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Institutional Interdependence –
The Structural Effects of Institutional
Overlap between NATO and the EU on
Military Cooperation within the EU

MA Thesis



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INSTITUTIONAL INTERDEPENDENCE –
THE STRUCTURAL EFFECTS OF INSTITUTIONAL OVERLAP BETWEEN NATO
AND THE EU ON MILITARY COOPERATION WITHIN THE EU

Meike Gerwin

Abstract

In an increasingly institutionalised world, it is vital that scholars take into account all decisive factors in the development of institutions. One such important factor is the increasing density and therefore the overlap between institutions. There is a variety of literature in International Relations on the effects of institutions and, more specifically, of institutional overlap on actors and their behaviour. However, the structural effects of institutional overlap on institutions, i.e. the inducement of change in their design, membership, mandate or resources, have never been explored. This thesis thus aims at addressing this gap in the literature and at furthering our understanding of how and why international organisations develop and evolve. Therefore, the concept of ‘institutional interdependence’ is introduced in order to capture the structural effects of institutional overlap on international organisations. Institutional interdependence refers to the idea that overlapping institutions become intertwined, and therefore change in one institution can induce change on the structural level in another one. The case of institutional overlap between NATO and the EU’s military cooperation is used as an illustrative case study to demonstrate the analytical utility of the concept of institutional interdependence. It is a compelling case study for the preliminary illustration of the concept because NATO and the EU are the two regional organisations with the highest degree of institutional overlap, which is the precondition for institutional interdependence. The study investigates the developments of EU military cooperation over three in-case observations, identifying the impact of overlap with NATO on each of these observations, using process tracing. The thesis therefore relies on a combination of primary and secondary sources and finds that at in each of these observations, namely the founding of the ESDP, the signing of the Lisbon Treaty and the founding of PeSCo, preceding (perceived) changes in NATO played a role for the choice of arena as well as for the timing of reforms.

Keywords: Institutional Overlap; International Organisations; EU; NATO

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List of Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CARD	Coordinated Annual Review on Defence
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy, former ESDP
EEAS	European External Action Service
ESDI	European Security and Defence Identity
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy, now CSDP
EU	European Union
FAC	Foreign Affairs Council
HI	Historical Institutionalism
HR	High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
IO	International Organisation
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NRF	NATO Reaction Force
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PeSCo	Permanent Structured Cooperation
PfP	Partnership for Peace
RCI	Rational Choice Institutionalism
SI	Sociological Institutionalism
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WEU	Western European Union
WTO	World Trade Organisation

1. Introduction

Our world has been becoming more and more institutionalised. The importance of institutions in the political and social life, including international politics, is reflected in the extensive literature on institutions in international politics (see e.g. March & Olsen, 1998). Over time, institutionalist theories of different metatheoretical backgrounds (e.g. rational choice or constructivism) have explored constraining and possible constitutive effects of institutions on actors¹ in depth (Campbell, 1998; Hall & Taylor, 1996; Immergut, 1998; Risse, 2004). As more and more institutions were created, scholars developed the research on institutional overlap (see e.g. Hofmann, 2009, 2011, 2018) and regime complexity (see e.g. Alter & Meunier, 2009; Alter & Raustiala, 2018; Raustiala & Victor, 2004) in order to find out how the overlap of institutions changed their role as well as their impact on state behaviour. Daniel Drezner (2009), for example, discusses how institutional overlap/regime complexity reverses the original impacts of institutions on actors, most notably the constraining ones, and Stefanie Hofmann (2009, 2011, 2018) shows how actors change their behaviour and reserve to different tactics in order to use institutional overlap to their advantage.

While these studies, amongst others, tell us much about how the overlapping of institutions influences actors and their behaviour, few authors deal with the structural effects of overlap on institutions themselves. Instead, the ones that do analyse the effects of overlap on institutions (cf. Gehring & Faude, 2014; Gehring & Oberthür, 2009; Hofmann, 2009, 2011, 2018) focus narrowly on interaction between them, i.e. on how institutions manage overlap. Gehring and his co-authors Faude and Oberthür, for example, show that international organisations (IO's) can affect each other according to different types of interaction (see e.g. Gehring & Faude, 2014; Gehring & Oberthür, 2009). Therefore, organisations might agree upon a division of labour or instead compete with each other (Gehring & Oberthür, 2009).

¹Constraining effects of institutions are the mechanisms that limit the choices of action for actors, making their behaviour more predictable, while constituting effects enable actors to find effective solutions (Finnemore, 1996; Keohane, 1989, p. 6; March & Olsen, 1998; Risse, 2004; cf. also chapter 2.1 of this thesis).

However, those scholars disregard possible long-term effects that overlap could have on institutions understood as structures.

In the light of these discussions, this thesis has theoretical as well as empirical objectives. First, it seeks to start filling the gap in the institutionalist literature. It does so by developing the concept of 'institutional interdependence'. The concept refers to the process by which IO's are altered as a consequence of institutional overlap. If there is sufficient overlap between organisations, they become dependent on each other as member states of one react to changes made in another institution. The hypothesis that follows from that idea is that due to institutional overlap, change in one institution will lead to change in the other, overlapping one. The concept is based on the theoretical background of rational choice institutionalism. Second, the thesis tries to further our understanding of how institutions work and, more specifically, of how the European Union (EU) is affected by its interdependence with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Thus, this study will show the analytical value of the concept of institutional interdependence by analysing a concrete case of institutional development. My research question is hence how (perceived) changes in NATO influenced the development of military cooperation within the EU.

In the empirical part on the development of EU military cooperation in connection to NATO, the study relies on primary sources, as official documents from both IO's and statements by political leaders, and secondary sources, as scholarly and newspaper articles. This data allows to assess the overlap between the organisations and (perceived) change in both of them as well as to evaluate whether institutional overlap contributed to these changes, using process tracing. The inclusion of secondary sources in the empirical part of this study is instrumental for achieving its aims, since it allows to analyse not only the official overlap between the organisations and formal change in them but also for example their actual capabilities and the usage of agreements etc. Furthermore, a combination of scholarly and newspaper articles in addition to, where available, statements by political leaders will give an overview over the perceived utility of NATO, often shown indirectly in the inter-organisational and transatlantic relations. More detailed data would be desirable for a more in-depth analysis of

the mechanisms of interdependence. However, that is beyond the scope of this study, which aims to establish – rather than to explore exhaustively – the workings of interdependence.

While the thesis illustrates the impact of overlap on institutions as structures, and therefore the concept of institutional interdependence, it does not claim to provide a comprehensive explanation of the mechanism. Instead, the case study has to be read in the light of the aim of this thesis, which is to demonstrate the analytical value of the concept, and therefore to demonstrate the presence and workings of institutional interdependence. While I come to the conclusion that institutional interdependence plays an important role in the development of EU military cooperation, this does not deny the influence other factors had on the process, like internal considerations or external events. Although this means that institutional overlap is not sufficient to explain the outcome of developments within the EU, it needs to be included in the analysis as it has had a notable influence especially on where and when reforms were taken. Demonstrating this effect by tracing the way in which NATO developments reflect in EU developments, the study establishes the plausibility of institutional interdependence playing a role. While this shows the importance of institutional overlap, its relative weight and exact role in the causal mechanism remain to be explored.

This thesis is structured in four subsequent chapters. The second chapter focuses on the theoretical framework by first establishing a working definition of institutions, assessing the literature on institutional overlap so far, embedding it in the wider institutionalist literature and then introducing the concept of institutional interdependence. The third chapter describes the research design used in this thesis, including the case and data selection as well as introducing the methods used. The fourth chapter contains the empirical part, looking at three in-case observations of overlap between NATO and European military defence cooperation since the end of the Cold War. For each of these observations, the impact of institutional overlap on institutions as structures is examined. Finally, the conclusion summarises the findings and shows possible focuses for further research.

2. The Concept of Institutional Interdependence

This theoretical chapter will give an overview over the institutional literature as well as literature on institutional overlap so far and then go on to develop the concept of institutional interdependence. As institutions are the central research object of this thesis, a clear definition of the term is the prerequisite for a coherent analysis. Thus, the first subchapter summarizes the different theoretical approaches taken in analyses of institutions, defines institutions and the subcategories (international) organisations and regimes, resulting in the decision to only look at organisations in this thesis. In addition, the thesis focuses exclusively on *international* institutions, as only these are of interest to the concept of institutional interdependence. The second subchapter deals in depth with the concept of institutional overlap, as it is the basis for the new notion of institutional interdependence. Overlap is first defined and distinguished from other, similar or related concepts such as institutional interaction or regime complexity. Secondly, effects of overlap on actor behaviour, i.e. member states of international IO's, as well as their tactics to deal with overlap are discussed. In a third step, the notion of institutional interdependence is introduced in order to analyse the impact overlap has on institutions as structures. If institutions are affected by institutional overlap, its impact becomes an essential factor in the analysis of IO's and their role in the international system. Thus, this chapter develops the theoretical idea that is then illustrated in chapter four.

2.1. Definition of Institutions

Although the analysis of institutions and their effects, or institutionalism, has practically always been a part of political science, there is no universal definition of the term 'institution' and it seems to not even be desired (Immergut, 1998; Martin & Simmons, 1998). Often, institutions are described as some form of rules or set of rules that can be formal or informal (Risse, 2016; Steinmo, 2001). In fact, the most common definition is that by Robert Keohane from 1989, who defined institutions as "persistent and connected sets of rules (formal and informal) that prescribe behavioural roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations" (Keohane, 1989, p. 3, cf. also Biermann, 2008, p. 153; Gehring & Oberthür, 2009, p. 126). The study of institutions goes back to behaviouralism, which it criticises for assuming that behaviour reveals the preferences of actors. Institutionalists on the contrary claim that actors

may not necessarily behave in line with their preferences due to institutional constraints and inducements (Immergut, 1998). Since then, institutionalist research has become more diverse; at the present there are three main strands of new institutionalism, namely historical institutionalism, rational choice institutionalism and sociological institutionalism. They all draw on alternative grounds in metatheories and therefore understand institutions quite differently (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Thus, I will briefly outline all three approaches and contrast the notion of institutions with that of regimes and organisations in order to achieve a working definition for the purposes of this thesis.

In rational choice institutionalism (RCI), institutions are seen as “as related complexes of rules and norms, identifiable in space and time” (Keohane, 1988, p. 383). RCI developed from Congress analysis and accordingly focuses on rules that shape choices and information available to actors (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Since the approach is based on behaviouralism and the rational actor model, it assumes fixed preferences of actors and the rational, strategic pursuit of those (ibid., p. 944 f.). From the rationalist viewpoint, institutions provide a solution for collective action dilemmas. Therefore, they are useful for actors to maximize their gains and minimize their losses, thus making it possible to achieve optimal collective outcomes. Without institutions, this would often not be possible due to a lack of information, communication and knowledge about the intents of other actors, as shown by game-theoretic puzzles like the prisoners’ dilemma (Moravcsik, 1998). Because policy making is often characterised as a culmination of collective action dilemmas (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 945), institutions play an essential role in this process. With regard to agency, institutions are mere instruments for actors to achieve their goals, sometimes even seen as “intervening variables” (Koelble, 1995, p. 232) and founded in order to minimize transaction costs and uncertainty about the other actors’ behaviour (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Moravcsik, 1998). Accordingly, they can have agency only in the form of agents for states, i.e. the principles (Keohane, 1989, pp. 1–20). Furthermore, institutions affect powerful states relatively more than weak states, as these cannot just rely on their power in order to achieve their goals but have to adhere to the rules (Drezner, 2009). This is due to the fact that “in relatively non-institutionalized systems, the physical capabilities of states are most important” but “in relatively institutionalized

international systems, states may be able to exert influence by drawing on widespread diplomatic norms” (Keohane, 1989, p. 9). Therefore, the relative power of the powerful declines in the presence of institutions. This means that institutions affect actors’ choices, however, they do not determine them (Koelble, 1995). Not only the existence but also the persistence of institutions is explained by their effectiveness and utility for actors (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Against the background of these assumptions and understanding of institutions, the creation and/or change of them occurs if it increases the benefits and lowers the costs of all actors in the strive for their interests (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 945). RCI hence gives a rather detailed scheme of the relation between institutions and actors compared to the other two approaches, although this is mostly possible due to their reductive view of human preferences and behaviour (ibid).

In contrast to RCI, Sociological Institutionalism (SI) is based on organisational theory, hence it is sometimes also called organisational institutionalism (Campbell, 1998; Immergut, 1998; Nichols, 1998). It shares much with constructivism, and can therefore be seen as the opposite pole to RCI (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Immergut, 1998; Keohane, 1988). The most important difference here is the disposition of actors: while RCI assumes they act according to the logic of expected consequence, SI postulates they act according to the logic of appropriateness, meaning they act “in accordance with rules and practices that are socially constructed, publicly known, anticipated, and accepted” (March & Olsen, 1998, p. 952). According to SI scholars, institutions are not just rules and norms, but include also “symbol systems, cognitive scripts and moral templates that provide the ‘frames of meaning’ guiding human action” (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 947), blurring the lines between institutions and culture. While the concept itself is therefore perceived broader than in any other institutional school of thought, the qualification SI scholars use to determine institutions is nevertheless quite narrow, as a “rule or pattern is only considered an institution by sociological institutionalists if there is an unspoken sense that the rule or pattern must be followed or adhered to” (Nichols, 1998, p. 483). SI scholars assume that institutions are not built for mere instrumental reasons but are constructed as culture-specific practices that are communicated to organisations.

Compared to the RCI perspective, institutions are seen to have more effects, as pointed out by Adler (2013, p. 128):

Constructivists understand institutions as reified sets of intersubjective constitutive and regulative rules that, in addition to helping coordinate and pattern behaviour and channel it in one direction rather than another (Ruggie, 1998a: 54), also help establish new collective identities, shared interests, and practices.

SI therefore assumes that institutions do not only constrain actors' behaviour, but that they can also "enable" and "empower" actors to generate solutions to their problems by providing cues and scripts that "constitute" legitimate forms of action" (Campbell, 1998, p. 382). That means that they are seen as having not only regulative but also constitutive effects (Finnemore, 1996; Keohane, 1989, p. 6; March & Olsen, 1998; Risse, 2004). Furthermore, institutions are often seen as norms attached to the "roles" an individual (or actor, for that matter) might take on in society, which are internalised and affect more than just strategic calculations, as suggested by RCI. Thus, institutions also influence actors on a cognitive level, reaching their "most basic preferences and very identity" (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 948) and are essential in generating meaning (Immergut, 1998). Risse (2004) moreover sees institutions as expressions of identities. Therefore, SI concludes that institutions are not created or modified for instrumental purposes only, but in order to raise the legitimacy of an organisation or its members depending on the predominant values in that setting. The process follows the "logic of social appropriateness" (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 949) as it is cultural factors instead of efficiency calculations that lead to the creation of institutions (Nichols, 1998, p. 485).

Historical institutionalism (HI) then builds a bridge between rational choice and sociological theories like SI by combining features of both approaches. Most importantly, it unites the dispositions of actors, which are not mutually exclusive (March & Olsen, 1998, p. 952). For HI scholars, institutions are "formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the polity or the political economy" (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 938) but they mostly look at formal organisations (Campbell, 1998). They usually use inductive methods and pay special attention to power dynamics within and distributed by institutions (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Steinmo, 2001), while drawing from

sociological theories like that of Max Weber (Immergut, 1998, p. 16). For HI, both interests and ideas affect actors' behaviour (Campbell, 1998, p. 379), which shows their combination of RCI and SI elements, and, according to Hall and Taylor (1996), gives them an advantage over the other theories. Thus, HI comes closest to a fusion of the different approaches which is called for by many scholars (Campbell, 1998; Hall & Taylor, 1996; Immergut, 1998; Koelble, 1995). Hence there are also two strands within HI when it comes to explaining the effects of institutions on actors and the persistence of institutions, namely the calculus approach, which mostly uses RCI assumptions, and the cultural approach, which is very close to SI (Hall & Taylor, 1996). What is unique to HI is that its proponents stress the importance of past choices and developments, as they use the concept of 'path dependency' in order to explain current decisions made (Pearson, 1998). They furthermore highlight that institutions will eventually develop their own agenda, separate from that of its member states, and a form of agency, leading to principal-agent dilemmas (ibid.). This also results in the conclusion that institutions are very stable or even 'sticky', which means that change is only possible at so called 'critical junctures' (ibid). That means that institutions do not disappear even if they lose their original purpose, contrary to what RCI scholars assume. As institutions develop agency, they also develop a sense for self-preservation and, accordingly, either find new tasks or coexist with new institutions with the same task, thus creating overlap (Nichols, 1998).

Having introduced the concept of institutions, I now turn to two specific types of them, namely regimes and international organisations (IO's). The distinction between institutions and regimes is not at all straight-forward, since there is no universal definition for 'regime', much like for 'institution', and the ones used cover about the same range as the term 'institution' does across the different approaches. This also shows in some studies that use the terms seemingly interchangeably (cf. Betts, 2013; Drezner, 2009). According to Haggard and Simmons, the definitions for regimes vary from a rather broad perspective, defining regimes as "patterned behaviours" (Haggard & Simmons, 1987, p. 495), to a more narrow strand that "treats regimes as multilateral agreements among states which aim to regulate national actions within an issue-area" (ibid., p. 495). This more restricted definition can also be found implicitly in scholarly articles that equate regimes with sets of rules and/or

agreements (Alter & Meunier, 2009; Alter & Raustiala, 2018). The most common definition is that by Krasner, who states that “Regimes can be defined as sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors’ expectations converge in a given area of international relations” (1982, p. 186). An important characteristic of regimes is that they are structures, not actors (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999, cf. also Alter & Raustiala, 2018). However, similarly to institutions, regimes help to reduce transaction costs and enable decentralised rule-making, therefore providing a solution to collective action-dilemmas and enforcing cooperation (Haggard & Simmons, 1987). Hence, there is no clear distinction to be made between regimes and institutions, even if one adapts the narrower definitions. Nevertheless, while the terms overlap, there are still differences:

Regimes aid the ‘institutionalization’ of portions of international life by regularizing expectations, but some international institutions such as the balance of power are not bound to explicit rights and rules (*Haggard & Simmons, 1987, p. 496*).

I therefore conclude for the purposes of this thesis that regimes, as in multilateral agreements, are a subcategory of institutions which in turn can be formal as well as informal rules.

Organisations are, similarly to my understanding of regimes, often seen as a subcategory of institutions. Accordingly, Clive Archer (2001, p. 2) describes international organisations, building on previous definitions, as the following:

An international organization in this context represents a form of institution that refers to a formal system of rules and objectives, a rationalized administrative instrument (Selznick 1957: 8) and which has ‘a formal technical and material organization: constitutions, local chapters, physical equipment, machines, emblems, letterhead stationery, a staff, an administrative hierarchy and so forth’ (Duverger 1972: 68).

He furthermore criticises that the terms ‘institution’ and ‘organisation’ are often used inconsequently and therefore interchangeably. He states that IO’s can represent a set of institutions (*ibid.*), while others say they can be used in order to monitor and administrate regimes (Betts, 2013, p. 76; Keohane, 1989, p. 5). The capabilities and effects ascribed to IO’s largely depend on the approach taken, as the economic and the sociological approaches propose very different assumptions about IO’s and as a consequence pose and answer different questions (Archer, 2001). Concerning for example the issue of agency,

constructivists see IO's as both structures and actors as they can acquire agency in their own right, while rationalists see their capability for agency as limited to principle-agent relations and therefore mostly perceive them as structures (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999). Accordingly, constructivist approaches ascribe IO's considerably more power than rationalists do, as they see them having also constitutive effects (ibid.). On the issue of persistence of IO's, the two approaches also have different answers. RCI assumes that IO's will be abandoned as soon as they are not of use to their members anymore, or that they will be reformed according to the new needs of actors (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Contrary to that, schools of thought building on constructivism, as e.g. SI, predict that IO's "persist not because they are useful but instead because institutions constrain the manner in which individuals are able to consider changing institutions" (Nichols, 1998, p. 486) or "because they are externally legitimated" (Finnemore, 1996, p. 329). So, while the mere definition of IO's is not as controversial as those of institutions and regimes, debates about their capabilities, characteristics and powers show about the same points at issue and argumentations.

For the purposes of this paper, I will focus only on IO's as formal systems of rules and objectives with a formal, technical and material organisation (see above), leaving aside other types of institutions as e.g. regimes and informal ones. I do so in order to delimit the following discussion of institutional overlap and its effects. Furthermore, this restricted approach enables the subsequent considerations on the theory of institutional overlap to be more specific. As the range of the understandings of institutions is so broad, it is not only difficult to ascribe direct effects on actors to all phenomena covered by those definitions, but it is even more questionable whether the effects of overlap are the same in all cases. This narrow approach is in line with previous attempts to study institutional overlap, as for example that by Stefanie Hofmann (2009, 2011, 2018). She analyses institutional overlap across the three dimensions of membership, resources and mandate, which only the subcategory of IO's possesses, while e.g. informal rules do not. Therefore, the focus on IO's as a subcategory of institutions is adequate. I will furthermore only look at *international* institutions, since in domestic structures, there is usually a hierarchy between institutions that prevents the mechanisms observable in the international arena from happening (Alter & Meunier, 2009,

p. 13), making international organisations the only ones of interest for the concept of institutional interdependence.

Despite the fact that all strands of institutionalism have something to say about the creation and functioning of institutions as well as their effects, in the following, I adopt an RCI perspective. I do so because using the rational choice institutionalist approach allows me to see institutions as structures and therefore to differentiate between structural changes on the institutional level and unit changes in the actors' behaviour. In addition, RCI has a very clear understanding of the effects that institutions have on actors, which will be useful when furthering the theory of institutional overlap to include its effects on other institutions. Furthermore, RCI focuses on the utility that institutions have for their actors and uses the concept of utility in order to explain the creation and possible abandonment of IO's. This seems to be the most appropriate approach for the analysis of overlap, since it focuses on how decisions are taken at a given time. The historical background that is highlighted by HI scholars is not of interest when it comes to institutional overlap, since the question is how overlap influences actors and institutions at a certain moment, not over time, as past overlap is unlikely to have any effect in the present. Moreover, HI focuses on continuity, while I want to explain change in IO's. While SI and the logic of appropriateness might also be capable of explaining the effects of overlap, I will leave this for future research to determine, and instead look at explanations as derived from RCI only. By doing so, I can use its straightforward theses about actors' decision-making that translate to the structural level in order to show the (inter-)dependences that IO's develop due to institutional overlap.

After showing the effects of institutions on actors and establishing working definitions for this thesis, I will go on to look at how institutional overlap changes these processes and mechanisms.

2.2. Institutional Overlap

Institutional overlap is the prerequisite for institutional interdependence and, accordingly, a key concept of this thesis. Hence, the following subchapters discuss the concept itself as well as its effects on actor behaviour and institutions in depth, resulting in the notion of institutional interdependence. The first subsection conceptualises overlap and distinguishes

it from related concepts as institutional interaction (see e.g. Gehring & Oberthür, 2009) and regime complexity (see e.g. Raustiala & Victor, 2004) in order to fully understand it. Furthermore, there are various documented effects of overlap on actors, depending on their power and membership, as well as strategies that actors apply to manage with institutional overlap; these are laid out in the second subsection. Building on that, the third subsection discusses possible effects that overlap is expected to have on institutions themselves as a consequence of its effects on actors, developing the notion of ‘institutional interdependence’.

2.2.1. Definition of Overlap

The world has been becoming more and more institutionalised, with there being “more than 2,400 intergovernmental organizations, 37,000 organizations engaged in international politics, and approximately 200,000 international agreements” (Alter & Raustiala, 2018, p. 18.2; cf. also Prado & Hoffman, 2017). Given these sheer numbers, it is inevitable that institutions share common members, goals or means, i.e. that they ‘overlap’. In fact, Raustiala and Victor (2004) predict that the number of ‘regime complexes’, i.e. overlapping regimes, will only increase. In order to understand the effects of institutional overlap, it is essential to first understand what exactly the notion describes and how and why overlap is created.

Again, there are several terms to consider and whose distinction is rather ambiguous. The term ‘regime complexity’, for example, comes very close to that of institutional overlap. It describes “an array of partially overlapping and non-hierarchical institutions governing a particular issue-area” (ibid., p. 279). Raustiala and Victor further add that complexes are characterised by the “horizontal, overlapping structure and the presence of divergent rules and norms” (ibid., p. 305). While Gehring and Faude (2014) argue for a separation of institutional overlap and regime complexity due to the differences between the terms ‘institution’ and ‘regime’, most other authors in the field use both terms interchangeably and even apply the terminology of one to explain the other (cf. Drezner, 2009; Hofmann, 2009, 2011, 2018; Raustiala & Victor, 2004). Betts (2013), on the contrary, sees institutional overlap as one of the consequences of regime complexity. In addition, Gehring and Faude (2014) introduce the notion of ‘institutional complexity’, further blurring the lines, while Gehring and Oberthür (2009) work with the concept of ‘institutional interaction’, and

Hofmann (2011) lists more related concepts for the analysis of the relations of overlapping institutions, as for example ‘networking’ and ‘intersecting multilateralism’. This means that there are several names for a currently very important phenomenon. I will nevertheless stick to the term ‘institutional overlap’, as it describes my research topic best.

In most of the aforementioned approaches, the focus lies on institutions as actors and how they manage overlap, e.g. by cooperating with other IO’s, while overlap is seen as a given precondition (e.g. Biermann, 2008; Gehring & Oberthür, 2009). Since the topic of this thesis is not the relation of institutions with each other, but how IO’s as structures are affected by overlap, I will use the exact concept of institutional overlap. As I made a distinction between institutions and regimes and will only include IO’s in my analysis, I will stick to the specific term, too, but still draw from the regime complexity literature, as it often looks at very similar dynamics. Especially since I understand IO’s as structures, they share many characteristics with regimes, making the two concepts move closer to each other. While I will assume that the consequences of regime complexity and institutional overlap are mostly the same, as the phenomena are very similar and are often treated as though they were the same, it will be up to future research to confirm this assumption.

Hofmann (2011) analyses the phenomenon of overlap for three different dimensions: Overlap in membership, overlap in mandate and overlap in resources. When overlapping institutions share members, this means that actors are members of both IO’s, like e.g. all EU member states are also members of the United Nations (UN). Overlapping mandates mean that IO’s are concerned with the same issues or issue area, as for example both the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Eurasian Economic Union are concerned with economic growth among their respective members. Overlapping resources then mean that IO’s work with the same funds, assets, or structures, like e.g. UN peace-keeping missions often use NATO forces (NATO, 2019). According to Hofmann, it is necessary to include all three dimensions into the analysis of institutional overlap in order to not overlook “one dimension of overlap that potentially could be utilized by actors for their own benefit or to constrain other actors and institutions” (2011, p. 103). On the contrary, Alter and Meunier argue that “Not all overlaps will be causally significant” (2009, p. 15), while Gehring and

Oberthür (2009) state that overlap in the membership and issue-area (i.e. mandate) dimension is the precondition for commitment-based and behavioural interaction between institutions. Gehring and Faude (2014, p. 474) further develop the idea that the type of overlap plays a role by introducing the concept of ‘functional overlap’. This occurs when there is overlap between two separately created institutions in both the membership and the mandate dimension, or, as they call it, the ‘regulatory scopes’ (ibid.). In their view, overlap in only one of those dimensions is unlikely to produce any interaction between the institutions and will therefore have little consequence (ibid.). Hofmann (2018, p. 3) picked up this idea in her latest article, renaming it ‘organizational overlap’, and also attributing it the most effects. As scholars ascribe different effects and henceforth different levels of importance to different types of overlap, this thesis will look at the three dimensions as separate parts of the overall overlap in order to distinguish between their impacts.

Therefore, I define institutional overlap as *the intersection of international institutions in membership, mandate and/or resources*, derived from Betts’ definition of regime complexity (2013, p. 69). The contrary concept to institutional overlap are parallel institutions, describing institutions that have “no formal or direct substantive overlap” (Alter & Meunier, 2009, p. 15).

Other concepts that need to be distinguished from institutional overlap are ‘nesting’ and ‘layering’ of institutions. First, “‘Nesting’ refers to a situation where regional or issue-specific international institutions are themselves part of multilateral frameworks that involve multiple states or issues” (Alter & Meunier, 2006, p. 363) and the example of the EU as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) is given (ibid.). Therefore, most nested institutions are also overlapping, definitely in membership. They are also very likely to share an issue area, as the smaller institution would have no reason to join the larger one if that was concerned with an unrelated topic, i.e. the EU would not have joined the WTO if it was not concerned with trade. It is furthermore imaginable that nested institutions would share parts of their resources in order to tackle common issues, thus creating overlap in all three dimensions. Whereas nesting refers to IO’s that as such are members of another organisation, overlap is a more general term describing that IO’s have either the same members, the same

mandate and/or use the same resources. Second, the concept of ‘institutional layering’ has been used rather inconsistently, which makes it difficult to define it concretely (Heijden, 2011). Heijden defines it as “a process in which new elements are attached to existing institutions and so gradually change their status and structure” (ibid., p. 9). This means that he understands layering as referring to one institution and uses it to explain change in that institution, while institutional overlap requires the existence of two or more institutions. Institutional layering can be and has been, however, used on the level of regime complexes, too:

Instead of creating new layers on top of a singular institution, layering in regime complexes involves the creation of rules which build upon the rules of the overall complex in order to avoid, or at least minimise, ‘countermobilization by defenders of the status quo’ (*Streeck and Thelen, 2005, p. 23, cited in Rabitz, 2018, p. 306 f.*).

Although this observation can hardly be transferred to the concept of institutional overlap, the layering of one institution can possibly create more overlap with another one as it changes the scope of mandate. Layering therefore refers to the development of single institutions; it is a process that is rather likely to produce overlap with another IO. Overlap itself, however, is a status at a given point in time, describing the intersection of two or more institutions.

Turning to the question of change in overlapping institutions, one characteristic of regime complexes is, similar to regimes and institutions themselves, that they are ‘sticky’, or underlie path dependency (Rabitz, 2018). That means that once they are established and have found an equilibrium, they are unlikely to change. Similar characteristics are observed between overlapping institutions that found a division of labour, which can itself be seen as a “spontaneous institution” (Gehring & Faude, 2014, p. 482) and is therefore also likely to endure. However, Hofmann (2018, p. 3) contests the assumption that overlap always leads to either division of labour, integration, fragmentation, or competition, rendering the stability of a certain status of overlap questionable.

Institutional overlap can be brought about intentionally or unintentionally. Hofmann (2011) shows that there are many incentives for actors to create an institution that will overlap with already existing ones. She argues that

Governments might perceive the ‘old’ institution as losing effectiveness or legitimacy or as an outright failure. Thus they might wish to create an additional institution for various reasons: strengthening the existing one, overcoming a collective action problem that cannot be tackled in the other institution, weakening the existing institution, or even competing with the existing institution. (Hofmann, 2011, p. 105)².

Raustiala and Victor (2004) moreover introduce the notion of ‘strategic inconsistency’ to describe the phenomenon that actors willingly create rules that contradict existing ones in order to force change through competition. Therefore, overlap can be intended and in line with the interests of the actors that consciously created it. However, overlap can also come about by accident or as an unexpected consequence, for example

if it results from the expansion of an international institution to new regulatory terrain or from the desire to meet new regulatory demand without the intention to create ‘strategic inconsistency’ (Raustiala and Victor 2004: 301) (Gehring & Faude, 2014, p. 474).

Moreover, overlap can result from the so-called ‘spill-over effect’, when institutions are widened further than originally intended (Alter & Meunier, 2009). This already shows that there are different versions of overlap that might have different effects and consequences and require different measures in order to handle it.

Institutional overlap therefore can be understood as the intersection of two or more international institutions in membership, mandate and/or resources at a given point in time. After this section defined the concept of institutional overlap, the next sections turn to its effects, first on actors and then on institutions.

2.2.2. Effects of Overlap on Actor Behaviour

At the core of institutionalist theory are the effects and influence institutions have on actors, as “All international governance institutions are designed to influence the behaviour of relevant actors in order to achieve their objectives (Levy et al., 1995; Young, 1992)” (Gehring & Oberthür, 2009, p. 141). This also applies to the study of institutional overlap, as it of course is very much connected to the traditional institutionalist literature. While institutions are considered to mostly constrain actors’ behaviour and therefore make it more predictable,

² (Cf. also Alter & Meunier, 2009).

institutional overlap has the opposite effect. Drezner shows this based on the three mechanisms of diluting power, creating contradictory legal mandates that weaken actors' commitment and raising the transaction costs formerly reduced by institutions (Drezner, 2009, p. 66; cf. also Hofmann, 2011). This means that institutional overlap reverses the effects that institutions were created for in the first place by making actors' commitments more ambiguous and thus less binding. Therefore, overlap is often seen as harmful as it discredits agreements and can evoke competition (Gehring & Faude, 2014). Moreover, institutional overlap advantages more powerful states over small ones. Since "institutions can shift arenas of international relations from power-based outcomes to rule-based outcomes" (Drezner, 2009, p. 65), they constrain powerful states relatively more, as these cannot use their raw power in order to achieve their goals in an institution. However, the ambiguity created by the multitude of available institutions diminishes the influence of rules, as states can choose to adhere to the ones that serve them best, and therefore gives power more weight again (ibid.)³.

Moreover, overlap does not only reduce the effectiveness of institutionalisation, it also influences actors' behaviour in a different way than institutions themselves do (Gehring & Faude, 2014), as it alters the way in which multiple institutions affect actors' calculations. Scholars have accordingly paid a lot of attention to the responses actors give to overlap in order to manage it and get their most optimal outcome. First, the response the most referred to is 'forum shopping', which describes the possibility for actors that are members of more than one institution that cover roughly the same or related issue-areas to choose the one that suits their interest best (Alter & Meunier, 2006, 2009; Alter & Raustiala, 2018; Betts, 2013; Gehring & Faude, 2014; Rabitz, 2018; Raustiala & Victor, 2004). This way, actors can 'play off' institutions against each other, making politics even more complicated (Alter & Meunier, 2006, p. 365). Since there is usually no hierarchy between international institutions, as that is the essential characteristic of the international system, a contradicting commitment cannot

³ In addition, Alter and Meunier (2009) suggest that overlap might reduce the control of all actors over institutions, making non-state actors such as experts and non-governmental organisations more influential.

be overridden by another one, making forum shopping possible without actors having to fear sanctioning or prosecution.

Second and related to forum shopping is the concept of ‘strategic inconsistency’. Strategic inconsistency, as mentioned above, was coined by Raustiala and Victor (2004) and describes actors deliberately creating overlapping institutions (or regimes) in order to challenge the existing one. Similar to the consequences of forum shopping, this creates legal ambiguity and therefore hinders the sanctioning of defectors. The difference to forum shopping is therefore mostly that the conflicting institution has to be founded, while when it comes to forum shopping, this conflicting institution already exists as a precondition. However, actors may decide to create overlap to increase their forum shopping opportunities in the long-term (Gehring & Faude, 2014), which in the short-term would qualify as strategic inconsistency, showing the thin line between the two notions.

Third, Prado and Hoffmann (2017) coined the term ‘international institutional bypass’ as the establishment of a new institution, or the repurposing of another, pre-existing institution in order to make up for dysfunctions of an existing one. This is done without challenging the hegemonic position of the existing institution but being completely independent from its governance structures (ibid.). Nevertheless, the bypass works in the same normative setting as the existing institution and therefore does not, as forum shopping, create legal ambiguity (ibid.).

Fourth, ‘regime shifting’ describes the action of moving certain competences from one institution to another in order to change the established division of labour, and can be seen as a ‘mode’ of forum shopping (Alter & Raustiala, 2018, p. 13; Rabitz, 2018). Still, it describes a slightly different manoeuvre, as with forum shopping in general, all involved institutions concern themselves with a given topic and actors can choose which commitments to adhere to and where to invest resources. Therefore, forum shopping is temporary, while regime shifting is permanent (Betts, 2013). However, strategic inconsistency and regime shifting are used relatively rarely in comparison to forum shopping (Rabitz, 2018, p. 303). While all actors that are members of more than one institution can use forum shopping,

powerful states again have the advantage here as only they can control or manipulate disputes between conflicting institutions (Drezner, 2009).

Hofmann (2009) calls methods for navigating overlap ‘chessboard politics’ and explains ‘hostage taking’, ‘turf battling’ and ‘muddling through’. Hostage taking is mostly used by actors that are members to only one of the overlapping institutions. As they usually have veto powers, they can prevent their institution from changing so that it would benefit members of both or all institutions or from effectively cooperating with other overlapping institutions (ibid.). This can halt or delay policies and therefore can prevent the institution or its interaction with another one from functioning, but comes at the cost of losing reputation with the other members (Hofmann, 2018).

Turf battling describes the competitive action that takes place when actors seek to reserve an issue or issue-area for another institution than the one that had been dealing with it so far, therefore being close to strategic inconsistency (Hofmann, 2009). Actors will fight “over the geographic and functional scope of both organizations, and [...] over resource acquisition and access” (ibid., p. 47) and thus try to advance one institution over the other.

In contrast to that stands the tactic of muddling through, where actors try to forge some kind of cooperation or even division of labour between the two (or more) institutions (ibid.). Often, they use informal measures to reach their goal when formal ones are blocked by hostage takers (ibid.). This then comes close to what Hofmann later calls “brokering”, i.e. actors trying to establish a clear division of labour in order for both (or all) institutions to effectively fulfil their mandate, working contrary to hostage takers and turf-battlers (Hofmann, 2018). In order to achieve that, they use a variety of methods, including “(informally) providing resources, addressing legitimacy concerns, establishing comparative advantages of each IO, or providing issue-linkages and side-payments” (ibid, p. 5).

Finally, Hofmann lists one more method, namely ‘playing along’. While she does not really explain this method, it seems to be less of a tactic and more of a passive option that actors reserve to if they do not have the capacities to broker nor want the stigma that comes with hostage taking (ibid.).

This means that actors respond in many different ways to the challenges that institutional overlap poses for them. Which of these methods actors can and will use depends on their membership as well as their priorities (ibid.). If actors are part in only one institution, they have no possibility to forum shop or regime shift. While strategic inconsistency would be an option, it is also very costly and, as Rabitz noticed, barely ever used (Hofmann, 2018; Rabitz, 2018). Furthermore, for single members, as Hofmann (2018) calls them, it is much harder to broker, as they have no connection to other overlapping institutions. For the choice of method, it is also relevant why the actors are members in the institution, whether they prioritise the distributional effects or the community that the institution offers. Single members that value the community most are unlikely to reserve to hostage taking as that would hamper inner-institutional relations. Hence, they mostly reserve to brokering, if they have the capacities, or merely play along, while single members with distributional preference are likely to choose the unilateral option of hostage taking (ibid.). Actors that are parties to all involved institutions and have a distributional preference, on the contrary, will most likely use forum shopping in order to achieve the best outcome for themselves while disregarding consequences for the side-stepped institution (ibid.). Only members of all institutions that value the community over the distributional effects and are therefore committed to all IO's have a strong enough incentive to provide the resources that brokering requires (ibid.).

This shows that a constellation of overlap significantly alters the constraining effects of institutions. While these effects can sometimes be intended, they are often brought about unintentionally. Furthermore, where constellations of overlap occur, actors adapt their behaviour to manage within the structure of institutional overlap according to their preferences and priorities. Some of these methods are impactful and will lead to changes on the structural level, i.e. in the institution itself. For example, for turf-battling to be successful, actors will need to expand and/or shift the mandate of one institution in order to be more competitive, therefore altering the institution mid- to long-term. However, the literature on this topic has mostly disregarded this side of the phenomenon so far. Whereas effects on actor behaviour have been addressed as the top-down effects of institutional overlap, the impact

on institutions themselves – including bottom-up, through actors adjusting their strategies vis-à-vis the IO's – has not been explored. While some of the aforementioned strategies strive for institutional change, scholars nevertheless neglect the structural level of this issue. In the following subsection I therefore look at exactly this part of the issue and develop the notion of 'institutional interdependence'.

2.2.3. Effects of Overlap on International Organisations

While the effects of overlap on actors have been the topic of many studies in recent years and are therefore fairly well researched (see above), the effects of overlap on institutions are often disregarded, only briefly mentioned or analysed with the analytical restriction of seeing IO's as actors only (Betts, 2013; cf. also Gehring & Faude, 2014; Gehring & Oberthür, 2009; Hofmann, 2011). In this subchapter, I will therefore briefly outline the existing research on the effects of institutional overlap on IO's and then move on to develop my argument about institutional interdependence, which discusses the effects of overlap on IO's as structures.

Scholars acknowledge that overlap has effects on institutions, stating for example that "institutional overlap has important repercussions for both institutions and their member states" (Hofmann, 2009, p. 45) or claiming that "international regime complexity has a causal influence primarily by creating a political environment that alters the behavior and political salience of states, IOs, and sub-state actors" (Alter & Meunier, 2009, p. 21). However, while the effects on institutions are often mentioned or implied, as for example the notion of institutional bypass implies one institution being abandoned or ignored, or turf battling will lead to the alteration of at least one institution for it to be successful, scholars do not elaborate on them detail. While Betts adds that overlap can have positive as well as negative effects on IO's and that it "creates both opportunities and constraints for international organizations" (2013, p. 75), Hofmann gives a few more insights by introducing the notion of 'feedback effects', namely that "decisions in one institution can feed back, affecting decisions and behaviors in the other institution" (2009, p. 45).

Moreover, Hofmann shows how overlap can have different effects in different stages of institutional development. She focuses on how overlap affects the creation of new institutions, as they are not established in a vacuum, showing that NATO was used as a

template for the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) (Hofmann, 2011). She further elaborates on how it impacts what she calls the ‘development’ of institutions, however mainly looks at inter-institutional cooperation or the lack thereof (ibid). In her view, overlap can often impede cooperation by impacting actors’ behaviour and driving them towards unconstructive strategies (ibid.) Therefore, there is no direct influence of institutional overlap on the functioning of institutions. Nonetheless, the impact it has on actors in a second step influences institutions, their functioning and their interaction with other institutions (ibid.; Hofmann, 2018). Gehring and Oberthür (2009) stress this point as well, calling for a well-found connection between the micro and the macro level. This is also shown in Hofmann’s latest contribution (2018), in which she analyses the effects of overlap on how institutions fulfil their mandate, attributing all of it to the above-mentioned strategies that actors reserve to in an environment of institutional overlap. Still, she applies this idea to interaction between institutions only, which is impacted by the response strategies of actors. She does so by showing that NATO and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP, now CSDP) failed to find a division of labour due to turf battling strategies of their members that led them towards competition and more overlap (ibid.). Betts (2013) on the other hand implies that international regimes are a ‘stepping stone’ and that effects on them translate to the level of IO’s since they are overseeing regimes and accordingly are strongly related to each other.

In addition, Hofmann (2018) claims that overlap has effectively hampered cooperation between these two organisations due to competition between them and hostage taking strategies of their members. While she sees competition as an exclusively negative status causing an unnecessary doubling of structures and a waste of resources (ibid.), Alter and Meunier (2009) show that it can also be perceived positively as competition has the ability to increase resources, spread risks, allow for experimentation and provide possibilities to prevent deadlock within one institution.

Gehring and Faude (2014) further conclude that functional overlap, as well as already its anticipation, will lead to competition between institutions. They moreover suggest that overlap can lead to some form of division of labour, with no clear partitioning but rather leading to institutions covering niche issues within the overlapping issue-area, calling it a

‘functional’ division of labour (ibid.). While Betts (2013) acknowledges the potential for competition, too, he also sees an opportunity in complementary overlaps for partnerships between IO’s, which would lead to more efficient functioning. As Hofmann (2018) disputes that overlap always leads to either a division of labour, integration, fragmentation, or competition, calling for a more dynamic understanding of it, the actual consequences of overlap for institutional interaction remain unclear. Furthermore, scholars do not discuss how the use of the aforementioned response strategies could affect IO’s as such, not just their interaction, which means they treat IO’s exclusively as actors, not as structures. Regarding the rising number of institutions (see above), I argue that it is vital for scholars of the field to examine the effects that overlap has on them as structures, as only then institutions and their role in the international system can be fully understood.

Gehring, together with his co-authors Oberthür and Faude, elaborates on the concept of institutional interaction (Gehring & Faude, 2014; Gehring & Oberthür, 2009), defining it as “one institution (the source institution) affects the development or performance of another institution (the target institution)” (Gehring & Oberthür, 2009, p. 127). While this approach also treats institutions as actors that can interact, it nevertheless comes the closest to the ideas presented in this thesis. Gehring and Oberthür distinguish between four ideal types of interaction, namely ‘cognitive interaction’, ‘interaction through commitment’, ‘behavioural interaction’ and ‘impact-level interaction’, depending on whether interaction happens at the output, outcome or impact level and whether it affects the target institution’s normative development or its performance (ibid.). Cognitive interaction is mostly a one-sided process that describes the learning from best practices or the asking for advice, therefore only affecting the target institution, and does not require any overlap, as for example administrative structures could be copied although the institutions do not share either members, mandate or resources (ibid.). However, for an institution to ask another one for advice, mandate overlap is a precondition. Interaction through commitment on the contrary requires functional overlap, i.e. overlap in the membership and the mandate dimension, as it describes the process of one institution creating commitments for double members that then affect their decision-making in the related institution (ibid.). For behavioural interaction, the

source institution needs to produce an output that changes its actors' behaviour so that it affects the target institution. Accordingly, it requires sufficient membership overlap, and while the mandates do not have to overlap as such, the issues covered by the two institutions need to be closely related for the behaviour according to one goal to impact the achievement of the other one (ibid.). Lastly, impact-level interaction is the process of reaching the target of one institution affecting the goal of the other institution, most likely negatively (ibid.). This again requires some relation between the two mandates, but not necessarily overlap in membership (ibid.). A powerful institution then can be identified by "its ability to retain, or expand, its capability to pursue its policies within the area of functional overlap" (Gehring & Faude, 2014, p. 479), meaning it does not have to adapt its mandate or functioning depending on other, overlapping institutions. Therefore, Gehring and Oberthür show how different types of overlap can have different effects on institutional interaction; in other words, they show that overlap does not only affect actor behaviour but also institutions as actors. This means that it is not merely overlap as such, but also the type of overlap that matters when analysing its effects on institutions.

When it comes to the question of which dimension of overlap affects institutions how, Gehring and Faude (2014, p. 475) develop this idea further by stating that only functional overlap has a substantial impact on institutions, since institutions without membership overlap have no connection to one another and are unlikely to influence each other if they deal with unrelated issues. Alter and Meunier (2009, p. 21) however contradict this thesis by highlighting the argument that overlap effects are not always brought about intentionally, but that "International regime complexity increases the chances of unintentional reverberations—changes in one institution having effects in parallel domains". As they classify 'parallel regimes' as those that have no overlap (ibid.), this means that they also see effects in parallel institutions, simply due to the sheer number of them. Thus, it remains unclear what kind of overlap is needed for overlap to affect institutions.

Moreover, Betts (2013) suggests that IO's can, similarly to actors, manage overlap for it to suit their interests using different strategies. This, however, requires for IO's to have agency, as only then they can be attributed a behaviour separate from that of their members.

Accordingly, they can adapt their behaviour to an environment of institutional overlap. As this thesis is based on the RCI approach, member states are seen as the main actors and IO's as structures that can only acquire very limited agency as agents, created by states. Change is therefore brought about by actors on both the unit and the structural level, as they have the ability to adjust the IO when it comes to membership, mandate and resources. In an environment that is characterised by the plurality of institutions, actors need to make sure these still serve their interests. While there is some literature on how actors' strategies can impact the relation between institutions, responses are also likely to change the institutional structure as such. Turf battling and strategic inconsistency for example are likely to impact the institutions' mandate and/or available resources, as actors try to reform their preferred institution for it to become more competitive. Or, on the contrary, actors might want to avoid the waste of resources due to two or more IO's fulfilling the same tasks, therefore limiting the available assets or finding sharing mechanisms. Furthermore, if actors made good experiences working together with others in one institution, they might be more inclined to let them access another one. There are multiple similar scenarios imaginable where actors are likely to alter any one of the three dimensions of an IO due to overlap. Therefore, those indirect effects of overlap will be the focus of this thesis.

As we can see, most scholars focus on the interaction of institutions as active management of overlap, e.g. cooperation between the EU and NATO, or on how the impacted behaviour of actors can affect the functioning of an institution. This is still a very actor-centred approach that focuses on temporary and often even informal outcomes and does not look at how overlap may affect institutions in their substance, i.e. their setup, membership, mandate, or resources. This thesis aims at establishing a notion that explains the structural effects of institutional overlap on overlapping IO's in the long-term, i.e. effects that change the structure itself by impacting one of the three dimensions of membership, mandate or resources. Since institutions are often 'sticky' (see above), formal change is difficult to reverse once it has been agreed upon, therefore changes in these dimensions are likely to be mid- to long-term. As we have seen, when institutions overlap, they (as agents) are unlikely to be unaffected by this, but rather to either feel threatened in their authority over an issue

and therefore start to compete. Accordingly, they either create more overlap or specialise in a niche area to not become redundant, or they seek some kind of division of labour in order to use their resources most efficiently. However, these are temporary strategies that, similarly to the actors' strategy and often related to it, affect the interaction of IO's but not necessarily the IO's themselves. Hofmann (2011) only acknowledges a more structural dynamic for the creation of new organisations or regimes, stating that they are often created according to a template, i.e. an existing institution, and that their mandate scope depends on the existing IO's as well. However, if institutions do not perform their functions anymore, as for example the reduction of transaction costs, i.e. they lose their utility, actors will either abandon them as they do not profit anymore or modify them in order to increase their gains again.

Therefore, since IO's are the structures in which a given set of actors tries to realise their interests, institutions become *dependent* on developments in other, overlapping ones. Changes in their setup can often be seen as consequences of changes in other IO's. This dependence is likely to increase as the level of overlap increases and the more dimensions are overlapping. Furthermore, while more powerful institutions are expected to be less affected by overlap (Gehring & Faude, 2014), it is unlikely that they can insulate themselves from developments in other, overlapping organisations. Therefore, institutional overlap can create *interdependence* between institution, i.e. the institutional setup of one IO will be changed due to change in another, overlapping one, without there being one source-only and one target-only institution but with the potential for them to switch roles (Gehring & Oberthür, 2009). For example, the mandate of an institution might be expanded to cover that of one with considerable membership overlap, if the latter is perceived to not effectively serve its members' interest anymore. Or, if the members can agree on cooperation, one institution's resources might be expanded to include those of another one, as e.g. seen with the Berlin Plus arrangements. I will call this phenomenon 'institutional interdependence'. Therefore, my hypothesis is that under conditions of institutional overlap, change in one institution will lead to change in the other, overlapping one.

3. Research Design

Institutional interdependence will be best researched using the method of process tracing, analysing the single case of EU-NATO overlap with three in-case observations. I use process tracing because it shows not only an interrelation of two variables, but also focuses on the mechanism behind that causal relation (Crasnow, 2017). In this case, institutional interdependence is the mechanism that leads to institutional change. In order to demonstrate the analytical utility of the concept of institutional interdependence, I need to not only show its existence empirically but also to illuminate how it functions, thus to look at the mechanism of it. Process tracing, accordingly, is important for demonstrating interdependence because it allows to trace the causal mechanism that has triggered change, here (perceived) change in NATO. As Checkel (2014) summarises how process tracing has advanced our understanding of how IO's function and impact states, it is appropriate to apply it to organisations' influences on each other as well. Process tracing furthermore highlights the importance of developments over time, which is what will show the effects of different levels of overlap. The purpose of this empirical study is the preliminary illustration (cf. Odell, 2001, p. 163) of my argument in order to make the mechanism clearer and to run a first test on my hypothesis. Scholars moreover stress the importance of eliminating alternative explanations that would end in the same result in order to ensure the credibility of one's argument (Checkel, 2014; Collier, 2011). In addition to testing my hypothesis on the effects of institutional overlap, I will therefore also control for the possibility of internal or external developments or events that could be an alternative cause for change in the target institution. However, my claim here is that institutional interdependence does influence the structure and design of IO's and therefore impacts their long-term development, but not that it is the only decisive factor. Thus, the elimination of other explanations is not necessary, as they might play a role alongside with institutional interdependence.

I will analyse the effects of institutional interdependence using the case of NATO and EU military cooperation. The overlap between them is a compelling case study since they are the two regional organisations with the highest membership overlap of all IO's, hence they make for a most insightful case for researching the structural effects of institutional overlap,

because overlap is the precondition for interdependence. Whereas in principle, the dynamics of institutional *inter*dependence run both ways, I focus on changes in the EU because here, I am interested in the development of EU military cooperation. Additionally, as Gehring and Faude (2014) explain, more powerful institutions are less likely to be impacted by institutional overlap. As NATO is the more powerful IO when it comes to defence, it is to assume that there are less institutional changes in NATO that can be clearly attributed to the effects of overlap than within the EU. Accordingly, EU military cooperation is here treated as the target and NATO as the source institution. In the following, the study will thus show how institutional overlap between NATO and the EU has affected military cooperation within the EU. This however does not mean that NATO is not impacted by institutional overlap. As Hofmann (2009) for example shows, NATO moved into crisis management at least partly due to competition with the ESDP. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this thesis, I will limit my research to the impact on EU military cooperation, leaving the other side to future studies. Moreover, I selected three different within-case observations that constitute substantial changes in EU military cooperation, namely the founding of the ESDP, the signing of the Lisbon Treaty and the founding of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PeSCo). I will first establish whether there were any (perceived) changes in NATO, and if so, then what kind of changes. Subsequently, I will go on to track whether there is a connection between those and the changes in EU military cooperation, i.e. whether it was the changes in NATO that caused member states to initiate change in the EU. While I present my findings in a chronological manner, I nevertheless use backward-looking process tracing (Crasnow, 2017) as I chose the in-case observations according to when change happened in the target institution.

I focus on the time after the end of the Cold War, as the EU only then widened its scope to include security policy (Duke, 1996; Hofmann, 2011), which created mandate overlap and therefore functional overlap with NATO.

According to this, I will take the structure from my hypothesis “under conditions of institutional overlap, change in one institution will lead to change in the other, overlapping one”. Thus, (perceived) change in NATO, as seen by EU members that are also NATO

members, will be the independent variable and change in the EU security dimension the dependent variable, while overlap as the prerequisite for institutional interdependence is the conditional variable.

Overlap as the conditional variable will be measured on an ordinal three-point scale ranging from low over medium to high, depending on the level of overlap in the three dimensions defined by Hofmann (2009, see also chapter 2.2.1), namely membership, resources and mandate. Overlap in each of these dimensions will be measured on a scale ranging from zero to five, with an accumulated score of 15 describing almost total overlap in all dimensions. Accordingly, low overlap ranges from the accumulative score of zero to five, requiring overlap in only one dimension; medium overlap ranges from six to ten, requiring overlap in at least two dimensions, and high overlap ranges from 11 to 15, requiring overlap in all three dimensions.

The most straight-forward dimension to measure is membership overlap, as the numbers are clear and not subject to interpretation. Therefore, the percentage of shared members will simply be transferred into a five-point scale (1-20%= 1, 21-40%= 2, 41-60%= 3, 61-80%= 4, 81-100%= 5). Important to stress here is that both institutions need to show these percentages. This means that while all EU member states are also members of the UN, constituting a membership overlap of 100%, from the UN perspective they are only 28 out of 193 members, constituting a membership overlap of merely 14.5 %. Therefore, both sides need to be considered, as otherwise the impact of overlap might be vastly misjudged. Although I treat NATO exclusively as the source and the EU as the target institution, both perspectives matter as for example a target institution seems more likely to take over tasks of a source IO if they can actually fill in the latter, which is easier if there is no considerable membership gap. Furthermore, I will only consider full members with all available voting rights, not for example candidate states to the EU or members of NATO's Partnership for Peace-programme (PfP), as they do not have the necessary leverage over the institutions to enforce institutional change. This means that I will also disregard Denmark as an EU

member, since it has an opt-out for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (European Union, n.d.-b) and therefore is not part of the overlapping issue area⁴.

To measure overlap in resources is more complicated, as it first requires defining what counts as the institution's resources. Hofmann proposes the following: "Common resources are assets and capabilities that are owned by all member states commonly instead of resources that are brought to the institution by member states. As such, they cannot be captured through the membership dimension" (2009, p. 49, n. 6). This, however, is a very narrow definition, especially since both institutions at hand rely mostly on national resources, and the lines between the two are often rather fluid. Therefore, I conclude that all resources that are at an IO's disposal are to be included in the measure of resource overlap. As the national contributions are essential for the functioning of both institutions, they should be taken into consideration. Moreover, they bear a lot of potential for competition, as states often have to decide whether to contribute e.g. their troops to one institution or the other. However, national resources cannot be fully considered as belonging to the institutions either, as member state commitment varies from operation to operation and members never provide all their assets. Accordingly, a resource overlap that is solely due to membership overlap and does not touch upon common resources will be attributed a score of one. A score of two will be ascribed when there is cooperation between the two institutions that does not amount to the sharing of resources but merely avoids the doubling of them, e.g. command structures in an operation or an effective division of labour. If one institution provides the other one with formal access to their resources, but there is little or no use of that agreement, the resource overlap score will be three. If there is restricted access as well as its occasional use, the score will be four. A score of five will be ascribed when the institutions have unlimited access to the same resources and use those frequently. While this constitutes a rather abstract approach to the dimension of research overlap, it makes it possible to take all, also indirect and irregular contributions into consideration and furthermore makes the scale transferable to other cases of institutional overlap.

⁴ In the following, I will refer to EU member states meaning CFSP members, i.e. excluding Denmark.

Overlap in mandate is probably the most complex dimension to measure and requires a qualitative approach to assess similar tasks, competences and capabilities, as well as a rather abstract approach, too. Therefore, a score of one in mandate overlap will describe both institutions either being concerned with the same region or the same policy field, a score of two when both these factors are true. If both organisations have the formal mandate to fulfil the same task, they will be attributed a mandate overlap score of three and if they both have the capabilities to fulfil those tasks a score of four. A score of five will be ascribed to institutions that actually perform the same tasks and can therefore be seen as interchangeable. This approach allows me to differentiate between marginal/theoretical and actual overlap in this dimension, while still simplifying it in order to make it easily comparable over time and with other cases in possible future research.

As I apply rational choice institutionalism in this study, I define ‘change’ as change in utility of the organisation, as only then it is relevant and can have an effect on the cost-benefit calculations of actors and, in a second step, on other, overlapping institutions. The variable change is measured along two dimensions – perceived and formal change. Formal change will be any increase or decrease in one of the three dimensions introduced by Hofmann that were formally decided upon and are therefore traceable in the institutions’ records. Perceived change here means perceived by members of the target institution, as only then it can have consequences for that IO. Perceived change will thus have to be measured using content analysis and is not part of the dependent variable (change in the target institution). While it is possible that members react to perceived change in the source institution, the reaction within the target institution needs to be formal institutional change for institutional interdependence to have real effects. On the contrary, formal change is assumed to also be perceived as such.

For my data, I will use different sources in order to assess the level of overlap as well as formal and perceived change. I will use official sources from the IO’s to measure their scores in overlap for membership, official mandate and resources as well as formal change. Their documents and records are accessible, reliable and do not pose a language barrier. I will furthermore use speeches and statements from European leaders whenever possible,

including leading politicians from member states as well as from the Union itself (Commissioners and the Commission president, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and the President of the European Council) that were made in direct or indirect connection to the source institution in the process leading up to formal change in the target institution to show perceived change. Furthermore, I will only include statements from the biggest and thus most influential members of the EU, namely France, Germany, and the UK, to guarantee significance and to avoid language barriers as well as an excessive amount of data. In addition, I will use accessible secondary sources as relevant newspaper articles that reflect perceptions of European leaders as well as scholarly articles on NATO and the EU and the transatlantic partnership in general. This will allow me to assess both perceived change from the European perspective and formal change as well as the institutions capabilities to fulfil their mandate, which might be depicted distortedly in the self-presentation of the IO's. Moreover, I will use all these sources on the formal changes at hand in order to check for alternative explanations as for example external factors.

In the following chapter, I will apply these methods to the case of NATO and EU military cooperation in order to illustrate the concept of institutional interdependence.

4. Interdependence of NATO and EU and the development of EU Military Cooperation in the post-Cold War period

In this empirical chapter, the analytical utility of the concept of institutional interdependence will be illustrated using the case of NATO and EU military cooperation since the end of the Cold War. The three subchapters deal with three different within-case observations that all resulted in major changes in EU military cooperation, namely the founding of the ESDP in 1999, the signing of the Lisbon Treaty in 2007 and the founding of PeSCo in 2017. Each observation will be analysed in three steps: first, the overlap score between NATO and the EU before change in the EU happened will be established, then, change in NATO that preceded change in the EU will be presented. Lastly, change in the EU as well as its motivations for the changes will be examined in order to demonstrate the plausibility of institutional interdependence being at play. While there are several factors that induced change in EU military cooperation in each observation, the state of NATO and the transatlantic relations are found to have had a significant impact in all of them. By demonstrating the presence of this linkage, even alongside other factors such as crises and wars in the extended neighbourhood or inner events like Brexit, and without prejudice of the relative importance of the linkage, this chapter demonstrates the plausibility of the conceptual argument and the analytical utility of thinking about institutional interdependence.

4.1. The Founding of the ESDP in 1999

The first major step towards military cooperation within the EU was the creation of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) at the Cologne Council in 1999. With the ESDP, member states agreed to back their commitment to the Petersberg tasks with credible forces and resources. In addition, the founding of ESDP brought with it several institutional changes, most notably the new position of the High Representative of CFSP, firstly filled by Javier Solana, the establishment of the Political and Security Committee (PSC) as well as the European Military Committee and European Military Staff.

In the following, I will first establish the overlap score between the two institutions and then go on to outline changes in NATO. Finally, I will summarise changes in the EU and discuss

the motivation behind them, leading to the conclusion that many of them were a reaction to a perceived utility decrease in NATO.

4.1.1. Degree of Overlap before the Founding of the ESDP

In this section, I will discuss the degree of institutional overlap according to the three dimensions before the EU decided upon the founding of the ESDP and calculate the cumulated overlap score for NATO and the EU in the late 1990's.

Before the founding of the ESDP, the EU had 14 member states as of 1995 out of which 11 were also full NATO members (European Union, n.d.-a; NATO, 2018), constituting a membership overlap of 78,57%. There was a slightly lower membership overlap from NATO's side, with 11 out of 16 members being member states in the EU, amounting to an overlap of 68,75%. This was further accelerated by the accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to NATO in 1999, reducing the membership overlap from NATO's perspective to under 60% just before the ESDP was decided upon. Plus, while the EU but non-NATO members are all rather small countries (Austria, Finland, Ireland, Sweden), the NATO but non-EU members (Canada, Iceland, Norway, Turkey, USA) have potentially much more weight over their organisation, especially the US. As a consequence, one would expect that NATO was less impacted by EU decisions than the EU by NATO developments, while the EU had a more receptive connection to NATO due to a higher membership overlap. However, overlap was considerably high on both sides as EU members made up the majority of NATO member states, resulting in an extensive connection between both organisations. With the membership overlap as seen from the EU side being well within the 60-80% interval, and membership overlap from the NATO perspective reaching a similar percentage, the two IO's will be ascribed a membership overlap score of four as the first component of the overall overlap score for the period before the founding of the ESDP.

When it comes to resources, there was barely any overlap between the EU and NATO before the founding of the ESDP. While the EU had a CFSP budget, it was rather marginal, with only five per cent of the total EU budget in 1998 going to 'External action', including CFSP (Karlsson et al., 1999). This means that it exclusively relied on indirect contributions from its member states, as "expenditure arising from operations having military or defense

implications” were to be “charged to the Member States” (Maganza, 1999, p. 179). But in fact, the CFSP budget had hardly any use for direct contributions, as the EU did not engage in any missions or operations yet (European Union External Action Service, 2019). Moreover, while the Berlin Arrangement between NATO and the Western European Union (WEU) was in place from 1996 until 2003 (Haine, 2004a), the WEU cannot be characterised as belonging to or falling under the EU, since it was not incorporated into it (Maganza, 1999) and since the WEU also worked in close cooperation with NATO, due to the fact that all its members were also NATO members (Duke, 1996; Declaration on Western European Union in Treaty on European Union (“Maastricht Treaty”), 1992). In addition, as the EU did not engage in any actual operations or missions at this point but merely strove for the coordination of its member states’ foreign policies (Bulut et al., 2009; European Union External Action Service, 2019), there could not have been any meaningful cooperation between NATO and EU in order to save resources. Neither was there any resource overlap due to membership overlap, because while the member states were largely overlapping, the EU’s security policy was not yet at a stage that would have required indirect contributions. Therefore, NATO and the EU will be ascribed a resource overlap score of zero for the period right before the founding of the ESDP.

When it comes to mandate, overlap was similarly low between NATO and the EU before 1999. However, both IO’s have always been concerned with the same region, namely Europe and its neighbourhood (Duke, 1996). In addition, with the Maastricht Treaty, the EU widened its scope to include some, even though very limited, competences concerning foreign and security policy, by establishing the CFSP as the second pillar (Maganza, 1999). With the Amsterdam Treaty, the so-called Petersberg tasks, “a range of tasks from non-combat peacekeeping, to humanitarian and rescue missions, to combat-capable crisis-management operations or peacemaking/peace-enforcing” (Cornish & Edwards, 2001, p. 589; see also Petersberg Declaration II (4) and Treaty of Amsterdam art. J.7.2) were incorporated into the mandate of the Union (Cornish & Edwards, 2001; cf. also Maganza, 1999). Therefore, the EU has also become concerned with crisis management, thus overlapping with NATO’s mandate which, as a military alliance, has always been focused on defence and security. In

addition, NATO also expanded its mandate to include peacekeeping by establishing the PffP in 1994 (Wallander, 2000). Thus, while the EU was not at a point to take on tasks such as crisis management outside its territories, the policy field and the general tasks striven for were nevertheless the same. Accordingly, the EU and NATO will be attributed a mandate overlap score of 2.5 for the period right before the establishment of the ESDP, as the formal mandate for some of their tasks was the same.

This means that overlap between the EU and NATO before the founding of the ESDP was medium, as the three dimension-scores accumulate to a total score of 6.5 out of 15. While overlap in membership was considerably high, it was non-existent in the resource dimension and medium in mandate. However, the high overlap in membership, arguably the most important dimension of overlap, implies that there were feedback effects nonetheless. Consequently, with the condition of overlap being fulfilled, we can expect that one IO is receptive to change in the other. In order to show this, I will look at (perceived) change in NATO and the subsequent developments in EU military cooperation in the following sections.

4.1.2. Change in NATO before the Founding of the ESDP

In the decade after the end of the Cold War, NATO saw a lot of changes happening to it. With the disappearance of the main threat to the alliance and NATO's *raison d'être*, its focus needed to be shifted in order not to become redundant and break apart, as many predicted (Wallander, 2000). NATO persisted partly due to its high institutionalisation, most notably its integrated civilian and military staff, as well as its experience with inter-alliance crises and its important tasks besides deterrence, e.g. keeping the peace between its members by providing the US as an outside (i.e. non-European) power and a security guarantor (ibid.). However, NATO also changed its conception of risks as put out in "the Alliance's New Strategic Concept" (North Atlantic Council, 1991):

Risks to Allied security are less likely to result from calculated aggression against the territory of the Allies, but rather from the adverse consequences of instabilities that may arise from the serious economic, social and political difficulties, including ethnic rivalries and territorial disputes, which are faced by many countries in central and eastern Europe. The tensions which may result, as long as they remain limited, should not directly threaten the security and territorial

integrity of members of the Alliance. They could, however, lead to crises inimical to European stability and even to armed conflicts, which could involve outside powers or spill over into NATO countries, having a direct effect on the security of the Alliance.

Therefore, NATO's focus was shifted from Article 5 to Article 4, meaning the alliance concentrated on peace-keeping missions (Wallander, 2000), since the "threat of a simultaneous, full-scale attack on all of NATO's European fronts has effectively been removed and thus no longer provides the focus for Allied strategy" (North Atlantic Council, 1991). In order for that change to happen, the PfP was established. This partnership allowed past adversary countries to take on a secondary membership position. It included the sharing of certain intelligence information, military planning and joint exercises, and built the framework for NATO's peacekeeping missions (Wallander, 2000). While the commitment of full members to Article 5 was still there, its declining importance can be seen in the reduction of forces during the 1990's:

The United States reduced its forward presence in Europe from 325,000 to 100,000 troops, and the European members cut their forces by more than 500,000 troops. By 1999, NATO land, sea, and air units had been reduced by 30-40 percent, with only 35-60 percent kept at a thirty-day readiness level (compared with 70-90 percent kept at a minimum of two days' readiness in 1990). In 1991, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to eliminate ground-based theater nuclear forces, and NATO reduced its deployed theater nuclear forces by 80 percent (*ibid.*, p. 718).

This shows a dramatic decrease of defence capabilities within Europe, as the "political division of Europe that was the source of the military confrontation of the Cold War period has [...] been overcome" (North Atlantic Council, 1991), making it possible for NATO to develop its Immediate and Rapid Reaction Forces and Augmentation Forces instead of its positional defence (Wallander, 2000).

Another question is that of perceived utility within NATO. As its formal change of focus goes hand in hand with the threat perception, its utility needs to be assessed considering the new goals as spelled out in the strategic concept from 1991. Although the PfP was founded exactly for the reason to tackle new challenges, the US's commitment to these tasks seemed questionable, as its security focus noticeably shifted:

Europe is currently focused on regional threats to security, while the United States is working to develop a system to protect against the threat of ballistic missiles carrying weapons of mass destruction from nations such as North Korea, Iran, and Iraq (*Gunning Jr., 2001, p. 3, cf. also p. 16*).

This can also be seen in the National Security Strategies of that time (The White House, 1996, 1998), especially in comparison with earlier ones (cf. e.g. The White House, 1991), as well as in other scholarly articles (cf. for example de Wijk, 2004, p. 72; Howorth, 2009, p. 101; *NATO's Purpose After the Cold War*, 2001, p. 9 f.). One consequence of this was that the US abandoned NATO's first ever military operation in 1994 – the maritime enforcement of the United Nations weapons embargo imposed on the former Yugoslavia (*NATO's Purpose After the Cold War*, 2001, p. 10). This meant that Europeans could not depend as much on the US as before.

Furthermore, many US political leaders expressed their disappointment about Europe's lack of self-sufficiency and the resulting dependency on US resources, trying to tie further US-American support to an increase of European capabilities (Duke, 2001, p. 171). This also marked a decrease in utility of NATO for EU members, as:

From a European perspective, the United States has continually asked the Europeans to contribute a greater share to support the defense burden while sending ambiguous signals about America's commitment to crisis reaction (*Gunning Jr., 2001, p. 6, cf. also p. 13*).

If EU allies could not count on protection by the US, the critical actor (Rabitz, 2018) of NATO anymore, the utility of the alliance for them definitely decreased.

Moreover, the US were unlikely to perceive their European allies as equal partners, even if they adhered to US demands concerning burden sharing, since the US would always be better equipped for high-end military operations, which they perceive as superior (*Gunning Jr., 2001, p. 21*).

To sum up, there was a substantial reorientation in tasks in NATO after the end of the Cold War that prioritised crisis management outside the alliance's territory over territorial defence. While this reorientation was made in order to preserve NATO's utility in the new security environment, its utility nevertheless decreased for its EU members as the commitment of the

critical actor, the US, became questionable and their impact on decision-making did not mirror their contribution to the alliance.

4.1.3. Change in the EU: The Founding of the ESDP

The period after the end of the Cold War brought about major institutional changes in the security cooperation of the EU. The ESDP was launched at the Cologne Council in 1999 (Bulut et al., 2009; cf. also European Parliament, 1999, Annex III), building on previous developments like the Maastricht Treaty, in which the CFSP was founded, the Amsterdam Treaty and the St. Malo Conference. In the Cologne Council declaration (European Parliament, 1999, annex III, par. 1), it is stated that in order for the Union to

play its full role on the international stage [...] the Council should have the ability to take decisions on the full range of conflict prevention and crisis management tasks defined in the Treaty on European Union, the "Petersberg tasks". To this end, the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises without prejudice to actions by NATO.

With the relation to the St. Malo Declaration becoming obvious due to the same wording being used, this shows much more ambition for actual military cooperation and EU operations than the overarching CFSP did, therefore marking a huge step for the EU in this department. Even more importantly, the founding of the ESDP brought with it several institutional changes, most notably the new position of the High Representative of CFSP, firstly filled by Javier Solana, the establishment of the Political and Security Committee (PSC) as well as the European Military Committee and European Military Staff, all of which were finalised at the Nice Summit in 2000 (Haine, 2004b). In addition, at the Helsinki summit in 1999, the member states agreed upon the so-called "Helsinki Headline Goals", which called for the ability to deploy up to 60.000 troops within at least 60 days and to sustain that presence for at least a year in order to be capable of fulfilling all Petersberg tasks (ibid.). The ESDP was then declared operational at the Council meeting in Laeken in 2001 (ibid.), with the Presidency Conclusion stating that "the Union is now capable of conducting some crisis-management operations" (cited in Barnier, 2002 par. 23), leading to the first ESDP operation in 2003 (Bulut et al., 2009). This means that the ESDP was the first step towards building the

infrastructure for hard security within the EU, although the necessary capabilities were developed later on. Therefore, the founding of the ESDP marks a major change in mandate for the EU. However, defence itself, although featured in the name of the programme, has been largely left to NATO (Duke, 2018; Haine, 2004b).

Indeed, the complementarity to NATO has been stressed, as e.g. in the above standing quote. Thus, both the declaration and the attached Presidency Report refer to the previous NATO Washington summit, acknowledging that NATO welcomed a stronger EU military cooperation since it would be beneficial for NATO as well. This again shows not only the close connection between the two institutions but also a perceived superiority of NATO, whose consent seems to be essential in order for EU military cooperation to proceed.

There were several possible reasons for EU members to strengthen their military cooperation in the late 1990's. Firstly, EU members wanted to make up for the decreased utility of NATO, as the US, the critical actor in the alliance, had shifted the focus of their security policy and seemingly imposed conditions on their continued commitment, namely larger burden sharing, while still dominating the decision-making process within NATO. Although the ESDP was not at all capable or even intended to ensure defence in a narrow sense (Duke, 2001, p. 157), i.e. to replace NATO, the founding of the ESDP can be seen as a response to these problems with NATO as perceived by its EU members (see above), therefore being a case of institutional interdependence.

Secondly, an alternative explanation for the creation of EU security cooperation could be that EU members wanted to increase cooperation in order to increase their capabilities, as was expected from them by the US. However, if European states merely wanted to satisfy the US so that they would keep their defence guarantees, there was no need to increase their capabilities within the framework of the EU. In fact, a similar development within the NATO framework would probably have served the goal of pleasing the US much more, as they showed discomfort with the EU striving towards autonomy. This can for example be seen in then-Secretary of State Madelaine Albright's Financial Times article (1998):

As Europeans look at the best way to organise their foreign and security policy co-operation, the key is to make sure that any institutional change is consistent

with basic principles that have served the Atlantic partnership well for 50 years. This means avoiding what I would call the Three Ds: decoupling, duplication and discrimination.

As Albright repeated the “three D’s” at a press conference in the NATO headquarters a day later, they were perceived by some as a warning for Europe not to become too autonomous (Hofmann, 2009, 2011). Here, one can see that while Albright did support the enhancement of European military capabilities, the US did not want to lose their influence over exactly that. Similarly, even after the launch of the ESDP, then-Secretary of State Rumsfeld perceived it as a threat to NATO (Gunning Jr., 2001, p. 12). Gunning further states that “There is a great reluctance to surrender the dominant voice of NATO (read the United States) in European security issues” (ibid., p. 14). Therefore, a similar development but within the framework of the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI), which was a NATO initiative, would have been the more effective option for pleasing the US. In addition, the only reason for wanting to please the US in the first place would have been to prevent reduced commitment on their part, which shows that the utility of NATO was indeed in question. This thinking can be seen in then-Prime Minister Tony Blair’s statement in the speech he gave at NATO’s 50th anniversary: “To retain US engagement in Europe, it is important that Europe does more for itself” (Blair, 1999). Therefore, the founding of the ESDP cannot be the result of the wish to adhere to US demands alone but reflects the decrease in perceived utility of NATO, which is why EU members decided to move their capability development outside of NATO.

Thirdly, there are the lessons from the Balkan wars. As the crisis showed many shortcomings in European crisis response (de Wijk, 2004, p. 72; Gunning Jr., 2001, p. vii, 4), it is likely to have spurred the wish for more abilities to handle similar conflicts in the future and to keep them from spreading to West Europe. Whitman, for example, notes that the Balkan conflicts changed the mind of the British so that they did no longer block European military integration (Whitman, 2004, p. 436). This of course went together with the US expecting more from Europe and EU member states striving for more independence, but nevertheless this external event made clear how fragile Europe’s neighbourhood was and stressed the need for crisis management capabilities.

Fourthly, the ESDP might have been the logical next step in the ongoing integration process. The ESDP developed from previous decisions, like the creation of the CFSP and the incorporation of the Petersberg tasks into the treaties. The question remains why the ESDP happened when it happened. Gunning explains this with the changed attitude of Britain in 1998, which he traces back to doubts about US willingness to engage in peace keeping operations in Europe (Gunning Jr., 2001, p. 6, cf. also Howorth, 2000, p. 34). This fits with another statement by Tony Blair (1999) in his speech at NATO's 50th anniversary, where he said that:

We Europeans should not expect the United States to have to play a part in every disorder in our own back yard. The European Union should be able to take on some security tasks on our own, and we will do better through a common European effort than we can by individual countries acting on their own.

In addition, then-UK Defence Secretary George Robertson expressed about the St. Malo declaration that it may lead to less dependence on US military support, implying that that was desirable ("Anglo-French military pact," 1998). Therefore, even if the ESDP was the next logical step to further integration (Gunning Jr., 2001, p. 1), it was only possible due to the British change of mind, which was induced by the (perceived) reduced commitment of the US towards NATO, i.e. the reduced utility of the alliance.

To sum up, there were several factors that led EU member states to introduce institutionalised change in their military cooperation in 1999 and the following years, widening the EU's mandate. While the Kosovo crisis definitely had its impact, all other explanations are connected to reduced security commitment from the US and therefore to decreased utility of the alliance for all European partners. Although the ESDP was never intended to replace NATO, as feared by some US-Americans, it was nevertheless created to fulfil critical security tasks for its member states at the time, which used to be NATO's sole competence and could have (and partially has) been realised within NATO. However, reduced US commitment and the strive for more autonomy, which are connected, led to EU members establishing their own framework to ensure security for themselves. Therefore, a decrease in NATO's utility can be linked to institutional change in the EU's defence cooperation in 1999, illustrating institutional interdependence.

While it is difficult to analyse the effect of overlap in detail, the high share of membership overlap was necessary for the takeover of security tasks. With both institutions relying mostly on national assets, a high membership share means comparable capabilities, therefore the ability to take over the task. Here, however, the lack of overlap in membership, i.e. the US being a member of NATO but not of the EU, was the more crucial point. As it was mostly the US that led to (perceived) decreased utility of the alliance for EU members, their absence from the EU was crucial. It made it possible for EU member states to create a framework that could potentially compensate for the utility they saw missing in NATO, as it was more reliable, and they had more decision-making power than in NATO. Resource and mandate overlap were relatively low and are therefore unlikely to have played a role. However, the high institutionalisation of the EU made it relatively easy, i.e. uncomplicated and cost-efficient, to add further policy areas to it.

4.2. The Signing of the Lisbon Treaty 2007

The Lisbon Treaty amended the ‘Treaty on European Union’ (TEU) and the ‘Treaty Establishing the European Community’, renaming the latter ‘Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union’ (TFEU), using several articles as well as protocols and declarations (Craig, 2010, p. 25). As the Treaty replaced the failed Constitutional Treaty, most of the provisions were simply taken over, including those in the realm of military and security cooperation. The Treaty brought about a lot of institutional change in general for the EU, as for example the abandonment of the three-pillar structure. It also further developed the ESDP, now CSDP. Most notably, it changed the High Representative of CFSP to be the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR) and gave considerably more tasks and competences to this new position. It furthermore added a solidarity and a mutual defence clause and provided for more cooperation possibilities among member states, considerably increasing the EU’s mandate in the area of security.

In the following subchapters, I will first assess the overlap between NATO and the EU before the signing of the Lisbon Treaty in 2007, then analyse change in NATO during that period in order to finally examine the changes and the reasons for them within the EU structure.

4.2.1. Degree of Overlap before the Lisbon Treaty

In this section, I will discuss the degree of institutional overlap according to the three dimensions before the Lisbon Treaty was adopted and calculate the cumulated overlap score for NATO and the EU in the 2000's.

With the accession of Central and East European states to both IO's in the 2000's, membership overlap between NATO and the EU changed considerably. After the Eastern enlargement in 2004 and the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU in 2007, 21 out of the 26 member states of both organisations were double members (European Union, n.d.-a; NATO, 2018). This amounts to a membership overlap of 80.77% from both sides, therefore I will ascribe them a membership overlap score of four. Consequently, membership overlap increased, but only marginally, so that the score did not change. The dynamics described in chapter 4.1.1 on overlap before the founding of ESDP moreover still hold true, with the US being the leading, most powerful and accordingly critical actor in NATO and with Turkey possessing the second biggest army of the alliance ("Defence expenditure and size of armed forces of NATO and Partner countries," 2001; Duke, 2008a, p. 39). Furthermore, while the numbers of membership overlap rose due to the massive rounds of enlargement in both organisations, the dynamics changed, too. Since Cyprus and Malta were not PfP members, they were not allowed at NATO meetings, impeding cooperation between the two IO's (Bulut et al., 2009, p. 132 f.). Plus, the accession of Cyprus to the EU gave Turkey yet more reason to revert to hostage taking in order to prevent meaningful cooperation between the institutions (Duke, 2008a; Hofmann, 2009; Raik & Järvenpää, 2017). Thus, although membership overlap increased, the small share that did not overlap cannot be disregarded, as these single members have a considerable impact on inter-organisational relations.

When it comes to resources, overlap changed substantially in comparison with the late 1990's, too. Since the EU started to engage in their own peace keeping and crisis management operations in 2003, both organisations now relied on membership resources for these kind of operations. Therefore, the Congressional Research Service found that the "issue of which organization, NATO or the EU, could use national forces if there were simultaneous crises has not been resolved" (Archick & Gallis, 2005, p. 7), which had "the potential for acute

conflict” (McNamara, 2007). Furthermore, NATO and the EU agreed upon the Berlin plus arrangement in 2003. This arrangement, which was firstly created in 1996 for the WEU to have access to NATO resources, was transferred to apply to the EU as “a set of key cooperation documents” (NATO, 2004, p. 9 f.). Due to the agreement,

The EU was guaranteed access to NATO planning capabilities for the preparation and execution of EU-led crisis management operations. The EU may also request that NATO provide a NATO European command option, under DSACEUR for an EU-led operation. In addition, the EU has what was termed ‘presumptive access’ to NATO assets and capabilities (*Smith, 2011, pp. 15 f.*).

Moreover, an EU-Operation Headquarters was set-up at NATO’s Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in order to ensure the functioning of the arrangement (Bulut et al., 2009, p. 131; NATO, 2004, p. 5). This allowed for the both institutions to use the very same resources, and in fact, for Operation Concordia and Operation Althea, the EU “employed large numbers of the same troops from the preceding NATO contingent, who merely operated under a different insignia” (McNamara, 2007). The arrangement, while basically closing the biggest gap or difference between the organisations – access to US capabilities – has nevertheless been criticised for not fitting EU needs (Duke, 2008) and for being ambiguous, or at least differently interpreted by the IO’s. Thus, it has often been taken hostage by either Cyprus or Turkey, who insists on NATO’s ‘right of first refusal’ (*ibid.*; Hofmann, 2009). Accordingly, the arrangement was only used twice so far (Raik & Järvenpää, 2017). Therefore, NATO and the EU will be ascribed a resource overlap score of three for the formal access to each other’s resources with little or no use for the time before the signing of the Lisbon Treaty.

As for mandate, the two organisations moved closer to each other as well. This is mostly due to EU capabilities increasing, with the development of the ESDP that led to the first crisis management operations in 2003 (Bulut et al., 2009). Another reason was the establishment of the European Defence Agency in 2004 (Trybus, 2006, p. 678). Furthermore, within both institutions there were created rapid reaction forces, first the NATO Reaction Force (NRF) and then the EU Battlegroups (Archick & Gallis, 2005; Quille, 2006). Therefore, the formal mandate as well as its fulfilment regarding crisis intervention were largely the same for both institutions (Hofmann, 2009, p. 46). However, EU capabilities still did not reach the Helsinki

Headline Goals in 2006 (Trybus, 2006, p. 670). In addition, the institutions had slightly different geographical focuses “with the EU placing more emphasis on Africa and Asia than NATO does” since they call “for the application of a wider range of security and non-security related tools than are in NATO’s arsenal” (Duke, 2008a, p. 32). Furthermore, before the Lisbon Treaty, the EU had no mandate for collective territorial defence, which is arguably still the core of NATO, although it might not have been the focus of its operations at that time. As Daniel Keohane puts it, the “ESDP is potentially meant to do everything but collective defence – the *raison d’être* of NATO” (Bulut et al., 2009, p. 127). Therefore, the institutions have the same formal mandate and capabilities for some of their tasks and will be ascribed a resource overlap score of three.

This means that overlap between the EU and NATO rose considerably, as the three dimension scores accumulate to a total score of 10 in 2007. Overlap therefore was medium on the verge to high. While overlap in membership rose slightly, its score remained the same. Both in the mandate and the resource dimension, overlap increased considerably, most notably due to the Berlin plus arrangements and the continued development of the ESDP. As feedback effects were already observable before with lower overlap, we should expect change in NATO to resonate even more in the EU now, as the two IO’s have become more interdependent. Whether that is the case will be examined in the following sub-sections.

4.2.2. Change in NATO before the Lisbon Treaty

In the early 2000’s, there was barely any formal change in NATO but for the increase in membership, which rose considerably from 18 to 26. The impact of this increase on the utility of NATO for its ‘old’ member states, however, is ambiguous. On the one hand, the increase in membership made it harder to find consensus and relatively diminished the decision-making power of the old members. Furthermore, the military contribution of the new members was rather marginal, while the existing members still had to pledge to defend them in the case of an attack (Edmunds, 2003, p. 159), thus increasing the burden-sharing dilemma (ibid., p. 146). On the other hand, the aspiration towards NATO membership enforced the processes of democratisation and stabilisation in East European countries, hence increasing security in the immediate neighbourhood of existing members (ibid.). Moreover, EU

membership also changed from 14 to 24 and then 26, with both organisations mostly admitting the same new members.

Looking at mandate, NATO's focus was kept on peacekeeping missions, while its setting for territorial defence also changed, as US troops were withdrawn from Germany but more of them were stationed in the new, East European member states (Archick & Gallis, 2005). In order to successfully conduct peacekeeping operations, NATO created the NRF, which was declared operational in 2004, with most of its troops being provided by European countries (*ibid.*, p. 5 f.). However, Duke (2008a, p. 31) sees NATO's structure and staff as not fitting to broader security challenges, making Art. 5 still its core task.

While there was little formal change, the alliance did go through two crises that changed the perceived utility for its member states. First, there were the events of 11th September 2001. While they invoked Article 5 for the first and so far only time, the US decided not to react with the help of NATO but with a 'coalition of the willing' (Risse, 2016, p. 31 f.). This led other members to question the overall solidarity among alliance members, who therefore argued for the consensus method to be upheld. However, the procedures of NATO were not efficient enough for the US administration (Archick & Gallis, 2005, p. 4; Duke, 2008a, pp. 36, 41; Noetzel & Schreer, 2009, p. 221). In fact, in its 2002 National Security Strategy, the US threatened to act not only unilaterally but also pre-emptively (Duke, 2004, p. 472). Tellingly, Duke argued that reserving to coalitions of the willing increasingly could cause Europeans to invest more in their defence cooperation, eventually rendering NATO redundant (Duke, 2008a, p. 41). Consequently, the US behaviour after 11th September 2001 led to a perceived decrease of utility of NATO for EU members, as the critical actor seemed to withdraw more and more from the alliance.

Second, there was the disagreement over the Iraq war in 2003. Alliance members had diverging opinions when it came to the war, about the necessity of a UN Security Council (UNSC) mandate, about the measures chosen for threat response as well as the timing of the war, as UN inspections for weapons of mass destructions were still ongoing (Archick & Gallis, 2005; cf. also Noetzel & Schreer, 2009, p. 220). This led to a general feeling of frustration amongst NATO members and had consequences such as Belgium, France and

Germany blocking NATO's defensive assistance to Turkey, which the US had initiated (Archick & Gallis, 2005, p. 10; Noetzel & Schreer, 2009, p. 214). This, as then-US Secretary of State Colin Powell stated, could have led to the break-up of the alliance (Schwarz, 2003). Sally McNamara goes so far as to call it a "message that Europe's time had come to directly challenge a sovereign U.S. foreign policy decision in an attempt to contain American leadership" since "EU elites [did] not only critique, but also obstruct American foreign policy. EU candidate countries were even threatened with delays in their accession for supporting the war" (2007). Accordingly, Duke classified the Iraq war in 2008 still as "highly divisive" (2008a, p. 35). Such divergencies further diminished the utility of the alliance for all members, as the commitment of all parties becomes questionable if they cannot agree on basic principles, as seen in the case of the Iraq war.

These disagreements are part of general discrepancies that some European states had with the Bush administration, along with Secretary of State Rumsfeld's division of the EU in 'old' and 'new' Europe in midst of the Iraq crisis (Archick & Gallis, 2005, p. 13), as well as the US not participating in the Kyoto Protocol and disagreements about Guantanamo (Duke, 2008a, p. 35). Divergencies furthermore showed in the abandonment of internationalism for "American internationalism that reflects our union of values and our national interests" (The White House, 2002, p. 1 cited in Duke, 2004, p. 472) and by the "overtly hostile attitude towards ESDP" by members of the Bush administration (Howorth, 2005, p. 47).

A further consequence of this were the parallel missions of both institutions to Darfur in 2005, when, across the institutions, members could not agree on an airlift base, leaving the African Union with the unnecessary coordination of two separate airlifts (McNamara, 2007, cf. also Smith, 2011). This clearly shows the frustration on both sides of the Atlantic with each other. Noetzel and Schreer (2009) therefore observe the development of three different 'tiers' within the alliance, that disagree over the purpose and the tasks of NATO, making it difficult to find any consensus. Again, this shows the general disagreements between allies, resulting in the decreased utility of NATO for all members, as they could not rely on it as much as before. This can also be seen in then-German Chancellor Schroeder's statement that NATO is "no longer the primary venue where trans-Atlantic partners discuss and coordinate

strategies.”, instead calling for negotiations with the US in the EU (Archick & Gallis, 2005, p. 5), thereby implying that NATO had no actual role anymore.

This means that while NATO formally remained on the path of transformation it started in the 1990's in reaction to the new security environment and challenges, as the eastern enlargement and the increased focus on peacekeeping over territorial defence show, the perceptions of member states diverged more and more, causing for several disagreements within the alliance. Therefore, the alliance became less functional, resulting in a noticeable decrease of utility of NATO for all its member states.

4.2.3. Change in the EU: The Lisbon Treaty

The Lisbon Treaty brought with it a lot of institutional changes in general, but “Some of the most profound and potentially far-fetching changes” were introduced to the CFSP (Duke, 2008b, p. 13). However, it needs to be noted that all of them were substantially already included in the Constitutional Treaty that was signed by all member states in 2004 but failed due to negative referenda in France and the Netherlands. Still, while especially in the field of CFSP much of the terminology was changed for the Lisbon Treaty, the substance remained essentially the same (Craig, 2010, p. 6; Maganza, 2008, p. 1603 f.). Notably, the Treaty did rename the ESDP to the CSDP (Hynek, 2011, p. 81).

The most important changes for military cooperation were the newly introduced mutual defence clause in Art. 42 (7) TEU and the solidarity clause in Art. 222 TFEU. The solidarity clause does not exactly cause a doubling of commitments with NATO, as it ensures assistance from member states in events other than territorial defence, namely terrorist attacks and natural and man-made disasters (cf. Art. 222 TFEU), and seems to be the response to the changing security environment (cf. Barnier, 2002, par. 45). However, the line between terrorist attacks and armed aggressions are not always clear, as can be seen in NATO qualifying the attack on the US on 11th September 2001 as triggering Art. 5 and France triggering the mutual defence clause in Art. 42 (7) TEU instead of the solidarity clause after the terrorist attacks on Paris in 2015 (Duke, 2018, p. 68). The mutual defence clause then basically reads the same as Art. 5 of the Washington Treaty, if not stronger, stating that:

If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States (*Art. 42 (7) TEU*).

While the clause does not explicitly mention armed force, as does Art. 5 in the Washington Treaty, it does not exclude it either (Wessels & Bopp, 2008, p. 10). Furthermore, Art. 5 leaves the aligned states some leeway, obliging a member only to take “such action as it deems necessary” in case of an armed aggression against another member, while Art. 42 (7) TEU requires “aid and assistance by all means in their power” from member states. However, this provision also prevents conflicts with NATO by further stating that

Commitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which, for those States which are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation (*Art. 42 (7) TEU, cf. also Wessels & Bopp, 2008, p. 10*).

Here, again, NATO is given primacy over the EU when it comes to defence, at least formally, therefore avoiding legal ambiguity while still providing collective defence for non-aligned EU member states.

Moreover, the common defence, which was already a possibility outlined in the Treaty of Nice, seems now to only be a matter of time, with the Treaty stating that: “This *will* lead to a common defence, *when* the European Council (...) so decides.” (Art. 42 (2) TEU, emphasis added). This also shows in a resolution by the European Parliament about the European Security Strategy of 2006, which states that the Union is on its way to becoming a “Security and Defence Union” (cited in Wessels & Bopp, 2008, p. 10). This means that EU member states now definitely doubled NATO structures and competences, even if the European Defence Union was still in an embryonic state.

A further change introduced by the Lisbon Treaty concerns the role of the High Representative of CFSP. While this position was supposed to be replaced by the creation of a Foreign Minister as envisioned in the Constitutional Treaty, member states decided against this title along with all mentions of the word “constitution” for the Lisbon Treaty, instead calling the new position ‘High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security

Policy' (Craig, 2010, pp. 379–436; Wessels & Bopp, 2008, p. 19 f.). This position combines the formally two positions of High Representative and Commissioner for External Affairs and adds to those by making the new HR also a vice president of the Commission and the chair of the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC)⁵. The FAC became thus the only council configuration not headed by the rotating member states presidency (Duke, 2008b; Wessels & Bopp, 2008, p. 19 f.). This is supposed to ensure greater coherence as well as efficiency (Wessels & Bopp, 2008, p. 28). In order to be able to manage all these tasks, the HR is supported by the new European External Action Service (EEAS). While the actual set-up and scope of the EEAS was not clear yet when the Lisbon Treaty was signed, this was seen as essential for the actual role that the HR could assume, often competing with either the Commission or the European Council President (Duke, 2008b; Wessels & Bopp, 2008, p. 27). These changes were aimed at strengthening the EU military and security cooperation, increasing their capabilities and thus further doubled NATO structures.

In addition, the Treaty expanded the Petersberg tasks to now also include

civilian and military means, [...] joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistant tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilisation (*Art. 43 (1) TEU, cf. also Wessels & Bopp, 2008, p. 8*).

While the Union already had been engaged in these tasks, they were now formally codified (Duke, 2008b, p. 17). Hence, its formal mandate was expanded to now include more NATO tasks. Similarly, the European Defence Agency, which has been operational since 2004, was codified in the Treaty and thereby given legal personality (Chappell & Petrov, 2012, p. 55). Furthermore, the Treaty opened the possibility for some member states to engage in PeSCo (Craig, 2010, p. 420, cf. also Art. 42(6), 46 TEU).

While the Treaty provides for other minor changes which can be omitted here (but see Craig, 2010; Hynek, 2011; Wessels & Bopp, 2008), it furthermore calls for cooperation with several other institutions, namely the UN, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

⁵ The Foreign Affairs Council was also created by the treaty, as it used to be part of the General Affairs and External Relations Council (Wessels & Bopp, 2008, p. 17).

(OSCE) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), however it notably does not name NATO in this regard (Art. 220 TFEU, cf. also Craig, 2010, p. 404).

Again, there are several possible explanations for these steps towards a common defence and a defence union. Even if not the entire development can be traced back to changes in NATO, it is nevertheless possible to show how these changes, as manifested in the Lisbon Treaty, were influenced by the changing perception of NATO by EU members. First, there are the differences that caused disagreements within NATO, most importantly the different opinions on threat perception and adequate threat response (Duke, 2004), but also the tendency to reserve more to coalitions of the willing (Archick & Gallis, 2005, p. 4; Duke, 2008b, pp. 36, 41; Noetzel & Schreer, 2009, p. 221). The disruptions this caused in transatlantic relations can also be seen in the distinct mention in the Lisbon Treaty of cooperation with other organisations, but not with NATO. As seen above, these developments led to a substantial decrease in utility of NATO for its EU members, therefore the changes made in the Lisbon Treaty can be seen as compensation measures. Member states consciously created overlap in order to overcome a collective action dilemma that could not be tackled in the other institution, which is one of the reasons for creating overlap listed by Hofmann (2011, p. 105, see also chapter 2.1.1).

This argument is supported by the Congressional Research Fund, which named differences over whether or not to include the UN in crisis management and whether to use primarily political or military means as disputes that “have fueled European desires to develop a more independent ESDP” (Archick & Gallis, 2005, p. 2). Furthermore, statements like that of then-Chancellor Schroeder imply that the EU could, even if in cooperation with the US, replace NATO. Therefore, McNamara calls all assurances that the ESDP is meant to complement NATO, not to compete with it, a “cosmetic cover story” that was uncovered by Schroeder’s aforementioned statement (McNamara, 2007). Hence, she also sees the strengthened ESDP as eventually replacing NATO (ibid.). As compensation measures that might eventually replace NATO were introduced, we see that institutional interdependence affected the development of military cooperation in the EU.

Like before, this does not mean that it was only institutional interdependence with NATO that brought about change in the EU. The ESDP had been developing further ever since its creation in 1999. Alternatively, the decisions taken in the Lisbon Treaty can thus simply be seen as the next step (Hynek, 2011, p. 82). Furthermore, practice unveiled several shortcomings that were supposed to be ameliorated with these changes (ibid, p. 90). In addition, public opinion was in favour of a more Europeanised defence (Barnier, 2002 par. 46). Hence, these are also factors that impacted the development of EU military cooperation.

Nevertheless, the changes in the military dimension would not have been necessary, had it not been for changes in NATO, as the same aims could have been pursued within the alliance as well. However, member states consciously decided to increase military cooperation within the EU, being aware of the risk that it could further impede the transatlantic relationship. NATO did not have their preferred geographical focus, nor did it develop its civilian capabilities, which were necessary to deal with the risks and threats that European states were most concerned with. Therefore, NATO's utility decreased considerably for EU allies. Consequently, an enhancement of European structures made sense. While internal developments pointed towards the same direction, disagreements with the Bush administration in particular had an immense effect on the perception of commitment by the US and on the utility of NATO, which makes them an undeniable factor leading to the changes in European mandate and capabilities.

Again, while overlap had to be high enough in order for the EU to compensate for NATO's decreased utility, the membership gap was of essence. Since it were the US that changed their focus and therefore was perceived to be less committed, Europeans had the chance to develop security mechanisms without them within the EU. Furthermore, with higher capabilities in security and defence, it was easier to increase these even more, creating more mandate overlap with NATO, thus implying a spill-over-like mechanism. On the contrary, resource overlap does not seem to have had a notable impact.

4.3. The Founding of PeSCo 2017

The most recent observation in the development of EU military cooperation is the founding of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PeSCo). Building on the Global Strategy, which was

published by the HR in 2016, EU member states agreed upon several, possibly far-reaching reforms in order to increase military cooperation, thereby enhancing the overall capabilities in this field. Most notably, they established a European Defence Fund to support multilateral research and development, a control mechanism called Coordinated Annual Review on Defence, which monitors whether member states adhere to their commitments, and 25 of the members launched PeSCo to increase interoperability. While it depends on the member states how far these reforms will push integration, according to Raik and Järvenpää (2017, p. 19), they have the potential to eventually lead to a joint army.

In the following subchapters, I will first assess the overlap score between NATO and the EU, then summarise change within NATO in order to finally examine changes and their motivation within the EU.

4.3.1. Degree of Overlap before the Founding of PeSCo

In this chapter, I will assess the overlap between EU and NATO for the time before the implementation of PeSCo, which was introduced in late 2016 and launched in 2017.

In membership, there have only been minor changes. Albania and Croatia acceded to NATO in 2009, and Croatia also to the EU in 2013. Montenegro's accession to NATO in 2017, with the accession treaty signed in May 2016, was the last change in membership (European Union, n.d.-a; NATO, 2018). This means that 22 out of 27 EU and 29 NATO members were full members in both institutions, amounting to a membership overlap of 81,48% and 75,86% respectively, which means that the institutions will again be ascribed a membership overlap score of four. Furthermore, the US remains the critical actor of the alliance and ongoing conflicts between Turkey and Cyprus keep impeding meaningful cooperation between the IO's (Raik & Järvenpää, 2017).

When it comes to resources, there were no major changes either. Although the Berlin plus arrangements are still in place, they have not been used since the launch of operation EURFOR Althea in 2004 (ibid.). Therefore, both organisations still depend on national assets for their respective missions and accordingly have to compete for them, and while there is the formal mandate to share resources, it has not been used in over a decade (ibid., Besch,

2016, p. 3). Accordingly, the resource overlap score will remain three for formal access to resources with little or no use.

The most notable change in overlap between the organisations has therefore happened in the mandate dimension. With the Lisbon Treaty, the EU gained many competences in the area of security and defence, most notably with the expansion of the Petersberg tasks as well as the solidarity and the mutual defence clause (see above). Therefore, the EU now formally also covers NATO's core, namely territorial defence. However, it is questionable whether the EU has the actual capabilities to fulfil this task (Howorth, 2017, p. 1; Raik & Järvenpää, 2017, p. 1). This also goes for the overlapping mandates for crisis management, as there is still some 'division of labour' between the organisations, with NATO – and primarily the US – engaging in high-intensity military operations and the EU focusing on low-intensity or humanitarian missions. Hofmann (2009) and Duke (2008) therefore state that the different tools of the IO's match different stages of a crisis, which can also be seen in the EU taking over former NATO missions (McNamara, 2007). While the mandate of the EU has expanded notably, its capabilities are still inferior to those of NATO. The battlegroups, for example, have never been deployed (Besch, 2016, p. 3). Therefore, the institutions have the same formal mandate and capabilities for many of the same tasks and will accordingly be ascribed a resource overlap score of 3.5.

The scores accumulate to an overlap score of 10.5, meaning that overlap was medium on the verge to high. Again, this means that feedback effects can be expected, as the institutions are very much interconnected, and therefore that, if there were changes in NATO in this time period, these should again reflect in the EU. This will be evaluated in the subsection after next, as firstly, change in NATO is analysed.

4.3.2. Change in NATO before the Founding of PeSCo

In the period before the founding of PeSCo and related measures, NATO's membership changed only marginally due to the accession of Albania, Croatia and Montenegro (see above). However, Russian assertiveness, especially the annexation of Crimea and the provocation of the ongoing war in south-east Ukraine, gave NATO members reason to strengthen the alliance and particularly its defence dimension. At the Wales summit in 2014,

members passed the 'Readiness Action Plan' which combines a mixture of 'assurance measures' and 'adaptation measures' in order to ensure "that the Alliance is ready to respond swiftly and firmly to new security challenges from the east and the south" (NATO, 2017). NATO itself calls the plan "the most significant reinforcement of NATO's collective defence since the end of the Cold War" (ibid.), as it tripled the NRF, established the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force of 20.000 troops under rotating national leadership and increased NATO's exercises and presence in Eastern Europe. Furthermore, member states newly committed to the two per cent goal as well as to spending 20 per cent of their defence budget on new major equipment and research and development (NATO, 2014 par. 14). These measures were further increased at the Warsaw summit two years later (Raik & Järvenpää, 2017, p. 10). Raik and Järvenpää (ibid., p. 8) therefore see "NATO's core purpose" – military threats and territorial defence – becoming relevant again. This means that the utility of NATO increased for all members, as with the return of the Russian threat NATO regained its purpose and its functionality.

While this strengthened the alliance and commitment and solidarity among member states, there were also inner conflicts in NATO (Raik & Järvenpää, 2017; Thimm, 2014). Before the Ukraine crisis, the scandal around the US National Security Agency strained the transatlantic relationship and therefore also the trust in the alliance, with especially Germany and France feeling mistreated by a supposed friend. Accordingly, French government spokeswoman Najat Vallaud-Belkacem said

Why are these practices, as they're reported – which remains to be clarified – unacceptable? First because they are taking place between partners, between allies, and then because they clearly are an affront to private life (*Pop, 2012*)

and then-German Defence Minister DeMaizière stated that "We can't simply return to business as usual" (Wilder & Neate, 2013). This has undermined trust between at least three major allies, which in turn weakens the alliance itself. Further contributing to the question about the utility has been the election of Donald Trump as the US president in November 2016, which made the European countries question the reliability of the alliance. During his campaign, Trump called NATO "obsolete" (Parker, 2016), and, although he took this statement back since his inauguration, he refused to explicitly commit to Art. 5 for about half

a year after his inauguration and kept criticising the other NATO members for not spending enough on defence (Lazarou & Barzoukas, 2017, p. 11). Plus, his Secretary of Defence threatened that “America will moderate its commitments” if Europe does not pay its dues, i.e. adhere to the two percent goal (Sommer, 2017), leaving Europeans feeling uneasy (Fritz, 2017; Gray, 2017). This can be seen in several more or less direct statements about Trump and the US’s commitment to NATO by European leaders. Donald Tusk, the President of the European Council, for instance, called declarations by the new US administration an “external threat” inter alia with Russian aggression, Chinese assertiveness, and chaos in the Middle East and Africa (Tusk, 2017). Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, stated shortly after the G7 summit that “The times in which we could rely fully on others — they are somewhat over” (cited in Smale & Erlanger, 2017). Similarly, the President of the Commission Jean-Claude Juncker called for emancipation and the strive for *Weltpolitikfähigkeit* in his speech at the Munich Security Conference in February 2018, stating that “We cannot depend on allies alone” (Juncker, 2018). Relations have not bettered either, with the US leaving the Paris Accords and the Iran nuclear deal (Raji, 2018; Shear, 2017). Accordingly, statements from the other side of the Atlantic have become more explicit, with Juncker commenting the retraction from the Iran nuclear deal: “Our U.S. friends are turning their back on anything that smells like multilateralism” (cited in Raji, 2018) and Merkel stating: “It’s no longer the case that the United States will simply just protect us [...] Rather, Europe needs to take its fate into its own hands” (cited in Delfs & Viscusi, 2018). The questionable US commitment thus had direct negative effects on the utility perception of NATO by its EU member states.

Moreover, both IO’s highlighted the new challenge posed by hybrid threats. However, it is not clear whether those can trigger Art. 5 of the Washington Treaty, although it was extended to include “extensive, malicious cyber-attacks” at the Wales summit (Raik & Järvenpää, 2017, p. 21). While these threats definitely fall under the EU’s solidarity clause, the latter ensures only weak support (ibid., p. 15). In other words, this means that it is not clear how well NATO accommodates the needs of its EU members, who thus introduced their own structures.

Risse furthermore observes disagreements about the scope of NATO, with the US aiming for it to be global and most European members preferring a regional version “with some global implications” (Risse, 2016, p. 28). As the allies can seemingly not agree upon the overall purpose of the alliance, its utility becomes questionable, especially for its EU members, who have less bargaining power than e.g. the US and accordingly cannot push the alliance to fit their interests as much.

Therefore, while Russia’s new assertiveness has underlined the importance of collective defence and NATO, which enhanced its cohesion (Thimm, 2014), there have also been disagreements and inner developments that caused members to question the solidarity among member states and therefore the utility of the alliance, since it is dependent on the commitment especially of major allies.

4.3.3. Change in the EU: The Founding of PeSCo

There have been major changes in the EU’s defence programme, as, similar to NATO, “the EU’s focus shifted from external crisis management to Europe’s own security. Military power has inevitably become a more pertinent issue also for the EU” (Raik & Järvenpää, 2017, p. 10). Based on the Global Strategy from June 2016, which “started a process of closer cooperation in security and defence” (European Union External Action Service, 2018b), member states agreed upon the initiation of PESCO, the launching of the European Defence Fund and the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence.

PESCO’s aim is to

make European defence more efficient and to deliver more output by providing enhanced coordination and collaboration in the areas of investment, capability development and operational readiness (*ibid.*).

It is voluntary but unites 25 of the EU member states, as only Denmark, Malta and the UK decided not to participate (Lazarou & Friede, 2018, p. 6). It has its treaty basis in Art. 42 (6) and 46 TEU, which means that the members already considered it when approving the Lisbon Treaty in 2007. While its launching has been considered before, member states only began seriously working on it in December 2016 and launched it in late 2017 (Fiott, Missiroli, & Tardy, 2017, p. 24 f.). The first list of projects was adopted in March 2018 (Lazarou & Friede,

2018, p. 1). Timing thus suggests a connection to the election of Trump, especially since “the rapid development of PESCO 'is not European Union', which is normally 'not doing things within few months'”, as General Mikhail Kostarakos, chair of the European Union Military Committee, stated (cited in Lazarou & Friede, 2018, p. 10). PeSCo combines capability and operational aims and is therefore defined as “an instrument or a process by which member states will develop capabilities and improve the deployability of their forces so as to strengthen the security and defence of the Union” (Fiott et al., 2017, p. 33). It is closely connected to the CSDP and its operations, which are to take place outside the territory of the Union. However, PeSCo has an internal dimension, too, mostly through capability development but also by countering hybrid threats that blur the line between the external and the internal (ibid., p. 35).

While PeSCo is supposed to be strictly intergovernmental, it is still a big step towards defence integration for the former economic union, as “the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, referred to PESCO as a means to achieve a 'fully fledged European defence union' by 2025” (Lazarou & Friede, 2018, p. 4). Raik and Järvenpää also see this potential in PeSCo but believe that member states would not go that far, showing PeSCo’s limitations:

PESCO could be an instrument for not just cooperation, but also integration of member states’ military forces. This would practically mean moving towards an EU army, which even the more pro-integrationist member states are generally not willing to do (2017, p. 19).

Therefore, PeSCo has the potential for considerably deeper military integration, but it remains to be seen how far the members are willing to go. Thus, due to PeSCo, mandate overlap with NATO increases further, implying that EU members do not see their interests covered by the alliance, and therefore double structures.

The European Defence Fund marks the first time that EU funds are used to buy military equipment and to develop joint defence capabilities (European Union External Action Service, 2018a). It “will promote cooperation and cost savings among Member States to produce state-of-the-art defence technology and equipment” as it “offers **grants for collaborative research projects** in the areas of drones, strategic technology foresight and

soldier protection and equipment” and “will also create incentives for Member States to **cooperate on joint development of defence equipment and technology** through co-financing from the EU budget” (ibid.). The EU plans on committing about 2.6 billion euros between 2017 and 2020 and 5.5 billion euros per year from 2020 on to fund these projects, although most of that will not come from the EU budget but has to be provided by the member states. This way, members want to strengthen cooperation amongst themselves and avoid unnecessary duplication of military capabilities (ibid.), which has arguably been the most important hurdle in the development of defence capabilities (Biscop, 2017, p. 2).

EU members also adopted the so-called CARD – Coordinated Annual Review on Defence, which is supposed to “foster capability development addressing shortfalls, deepen defence cooperation and ensure more optimal use, including coherence, of defence spending plans” (European Union External Action Service, 2017). While the agreed upon goals of the European Defence Agency were difficult to enforce, CARD, which firstly allows for joint capability planning, might develop to be more successful in that regard (Fiott et al., 2017, p. 45). In addition to this, member states agreed upon the establishment of an “Operational Planning and Conduct Capability” for non-executive military missions in March 2017 (Raik & Järvenpää, 2017, p. 10). This is “a first meaningful step towards a future EU permanent OHQ [operational headquarter]” (Kempin & Kunz, 2018, p. 73).

Therefore, there have been no treaty changes, but nevertheless, EU member states decided to integrate further in the areas of defence funding, capability and operationality, thus enhancing their capabilities in all these areas. Furthermore, they shifted their focus from crisis management in third states to territorial defence, moving closer towards NATO’s agenda (Raik & Järvenpää, 2017, p. 16). Thus, we can see a change in mandate in the EU military cooperation, further doubling NATO structures, which would be unnecessary if EU members still perceived NATO’s utility as high.

There are several events that opened “the political space today to do things that were not really do-able in previous years” (Mogherini, 2016, cited in Duke, 2018, p. 73), most notably Russia’s assertiveness, the refugee crisis, Brexit, and the election of Trump (Besch, 2016; Duke, 2018; Fiott et al., 2017; Lazarou & Barzoukas, 2017; Lazarou & Friede, 2018; Martill

& Sus, 2018; Raik & Järvenpää, 2017; Tardy, 2018, p. 124). Most often, the election of Donald Trump as the US President in November 2016 has been named as contributing to the enhancement of EU defence cooperation. Trump's questioning of NATO had Europeans fearing for the alliance's continued existence (Stelzenmüller, 2018, p. 1). The statements by various European political leaders (see above) show that Trump's threats to abandon NATO if allies did not pay their dues (Duke, 2018, p. 70; Lazarou & Barzoukas, 2017, p. 11) enhanced the strive for European strategic autonomy. This arguably had been a declared goal since the St. Malo conference in 1998 but has never been realised (Howorth, 2017). In fact, Polish Commissioner for Industry Elżbieta Bieńkowska stated about the European Defence Fund that "Trump's tweets [...] are making it easier push through this 'more complicated' part of the plan" (cited in Barigazzi & Cooper, 2017). This fits several assessments of authors that consider Trump's election amplifying and accelerating European defence cooperation. Stelzenmüller e.g. stated that the EU reforms around PeSCo were "given added impetus by the new American administration" (2018, p. 3) and Besch claims that Trump's election and Brexit "have given a boost to Mogherini's defence plans, and increased the pressure on EU countries to increase their military spending" (2016, p. 10) since they "have given an unprecedented sense of urgency to the European defence project" (ibid., p. 2). Similar observations have been made by Kempin & Kunz (2018), Lazarou & Friede (2018) und Martill & Sus (2018). Moreover, European politicians found that progress on the defence reforms was made unusually fast (Lazarou & Friede, 2018, p. 10; Tardy, 2018, p. 124), underlining the urgency as well as the special status of the project. This shows that, while the impact on the exact content of interdependence on the new measures in EU military cooperation is not clear, their timing can be linked to perceived changes in the utility of NATO without a doubt, giving another example for institutional interdependence.

As an internal factor in the development of PeSCo and related measures, Brexit plays an important role, since the UK was one of the main opponents of closer EU defence cooperation in order to avoid duplication of NATO (Biscop, 2016, p. 432; Duke, 2018, p. 73; Martill & Sus, 2018, p. 849 f.). On the one hand, especially the creation of EU headquarters has been heavily opposed by the British (Besch, 2016, p. 3), but now, "As the risk of a UK veto

vanished” (Martill & Sus, 2018, p. 851), the remaining states could pursue further defence and security integration. However, since PeSCo was always supposed to be voluntary, they could have done so before. In addition, as Besch (2016, p. 4) notes, there are other EU members with similar opinions that now oppose measures like an EU operational headquarter. On the other hand, Brexit made the EU look weak and vulnerable, therefore, the members needed to stress their commitment to one another and to the Union (ibid., pp. 2, 7; Martill & Sus, 2018, p. 851). Plus, the UK accounted for 25% of the defence budget of all EU member states. Accordingly, its leaving results in a considerable gap in European defence (Biscop, 2016, p. 436). Therefore, the shock of the Brexit referendum was a factor in the creation of PeSCo and related measures as it increased solidarity and cohesion amongst the remaining member states.

Similar to NATO, Russia’s annexation of Crimea in early 2014 increased cooperation among EU members, as their threat perceptions in regard to Russia converged (Thimm, 2014). However, deterrence against Russia is traditionally NATO’s area of expertise, and, as mentioned above, NATO members did react to the crisis with a variety of measures. Furthermore, the development of capabilities, resources and also interoperability to counter Russia could just as well have been realised within NATO. In fact, the new commitment to the two per cent goal and the increased joint exercises served exactly these purposes. Accordingly, the “Russian threat” (Besch, 2016, p. 9) alone does not explain the increase in European defence cooperation. The same holds true for the war in Syria, of which the refugee crisis was mostly a result.

It also needs to be noted that Europeans still show no intention to replace or abandon NATO. In fact, the Global Strategy highlights cooperation with NATO several times (Lazarou & Barzoukas, 2017, p. 8). Similarly, Stelzenmüller (2018, p. 8) states that the reforms

are not motivated by a (in any case delusional) wish to create a European “counter-hegemon” or counterweight to the U.S., nor by a desire to push out NATO and replace it with a new European security architecture. Most Western foreign policy elites urgently hope to preserve the Western liberal order, and to stop a Trump-led America from turning its back on it.

Accordingly, all EU reforms are explicitly complementary to NATO (Duke, 2018, p. 77) and the EU still lacks the capability to replace NATO. Nevertheless, while “Complementarity is a shared and attainable goal, [...] an element of competition cannot be fully avoided” (Raik & Järvenpää, 2017, p. 16). This means that while the developments in EU military cooperation are at least partly due to developments in NATO – thereby reflecting institutional interdependence – this does not mean that member states dismantle NATO. Instead, they engage in ‘hedging’ (Tessman, 2012) by strengthening military cooperation without directly confronting NATO or the US⁶.

Hence, uncertainties about the commitment of NATO’s critical actor – the US – towards the alliance has resulted in (perceived) decreased utility of NATO for its European members, who built another arena to better advance their interests. While the strive for more defence and security integration has been an ongoing process since the end of the Cold War, the timing of these rather substantial reforms is telling. In contrast to that, Brexit had conflicting consequences and external factors as the wars in Ukraine and Syria can explain increased commitment to NATO or the enhancement of national assets, but not the integration within the EU. While there generally has been public support for more EU military cooperation (Besch, 2016, p. 2; Duke, 2018, p. 74), it cannot explain the fast implementation of the new reforms. Thus, in this last observation, institutional interdependence with NATO again had a significant impact on the development of EU military cooperation.

To sum up, this study showed the impact of (perceived) change in NATO on the development of EU military cooperation in all three in-case observations. In the first instance, general doubt about the continued existence of NATO as well as a shift in the US-American security focus drove EU allies to launch the ESDP. While the Balkan wars are also often named as factors, they cannot explain why double members did not develop their capabilities within NATO, where the ESDI framework was already in place. The EU initiative shows that EU

⁶ “Strategic hedging may [...] address a different long-term threat faced by second-tier states in a unipolar system: the potential loss of public goods or subsidies currently being provided by the system leader [...] Type B hedging may involve the search for other providers of the goods or subsidies, the development of independent provision capabilities, or progress toward decreased reliance on the goods or subsidies” (Tessman, 2012, p. 204 f.).

allies did not fully trust NATO anymore and that they wanted a framework where they would not be treated as the eternal junior partners. Hence, (perceived) decrease in utility of NATO for its EU members led them to create what can be called compensation measures, permanently altering the EU's mandate and therefore its structure. Similar mechanisms can be seen later with the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, that further enhanced the EU's capability and mandate in the sector of security and defence. Here, general disputes with the US government over threat responses and regions of concern showed a growing frustration of EU leaders with NATO, and therefore its decreased utility for them. Again, inner considerations cannot fully explain why member states would decide to increase the doubling of structures, further impeding the transatlantic relationship, instead of reforming or enhancing NATO. The creation of an EU mutual solidarity clause especially shows the poor relations between the two organisations, as EU members saw the need for a collective defence clause that included the few EU but non-allied member states. In the third instance then, statements from leading European politicians show their perception of decreased utility of NATO, caused by perceived reduced US commitment, as well as how this affected the development of PeSCo and related measures, namely by accelerating it. Therefore, although there were other circumstances that factored into the development of EU military cooperation, institutional interdependence definitely had an impact, especially on the choice of arena, here the EU, and the timing of reforms.

Although overlap was medium in all observations, there can nevertheless be made inferences from its different levels. First of all, medium overlap is sufficient for there to be structural effects of institutional overlap, i.e. institutional interdependence, which was apparent in all three in-case observations. Secondly, membership overlap seems to be the most important dimension of overlap, as it was the only high dimension in the first observation, and structural effects were already observable. Thirdly, the fact that overlap was the highest in the last observation and feedback effects were the strongest in that period implies that higher overlap leads to stronger interdependence. However, different levels of reception on reaction within the target institution, here the EU, could also be due to different levels or kinds of (perceived) change within the source institution, here NATO. While the empirical study in this thesis was

sufficient for its goals, namely to illustrate the plausibility and existence of institutional interdependence, future research should look into the structural effects of different levels and dimensions of overlap in more detail.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the *structural* effects of institutional overlap, building on the theories of institutionalism and the literature on institutional overlap, as well as related concepts. I therefore introduced the notion of ‘institutional interdependence’ which captures the impact overlap has on the structural level of institutions, i.e. their design, membership, mandate and available resources. As shown in the second chapter, there is a lot of literature on the effects of institutional overlap, but it focuses either on the effects of institutions on actor behaviour or on the interaction of organisations. Therefore, there remains a considerable gap in the literature so far. Furthermore, if overlap does affect institutions on a structural level, the analysis of its impact is vital to further our understanding of institutions. As the world is becoming more and more institutionalised, this means that institutional interdependence is essential for our understanding of the world.

After developing the theoretical argument, I proceeded to introduce my research design and then illustrated the analytical value of the concept of institutional interdependence by applying it to three in-case observations of institutional overlap between NATO and the EU, namely the founding of the ESDP in 1999, the signing of the Lisbon Treaty in 2007 and the founding of PeSCo in 2017. For all these observations, firstly the overlap between NATO and the EU was assessed, which has only slightly changed over time and has been medium for the entire case. Then, change in the utility of NATO, as perceived by EU allies and antecedent to changes within EU military cooperation, were demonstrated. While there has been little formal change in NATO in the time period under consideration, the perceived utility has varied, often together with the status of transatlantic relations. This results from the US being the critical actor of NATO, which makes their commitment indispensable for the functioning of the alliance and thus for its utility as perceived by EU allies. Following the idea of institutional interdependence, the study then explored how these (perceived) changes in the utility of NATO resonated in the development of EU military cooperation over time.

For this purpose, I examined change in the military cooperation within the EU, as well as the reasons that led to these changes. There were several external factors that induced deeper

military cooperation amongst member states, such as the Balkan wars in the 1990's or Russia's accession of Crimea in 2014, as well as internal considerations like the general strive for closer cooperation or the need to prevent the Union from collapsing after the Brexit referendum. However, alongside those input factors, the perceived utility of NATO also always had an impact, especially on *where* members organised their response to these issues. While they could have done so within NATO, doubts about the commitment of other allies as well as their lack of influence on NATO led them to develop their capabilities within the EU framework instead.

First, as shown in the analysis of the early phase of European military cooperation, there was a general doubt in the 1990's about whether NATO would continue to exist after losing its *raison d'être*. While NATO was reformed to match new risks, the US's commitment to these was questionable as they shifted their focus away from Europe and its neighbourhood towards other regions, e.g. the Middle East and North Korea. Moreover, the US administration repeatedly demanded higher burden sharing from its European allies, implying that collective self-defence was no longer unconditional. Therefore, and – as shown above – because Europeans were unlikely to be treated as an equal partner within the alliance, the utility of NATO decreased from their perspective. Accordingly, Europeans decided to start their own framework for crisis management, establishing the ESDP. Thus, we see that institutional dynamics in one organisation (here NATO) affected the institutional setup of another (here the EU). Due to overlap between the organisations, the (perceived) changes in NATO contributed to changes in EU military cooperation, demonstrating institutional interdependence.

Second, in the early 2000's, the crisis over the Iraq war shed light on disagreements over general codes of conduct between the allies, for example over the importance of UN mandates and over appropriate threat responses (hard vs. soft responses). Furthermore, the US showed a tendency to prefer coalitions of the willing over acting within the framework of NATO, thereby rendering NATO somewhat redundant. Moreover, NATO as a whole did not prioritise European needs, which led EU member states to once again advance their military cooperation inside the EU framework. Hence, they went ahead with their defence

cooperation in the Lisbon Treaty, which provides a solidarity and a mutual defence clause as well as possibilities for further military cooperation. Thus, institutional interdependence is again observable, as (perceived) changes in the utility of NATO induced a widening of EU military cooperation.

Finally, also in the third observation period, the perceived utility of NATO decreased for EU allies due to the US presidential election of 2016. The newly elected president and large parts of his administration were rather reserved about NATO and multilateralism in general. These attitudes undermined the utility of NATO for EU allies, as they rendered the US commitment to the alliance questionable. Once again, those events were followed by institutional developments inside the EU. Reflecting dynamics of institutional interdependence, EU members reacted to a decrease of perceived utility of NATO by strengthening the defence cooperation inside the EU through PeSCo and related measures.

Overall, this leads to the finding that across all three periods of observation, developments in EU military cooperation were always preceded by a decrease in perceived utility of NATO for the European allies. In addition, overlap between the IO's has always been medium (high in the membership dimension), creating the condition for these changes in NATO to resonate in the EU. On this basis, it can be concluded that the dynamics of EU military cooperation have been affected by dynamics inside NATO and that institutional overlap was a crucial condition for that. Statements by European leaders definitely allow to establish a connection between NATO and the timing and swift implementation of EU reforms.

By shedding light on the intertwined nature of the evolution of NATO and EU military cooperation after the Cold War, the study of the EU and NATO as a case of institutional overlap demonstrates the analytical utility of the concept of institutional interdependence. Here, we can see that in order to fully understand developments within the EU, one needs to include developments within NATO and, more specifically, how double members perceive those developments in the analysis as well. Therefore, the concept of institutional interdependence helps to better understand how organisations like the EU evolve. Although the EU is still a long way from replacing NATO, and EU representatives and those of member

states claim that this is not their intention, the analysis has demonstrated that mandate overlap has been increasing, as has competition amongst the institutions.

Although the study has demonstrated the analytical utility of the concept of institutional interdependence, it is not the sole factor that explains the reforms in European military cooperation; other events like external crises and internal considerations played a role alongside interdependence. Furthermore, the thesis does not show the exact impact of the different dimensions of overlap. Since the variation of overlap in this case study has been limited, it is not possible to assess the impact of different dimensions and levels of overlap on institutional structures. As a result, it was only possible to demonstrate that overlap matters, but not precisely how it matters. However, the study implies that membership is the most important dimension, as it was high in all three in-case observations and all showed instances of institutional interdependence. Plus, the other two dimensions, resources and mandate, are at least partially connected to membership. In order to improve our understanding of the dynamics of international organisations, future research should aim at examining cases that have different levels of overlap or overlap in different dimensions in order to find out exactly how much and what kind of overlap is a necessary condition for institutional interdependence. Whereas here the goal was to introduce the concept of institutional interdependence and to illustrate its analytical utility, the more precise workings, including on the impact of specific dimensions and degrees of overlap, lay ahead.

Other limitations of this study follow from the caveats that were made consciously. First, since the thesis used RCI as the metatheoretical background, alternative explanations and factors that cannot be captured with RCI might have been overlooked. However, using RCI the study was able to demonstrate the underlying mechanism of institutional interdependence and to illustrate it with the case of NATO and the EU. It showed how actors, due to the impact overlap had on their utility calculations, will not only engage in forum shopping etc., but how these tactics can in turn alter the structure of institutions. This means that while the workings of institutional interdependence have been theorised on the basis of an RCI explanation, alternative explanations based on SI or HI could be put forward as well, which would introduce additional ways in which overlap can shape structural developments of overlapping

institutions. HI, with its concept of path dependency, might explain why the EU did not disintegrate whenever the perceived utility of NATO was high or find explanations for the deepening of EU military integration unrelated to NATO. Similarly, SI might explain the shift of competences and mandates from NATO to the EU with the logic of appropriateness, meaning that the EU became the more appropriate institution for crisis management and general military cooperation. Therefore, further research using these approaches would also be insightful in order to fully understand institutional interdependence.

Second, the thesis focused on international organisations as one type of institutions. This caveat was made given the aim to relate the study to the existing literature on overlap, especially between the EU and NATO (cf. chapter 2). It was furthermore necessary due to the limitations of the thesis, as other types of institutions, e.g. regimes, have partially very different characteristics and thus need to be looked at in a separate study. Hence, future research should also include other types of institutions, not just organisations, in order to see whether for example regime complexity has similar structural effects.

Third, the empirical part of this thesis focused only on one direction of institutional interdependence, with NATO as the source and the EU as the target institution. While this allowed to explain the developments in the EU, in principle the mechanisms are expected to work in both directions, i.e. it should be possible to observe effects of EU developments in NATO. However, this needs to be shown by future studies.

Placing the findings of this thesis in the wider context, institutionalism as well as literature on institutional overlap and on the EU can benefit from them. They showed institutionalists that institutions do not develop in a vacuum but are linked to other, overlapping ones. Thus, they cannot be analysed in isolation, institutional interdependence needs to be taken into consideration. In addition, the study showed the structural effects of institutional overlap, which have not been examined before, and therefore expanded our knowledge of the concept of overlap. Lastly, it furthered our understanding of how and why the EU develops through the case study as it showed that the widening of EU military cooperation happened in reaction to (perceived) changes in NATO. However, more detailed research on the reasons for the changes in EU military cooperation – and the extent to which NATO played a role – would

be helpful to analyse these developments and connections more in-depth. To that end, the use of more primary sources, like for example interviews with leading politicians, would lead to more precise findings. While that was not the aim of this study, which illustrated preliminarily the impact of institutional interdependence, it would be the next step in this line of research. All in all, institutional interdependence makes for a very insightful field of research and provides useful methods that have the potential of extending our understanding of institutions.

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