

## **Theorising the effects of CFSP on national foreign policy and the concept of Europeanisation**

### **1 The limits of traditional approaches**

The CFSP has traditionally been conceptualised from an intergovernmentalist perspective and it is often assumed that a common European foreign policy is constrained by the foreign policy preferences of the EU member states, while the CFSP itself is usually not considered to have deep effects on these national foreign policies.

However, there is considerable evidence which gives rise to the presumption that this traditional approach does not suffice any more (e.g. the CFSP does not necessarily represent the lowest common denominator of the positions of the member states; a “coordination reflex” could be observed).

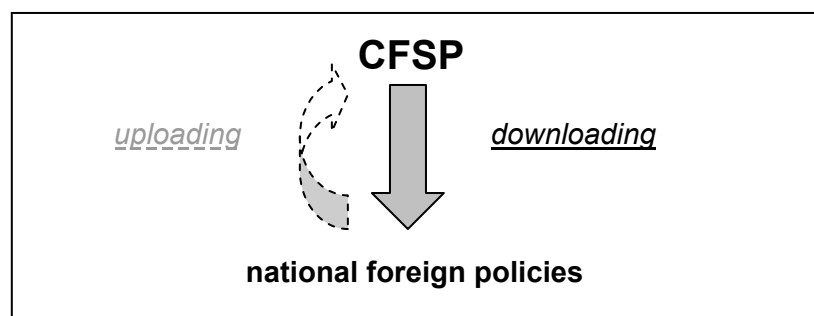
### **2 The applicability of the concept of Europeanisation**

In order to explore the circumstances under which Europeanisation may take place, it is often assumed that there is a certain ‘goodness of fit’ between the EU level and the member state level, which might lead to adaptational pressures for the national level.<sup>1</sup>

However, in applying Europeanisation to foreign policy one must take into account some special characteristics of European foreign policy and the analytical framework has to be refined.

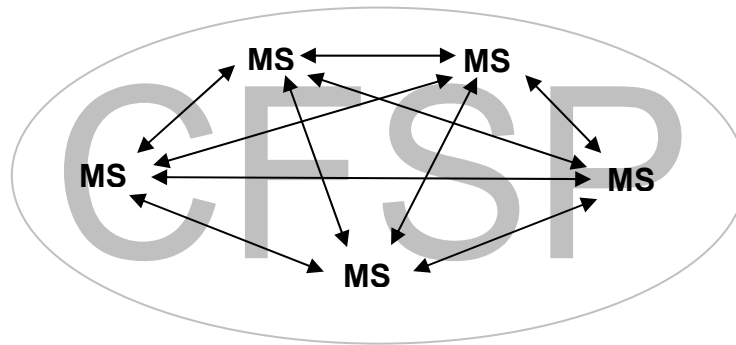
### **3 Two dimensions of Europeanisation of national foreign policy**

#### *Europeanisation through (vertical) adaptation*



<sup>1</sup> Especially see: Risse, Thomas, Maria Green Cowles and James A. Caporaso. 2001. Europeanization and Domestic Change: Introduction. In *Transforming Europe: Europeanization and Domestic Change* edited by Maria Green Cowles, James A. Caporaso and Thomas Risse. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1-20.

### ***Europeanisation through (horizontal) interaction***



#### **4 Two logics of Europeanisation of national foreign policy**

So far the research on Europeanisation has mostly focused on describing supposed outcomes of Europeanisation rather than on explaining them. In this respect, it seems useful to draw upon the rational choice and sociological versions of the new institutionalism, which in particular are based on different logics of action (logic of consequentialism and logic of appropriateness).<sup>2</sup>

Depending on the basic underlying logic, in principle there may be two kinds of effects of Europeanisation of national foreign policy: on the one hand, an adaptation of the strategies (while the preferences remain stable), and on the other hand, more profound learning, which may also cause changes of the preferences.

#### **5 Further explanatory factors**

However, the EU member states may not only display common features with regard to the (possible) Europeanisation of their national foreign policies, but there may also be differences between the member states.

Rationalist and social constructivist approaches highlight different factors which may also come into play and hinder or facilitate the Europeanisation of national foreign policy.

#### **6 Conclusions**

It is a great advantage of the Europeanisation concept that it allows to explore the linkages between the CFSP and the national foreign policies of the EU member states.

However, in order to deliver what it promises and to also have more explanatory power, the Europeanisation approach should be refined and underpinned by other theoretical approaches (rational choice and/or sociological institutionalism).

Further research is particularly needed to explore how the different kinds and mechanisms of Europeanisation of national foreign policy relate to each other.

<sup>2</sup> Especially see: March, James G., and Johan P. Olsen. 1998. The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders. *International Organization* 52 (4): 943-969.