional supply for further integration, between the Intergovernmental or Supranational bodies is converging or diverging is another issue addressed in this work. The relevance of the implications that can be derived from such results can be deemed to fit perfectly into the framework of European integration theory and the scholarly debates it contains.

Summing up, the main objective of this work is to contribute to shedding light on the evolution of both citizens' demand and institutional supply for further European integration in defence and security matters. More importantly, it aims to provide a bridge between analyses carried out on voters' preferences and institutional initiatives, and present, hopefully, a clear trend of convergence or divergence between the supply offered by Intergovernmental or Supranational institutions. The final goal of this work is to establish a comprehensive understanding of the historical evolution of the European security framework, its support from EU citizens and the variables at play, and the EU's institutions' willingness to supply it.

Once the research questions and objectives of this work have been clearly laid out, it is now necessary to move on to the organisation and structure of this Thesis.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

Before delving into the specifics of the statistical analysis carried out below and the precise design of this research, it is necessary to provide a clear structure of this Thesis.

The first Chapter of this work provided a comprehensive analysis of European Member States' participation in recent military and security missions in the OSCE, UN, NATO, and CFSP-mandated operations to highlight the relevance of this Thesis's contents. Furthermore, it highlighted the historical background for this work, which is vital to at least have a brief overview of the major developments in the field of European integration in matters of defence and security since the end of WWII. Thus, it moved on to analysing the pre-existing literature on European integration theories, Issue Saliency, "core-state power" politics, and how scholars addressed CFSP and CSDP citizens' support and Member States' stances. In addition to that, it concluded by clearly presenting the research questions behind this work and the objectives it aims to achieve.

Instead, the second Chapter, Research Design, provides a clear definition of the research's bounds. It specifies the sources, the methods, and the data retrieved to highlight the process of information gathering. In addition to that, it illustrates how the Hypotheses contained below stem from solid theoretical assumptions and how this work aims to test such assumptions. Moreover, it provides an overview of how the statistical analysis is carried out and how its results are achieved.

The third Chapter, Results and Limitations, provides a clear explanation of the statistical analysis. It presents the results by emphasising their significance, the extent to which they are relevant for European defence integration, and whether or not the Hypotheses set out in the Chapter before have been corroborated by empirical evidence. Furthermore, it illustrates the limitations of this work, highlighting generalizability, replication, and omitted variable biases.

Finally, the Fourth and last Chapter, Conclusions, presents a summary of the work: how European defence integration has evolved since WWII, the Hypotheses it aimed to test, and how the statistical analysis' results were coherent with this Thesis's assumptions. Furthermore, it clearly outlines the implications that can be derived from the results contained in the pages below for the existing literature on European security and defence integration.

Thus, a precise overview of this work's Hypotheses and the research design follows.

2. Research Design

Once an introductory Chapter provided the historical and theoretical bases from which this Thesis performs its analysis, it is now necessary to delve more into the details on how the relevant data was gathered, the sources of such information, and the variables it uses in the statistical analysis below. Furthermore, the following pages illustrate the research Hypotheses tested in the next Chapter and the theoretical assumptions from which they stem. Finally, it shows a set of preliminary findings and trends related to both citizens' demand for enhanced integration in matters of defence and security, and institutional supply for closer cooperation in this matter.

2.1 Methods and Data

As was extensively stated above, this work aims to shed further light upon the current state of European defence and security policy integration. More specifically, this Thesis firstly investigates possible factors affecting CFSP and CSDP's support, its trend along the years, secondly, the level of emphasis different EU institutions attribute to such topics in their official documents and, finally, a possible convergence between supranational and intergovernmental bodies' supply. Furthermore, the preceding Chapter highlighted the qualitative and theoretical foundations backing this work, clearly stating the historical background and literature review concerning the European defence institutional framework.

However, considering that the most effective way to highlight the role different variables play in leading to a certain outcome is a robust statistical analysis, it is exactly this method which is employed in the next Chapter. This investigation employs quantitative research methods based on numeric variables, which allows the process to use statistical and econometric tools present in the software STATA and R-Studio. Quantitative methods are necessary to find correlations and results' degrees of significance, yet the prior qualitative analysis permitted setting the theoretical framework of the research.

Firstly, citizens' demand for further EU integration in matters of Defence and Security policies was measured at the pan-European level since 1990. This 34-year-long range enables researchers to investigate the role of both short-term and long-term variables affecting voters'

choice and consists of one of the few pieces of literature possessing such a wide time frame. Furthermore, the analysis contained in the next pages exclusively takes into consideration EU Member States, as well as a measure of their mean in the period of investigation. The data enabling such an extensive coverage in both time and space was retrieved from the EU Commission's Standard Eurobarometers surveys, which allowed for computing two observations per Member State per year of analysis. More in detail, this variable represents the percentage of voters supporting a unitary CSDP. Respondents were asked whether or not they were in favour of a Common Defence and Security Policy at the EU level. Overall, a little less than 1,600 observations were retrieved. Hence, consistent with the qualitative framework provided above, this measure represents the dependent variable of this work, namely, voters' Demand.

Secondly, a measure compatible with previous findings highlighted in the pre-existing literature above and which could play a role in explaining citizens' support for further CSDP integration was identified. Moreover, given that Standard Eurobarometers do not possess a unifying measure of threat perception spanning across the whole period of analysis, a proxy variable is used to perform the statistical analysis below. More specifically, the EU Commission's survey asks respondents about their general expectations for the year to come, whether it is going to be better, worse or the same compared to the current one. Hence, this variable represents the percentage of pessimistic citizens about the following year, which could imply a lower threshold of general threat perception compared to the other respondents, and which could be used to investigate whether this differentiation is statistically relevant for the dependent variable introduced above. Thus, European voters' worse future expectations comprise the first independent variable contained in this Thesis. However, considering that before 1999 the question from which this data was retrieved was asked only at the second and last survey of the year under investigation, for the first ten years of analysis, a mean between the preceding and following Eurobarometer was computed to offset this loss in coverage.

Thirdly, a measure of Euroscepticism was retrieved to reach a conclusive answer as to whether European voters support CSDP integration irrespective of their view of the EU in general. Standard Eurobarometers ask citizens whether or not the Union conjures up a positive or negative image to them. The percentages of respondents who answered both positively and negatively to this question were gathered to create measures of Europeanism and Euroscepticism, respectively.

The latter is hoped to be statistically relevant in explaining the change in citizens' demand for CSDP, and, hence, represents another independent variable employed in this Thesis.

Finally, a dummy variable called "East" was created to represent Eastern European Member States' respondents. More clearly, the value 1 was assigned to the countries associated with the geographical and political East of the Continent, while a value of 0 was assigned to the West ones. This computation allows observers to see the differential effect of the former on the dependent variable of this analysis. The countries identified with the value 1 are: Poland, Hungary, Romania, Czech Republic, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Slovenia.

Even though the measures just introduced are enough to reach the statistical conclusion set in the previous Chapter, a set of controls was gathered to isolate the effect of the main independent variables of interest. More specifically, although they do not represent the primary focus of this investigation, they could potentially influence voters' support for further defence integration and correlate with the other predictors. Hence, including such control variables into the regression analysis below allows for a more accurate estimation of causality, reducing the risk that the observed effects are not due to structural differences across countries and over time.

Thus, the first control variable introduced in this work is GDP per capita, which represents Member States' GDP level divided by their number of citizens. The information employed to create this measure was retrieved from the OECD dataset and was log-transformed to reduce distribution skewness and to mitigate the influence of outliers, such as Luxembourg.

Instead, the second control variable measures the percentage of states' population enrolled in tertiary education programs such as colleges, universities or technical training institutes. The World Bank Database provided the data.

Lastly, another control variable included in the model below is military spending. More in detail, the percentage of GDP that Member States devote to defence funding or military research and development was retrieved from the World Bank dataset and gathered in a variable.

Before delving more into the specifics concerning the variable related to the institutional supply stemming from EU institutions regarding matters of the CFSP and CSDP, it is necessary to highlight the process this research employs to exactly calculate the level of defence issues' emphasis originating from said bodies. Moreover, employing speeches, reports, minutes,

addresses, and other official documents, this work analysed more than 400 observations in 21 years, originating from both supranational bodies, such as the Commission and the EP, and intergovernmental institutions, such as the EU Council and the Council. However, it is important to mention from the start that the period of analysis concerning the supply of more defence integration at the EU level varies from the ones identified for the demand: while the latter consists of 34 years of observations, the former accounts for 21, or from 2003 to 2024. This difference in coverage is due to the limited provision of official documents stemming from one source only, which in this case was identified with the GESIS database, and which dates back to observations starting only in 2003. Nonetheless, considering that the supply of different EU institutions is not employed in this research in a regression or any other statistical analysis linked to the demand, the difference in time coverage does not constitute a technical limitation for the goals of this work. In fact, as was highlighted in the previous Chapter, this Thesis aims are merely descriptive concerning supply: more specifically, it sets itself the objective of identifying, if present, a clear trend of increased defence issues' emphasis and one of convergence between supranational and intergovernmental institutions. Hence, the difference between the coverage in demand and supply of European defence integration should not constitute a limitation for this research.

Having a clear idea of how this investigation measured the level of EU institutional supply for further defence integration is of paramount importance to correctly frame the results it achieves. More specifically, this work accounted for the institutional salience of defence and security issues over time through a dictionary-based text analysis. This method consists of creating a predefined set of keywords related to a specific topic, called the dictionary, and of counting how many times those words appear in the documents analysed. The terms included in the dictionary used in this analysis referred to policies (CFSP, CSDP…), institutions (PESCO, EDA…), threats (conflict, war…), concepts (European Army, joint procurement…), technologies (tank, fighter jet…), and other defence-related words (military, weapon…). Overall, the entirety of words identified as relevant for the dictionary in this analysis accounts for slightly over 100. However, some keywords, such as defence or war, might be used in contexts different from the ones related to defence and military policy, and constitute a limitation which is investigated in the pages below. Nonetheless, the strength of the dictionary-based text analysis lies in the immediate understanding of clear

patterns of increased or decreased emphasis of certain issues in specific documents, and in this research, too, this end was attained.

Thus, once a dictionary with defence-related keywords was created, R-Studio was employed as a powerful tool to discover how many times those words appeared in institutional documents dealing with European security. The results of this passage provided both the absolute and relative weight of those observations, highlighting also the most recurring terms in each document. This analysis was performed, as was mentioned above, for more than 400 observations in 21 years from both supranational and intergovernmental bodies. However, to have a pooled result every six months during the investigation period, an average was performed between both types of institutions, resulting in two values each per year. Finally, a total mean was calculated between the ones of supranational and intergovernmental bodies to highlight the overall trend of defence issues emphasis stemming from the EU in general over time.

Once an overview of the methods and variables employed in the statistical analysis below has been provided, it is now high time to set out the Hypotheses this research aims to statistically test in the next Chapter.

2.2 Hypotheses

As was clearly outlined in the previous Chapter, a key Neo-functionalist assumption argues that path dependence is an unignorable factor in explaining the EU integration process (Pierson, 1996). However, for this mechanism to work correctly, the option of disintegration must become more and more unattractive due to its perceived higher cost than further integration and neither (Schimmelfennig, 2018, pp. 7-8). One fundamental factor increasing the costs of exit, hence disincentivising disintegration initiatives, is transnational interdependence, namely the increased level of interdependence produced by previous integration initiatives. Thus, an increased level of transnational interdependence renders the possibility of leaving the Union, or disintegrating, less likely. Consequently, according to this logic, when a policy domain with high transnational dependence, such as arguably CFSP or CSDP, faces a crisis, it runs a lower risk of disintegration than a field which saw less previous integration (Lefkofridi et Schmitter, 2015). Hence, when a policy

area, such as CSDP, encounters a period of difficulty related to its matters of competence, for instance wars, conflicts or attacks, and the level of transnational interdependence is relatively high, such as the coordination and institutionalisation of CSDP among Member States since Maastricht highlighted above, it could be expected that further integration in European security is expected. Crisis-driven integration theory has proven an effective explanatory mechanism, with periods of hardship spurring enhanced cooperation among Member States and, consequently, an increased demand from their citizens (Ferrara et Kriesi, 2021).

Furthermore, as it has been explained in the previous Chapter, the recent geopolitical developments such as the Russian occupation of Crimea, Putin's invasion of Ukraine, or the increased insecurity in the Middle East are all events which could indicate a recent growth of Europeans' support for further defence integration. As was mentioned above, the "bellicist" assumption arguing that higher threat perception leads to higher demand for Euroepan security integration was corroborated by the data in previous research (Wang & Moise, 2023, p.1680). While in the 1990s the consequences of the fall of the USSR created instability and armed confrontation in the Balkans, the first 2000s saw 9/11 and the Global War on Terror in the Middle East, leading to the American invasion of both Afghanistan and Iraq, and the 2011 Libyan intervention. Hence, it could be expected that these developments in the field of international security, more present in the last few years than in the recent past, might lead to an increased citizens' support for defence integration at the EU level in the early 2010s and 2020s compared to the early 1990s.

Thus, this Neo-functionalist assumption lays the groundwork for the formulation of both Hypotheses for Demand 1 and 2.

HD1: *A positive trend is expected in citizens' support for further EU defence integration from the 1990s until the 2020s.*

HD2: *Voters' higher threat perception positively affects citizens' demand for further EU defence integration.*

An assumption strictly intertwined with ideology refers to citizens' support for increased integration in defence matters at the EU level based on political orientation. Post-functional thought argues that, often, administrative efficiency and authority allocation in a multi-level governance clash with concerns for national values and self-determination, which might lead a part of the electorate to support political parties who believe more in national administration rather than in the EU one (Leuffen et al., 2022, pp.3-4). Furthermore, the politicisation of specific topics and the activation of shared social cleavages in Member States' politics could be a factor explaining the variation in support by their voters concerning a more integrated system of European defence (Hooghe & Marks, 2017). Moreover, as was stated in the previous Chapter, some citizens may perceive the possible delegation of (core state) powers to the Union level as threatening to their national sovereignty and a cause of concern for their national values (Rittberger et al., 2013, pp. 192-193). Consequently, this Eurosceptic part of the electorate might be more prone to reject the idea of further delegation even in matters of defence and security policy. Conversely, the empirical evidence supporting the assumption that citizens who possess a stronger European identity are more likely to support CSDP was already discussed and proven as sound above (Wang & Moise, 2023, pp.1680).

Thus, the assumption that identity politics and cleavage theory might explain the variation in citizens' support for increased integration in matters of defence is summarised in Hypothesis for Demand 3 below.

> HD3: *Citizens with Eurosceptic views are expected to be less supportive of EU defence integration compared to Europeanists.*

A similar assumption to the one backing HD3 concerns a possible differentiation in support for defence integration based on geography. More specifically, historical and political cleavages present in Eastern Europe are expected to be more influential than in the Western part of the Old Continent. The recent Communist past and the increased belligerency of Putin's Russia might provide Eastern European voters with incentives to support a closer and more efficient military integration not at the EU level, but within NATO (Angelucci et al., 2024, p.11). This differentiation can be attributed to these Member States' functional differentiation concerning the two

organisations. More clearly, while Eastern European states might view the EU as a life jacket for their economies after the collapse of the USSR, the only military insurance against any future Russian retaliation lay in NATO and its Article 5. Thus, while Western voters tend to be more "trustful" of the EU rather than NATO even in defence matters, Eastern ones seem to be still maintaining a strong functional differentiation concerning these organisations, which could lead to a lower support of the latter for any effort of increased integration at the Union level.

Hypothesis for Demand 4 summarises this logic.

HD4: *Eastern European voters are less supportive of EU defence integration than Western ones.*

The same reasoning set out for both Hypotheses for Demand 1 and 2 relative to the demand European citizens might possess for further defence integration could be applied to the supply EU institutions provide over the same topic. While path dependence and increased threat perception might incentivise voters to support more fiercely a Common Defence and Security Policy, the same mechanism may also be found significant in the Union's institutions' willingness to supply it. Moreover, ever-increasing sunk costs of disintegration and an ever-more volatile arena of international politics could both be bearers of a stronger emphasis EU supranational and intergovernmental institutions put upon CSDP issues. Thus, it could be expected that recent developments in this regard, such as Crimea, the migration crisis and Ukraine, led the Union's institutions to increasingly emphasise issues related to CSDP, "rallying around the flag" notwithstanding their being supranational or intergovernmental. Furthermore, the Neo-functionalist concept of functional spillover might be used to analyse the (supposed) difference between the emphasis put on defence issues by supranational and intergovernmental institutions. More clearly, while path dependence renders the possibility of disintegration in already integrated matters less likely, functional spillovers provide incentives for further integration in other policy domains that do not possess the same degree of interstate coordination (Malamud, 2005, pp.4).

In addition to that, as was argued in the previous Chapter, even though supranational institutions do not possess the same decision-making power than intergovernmental ones in matters of CFSP and CSDP, factors other than institutional weight could lead to a possible

convergence in defence issues emphasis (Lundgren et al., 2024, p.840). For instance, while Neo-functionalism historically stood at the opposite end of the room compared to Intergovernmentalism, in matters of security and defence policy, some middle ground was found by Howorth (2011). He not only considers the presumed control by Member States over matters of CFSP and CSDP as overvalued, but he suggests that its decisions are shaped by extremely well-socialised small groups acting "in a mode which is as close to supranational as it is to intergovernmental" (Howorth, 2011, p.3). Hence, working groups, committees and commissions shape the various decisions related to CFSP well before they are approved by the Intergovernmental Council: state representatives working in these bodies "may officially remain the representatives of their nation-state, but they increasingly act as Europeans" (Howorth, 2011, p.10). This process could be named "intergovernmental supranationalism" rather than the contrary because, even in a strong intergovernmental setting such as the EDA, the trajectory is clearly towards more cooperation and integration. Thus, even formally intergovernmental agencies or institutions are not immune to micro-variables playing their role at the personal level, influencing the relations between people and altering the direction of the EU's CFSP policies, as Neo-functionalism postulates.

Thus, the interaction between these mechanisms and the increased preponderance of supranational institutions to go back to being the drivers of European integration holds the ground for Hypotheses for Supply 1 and 2.

HS1: *An increased emphasis on defence issues is expected in recent years compared to the previous ones.*

HS2: *An increased convergence of defence issues emphasis supply is expected in recent years compared to the previous ones.*

Once this Thesis's Hypotheses have been set out, some preliminary findings are to be highlighted before proceeding with the statistical analysis and the Results Chapter.

2.3 Preliminary Findings

Before delving into the statistical analysis below, it is necessary to at least hint at the macro trends of both the Demand and Supply of European Defence integration first. For instance, how did EU citizens' support for further Defence cooperation change since 1990? Is there a difference in support stemming from Western or Eastern voters? Can a discernible trend of EU institutions' supply for defence issues emphasis be detected since the start of the analysis? Are these relationships statistically significant? The next few lines aim at answering all such questions.

First, Figure 1 below clearly highlights the temporal and cross-national patterns in EU citizens' support for further CSDP integration since 1990. The heatmap shows some clear patterns. For instance, larger Member States such as Germany, France, Italy and Spain display both a high and constant pattern of support for further defence integration. In addition to that, newer Central and Eastern members highlight their always-increasing support and display more volatility, which might be the result of regional security concerns towards Russia. Moreover, the measurement "EU Mean" could be used to infer some general trends of CSDP demand stemming from EU voters. More specifically, it could be argued that said factor shows a clear increasing trend, witnessing citizens' greater support for joint action concerning this core state power, above all after 2010, which could indicate a greater concern for terrorism, regional conflicts or economic crises.

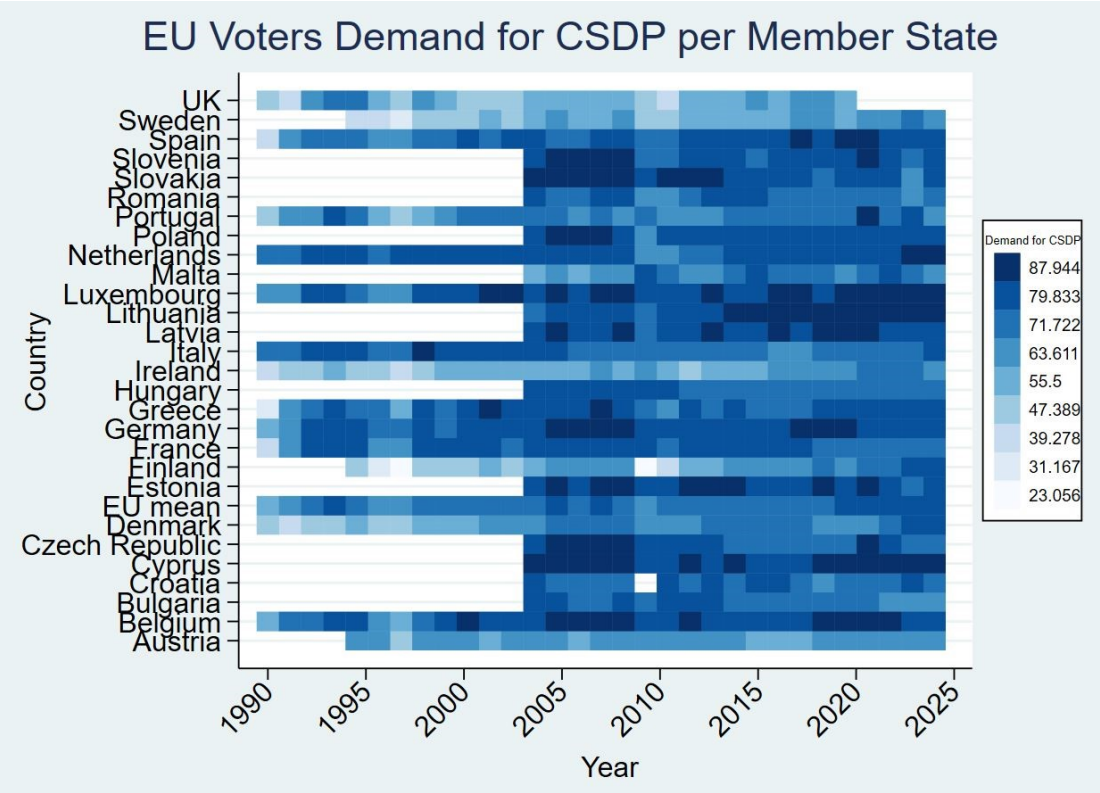

Figure 1: Total EU Voters' Demand for CSDP divided per country.

In addition to that, Table 1 below sets out the statistical relevance of such correlation, proving that a positive and significant relationship has been found between these two variables. Thus, it can be argued that HD1, assuming that a positive trend of EU citizens' demand could be observed since the 1990s, has been corroborated by the data. It is true to say, though, that the small coefficient of correlation found, 0.001, and the modest R-squared value, 10,1%, limit the explanatory power of this model.

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	1,577
				F(1, 1575)	=	177.48
Model	22354.484	1	22354.484	Prob > F	=	0.0000
Residual	198382.392	1,575	125.957074	R-squared	=	0.1013
				Adj R-squared	=	0.1007
Total	220736.876	1,576	140.06147	Root MSE	=	11.223

FOR_Cit_De~P	Coefficient	Std. err.	t	P>|t|	[95% conf.	interval]
Date	.0010933	.0000821	13.32	0.000	.0009323	.0012543
_cons	52.70145	1.533245	34.37	0.000	49.69404	55.70887

Table 1: Regression between EU Citizens' Demand for CSDP and Time.

Secondly, a more precise analysis of EU citizens' support for further defence integration could be pursued by investigating the change in the years' observations' means. More clearly, Figure 2 below represents the average trend in support for CSDP stemming from EU Member States' voters. It could be seen that a clear increasing trend is still present in the figure; however, it can be expected that the average support for further integration in matters of defence over time follows more of a quadratic evolution rather than a linear one. In fact, until 2010, the increase in support for CSDP was very steep, although with a consistent variation; nonetheless, it seems that once the Sovereign Debt Crisis hit Europe, the support for further defence integration continued to grow with less variation, but at a slower pace compared to pre-crisis levels. However, the regression analysis for both a linear and a quadratic association between these two variables proves that their relationship is not statistically significant. Moreover, although neither of the independent variables of the model is found as a potential explanation of the dependent variable's variation, the difference between the linear coefficient and the quadratic one can be seen as a hint that the latter fits the model better than the former, although not enough to be statistically significant. Table 2 below shows exactly that.

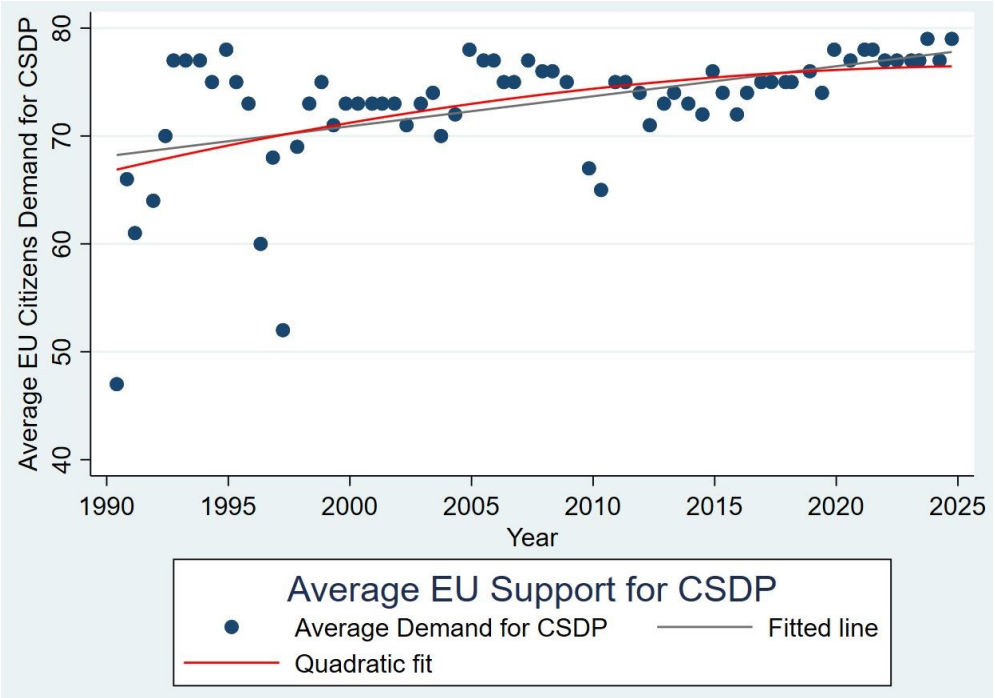

Figure 2: Average EU Voters Demand for CSDP.

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	69
				F(2, 66)	=	11.84
Model	584.416468	2	292.208234	Prob > F	=	0.0000
Residual	1628.56904	66	24.6752885	R-squared	=	0.2641
				Adj R-squared	=	0.2418
Total	2212.98551	68	32.5439045	Root MSE	=	4.9674

Average_EU_~d	Coefficient	Std. err.	t	P>|t|	[95% conf.	interval]
Date	.0025962	.0017119	1.52	0.134	-.0008217	.0060141
c.Date#c.Date	-5.27e-08	4.90e-08	-1.08	0.286	-1.51e-07	4.51e-08
_cons	44.54997	14.43003	3.09	0.003	15.73948	73.36045

Table 2: Regression between Average EU Citizens' Demand for CSDP and Date.

Once some preliminary findings concerning citizens' demand for further defence integration have been found, it is only fair to show at least the same trend concerning the EU institutions' supply. Firstly, since 2003, the total defence issues emphasis, namely the average

between the one stemming from supranational institutions and the one provided by intergovernmental ones, instead, seems to slightly increase. In fact, as Figure 3 below shows, both an evident increasing trend in emphasis and of decrease in observations' variation can be observed. Furthermore, a quadratic fit shows how the level of emphasis supplied seems to decrease until 2012, where it picks up and starts increasing. This could be due, not so differently as to what has been stated above concerning citizens' demand, to the Great Recession of 2007/2008 and the Sovereign Debt Crisis. Instead, the following increase might be due to the difficult security situation in Libya, Syria and later Crimea, which could have influenced EU institutions' defence issues emphasis. In addition to that, Table 3 shows that the associations between the variables contained in Figure 3 are statistically significant. In fact, while both are statistically relevant in explaining EU institutions' variation, the greater and positive coefficient of the quadratic fit seems to be a stronger explanatory variable than the linear one.

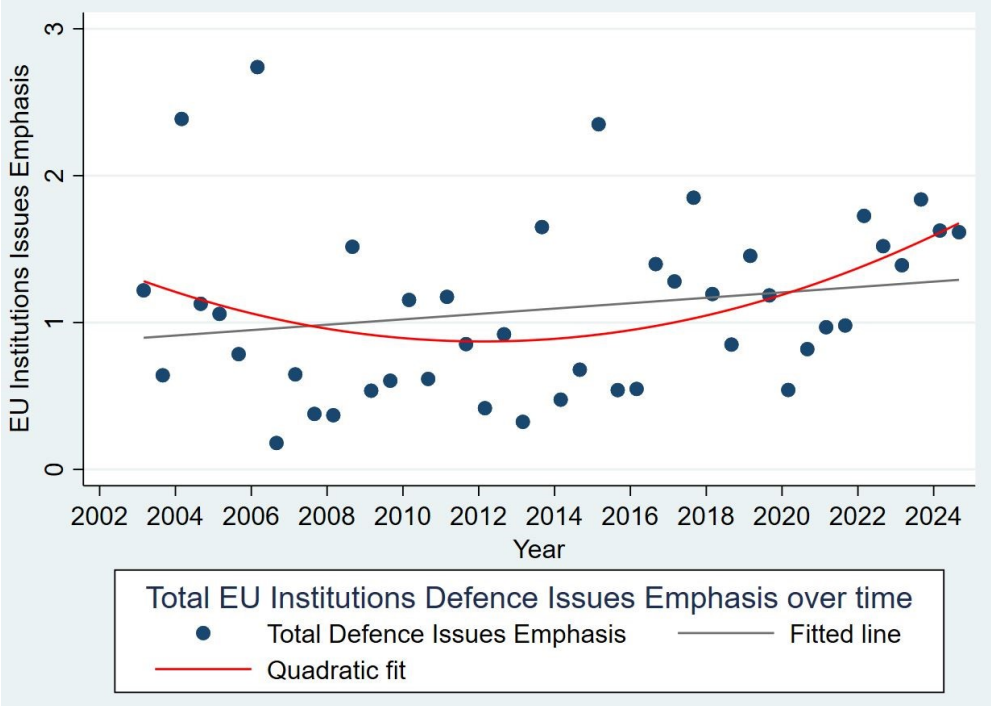

Figure 3: Total EU Institutions Supply over time.

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	44
				F(2, 41)	=	3.32
Model	2.09034868	2	1.04517434	Prob > F	=	0.0463
Residual	12.9247407	41	.315237578	R-squared	=	0.1392
				Adj R-squared	=	0.0972
Total	15.0150894	43	.349188125	Root MSE	=	.56146

Total_Emphasis	Coefficient	Std. err.	t	P>|t|	[95% conf.	interval]
DATESEMYEAR	-.0014595	.0006945	-2.10	0.042	-.0028621	-.000057
c.DATESEMYEAR#c.DATESEMYEAR	3.83e-08	1.76e-08	2.18	0.035	2.77e-09	7.39e-08
_cons	14.76424	6.772569	2.18	0.035	1.086764	28.44173

Table 3: Regression between Total EU Institutions Supply and Date.

Inspecting at a closer glance, the same trend between EU institutions over time, the intergovernmental bodies' level of issues emphasis seems to behave in the same way as the total one explained above. Figure 4 below shows that intergovernmental institutions' quadratic fit is even more accentuated than the total one, highlighting a clearer descending trend at first, and an ascending one later. Furthermore, Table 4 portrays the same results contained in Table 3, concluding that both the linear and the quadratic models are statistically significant in explaining the level of emphasis variation.

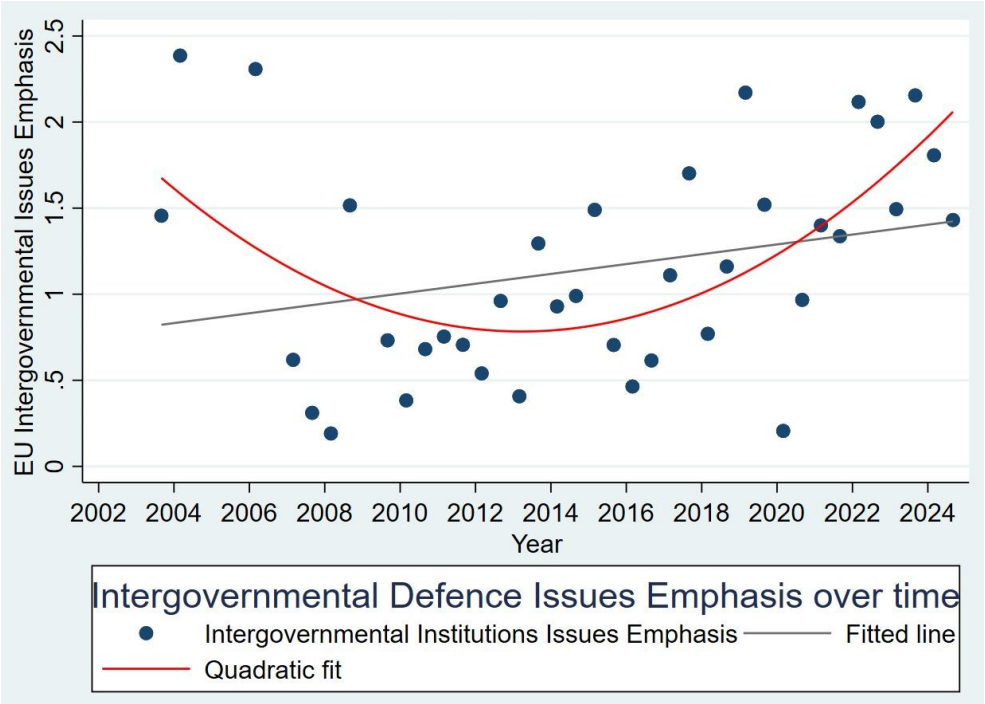

Figure 4: EU Intergovernmental Institutions Supply over time.

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	38
				F(2, 35)	=	9.67
Model	5.13143695	2	2.56571847	Prob > F	=	0.0005
Residual	9.28510197	35	.265288628	R-squared	=	0.3559
				Adj R-squared	=	0.3191
Total	14.4165389	37	.389636187	Root MSE	=	.51506

Intergovernmental_Emphasis	Coefficient	Std. err.	t	P>|t|	[95% conf.	interval]
DATESEMYEAR	-.0028423	.0007459	-3.81	0.001	-.0043564	-.0013281
c.DATESEMYEAR#c.DATESEMYEAR	7.31e-08	1.86e-08	3.92	0.000	3.53e-08	1.11e-07
_cons	28.41272	7.397561	3.84	0.000	13.39487	43.43057

Table 4: Regression between Intergovernmental EU Institutions Supply and Date.

The same reasoning could be made for the supranational institutions' supply since 2003. However, different from the intergovernmental case highlighted above, the level of defence issues emphasis stemming from the Commission and the EP seems to be explained by only a linear fit. Figure 5 shows a clear, although mild, increase in the supranational institutions' level of supply.

However, Table 5 below indicates that the correlation between supranational defence issues emphasis and the passage of time is not statistically relevant. Notwithstanding this result, both the Total and the Intergovernmental regressions proved to be. Hence, it could be argued that the Hypothesis for Supply 1, which assumed an increase in defence issues emphasis in recent years, was corroborated by the data.

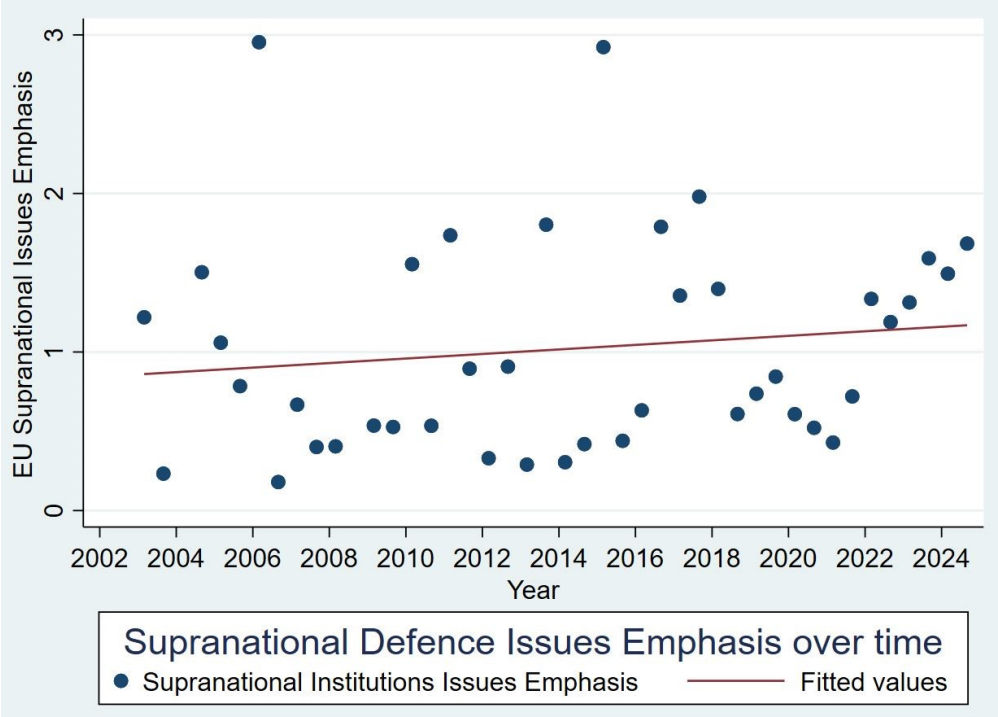

Figure 5: EU Supranational Institutions Supply over time.

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	42
				F(1, 40)	=	0.74
Model	.336944306	1	.336944306	Prob > F	=	0.3946
Residual	18.1968777	40	.454921944	R-squared	=	0.0182
				Adj R-squared	=	-0.0064
Total	18.533822	41	.45204444	Root MSE	=	.67448

Supranatio~s	Coefficient	Std. err.	t	P>|t|	[95% conf.	interval]
DATESEMYEAR	.0000392	.0000455	0.86	0.395	-.0000528	.0001312
_cons	.2434624	.9082842	0.27	0.790	-1.592249	2.079173

Table 5: Regression between Supranational EU Institutions Supply and Date.

Summarising, this Chapter aimed at, firstly, setting out this Thesis's research design and the methods employed in the analysis. It illustrated how the relevant information was gathered for both sides of the analysis, demand and supply, and how the data was organised in specific variables to perform the statistical analysis contained below. In addition to that, it argued how those variables could be used as proxies to test qualitative assumptions and theories contained in the literature review above. Moreover, it highlighted the official sources employed to retrieve said data, such as the Standard Eurobarometer surveys, the World Bank database, and the OECD. Furthermore, it specified how the research employed a dictionary-based text analysis to reach its conclusions regarding the supply-side analysis. It shed light upon the general contents of the dictionary, how it was employed in R-Studio to analyse official documents stemming from EU institutions and how the data was organised to perform the statistical analysis in the next Chapter.

Secondly, the pages above put forth the Hypotheses of this research and the theoretical assumptions lying at their foundations. More specifically, it set out that time and threat perception are expected to positively affect citizens' demand for further European integration in matters of security and defence and its supply from EU institutions. Instead, it posited that Eastern and Eurosceptic voters are expected to support this integration effort less fiercely than Western and Europeanist ones. Finally, it assumed that the convergence between the level of defence issues emphasis stemming from supranational and intergovernmental institutions increased in recent years compared to the previous ones.

Ultimately, this Chapter proposed a section of preliminary findings where it showed the latest trends in overall voters' support for the CSDP, its EU mean values, and the level of defence issues emphasis stemming from both intergovernmental and supranational institutions, as well as their values combined. It concluded by stating that both Hypotheses for Demand 1 and for Supply 1 were corroborated by the data.

Once both the qualitative and quantitative settings have been attributed to this research, it is now mandatory to proceed to the main *corpus* of this Thesis: the statistical analysis.

3. Results and Limitations

Considering that Hypotheses for Demand 1 and Supply 1 were already analysed and presented in the previous Chapter's Preliminary Findings, it is now time to proceed with the statistical analysis on voters' demand for further defence integration and its possible factors. This Chapter aims to, firstly, expose the regressions' results of the analysis introduced in the preceding chapters, and, secondly, to set out the empirical and statistical limitations of this Thesis. Thus, the pages below are structured as follows.

The first section, Results, analyses all the independent variables introduced above, such as threat perception, Euroscepticism, and Eastern EU Member States. It investigates the roles they play in explaining the variation of citizens' demand for further EU defence integration individually and in a multivariate regression model. In addition to that, it sets out to demonstrate whether the hypothesis that a convergence in supply between supranational and intergovernmental institutions is based on official data. Secondly, it considers the empirical and theoretical implications of the results' findings and hints at what they could mean for further research in the same field. Furthermore, it analyses the limitations of this research. It considers the data gathering process, the statistical shortcomings of the analysis and the time limit this Thesis sustained to reach its results.

Thus, the thorough statistical investigation of the results follows.

3.1 Results

As the previous Chapters introduced, this Thesis' aims are to investigate whether factors such as threat perception, Euroscepticism and geography are statistically significant in explaining European citizens' support for further EU defence integration and CSDP.

Recalling the lines contained in Chapter 2, Hypothesis for Demand 2 assumed that:

> HD2: *Voters' higher threat perception positively affects citizens' demand for further EU defence integration.*

As was already anticipated, the independent variable investigated in this Hypothesis was not mirrored by the same specific question in the Commission's Standard Eurobarometer surveys. Hence, EU voters' expectations for the future were chosen as a proxy. More specifically, worse future expectations in general, encompassing economic, financial, security and foreign possible threats, were taken into consideration by respondents to answer the question in the survey. As Table 6 below shows, the univariate regression analysis proves that worse future expectations are a relevant explanatory factor to voters' support for further defence integration. More in detail, the p-value < 0.001 found for the independent variable under analysis indicates that the influence that worse future expectations have on European citizens' willingness for more integrated CSDP is as statistically relevant as it can be. Moreover, a one-unit increase in worse future expectations leads to an increase in CSDP support of 0.14. Nonetheless, it is fair to mention that the R-squared value found, which indicates the percentage of the dependent variable's variation explained by the independent one, is relatively low. In fact, worse future expectations alone can only predict 2.1% of citizens' support for CSDP. Thus, the multivariate regression model investigated below clarifies whether the weight this factor possesses on the dependent variable increases, decreases or stays the same once other possible causes are added. Notwithstanding this humble R-squared value, the results found in this first univariate model prove the consistency of the theoretical assumptions set out above, and highlight that Hypothesis for Demand 2 is corroborated by the data.

	Model 1 b/se
WORSE_Fut_Expect %	0.142***
	(0.03)
constant	71.765***
	(0.48)
R-sqr	0.021
dfres	1415
BIC	10709.7

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 6: Worse Future Expectations on Citizens' Demand for CSDP.

The following Hypothesis argued that:

> HD3: *Citizens with Eurosceptic views are expected to be less supportive of EU defence integration compared to Europeanists.*

To test whether this assumption is based on empirical evidence, and as was explained in the previous Chapter, a proxy variable was employed. More in detail, Euroscepticism was retrieved by the Standard Eurobarometer's measure of voters' confidence in the EU, namely, whether it conjured up a positive or negative image overall. Thus, the percentage of citizens who provided a negative view of the Union was employed to represent the level of respondents' Euroscepticism. Table 7 below summarises the regression analysis based on the effect this variable has on voters' support for more CSDP. Similarly to the case of HD2 explained above, the results found here are strongly statistically significant (p-value < 0.001). Furthermore, the independent variable's negative coefficient, which is more than two times the one contained in Table 6, indicates that per 1-unit increase in a negative view towards the EU, the support for a Common Defence and Security Policy is expected to decrease by 0.3. Furthermore, the R-squared value shows that the amount of voters' support for CSDP variation explained by Euroscepticism is 5.6%, more than double compared to the previous Hypothesis. Moreover, while this last indicator remains low, the statistical relevance of this result is not to be discarded. In fact, Table 7 highlights that Euroscepticism plays a negative and significant role in shaping voters' support for CSDP, as predicted. Thus, Hypothesis for Demand 3 was corroborated by the data. However, to check whether the variable under analysis here holds the same weight and significance once it comes into play with the other factors, the multivariate regression below provides a clear answer.

	Model 2 b/se
NEGATIVE_EU %	-0.305*** (0.03)
constant	78.027*** (0.62)
R-sqr	0.056
dfres	1568
BIC	12143.9

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 7: Negative EU Image on Citizens' Demand for CSDP.

Moving to the last assumption relative to the demand side of the equation, it argued that:

> HD4: *Eastern European voters are less supportive of EU defence integration than Western ones.*

In the Chapters above, the logic and literature behind this Hypothesis were set out to assume a more widespread support for NATO-based integration in the military field compared to the EU's one stemming from Eastern constituencies. However, as Table 8 shows below, this logic was found to be completely reversed in empirical data. As a matter of fact, its highly statistically significant result (p-value < 0.001) indicates that the assumed negative correlation between Eastern voters' origins and their support for a more integrated CSDP is erroneous. Furthermore, the strong coefficient the variable holds compared to the constant one highlights that while 70.37 percentage points of Western citizens are expected to support a Common Security and Defence Policy, 78.87 Eastern ones are expected to do so. More in detail, Eastern European respondents show an 8.5 percentage point increase in support for CSDP compared to their corresponding parties in the West. In addition to that, the R-squared level found for this result is higher than the previous two, reaching 10.4%.

The different results found for HD4 could be explained by the fact that Eastern European voters are more reactive to foreign threats than Western ones, as was introduced in the previous Chapters. However, as was (erroneously) assumed, it was thought that this lower threshold for threats' perception would lead to an enhanced support for NATO initiatives relative to the military and security field, showing a competence specialisation "discrimination". Instead, the data retrieved seems to indicate that Eastern European voters support any effort, stemming from NATO or the EU, aimed at ensuring a more reactive and integrated defence coordination mechanism. Whether or not this logic could have explanatory power, or whether it could be applied to other fields of EU policy-making, is not within the aims of this Thesis. Nonetheless, it would be an interesting investigation objective for future research.

	Model 3 b/se
East	8.486***
	(0.63)
constant	70.378***
	(0.33)
R-sqr	0.104
dfres	1575
BIC	12108.9

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 8: Eastern Member States on Citizens' Demand for CSDP.

Once the univariate models for all the independent variables contained in this work have been laid out, it is now time to investigate whether their role changes in a multivariate regression. As was anticipated above, three control variables have been identified as possible factors explaining citizens' support for CSDP: namely, GDP per capita, Tertiary Education Enrolment, and Military Spending. These variables were included in the regression below.

As Table 9 shows, all the variables included in the model are highly statistically significant except GDP per capita and Tertiary Education Enrolment. Moreover, while both East and Worse Future Expectations saw their coefficient reduced in the multivariate analysis, Negative EU Expectations instead increased its absolute weight. While the former two went from 8.48 and 0.14 to 4.8 and 0.1, respectively, the latter reached -0.368 from -0.305. These results indicate that once all the independent variables are inputted in a multivariate regression, the only one that gained more momentum is Euroscepticism. As assumed, citizens' views about the EU in general seem to be a strong force preventing them from discerning one policy field from another, and, hence, rejecting a further delegation of power (*a priori*). Whether this mechanism has empirical foundations or applies to other policy areas should be investigated further if a thorough understanding of Eurosceptics' perceptions and preferences is wanted.

Furthermore, the results show that two of the three control variables used in the model are found to be not statistically significant. In fact, only Military Spending possesses a highly relevant and positive coefficient. This finding might indicate that countries more used to higher military expenditures are more prone to invest in security and defence, and, since all EU Member States are developed democracies in which citizens' dissatisfaction with public expenditure in one sector instead of another can be translated in majority changes, voters coming from high-military-spending countries may be more likely to accept further EU integration in security and defence, thus, leading to an increased support for CSDP.

Moreover, the variable Date, representing the influence of time on citizens' demand, is also found statistically significant, although its coefficient remains low. Hence, time seems to be a positive, albeit modest, influencer of European voters' demand for CSDP.

In addition to that, the adjusted R-squared value found for the multivariate regression reached 23.9%, and its steady increase from Model 1 through 5, except Model 2, indicates that all the variables considered in the analysis augmented the explanatory power of the model.

Summarising, Table 9 proves that HD1, HD2, and HD3 are corroborated by the data even in a multivariate regression model. All the predicted effects, negative and positive, were consistent with the relevant literature and the theoretical arguments provided in the previous Chapters, and, above all, highly statistically significant. Instead, Hypothesis for Demand 4 was not entirely corroborated by the empirical findings. While a strong significance was found, the assumed

negative coefficient of correlation turned out to be positive. The reasons behind this difference in expectations and statistical findings were hinted at above.

Nonetheless, this Thesis reached clear and statistically significant results concerning European voters' support for CSDP and was able to answer all the relevant questions it posed itself relative to the analysis' demand side.

	Model 1 b/se	Model 2 b/se	Model 3 b/se	Model 4 b/se	Model 5 b/se
Date	0.001***	0.001***	0.001***	0.001***	0.001***
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
WORSE_Fut_Expect %		0.142***	0.160***	0.124***	0.105***
		(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)
NEGATIVE_EU %			-0.403***	-0.350***	-0.368***
			(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
East				3.995***	4.801***
				(0.59)	(0.81)
log_GDP_capita					0.265
					(1.09)
Military_Spending_~P					2.119***
					(0.52)
Tert. Education En~%					0.000
					(0.00)
constant	52.701***	57.346***	60.593***	62.030***	57.887***
	(1.53)	(1.74)	(1.66)	(1.65)	(9.75)
R-sqr	0.101	0.070	0.186	0.212	0.243
dfres	1575	1414	1408	1407	1162
R-sqr_adj	0.101	0.068	0.184	0.209	0.239

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 9: Date, Worse Future Expectations, Negative EU Image, Eastern Member States, GDP per Capita, Military Spending and Tertiary Education Enrolment on Citizens' Demand for CSDP.

Concerning the institutional supply of defence issues emphasis instead, the previous Chapter already showed that an increasing trend could be identified related to the salience stemming from both supranational and intergovernmental institutions overall. Whether there is a converging or diverging, and statistically significant, trend in this regard is yet to be seen. Moreover, the Hypothesis set out above concerning this matter stated:

HS2: *An increased convergence of defence issues emphasis supply is expected in recent years compared to the previous ones.*

Reaching this answer, however, required slightly transforming two variables that the Dataset gathered in its data retrieval phase. More specifically, once the dictionary had been used to analyse specific documents and to count how many defence and security-related words were emphasised in official papers, a subtraction was performed between the weighted average of the level of salience found in a specific semester for supranational institutions and the one calculated for intergovernmental ones. This simple calculation represents the difference between supranational and intergovernmental defence issues' emphasis in a specific time frame. Once all semesters between 2003 and 2024 were included in this calculation, a series of values was obtained, which was called Supply Convergence. Hence, following the Hypothesis for Supply 2 and the brief explanation set out here, it was expected that a clear and statistically significant negative relationship could be observed.

Indeed, as Figure 7 shows below, a negatively shaped line can be observed in the plot representing this subtraction, hinting that the difference between the two institutions' types is decreasing with time. Furthermore, at a closer look, it is possible to note that the variance between the observations decreases as time advances too, hence indicating that a converging trend can be observed. The values closer to nowadays seem to be less dispersed than the ones at the beginning of the timeline. Thus, it seems that HS2 is corroborated by the data.

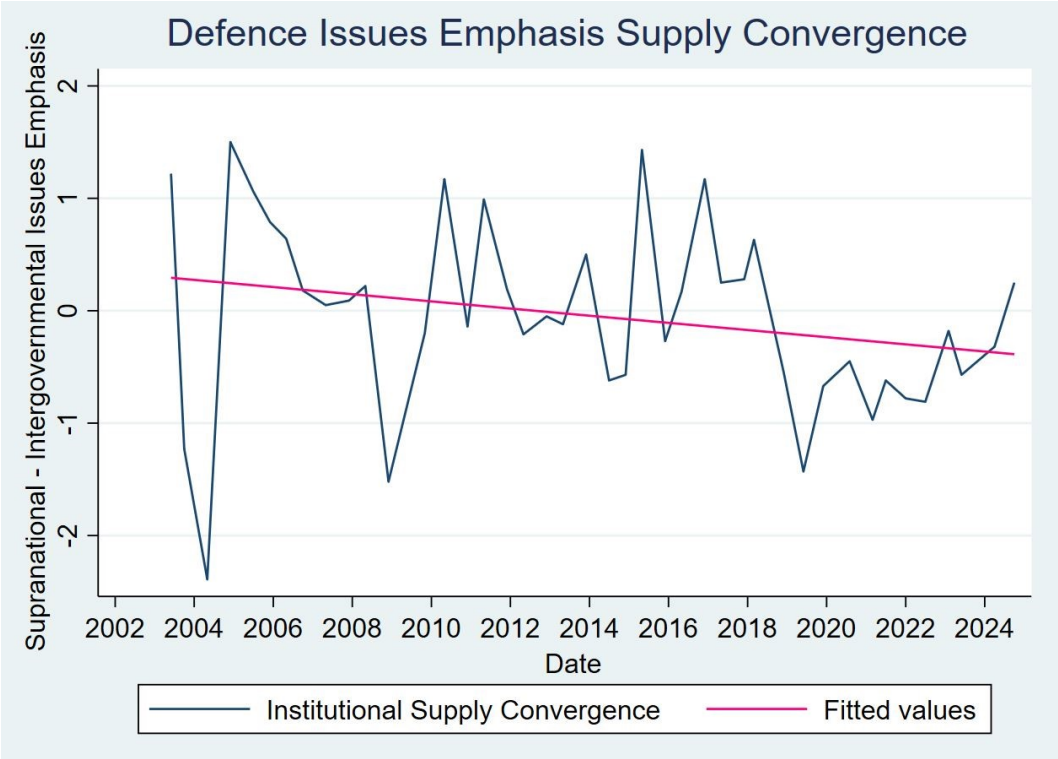

Figure 7: Line plot EU Institutions Supply Convergence over time.

Notwithstanding this seemingly clear correlation, a further examination was performed to assess the statistical implications of this finding. Table 10 below shows the results of a mean difference t-test, which leaves little doubt about their statistical significance. While the expected coefficient of correlation was found to be negative, it was not only of an irrelevant amount, but also not statistically significant. Moreover, these results indicate that there is no strong empirical evidence suggesting that supranational institutions place a different average level of emphasis on defence-related issues compared to intergovernmental ones. This finding, together with Figure 6 above, might hint at the fact that a converging trend of alignment is present between the two institutions' types, which could indicate closer harmonisation among EU institutional stances, notwithstanding the weight each possesses in matters of CFSP or CSDP.

Thus, the empirical analysis does not reveal a statistically significant difference between supranational and intergovernmental institutions regarding their defence issues emphasis. However, it is important to underline that the absence of a significant difference is not, in itself,

definitive proof of convergence; rather, it indicates that such a result aligns with the theoretical expectations set out above, while leaving room for further investigation in the future.

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. err.	Std. dev.	[95% conf.	interval]
Supra_~p	42	.9933333	.1080944	.7005317	.7750323	1.211634
Inter_~h	42	1.038333	.1068104	.6922107	.8226253	1.254041
diff	42	-.045	.1299215	.8419873	-.3073817	.2173817

mean(diff) = mean(Supra_Inst_Emp - Inter_Inst_Emph) t = -0.3464
H0: mean(diff) = 0 Degrees of freedom = 41

Ha: mean(diff) < 0 Ha: mean(diff) != 0 Ha: mean(diff) > 0
Pr(T < t) = 0.3654 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.7308 Pr(T > t) = 0.6346

Table 10: T-test on the Difference between Supranational and Intergovernmental Defence Issues Emphasis Average values.

Although it is not within the Hypothesis of this Thesis, it seems fairly important to at least show in a single graph the evolution of both Demand and Supply for further EU integration in matters of defence and security, highlighting periods of international crisis. Such stages of uncertainty were identified with: the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the 2004/2005 terrorist threats and EU enlargement, the 2011 intervention in Libya, the 2014 occupation of Crimea, the 2015 migration crisis and Paris' Bataclan, the 2016 Brexit and Brussels terrorist attacks, the 2020 pandemic, the 2022 invasion of Ukraine and, lastly, the 2023 conflict between Israel and Palestine. In light of this, Figure 8 below outlines these trends since 2003, clearly hinting at some intuitions. On one hand, the evolution of European voters' demand for CSDP is fairly stable and seems to be increasing with time, independently of international crises. This observation might indicate that the public's support for CSDP is robust and resilient, which hints at the role played by specific long-term implications of further integration, consistent with the impossibility of disintegration logic outlined in the previous Chapter, and the strong presence of consolidated European values. Hence, factors such as the idea of being part of a European community, further integrating core-state powers other than currency and the market, or the need to achieve more efficiency in the defence

and military domain by continuously coordinating among Member States seem to be more important to EU voters in deciding whether to support CSDP than international crisis. This Thesis, due to its limitations in both time and space, does not encompass such an analysis; however, it is of the utmost importance to grasp the sources of Europeanist sentiments in matters of defence as well as Eurosceptic ones.

On the other hand, the evolution of institutional supply appears more irregular, with spikes during or right after international crises. This observation is perfectly consistent with the theory of crisis-driven integration mentioned above. It then seems fair to assume that the volatility characterising the EU institutions' defence issues emphasis might mirror institutional blockages or political susceptibility. More clearly, international crises might represent a sort of political/institutional catalyst for the supply of further defence integration, which could hinder, in the medium and long term, the evolution of the EU institutional setting. This finding signals the difficulty of building up a coherent and continued political objective which is less restrained by international instabilities. Taking a step further, it does not seem illogical to assume that a more active and stable demand for further defence and military integration, coupled with a more crisis-reactive and volatile supply, represents a stage of democratic tension between European voters and EU institutions. This dangerous (im)balance could give birth to and nurture further Eurosceptic sentiments and become a threat to the EU's image and institutional framework.

Nonetheless, this work cannot delve deeper into such topics, although it would be a quintessential academic contribution to the relevant literature of European integration and an important factor to be taken into consideration by policy-makers.

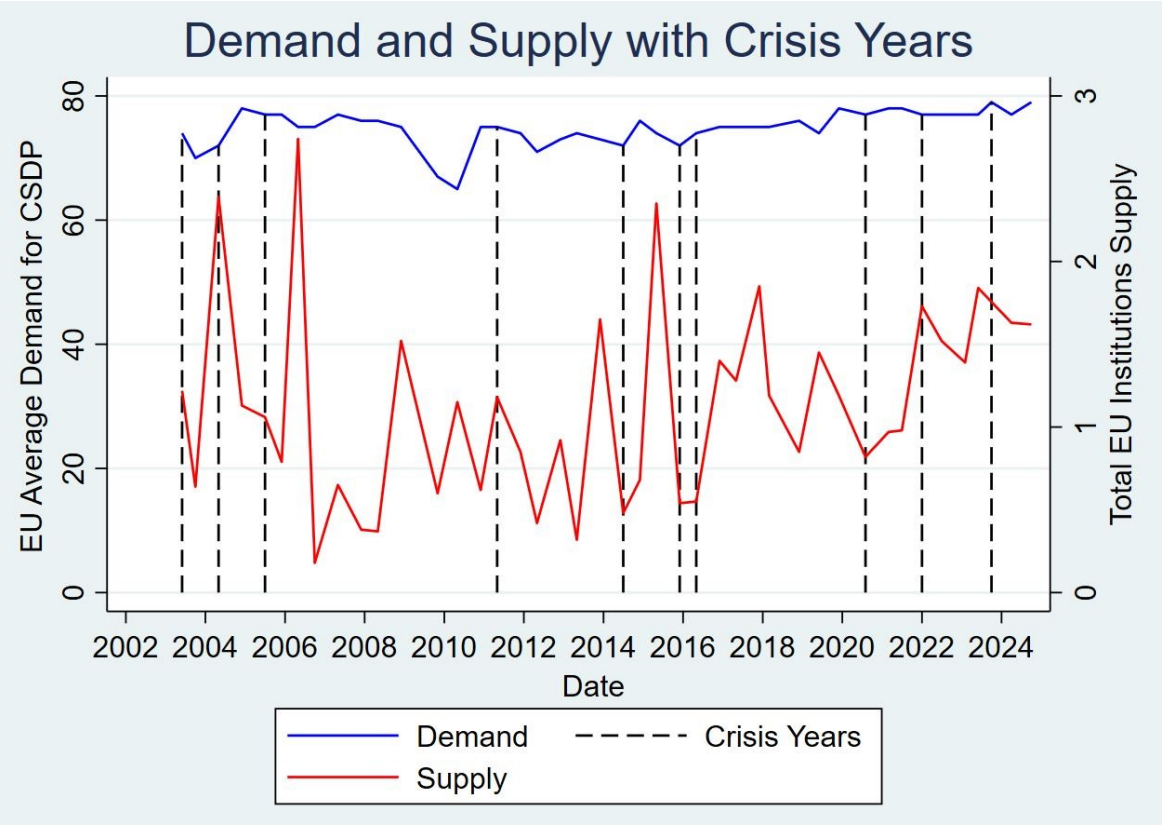

Figure 8: Line Plot of Demand and Supply with Crisis Years.

Once the results of this Thesis have been laid out, it is necessary to carefully examine the theoretical and empirical limitations of this work.

3.2 Limitations

Considering the results' interpretation outlined above, it is now necessary to highlight some important limitations concerning this work.

Firstly, the adjusted R-squared value found for the multivariate regression contained in Table 9 indicates that the model can only go so far in explaining citizens' demand variation according to the independent variables chosen by this Thesis. Moreover, while 23.9% is still a respectable result, it hints at the fact that this research was not able to find more explanatory

variables with statistical significance. For instance, political affiliation might be considered as one of the most relevant factors at play in European Integration theories and debates. More specifically, a clear declaration of which party each respondent identified the most with might have furnished valuable information to the model and, possibly, it could have increased its generalizability. However, the author of this Thesis was not able to find a single survey, official or not, encompassing the two indicators, namely, support for CSDP and party affiliation. Hence, future research aimed at studying the interplay between these two factors might be obliged to perform on-field investigations on its own, rely on proxy variables or incorporate in the same dataset observations stemming from different sources. Clearly, due to both the time and space constraints applicable to this work, this Thesis could not have performed such duties.

Another variable the model could have assumed to have a potential explanatory effect on European voters' support for CSDP is Atlanticism. More specifically, an indicator encompassing citizens' standing on NATO might mirror two logics at play: on one hand, it could indicate whether the respondent identifies more European integration in matters of defence with the Alliance or with the EU. This might hint at the fact that citizens who strongly favour the Alliance might not support CSDP as much in terms of defence and security. On the other hand, in cases where the respondent has shown low support for both these institutions' defence integration, it could be assumed that an intervening factor might be at play there. For instance, the level of pacifism or anti-militarism could be considered another element influencing citizens' choice in this regard, and, hence, might offset the balance between the refusal to support the EU's efforts for defence integration because of a fear of further power delegation, in favour of a rejection *in toto* of additional resources devoted to the military because of higher convictions. Similarly to the reasoning made above, for such an indicator, too, the author failed to find any proxy from the Standard Eurobarometer's surveys, and, thus, abstained from integrating different sources into the same dataset.

Finally, one last factor which could be used to potentially explain the dependent variable's variation is Member States' relationship with Russia. More clearly, since the 2014 occupation of Crimea and, above all, the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, the political, economic and diplomatic ties between Putin's regime and the EU have profoundly changed. However, not all the Union's Member States reacted the same. In the East, countries were divided between those who favoured security

concerns over energy provisions, hence condemning Russia's behaviour, and those who didn't. In the West, Member States often collided between those who favoured a more prominent role of NATO, and those who wanted to seize the invasion of Ukraine as the ultimate *Zeitenwende* to finally furnish the EU with its own military power. Thus, the state of the country's relations with Russia before and after the aggression, and the factors introduced above, might be able to influence European citizens' support for CSDP. However, it would be immensely articulate to pursue such a road, considering that it would require the translation of years of diplomatic relations into numbers.

Secondly, another limitation of this work relates to the concept of "supply" as a whole. Moreover, while the reasons as to why the EU's defence issues emphasis would be considered as institutional supply were clearly outlined in the previous chapters, a measure of language polarity was not employed in the models above. More specifically, a clear distinction between positive and negative language affecting institutional defence issues emphasis could be used to identify whether the Union's official documents were calling in favour or against CFSP or CSDP. Hence, a clear differentiation between intergovernmental and supranational institutions' preferences could have been observed, with the former potentially favouring more national responses, and the latter instead calling for further integration. However, to reach such a conclusion, more documents and data have to be drawn from official sources, a task that the available time and space for this research prevented from being accomplished.

Thirdly, a more nuanced limitation is to be highlighted concerning the dictionary's word choice. More specifically, the keywords identified to pertain to the defence or security field do have the power to be transectoral and could be used to describe other policies or topics. Moreover, even the word "defence" could be used not to describe the Union's efforts to further military and security integration in the EU, but instead to indicate completely different matters. However, the keywords chosen for this analysis are thought to possess a strong value of specificity related to the policy area to which this Thesis pertains, thus decreasing the limiting character of dictionary-based approaches and this work.

Finally, and as anticipated in the previous section, the EU's institutional supply might be more due to reactive forces rather than active ones. More in detail, exogenous factors such as crisis, disasters or military-technological advances might better explain both supranational and

intergovernmental defence issues' emphasis than mere employees' discretion. This argument could also be hinted at from the last conclusion contained in the previous section, which indicates the volatility of supply. Furthermore, while it was within the scope of this work, a precise statistical analysis of the Union's institutions' supply for defence and security integration is to be carried out if a clear understanding of the matter is wanted. Investigating the factors influencing such variation and finding a way to compare the difference between demand and supply concerning European defence would provide the relevant literature with an incredible contribution. Again, time and space constraints limited this research's scope and application.

Hypothesis	Expected Sign	Observed Sign	Statistically Significant?	Hypothesis Confirmed?
HD1	Positive (+)	Positive (+)	Yes	Yes
HD2	Positive (+)	Positive (+)	Yes	Yes
HD3	Negative (-)	Negative (-)	Yes	Yes
HD4	Negative (-)	Positive (+)	Yes	No
HS1	Positive (+)	Positive (+)	Yes	Yes
HS2	Convergence	No Convergence	No	No

Table 11: Summary Table.

Summing up, this Chapter highlighted the main results of this Thesis, as Table 11 above shows. It described how the relevant variables stemming from the pages above were analysed, and their effects were investigated concerning this research's Hypotheses. Namely, it identified that citizens' worse future expectations, namely HD2, have indeed a negative and statistically significant relationship with European voters' demand for CSDP. Furthermore, it highlighted how respondents with lower trust towards the EU in general are less likely to support any effort toward a more integrated CSDP, as Hypothesis for Demand 3 asserted. Conversely, it recognised how the theoretical assumptions backing HD4, predicting that Eastern European voters are less likely to support CSDP, were not corroborated by the data employed in this research. Finally, it showed that a convergence between supranational and intergovernmental institutions' defence issues emphasis can be inferred from the data this research retrieved, however, it cannot be statistically proven. For every result contained in the pages above, this work derived possible explanations

consistent with the relevant literature and the possible mechanisms at play in every case. Finally, it recognised various limitations decreasing the generalizability of this research. For instance, the ambivalent meaning of the keywords chosen for the dictionary employed for the supply side of the analysis, the R-squared values found in the regression models, the explanatory power of other variables, such as Atlanticism or party affiliation, might have in predicting citizens' demand for CSDP, or language polarity. Thus, this Section diligently set out the statistical analysis's results and their limitation, as the aims of this Chapter introduced above.

It is now time to proceed with the last and conclusive Chapter of this investigation.

4. Conclusions

While these pages are being written, more than three years have passed since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and almost two since a renewed violent confrontation between Israel and Palestine. Instabilities in the Arab peninsula, Africa, Asia, the energy crisis, and the ever-more antagonistic approach of the US towards the EU are just some of the events that have characterised the last few years. Although these developments in the international arena concern different policy fields, they all represent possible factors influencing the EU's system of Common Foreign and Defence Policy, and they constitute possible incentives for states to move toward a more integrated Europe. For instance, most EU countries revealed an increase in defence spending. Others opted for enlarging the military base of its defence sector. Some, instead, announced a *Zeitenwende*. Notwithstanding the precise measure chosen, the majority of EU Member States called for a more integrated and effective system of European defence. It could be argued, then, that "people only accept change when they are faced with necessity, and only recognise necessity when a crisis is upon them" (Monnet, 1976). Although this Thesis only touched upon the concept of crisis-driven integration, it still argued that the recent international instabilities might be relevant factors explaining, firstly, the relevance of this research, and, secondly, the progress of CFSP and CSDP altogether.

The First Chapter of this work clearly outlined the security initiatives, the coordination of different procurement policies, the various operations, and the military-industrial cooperation between Member States since the 1990s. States' participation in OSCE, UN, Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) or NATO-led operations was analysed, as well as the implications that could be drawn from such data. Furthermore, the efforts and limitations in coordinating different procurement policies were presented to highlight the relevance of these topics for today's European defence cooperation. The level of military-industrial collaboration between states since the 1990s was used to highlight the significance they attribute to the autonomy they are still willing to maintain in the management of national weapon industries. In addition to that, a thorough analysis of the European defence sector's evolution and institutional setting since 1945 was performed. It highlighted how states' cooperation changed concerning security and defence matters by presenting various initiatives, policies, agreements and other fundamental steps

employed by policymakers to craft an integrated system of European defence. Furthermore, it introduced two main theories of European integration, namely Intergovernmentalism and Neo-functionalism, and how they came to deal with the matter at hand. In addition to that, "high and low politics", core state power analysis, strategic culture, and issue emphasis are all relevant argumentations the First Chapter provided to present a more complete frame of research as possible. This work then moved on to outline the Thesis's questions and objectives; namely, how has European voters' demand for further integration in matters of security and defence evolved since 1990? What are the factors influencing such a process? What is the supply of defence and security integration offered by key EU institutions? Is such a level of integration stemming from Intergovernmental or Supranational institutions converging or diverging? Finally, Chapter 1 provided a detailed structure of this work.

The second Chapter instead presented that this Thesis employed a statistical method to reach its results, and carefully explained the methods used to gather the relevant data, to create the dictionary employed in the statistical analysis relative to the supply side of the work in R-Studio, and how the variables was formed and investigate in regression models in STATA. More specifically, it presented the independent variables contained in this research, which amounted to a little less than 1,600 observations each, from 1990 to 2024. Moreover, it identified the dependent variable as CSDP support from EU citizens, extracted from an identical question asked in the Commission's Standard Eurobarometer surveys since the beginning of the analysis. Furthermore, expectations for the following year, employed as a proxy for threat perception, Eastern origins, and whether or not the EU conjured up a negative image to respondents, used to represent the level of Euroscepticism, were all values retrieved from the same survey cited above. Instead, the control variables employed in the demand regression analysis, namely GDP per capita, tertiary education enrolment and military spending, were retrieved from the World Bank and OECD Databases. Then, it moved on to explain how the dictionary contained above was created and the keywords it employed to measure EU institutions' defence issues emphasis. In addition to that, Chapter 2 presented the research Hypotheses and their theoretical foundations, enunciating them in a clear and ordered manner, representing the testable assumptions for both demand and supply. Finally, it presented some preliminary findings concerning the general trends of both sides of the analysis. More specifically, it highlighted how a clear, positive and statistically significant trend for EU voters'

demand for CSDP can be observed, hence, corroborating HD1 of this work. In addition, HS1 was corroborated by the data, as it was able to identify a positive and statistically significant result concerning institutional supply.

Instead, Chapter 3 presented the statistical analysis introduced in the preceding pages, the results' implications and the research's limitations. Firstly, it highlighted how HD2 was corroborated by the data, as it found a statistically significant result, witnessing that per one-unit increase in worse future expectations, an increase in CSDP support of 0.14 was observed. Similarly, the regression model relative to HD3 indicated that per 1-unit increase in negative views towards the EU, the support for a Common Defence and Security Policy is expected to decrease by 0.3, corroborating the assumptions made in the previous Chapter. Instead, while HD4 was found to be strongly statistically significant, the expected coefficient of correlation was opposite to the one observed. Moreover, the regression model highlighted that while 70.37 percentage points of Western citizens are expected to support the Common Security and Defence Policy, 78.87 Eastern ones are expected to do so. The implications of this finding might represent the need of Eastern European voters to further integrate Member States' defence sectors irrespective of the institution into which this process takes place, the EU or NATO, partially discrediting the logic of functional discrimination introduced above. The multivariate model contained in Table 9 reiterated how the univariate regressions' results' sign of correlation and statistical significance. On the other hand, HS2, assuming a convergence between intergovernmental and supranational institutions' supply, was not completely corroborated by the data. While a graphical view of this trend seemed to go hand in hand with the Hypothesis's assumptions, as well as a T-test between the two institutions' means' difference was not found statistically significant, stating that HS2 was fully corroborated by the data would not be entirely accurate. More clearly, it is rather more precise to argue that the divergence between the emphasis put on defence issues by supranational and intergovernmental institutions was not found to be statistically significant. Thus, while it cannot be stated that a converging trend is present, it might be safer to argue that a diverging one is absent. Finally, Chapter 3 presented different limitations decreasing the generalizability of this research. For instance, the ambivalent meaning of the keywords chosen for the dictionary employed for the supply side of the analysis, the R-squared values found in the regression models, the explanatory

power which other variables, such as Atlanticism or party affiliation, might have in predicting citizens' demand for CSDP, or language polarity.

Hence, it then moved on to the concluding Chapter of this Thesis.

This work's objectives were set out clearly from the beginning. It aimed at investigating European voters' support for CSDP and the possible factors behind such demand. As hinted above, the general increasing trend observed since 1990 clearly shows how EU citizens view the Common Defence and Security Policy. More in detail, respondents seem to highly consider further integration in defence matters at the EU level, and, as Figure 8 above shows, their consideration towards CSDP is not likely to be affected by international crises. The reasons behind this finding might be multiple. However, the one which compels the author more is rather optimistic. The observed trend could be explained by the fact that the majority of respondents support, and even hope for, further integration in the EU as a whole. Therefore, support for more CSDP institutionalisation might shine thanks to mirrored light. It seems from the regression models above that other factors not included in the analysis might explain the dependent variable's variation. Thus, further research in this direction is needed to fully grasp the meaning and reasons behind voters' preferences regarding EU politics as a whole, and CSDP specifically.

Furthermore, the fact that threat perception had a positive correlation with voters' support for CSDP might be due instead to a more receptive electorate than what both Figure 8 above and the previous paragraph stated concerning international crises' influence on voters' demand for further defence integration. Moreover, the difficulty of clearly perceiving the effect of said instabilities on EU citizens' demand might be because the respondents' support for CSDP is so high and stable that even major disrupting events, such as the war in Ukraine, have less influence than expected. More in detail, worse future expectations amount to the second smallest coefficient in the multivariate regression model, clearly stating the statistical influence of threat perception on voters' demand compared to all the other independent variables in the analysis. Notwithstanding this specification, it is not far from logical thought and empirical evidence to assume that EU citizens tend to support CSDP more in unstable times. The assumptions of crisis-driven integration introduced above also seem to apply to European defence, as the data supports this theory.

All this stands to say that international crises' influence on both the demand and supply sides of the analysis is clearly in line with the Neo-functionalist assumptions set out in the previous Chapters. The data seems to suggest that instabilities create functional spillovers that pressure institutions into deeper integration. More precisely, while a strong intergovernmental supply increase had been found in the data, and the results concerning supranational institutions' emphasis were instead not significant, the total level of salience related to defence issues in official documents, together with the convergence analysis carried out above, seems to hint at the fact that a progressive alignment between different types of institutions can be observed. The "non-divergence" found might represent a renewed effort from supranational institutions, such as the Commission or the EP, to have their say even in matters where their institutional weight and decision-making power are rather weak. This argument might represent a newfound willingness of the Commission to get back in the driver's seat of the European integration process. However, to perfectly grasp whether this finding can be mirrored in other studies, both qualitative and quantitative analyses are to be performed on EU institutions' official documents regarding defence and security matters. Thus, further research might take on these tasks to truly assess the will and success of supranational and intergovernmental institutions' supply for increased defence integration.

In addition to that, the research design and methodological approach developed in this Thesis offer potential for broader applications beyond the specific case of the European defence framework. The combination of demand- and supply-side analysis with textual data and public opinion surveys can be applied to other strategic areas of EU policymaking, such as climate policy, migration management and energy cooperation. These areas also involve multi-level governance and evolving citizen preferences, particularly in times of crisis. Using a similar issues emphasis framework could help to assess whether institutional communication in these fields aligns with public concern, and how this alignment, or lack thereof, influences the EU's legitimacy and effectiveness. It would also enable the comparison of integration dynamics across policy domains, potentially identifying shared mechanisms or domain-specific patterns in supranational or intergovernmental institutions' responsiveness.

This Thesis suggests that a higher and more stable level of demand for CSDP is mirrored by a lower and more volatile level of supply stemming from EU institutions. However, future

investigations will need to consider the role of Member States in the process of EU defence integration. While it is important to assess the Council and the EU Council's roles in this project, internal politics are bound to be relevant when drafting policies that touch upon core state powers. As was stated in the previous Chapters, this Thesis could not undergo such tasks due to its limitations in both time and space. However, the incumbency status of Eurosceptic Member States' parties, election proximity and political scandals are all factors which might interfere with the process of supplying further defence integration stemming from the Council or EU Council. It is of paramount importance to investigate their roles if a more complete view of the European defence framework is wanted. A meso-approach will surely contribute to shedding more light upon the matter.

Despite the traditionally intergovernmental nature of the EU defence framework, European voters have consistently expressed a strong and increasing demand for deeper integration in this field. Meanwhile, institutional supply, although uneven, appears to have responded with growing emphasis on defence, particularly in response to crises. Further research will need to explore the specifics of the interplay between these two factors because the relationship between demand and supply in the CSDP domain is not only a matter of effectiveness but also of democracy legitimacy. As the EU navigates an increasingly unstable geopolitical arena, aligning institutional supply with citizens' demand becomes essential. If the EU aspires to be both a strong geopolitical actor and a fair democratic Union, responding to the voices of its people on security matters may be the key to reconciling sovereignty with solidarity, and efficiency with military might.

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