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# The relationship between EU climate and energy policies and EU foreign policy and security

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Master in International Relations, Strategy and Security, School of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Neapolis University of Pafos

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**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, ARTS AND  
HUMANITIES**

**THESIS TITLE**

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EU CLIMATE  
AND ENERGY POLICIES AND EU FOREIGN  
POLICY AND SECURITY**

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**JANUARY 2023**



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SECURITY**

**This thesis was submitted for distance acquisition of a MSc  
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Philip O’Kane

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to examine the evolution of climate change and energy policy within the European Union and to evaluate how effective it has been in terms of changing the policy of member states and also the impact of these EU policies on third countries. This involved an examination of the foreign policy infrastructure of the EU and analysis of the dynamics between EU climate change and energy policy, and the foreign policy and security of the EU. Climate change and energy policy to meet climate targets is an area of EU policy which is constantly evolving and developing, involving, as it does, all aspects of EU foreign policy.

The extent and success of the National Energy & Climate Plans (NECPs) of EU member states was therefore studied along with the current foreign policy tools of the EU such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the European External Action Service (EEAS) and EU Sustainable Trade Agreements in order to evaluate the extent to which EU foreign policy impacts on EU climate and energy policy and vice-versa. Other external variables such as the ongoing conflict in Ukraine (post February 2022) and the current energy crisis in Europe was examined as was independent data on the progress of the EU in meeting their 2030 green energy and climate targets in order to evaluate if the success of climate change and energy policy of the EU is impacted in any way by both the foreign policy and security policy of the EU.

The complex dynamics between EU climate and energy policy and EU foreign policy and security was also examined within the context of the ongoing conflict within EU member states between Europeanization and national agenda. The study conclusion outlines the reasons for the complex dynamics between the climate change and energy policies and foreign policy of the EU and makes some recommendations for future areas of research and policy development which could further align these variables within EU policy

# Chapter 1 – Introduction

## 1.1 Background & Context

Over the past number of decades the scientific and political debate around climate change and energy security has become more prevalent within international relations. Climate and environmental issues which had been seen as peripheral to global politics became central issues in the 1970s within the context of depleting energy resources worldwide. In the 1980s damage to the ozone layer and predicted rising global temperatures dominated the climate debate and as the 21<sup>st</sup> century has progressed climate change now dominates global environmental discussions. (Burroughs 2007). The reason for this progression of climate issues from being peripheral to international relations to be central to all aspects of global politics is that the problem of climate change and that of sustainable development and energy security are so closely related that they need to be effectively addressed in an integrated fashion. The challenge in doing this however is balancing the competing needs of developing and developed countries. (Richardson 2011). The European Union and the wider international community have attempted to take action over climate change through various international agreements signed over the past number of years with The European Union arguably being at the forefront of the battle against climate change as a strong integrated environmental policy has always been a key aspiration of EU policy. (Wurzel 2011).

While the climate policies of the EU are to be welcomed, there is, however, considerable debate within the global community as to how effective they have been in tackling the issue of climate change with many commentators arguing that many of these policies and legislation are relatively ineffective as short-term economic policies still dominate the domestic and foreign policies of many nations. This seems to be particularly true for countries in the developing world. (Tanner & Horn-Phathanothai 2014). Co-operation between EU member states and third countries can therefore be problematic particularly as many of the worst contributors to climate change in terms of fossil fuel emissions are located in the developing world or in 3<sup>rd</sup> countries outside of the EU. (Dessler 2012). As a result of this one way in which EU member states attempt to enforce climate change targets is through Trade and Sustainable Development agreements with these third countries which can include clauses for cutting carbon emissions and implementing new environmental standards. (Minas & Ntousas 2018).

Climate and energy policy is an evolving area of EU policy and one which is becoming more important as it effects many areas of EU foreign policy. While the focus on EU climate policy, and on third countries which the EU attempts to influence through Trade and Sustainable Development agreements, is still based on mitigating against the long terms effects of climate change there is now an increasing acknowledgement by EU member states that stronger climate change policies and the development of new energy resources will also contribute to a higher level of energy security within the EU in the short to medium term. (O'Connor 2011).

As climate change policies and economic priorities are not always compatible the question on how best to address climate change within the context of these competing interests has become central to global politics, security and foreign policy. (Tol 2019). The problem of climate change and that of energy security and sustainable development are so closely related therefore that they need to be addressed in an integrated fashion.

In addition to the environmental threats to the planet from climate change many EU member states also feel they may potentially be impacted by additional effects of climate change such as competition for depleting resources and desertification which could contribute to international conflicts in the future potentially leading to famine and other humanitarian crisis, one effect of this could potentially be the displacement of large numbers of people from outside the EU as a result of increasing desertification and lands becoming uninhabitable, these displaced climate refugees could seek refuge within the EU. (Allen et al 2021). Another key motivation for the development of EU climate change policy is increasing energy consumption, it is expected that by 2035 energy consumption will rise by over 40% (Tocci 2017). Energy security and climate change will therefore be key challenges for the international community worldwide for decades to come. Climate change and energy policy are therefore becoming cross cutting themes across many institutions and policies within the European Union, particularly in regard to foreign policy and interaction with 3<sup>rd</sup> countries outside the EU bloc. (Keukeleire & Delreux, 2014).

Recent events in Europe have also begun to focus the thoughts of EU member states on the growing importance of climate and energy policy. The conflict in Ukraine from February 2022 has led to a rise in energy prices and has highlighted the extent to which the EU relies on the supply of energy from Russia and while this reliance on Russian fossil fuels has been the case for many years (Tsoukalis 2016), the sanctions that have been imposed on

Russia by the EU and many of its member states has now led to a developing energy crisis in the EU. This has been building for some time with the security implications of Russian foreign policy, which has included involvement in the Syria and the Middle East, having a potential knock on effect on energy security in Europe. (Pantelis et al 2018). Russia is the world's third-largest producer of oil and second-largest producer of natural gas with fossil fuels accounting for 14% of the countries' economic output. (International Energy Agency 2022). The EU must now seek alternative energy resources and suppliers as approximately 40% of Europe's oil and gas is imported from Russia. (Kropatcheva 2014). The European Union must therefore identify a range of options for alternative renewable energy sources. This demonstrates that the development of EU climate change and energy policy is now potentially entering a more effective phase as there is now a realisation within EU member states that reducing their consumption of imported fossil fuels will mitigate against climate change by helping to meet EU climate change targets but also achieve energy security and reduce rising energy costs.

This thesis therefore studies the relationship between EU climate and energy policies and EU foreign policy and security. This will be done via examination of EU member states National Energy & Climate Plans, an examination of existing EU foreign policy and analysis of the extent to which these National Energy & Climate Plans have achieved their objectives and the extent to which they influence the foreign policy of these member states and therefore the EU as a whole.

## **1.2 Structure**

Chapter One gives an overview of the topic and provides a context and background to the thesis by outlining the current importance of climate change and energy policy within the EU and the challenges for EU member states when balancing these policies with national interests and how these impact on foreign policy and security. The chapter also outlines the research question and gives an overview of each chapter within the thesis.

Chapter Two involves an extensive literature review of existing research and publications on the topic which provides a theoretical background to the research topic. The literature review is divided into a number of sections addressing the following sub headings; a general overview of international relations and the various dynamics involved within this

topic, an outline of existing EU climate and energy policy through examination of EU member states National Energy & Climate Plans and an examination of existing EU foreign policy and security and the extent to which there is a common agreed view on foreign policy or if national interest and bilateral agendas have limited the extent to which there is an integrated foreign policy across EU member states.

Chapter Three follows on from the literature review in Chapter Two in outlining the main research question and a number of research sub-questions. The Chapter outlines how these sub-questions are addressed in order to develop results and a conclusion to the research. Research sub-questions include examination of the existing climate change & energy policy of the EU, the existing foreign policy of the EU and the extent to which these policies have achieved their objectives. The impact of the conflict in the Ukraine post-February 2022 on EU foreign policy and security are examined as is the impact of EU policy on third countries and the extent to which EU integration on the area of climate change and energy has been achieved at the highest level. A hypothesis is formulated within this chapter to be tested in subsequent chapters.

Chapter Four presents the results to the research sub-questions outlined above based on the data collected through the various areas of research outlined within the literature review. Analysis of the research sub-questions gives answers to these questions which are then used to draw conclusions on the hypothesis outlined within Chapter Three.

Chapter Five summarises and draws conclusions on the thesis research question based on the results of the sub-questions as outlined in Chapter Four. The chapter answers the initial research question but also highlights potential weakness in the available research material or limitations to the scope of the study of the thesis. The conclusion chapter also speculates on the possible future direction of EU foreign policy and further potential areas of study.

## **Chapter 2 – Literature Review**

### **2.1 Overview of International Relations**

International Relations is a very complex wide-ranging term which encompasses global politics, war and peace, the global economy, environmental issues and covers a wide range of disciplines including history, geography, politics, law, economics and sociology. The academic discipline of international relations which has arisen in the 20<sup>th</sup> century brings all these various factors together within one field of study (Bayliss et al 2020).

The concept of international relations has its basis in the rise of the concept of the nation state in Europe in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with the 1648 Peace of Westphalia which created a number of peace treaties which led to the development of the modern nation state as we understand it in that each nation state has exclusive sovereignty over its territory. The nation state is central to the way world politics is organised and revolves around the sovereign state system with economic and political theorists such as Adam Smith (1776) arguing that the strategy of nation states in terms of their interaction with other nation states, i.e. their foreign policy, is dictated by merchants and manufacturers. This has led to the rise in globalism due to an intensification of worldwide social relations, the integration of national economies, the development of trade links, foreign investment and emigration between nation states, all the factors which are involved in the study of international relations. (Heywood 2014).

A nation state is commonly defined as a sovereign state having its own defined geographic territory exercising its own laws, authority and judiciary over that geographic territory. (Crawford 2006). The main requirement for legitimacy for a new state is that the state emerged following a process of self-determination from the population (Lowe 2007). Each state then conducts its foreign relations with other states on the basis of recognition of their legitimate sovereignty over this defined geographic territory. The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States (1933) established the definition of a state in Article 1, outlining that a state in international law should possess a permanent population, a defined territory, government and capacity to enter into relations with other states.

Foreign policy and diplomatic relations refer to the interaction between states in terms of international relations using dialogue and other means to reach agreements over conflict rather than resorting to warfare. Diplomatic relations form part of a state's strategy on

how they interact with other rival states in the competition for resources, power and in defence of their borders. (Mahnken 2012). As part of their strategy states will define a number of long-term objectives which they hope to achieve through decisions taken during international relations with rival states. While this strategy deals with success in conflict with other rival states this does not necessarily mean warfare, although military strength and military intervention can be key components of a nation state's strategy. (Hough et al 2021). Other tactics which states use within their strategy which are designed to avoid warfare include economic policy and diplomacy. States will therefore use economic or political sanctions against other states as part of their grand strategy or employ diplomatic negotiatory tactics in order to maintain the balance of power to their advantage and force other states to yield to their wishes without resorting to warfare. The interaction between states within these parameters is defined as international relations. (Lawson 2017).

Mearsheimer (2014) argued that international anarchy explains the dynamics behind this competition for power and resources between nation states. Mearsheimer used the term 'anarchy' to explain the situation that exists between nations in that there is no ruling body so to speak over world nations and so anarchy therefore exists within this vacuum in terms of the competition for power. International bodies such as the European Union and United Nations etc have therefore been established in an attempt to replace this anarchy with order. Mearsheimer argues that this inter-state conflict is due to the ongoing competition between states around the balance of power and the desire to achieve hegemony. The basis for this competition between states being the suspicion that exists over each other's intentions and how this may then affect the balance of power, this suspicion leads to fear and hostility and a power struggle which can result in conflict. (Mearsheimer 2014).

The concept of 'international anarchy', as discussed by Mearsheimer above, is a key concept within the realist school of thought on international relations theory. For students from the realist school of thought, the political vacuum created by this international anarchy means that states will inevitably come into conflict with each other and this can invariably lead to interstate warfare. For realists therefore the balance of power is the key factor which will either cause or prevent warfare, for example some aggression by states can be designed to maintain the balance of power rather than to lead to domination, depending on the circumstances. This is why for realists international anarchy is such a key factor for the cause of warfare, which is motivated by self-interest and usually is calculated in that states will avoid wars which they see as being either too expensive or too

risky as this would have a detrimental impact on their competition for power against other states. (Heywood 2014). This theory of power politics was put forward by realist theorists such as Hans Morgenthau whose 'Politics Among Nations' (1948) was influenced by much earlier political and economic theorists such as Niccolo Machiavelli in 'The Prince' (1532), Thomas Hobbes's Leviathan (1651) and Jean Jacques Rousseau's 'Social Contract' (1762). The realist school of thought follows the Darwinian theory of natural selection which involves the survival of the fittest in terms of interstate rivalry with the balance of power performing an important function in ensuring continuing order within international relations and in many cases preventing warfare. (Bayliss 2020). This outlook on states being motivated entirely by self-interest has led to many realist strategists, most notably Machiavelli, being regarded as too cynical in their outlook. The study of international relations must therefore acknowledge the influence which the concept of international anarchy has had on the subject (Donnelly 2000). Realists view states as having a natural tendency towards rivalry and conflict and the concept of international anarchy is therefore regarded as being of most influence in terms of the origins of interstate wars.

Another school of thought within international relations theory is the liberalist school of thought. Liberalists, while acknowledging the concept of international anarchy, have a much different interpretation on it than realists as liberalists believe that war and conflict is not inevitable within interstate relations with peace a more natural state of being amongst countries. This is primarily because Liberalists have a more positive view of human nature than realists and believe that the solution to international anarchy is achieved through co-operation between states in setting up bodies such as the European Union, United Nations and other similar organisations which promote the rule of international law. (Heywood 2014). The liberalist school of thought owes its origins to 18<sup>th</sup> century political philosophers such as Jeremy Bentham (1780) and Immanuel Kant (1784). In contrast to Realists they see warfare as arising from economic competition between states for resources and therefore feel that economic integration between states and the promotion of liberal democratic governance over more extreme totalitarian political regimes reduces the probability of warfare. (Bayliss 2020). This concept of 'liberal peace theory' as it is known, concludes that democratic states are less likely to engage in warfare as the state is much more accountable to its citizens than totalitarian regimes and therefore less likely to involve them in conflict. (Hough 2021). Liberalists argue that liberal democracies through the promotion of free trade and human rights through organisations such as the United Nations (UN) & European Union (EU) have successfully reduced both warfare and



poverty worldwide. (Lake et al 2021). The concept of international anarchy therefore influences both the realist and liberalist theory of international relations and theories of war and peace. The liberalism approach to international relations has dominated western political thought and international relations after World War I (Heywood 2014) and it is significant that there are more liberal democracies in the world than any other political regime type (Dunne 2020).

The study of international relations therefore involves an interdisciplinary approach incorporating the study of both national and international interests and how these interact. The academic discipline of international relations arose in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with a backdrop of a great deal of global political and economic upheaval and the formation of international bodies such as the United Nations and the European Union which brought the interaction of national and international interests into much sharper focus than before. The study of international relations from the 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards can be categorised into a number of periods such as the period from the start of World War I in 1914 to the end of the Cold War in 1990, a period which historian Eric Hobsbawm (1994) referred to as ‘The Short Twentieth Century’ to the period of international relations which we are currently living in which is the post-Cold War period or as some theorists argue a post-9/11 War on Terror period (Lawson 2017). With a climate crisis already upon us and a long term energy crisis looming the impact of globalisation on international relations within this post-Cold War vacuum is something which many theorists see as being significant. (Giddens 2003). It is within this backdrop and context which this study on the relationship between EU climate and energy policies and EU foreign policy and security is being conducted.

## **2.2 EU Foreign Policy & Security**

As outlined in the previous section the concept of the nation state originated in Europe and so it should come as no surprise to students of international relations that the first region of the world to move towards a unified political and economic union of nation states has been Europe through the development of the European Union. The modern European Union has its roots in the push for European integration that followed the end of World War II in 1945. The United States initiated ‘Marshall Plan’ (1947) which was a programme of economic assistance and co-operation between European States to reconstruct Europe post WWII laid the groundwork for European integration (Hogan 1987). The Treaty of Rome signed in 1957 by six European nations established the European Economic Community

(EEC) and signalled the beginning of an ambitious new era in terms of European integration (Phinnemore 2019). This concept was further developed with the Luxembourg Report (EEC 1970) which outlined a potential further co-ordinated European political co-operation and foreign policy system for the EEC. (Hill & Smith 2000). The following decades saw a phenomenal growth of the EEC culminating in the establishment of the European Union which at the time of writing (January 2023) has twenty seven member states, four hundred and fifty million citizens speaking twenty four languages all living within a single market and customs union with a common currency. (Hardacre 2020).

The Treaty of Rome (1957) established the European Economic Community which originally encompassed six European states but by 1992, with the signing of The Maastricht Treaty, a European Union with a membership of twelve member states was established. In terms of codifying foreign policy and defence strategy within the EU the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) was established under the Maastricht Treaty (1992) in order to co-ordinate foreign policy of member states. (Nuttall 2000). The objectives of the CFSP are set out in Article 21 of the Treaty and are; *“to maintain peace and strengthen international security, to promote international cooperation with third countries and to advance and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”* (European Union 2012). Under the CFSP the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), a security alliance of Western European and North American countries, is responsible for defence in the European Union. A key element of the CFSP is the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) which enables the EU to involve themselves in overseas conflicts by providing peace keeping forces as part of the EU’s stated aim of ‘consolidating democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms’ (Faleg 2017).

Further amendments to the Treaty of the European Union were signed by member states in 1997 (Treaty of Amsterdam) which developed security policy and initiated the process of widening EU aims to cover employment and social protection policies and right for citizens and in 2001 (Treaty of Nice) which reformed EU institutions and defined future co-operation in defence and judicial policy. (European Union 2012). These treaties ultimately led to the 2007 Treaty of Lisbon which extended the powers of the European Parliament and European Council and defined the aims of the European Union in terms of both its member states and also the foreign policy of the European Union (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014) within Article 3 of the treaty, as outlined in the excerpt below;

“The aims of the European Union within its borders are to;

- Promote peace, its values and the well-being of its citizens
- Offer freedom, security and justice without internal borders, while also taking appropriate measures at its external borders to regulate asylum and immigration and prevent and combat crime
- Establish an internal market
- Achieve sustainable development based on balanced economic growth and price stability and a highly competitive market economy with full employment and social progress
- Protect and improve the quality of the environment
- Promote scientific and technological progress
- Combat social exclusion and discrimination
- Promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, and protection of the rights of the child
- Enhance economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity among EU countries
- Respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity
- Establish an economic and monetary union whose currency is the Euro

The aims of the EU within the wider world are to;

- Uphold and promote its values and interests
- Contribute to peace and security and the sustainable development of the Earth
- Contribute to solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights
- Strict observance of international law” (European Union 2022).

EU foreign policy is outlined within the various treaties which EU member states have signed over the past number of decades. Establishing a coherent foreign policy framework for a bloc of countries is a complex issue as member states do not always agree and so these various international treaties have attempted to define and refine tools and methods for co-operation between EU member states on key issues. (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014). From 2000 the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, targeted the reform

of the governance of the EU as a key priority. (Georgakakis 2012). The enlargement of the EU with the inclusion of ten new members states in 2004 led to new issues arising within the foreign policy relations of member states, many of these were social issues and problems surrounding the population enlargement of the EU and the subsequent issue of internal migration within the EU. These issues combined with the global political fallout from the 2001 terrorist attacks on America and conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan led the EU to realise that internal reform was required in order to meet these challenges and that a more codified foreign policy and international relations framework was required. This came in the form of The Treaty of Lisbon (2007) which centralised foreign policy structures within the EU by amending the Maastricht Treaty (1992) by providing more coherence in matters of foreign policy and security by centralising key structures within the EU (Piris 2010). EU lawmakers realised that the fact that the EU had a number of institutions in place which separated key decision making in terms of foreign policy and defence and judicial functions needed to be addressed. Within the Lisbon Treaty an attempt was made by the EU to reform this so called ‘pillar system’ in order to establish a more effective and cohesive foreign policy system. (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014).

One aspect of EU foreign policy which the Lisbon Treaty addressed was the office of ‘High representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs/Vice President of the European Commission’ which had been established by Treaty of Amsterdam. The Treaty of Lisbon gave this role more influence by making the ‘High representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs/Vice President of the European Commission’ the chair for the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) of the EU. (Schutze 2014). Prior to this the FAC chair was rotated between member states which had led to criticism that some member states used this chair role of the FAC to further their own national agenda. This new defined role for the High Representative of the Union was designed to limit this internal abuse of power by member states. (Cini 2019). The Treaty of Lisbon also established the European External Action Service (EEAS) which was made up of diplomats from within the EU and European Commission staff with a brief to assist the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs. (Hansen 2022). This establishment of a dedicated diplomatic service in the form of the EEAS by the Treaty of Lisbon was a significant development in the evolution of EU foreign policy. The EEAS were given the role of assisting the FAC to limit the influence of individual member states. (Murdoch et al 2014).

The EEAS performs this function by working closely with the FAC and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs to manage ongoing diplomatic relations internally between EU member states and also between the EU and third countries.

The evolution of the EU over time involved a growing number of member states joining the bloc over the years and successive updates to the Treaty of the European Union to accommodate this expansion. This led to the EU having a wider focus than merely economic and involved wider issues such as energy, climate, security and social issues and therefore required a more complex foreign policy framework in order to address these issues adequately on the global stage leading to the formation of the European External Action Service (EEAS) (Galarotis 2016). The institutional reform, outlined above, which was established under the Treaty of Lisbon in extending the role of the High representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and creating the European External Action Service (EEAS) made significant progress in enabling all the member states in the EU to begin to work collaboratively on issues such as energy, climate, security and human rights. (Ashiagbor et al 2012). This evolution in EU foreign policy instruments is therefore important to understand when analysing the impact of EU climate and energy policy on these EU foreign policy instruments and why conflicts can arise within member states over these climate and energy policies.

### **2.3 EU Climate & Energy Policy**

The European Union would argue that they are pioneers of the battle against climate change as a key focus of EU policy since inception has been environmental issues and particularly the protection of the natural environment. (Wurzel 2011). While the European Economic Community, established in 1957, had no specific stated environmental policy (Cini, 2019) this changed with the creation, in 1973, of an Environmental Action Programme which has now developed into a very extensive and comprehensive environmental policy which emphasises the importance which the EU has increasingly placed on environmental policy and in particular climate change action over the past number of decades. Significant changes within the Treaty of the European Union such as the 1992 Maastricht Treaty decision to extend qualified majority voting into all areas of environmental policy and the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam clauses around environmental policy integration culminated in the 2008 EU Climate & Energy package which was a series of climate change and energy security targets which brought climate change to the

forefront within EU Policy. (European Union 2008). The EU is now seen as a leader in global environmental governance as a result of the many environmental protection designations the European Commission has established such as Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Natura 200 site designation and Marine Protected Areas which are all designed to protect the environment and biodiversity of the EU (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014). The EU has followed up on these designations by making significant funding available to safeguard these protected areas through trans-national co-operation programmes such as INTERREG European Territorial Co-operation. (Dalsgaard 2020). In addition EU member states have played a central role in influencing UN climate policy particularly at the Copenhagen (2009) and Cancun (2010) climate change summit meetings. (Groen et al 2012).

One problem that keeps arising however in terms of the implementation of environment policy is that of cost, as enforcing many of the environmental priorities and policies outlined above can be very expensive for member states. An increasing area of focus within the debate on how to effectively address climate change is therefore the challenge between balancing environmental priorities with those of the economy and how states can achieve equilibrium between both. (Heywood 2014). Despite these challenges the various international agreements signed over the past number of decades has demonstrated the commitment of the European Union and other global organisations such as the United Nations to tackling the issue of climate change. These international agreements have included the 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, The International Panel on climate change being established by the UN in 1988, the United Nations conference on Environment and Development (1992) and the Kyoto Protocol (1997), the latter which involved a legally binding commitment to limit greenhouse gas emissions. More recently international agreements on climate change such as the Paris Agreement (2015) have continued to set climate change targets such as the commitment to limit global warming to below 1.5°C.

One of the key problems in tackling climate change is however the complex relationship between scientific understanding of the impact and cause of climate change and the relationship in terms of the global economy and sustainable development (Bayliss 2019). The economic cost of implementing climate change policy is a key factor in this. Many of the international conventions and agreements outlined above were assuming that new technological developments would come in the future to enable these climate change

mitigation and adaptation measures to be implemented on a low-cost basis. However, many of these projected technological developments upon which the assumption of low-cost solutions rely have arguably not arrived and alternative energy costs are still viewed by many countries as being expensive and not feasible at present (Paerson 2013). This is also true in terms of ethical considerations in the environmentally damaging long-range transportation of goods but economic factors still dictate these trade agreements rather than ethical factors linked to the environment. (Bayliss 2019). The extent to which the scientific community has established a concerted view on how best to tackle the issue of climate change is also a matter for debate. Achieving climate and energy policy integration, not only within the European Union but also globally, has been problematic given the extensive nature of climate change policy as it requires many sections of government such as agriculture, transport and energy to all integrate their policies and targets which in many cases can be extremely difficult to achieve due to the competing interests within these sectors. (Tosun et al 2015).

The EU has attempted to legislate for this through the provision contained in Article 191 (1) of the EU Treaty one of the key objectives of which states that; “*promoting measures at international level to deal with regional or worldwide environmental problems and in particular combating climate change*” is a key focus of the Treaty. (European Union 2012). Article 191 (1) is therefore an acknowledgement by the EU that addressing climate change is difficult for EU member states to achieve in isolation and that the EU has therefore to collaborate internationally with third countries and international organisations such as the United Nations in order to effectively address the issues surrounding climate change.

Many political commentators would argue though that Article 191 (1) is ineffective as there is no properly defined framework for co-operation between the EU and international organisations and 3<sup>rd</sup> countries in terms of addressing climate change and this has led to considerable debate amongst environmentalists as to how effective EU environmental and climate change policies have been in tackling the core issues affecting climate change with economic priorities still arguably being viewed as more important than environmental or climate priorities. (Tanner & Horn-Phathanothai 2014).

This view that economic priorities should take precedence over environmental priorities has made collaboration between EU member states and third countries, particularly those

in the developing world, especially challenging in terms of climate change as many of the key contributors to issues which negatively impact on the climate are located in the developing world. One way in which the EU have attempt to address this problem of encouraging 3<sup>rd</sup> countries to embrace EU climate change legislation is through the development of bilateral trade agreements which in many cases the EU has included clauses for these 3<sup>rd</sup> countries to attempt to mitigate against climate change by cutting carbon emissions etc and implementing new environmental standards. It is through the use of environmental clauses within these bilateral trade agreements that the EU can arguably impact positively on the climate and energy policies of many 3<sup>rd</sup> countries and international organisations beyond the borders of the EU. (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014).

The key climate and energy policy documents which EU member states must adhere to are the National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) which are designed to enable the EU to achieve their climate and energy targets by 2030. (European Union 2019). All EU member states must have a NECP which outlines how they will address energy efficiency, renewable energy, greenhouse gas emissions reductions and research and innovation within the field of climate and energy between 2021 and 2030. (European Union 2019). The EU have set a target of 32% renewable energy usage and a 40% reduction in emissions by 2030 (Walker & Biedenkopf 2018), and these National Energy and Climate Plans are seen as the key framework in achieving this. In order to meet these climate and energy targets however, the European Union needs effective policy instruments and must define clear targets for member states that illustrate the benefits that the transition to green energy will bring them in terms of long-term energy security. (Berry-Weiss 2022). This approach requires effective co-ordination of purpose and financial planning across all government departments and between member states. The fact that all EU countries are using a similar template means that they can work together to make 'efficiency gains across borders'. (European Union 2019).

Despite this common approach within the EU to delivering the National Energy and Climate Plans EU climate policy and energy targets do not have full universal support within all member states this is due to the perception that through climate and energy policy the EU is increasingly becoming involved in the domestic politics of member states and also 3<sup>rd</sup> countries particularly in regards to climate and energy policy.



The clauses which the EU have inserted into bilateral trade agreements with external partners which relate to climate and energy have been difficult to enforce particularly when these EU trading partners point to examples of bad environmental practice within the EU itself. A good recent example of this is the attempt by EU car manufacturers to circumvent EU policy and penalties on carbon emissions. The Brexit vote of 2016 which led to the UK leaving the EU is also an issue as many Brexiteers in the UK cited restrictive EU environmental policy in terms of climate change and environmental targets as a key motivation for leaving the EU. (Cini 2019).

The need for new forms of renewable green energy within the EU is also motivated by energy security and a growing realisation within the EU that the bloc needs to be less dependent on oil and gas from areas outside the EU such as the Middle East and Russia. (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014), (O'Connor 2011). Energy security is therefore now viewed within in the EU as an increasingly important security issue. This is emphasised by the reference to energy security in the 'Climate Change and International Security' (2008) of the High Representative and the European Commission as being an issue which 'directly threatens European interests'. (Umbach 2012). The EU attempts to safeguard these interests in a number of ways, primarily through collaboration work with other international organisations, outside the EU bloc, such as the United Nations in order to attempt to find common ground in the development and implementation of climate change and energy policy. (Minas & Ntousas 2018). As mentioned previously the EU has made significant attempts to influence third countries to adopt EU climate and energy policy as part of bilateral trade agreements which contain clauses to encourage trading partners to implement policy on climate and energy, these clauses are known as 'Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) Chapters'. (European Union 2022). These bilateral trade agreements could therefore include clauses to encourage trade in environmental goods and services such as products used to generate renewable energy. In addition, the EU can also insert clauses in trade agreements requesting that third countries limit their economic support for fossil fuels and to instead invest in renewable energy. (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014). While this international commitment by the EU to addressing climate change is why the EU is seen by many as being world leaders in terms of implementing progressive climate change and energy policy there is still some way to go to ensure that countries beyond the borders of the EU also place climate change at the top of their agenda. (Tocci 2017).

## 2.4 Challenges for the EU : Europeanization v National agendas

In 1992 the Maastricht Treaty on European Union was ratified by twelve European nations, in the subsequent years there was much discussion on how a civilian diplomacy such as the EU could effectively influence the domestic policy of member states. Examples such as the First Gulf War or the conflict within Yugoslavia were cited by many theorists as early examples of how EU foreign policy was not effective enough to prevent or stop these conflicts. (Hill 1993). In the early years of the drive for European integration many academics examined the development of the European community in order to evaluate the potential for a European union to have a significant enough role in global affairs that could balance the domestic interests of member states with the emerging political outlooks of internationalisation or globalism. Bull (1982) for example felt that Europe would never become a cohesive enough political entity to have a role within international relations while others took the view that while European powers are disjointed in terms of integrated foreign policy they could still collectively have a role to play in international affairs. (Allen & Smith 1990). Whilst many of these academics acknowledged that the EU had an influence on international relations, they concluded that a lack of a coherent or cohesive foreign policy was limiting the influence of the EU and therefore a more unified approach from EU member states on foreign policy was required. (Dehousse 1991). Potential roles for the European community identified since the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 have included achieving the capability to intervene in global conflict and crisis in order to bring international stability as well as having the ability to bring stability to Europe, particularly eastern Europe, which was in political turmoil in the early 1990s following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The initial role that had been envisaged for the European community at its inception was to bring economic stability to Europe by managing world trade and providing a collective voice in international relations for western European nations. (Hill 1993). This role had clearly evolved by the later decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to also include a social aspect as the EU attempted to help countries in the developing world to deal with issues such as poverty, human rights and the environment. (Prodi 2000).

In order to achieve this ambition of being able to effectively address global issues the EU realised that it needed an effective foreign policy structure which would involve cohesion across member states on these key issues. Achieving agreement across EU member states on issues such as climate, energy and economics etc is an ambitious aim and one which has arguably led to unrealistic expectations on what the EU can be expected to achieve. There

have been many stumbling blocks to achieving a coherent EU foreign policy as member states cannot agree on many areas such as defence as some member states feel that for the EU to bring stability to conflict zones some form of unified EU military force is required. This has led to speculation as to the future relationship between NATO and the EU as the two organisations have become closer aligned since the end of the Cold War. (Allen et al 2021). The membership of the EU has also increased significantly since the Maastricht Treaty (1992) and with this the foreign policy interests of the EU have also expanded from merely economic interests to embrace wider political issues such as climate, energy, human rights, social justice and peace building etc, which has placed more importance on the EU being able to develop a cohesive foreign policy in order to address these various issues. (Manners 2002). In addition, it has also been argued that the post-cold war period enabled the EU to make progress in terms member state relations. (Merlingen et al 2001).

As stated previously many political theorists and students of international relations viewed the European Union at its inception as being a ‘civilian diplomacy’ and that due to the bloc’s lack of military power meant that the EU would have little or no effective role to play in international relations or global political issues. (Manners 2002). This hypothesis has been critiqued in recent years however as the EU has grown significantly as an actor on the international stage resulting in the EU playing a more significant role in influencing global politics and international relations. (Bayliss et al 2020). An example often cited of this is the fact that EU member states were able to agree a ‘Common European Security and Defence Policy’ in 1999 which showed a willingness by member states to work collectively on the world stage. (European Union 2021). Another example of how effective EU foreign policy can be, in terms of member states, is in relation to the abolition of the death penalty. Manners (2002) argued that in the early 1990s the death penalty was still prevalent within the legal systems of many European nations despite many of these nations having been signatories of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights within which members of the Council of Europe agreed to abolish the death penalty. The majority of these European states have however, post-Maastricht, abolished the death penalty leading Manners to conclude that the wider influence exerted by the EU on global issues such as human rights since the early 1990s influenced these states to abolish the death penalty. (Manners 2002). This is further evidenced within the Amsterdam Treaty (1997) which made specific reference to the protocol within the European Convention on Human Rights (1950) which states ‘*no-one shall be condemned to such penalty or executed*’. (European Union 1997) and which led to many European nations abolishing the death

penalty following the Amsterdam Treaty. The fact that European nations who had previously signed the European Convention on Human Rights only abolished the death penalty when compelled to do so by the EU within the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam illustrates the influence which the EU can exert over international relations as member states, 3<sup>rd</sup> countries and international organisations attempt to align themselves more closely with the policies of the EU. This process is commonly referred to as the process of Europeanization which is the term for the influence exerted by the European Union on its own members states in terms of domestic politics and policy decisions. (Saurugger & Radaelli 2008). Not everyone welcomes this ‘Europeanization’ however and there is growing evidence that not all member states prioritise EU policy over their own domestic needs or policy. The rise of nationalist parties within Europe which prioritise national agenda over European integration is becoming an increasing threat to the European Union aim of ‘enhance economic, social and territorial cohesion and solidarity among EU countries’ (Lake et al 2021). The effectiveness of European integration and therefore the continuing process of ‘Europeanization’ has been called into question by many academics who feel that the foreign policy of the EU which was viewed for many years as being a force for good within the international system is now viewed with scepticism by many member states due to competing interests and agendas in terms of the economy, migration and competition for energy resources. (Barbe 2019). An example of this slowing down of Europeanization in action is evident from the 2009 United Nations conference on climate change held in Copenhagen. It was clear at this conference that EU member states no longer spoke as one voice on the issue of climate change due to the many competing interests such as the economic cost of meeting climate change goals and the ongoing competition for energy resources. (Backstrand 2013).

While EU member states strive to work together to share the burden of meeting climate and energy targets, this concept of a ‘shared burden’ requires all member to states to work together to achieve their objectives with more powerful member states helping weaker member states to meet their targets, this is however not always the case. (Jordan et al 2010). As mentioned previously meeting climate change targets usually tend to conflict with both economic priorities and the availability of energy resources for states. (Tol 2019). Due to these factors EU member states tend to progress at different rates in terms of meeting EU policy within domestic legislation. Borzel (2002) formulated a framework for measuring the relative success of Europeanization in impacting on the domestic policy of member states. Borzel found that some member states adapt quicker in integrating EU

legislation within their domestic legislation than other member states and classified member states as being either ‘pace-setting’ (promoting EU policy), ‘foot-dragging’ (delaying implementation of EU policy within domestic legislation) or fence-sitting’ (neither promoting EU policy domestically nor delaying it) (Borzel 2002). Flouros & Maris (2021) used Borzel’s framework to evaluate how successful each EU member state has been in terms of implementing their National Energy & Climate Plans. The European Commission monitors the progress of each member state in achieving their NECP targets and will publish a progress report every two years. (European Union 2020). Flouros & Maris (2021) found a significant variance between the progress of member states in achieving their NECP targets and also in their strategies for doing so which are heavily influenced by each member states domestic priorities in regard to climate, energy and environmental issues leading to member states fluctuating between being pace setters, foot draggers or fence sitters, to use Borzel’s analogy, at any given time due to these factors. The political ideology of the prevalent government in each member state at the time was also found to be a factor, eg a left wing government is more likely to be pace setters in terms of meeting EU climate and energy policy. (Flouros & Maris 2021).

This variance by member states in meeting EU climate and energy policy is due therefore to the ongoing competition between Europeanization and domestic agenda particularly in regard to competition for global energy resources from developing nations such as India and China which is leading EU member states to prioritise their own national interests above the wider ‘shared burden’ agenda of the European Union. (Phillips 2012). The EU is therefore arguably in a crisis situation currently, not only in terms of climate and energy but also in terms of the effectiveness of EU foreign policy within global politics. (Zaki 2008). In addition the Brexit referendum vote of 2016 which resulted in the United Kingdom leaving the European Union will also have long lasting ramifications for the balance of power in Europe, not least in terms of a change within the power dynamics of the EU. (Taylor 2017). The significance of this will change the dynamics of the EU and the relationship between member states in the years to come and in particular the foreign policy of the EU. (Oliver 2018). As Youngs (2018) has argued the European Union potential needs to ‘reinvent’ itself to survive this post-Brexit environment to combat the rise of populist right wing parties within member states and the resulting stagnation of the process of European integration and the ‘Europeanization’ of member state domestic policy. It is against this backdrop that this thesis examines the relationship between EU climate and energy policies and EU foreign policy and security.

## **Chapter 3 -Research Methodology**

### **3.1 The Research**

The research question being addressed is what is the impact of EU climate and energy policies on the EU's foreign policy and security. In terms of the research design process it is important to follow a transparent, scientific approach to all research processes when examining various aspects of the topic critically. This approach is laid out methodically within the contents of this thesis. Based on the literature review outlined in the previous chapter the hypothesis proposed is that the relationship between current EU foreign policy tools and EU climate and energy policies make a coherent cohesive EU foreign policy on climate policy and energy security problematic and difficult to achieve.

#### **S.M.A.R.T. Objectives:**

- To outline and analyze current EU climate and energy policies.
- To give an overview of EU foreign policy and security citing specific examples and case studies.
- To analyze, using both qualitative and quantitative data sources, the impact of EU climate and energy policies on EU foreign policy and security.
- To conclude to what extent EU climate and energy policies are problematic in enabling the EU to formulate a cohesive foreign policy and energy security strategy.

### **3.2 The Main Research Question**

The context for the research proposal is the current global climate crisis and the subsequent climate change and energy policy formulated by the European Union to tackle this climate crisis and the impact that these policies are subsequently having on EU foreign policy and EU energy security. The research focusses on identifying EU climate and energy policies, defining the EU foreign policy framework and examining how successful these climate and energy policies have been in persuading member states to enact domestic legislation to meet targets outlined in the policies. Analysis of the effectiveness of these policies on EU member states helps to form a conclusion on their impacts on the effectiveness of the EU to develop a foreign policy and energy security strategy for the EU as a collective.

A number of research sub-questions to help answer the main research question have been outlined below;

- What is the existing climate change and energy policy of the EU?
- What is the existing foreign policy of the EU?
- Has the ongoing conflict in Ukraine post-February 2022 impacted on either of the topics above?
- To what extent has this existing EU climate change and energy policy been effective in achieving its objectives?
- Have these policies had any measurable impact on third countries in terms of energy policy and climate change mitigation and adaptation?
- To what extent has EU integration been successful at the highest level?

### **3.3 Methodology**

The research is positioned in relation to the existing body of literature on the topic of EU climate and energy policy and EU foreign policy in order to build on previous research done on the research question which will identify gaps and issues that have not been previously covered by research within the topic area which will provide a justification for this new research question (Kuada, 2012). This will involve taking a systematic approach to the research question by firstly completing an extensive literature review of the existing research on the topic which will determine what relevant research information already exists. This will provide a theoretical background to the research question and enable the thesis to build upon previous research within the area of EU climate change and energy policy. The purpose of the literature review is to provide a deeper understanding of the research area in order to identify established theories and identify any possible gaps in the existing literature on the research topic (Kumar 2019). These existing theories which are examined within the literature review can explain the context of certain situations which can then be examined and tested in more detail within the thesis research (Van Evera 1997).

The hypothesis, outlined above, will be tested via an evidence-based approach through the gathering and analysis of data. This will involve the analysis of data on the topic in order

to support the hypothesis. Determining the most appropriate method and the type of data to be collated will depend on the specific question or topic being researched, in this case the data being collated will be both qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative data involves content analysis of policy documents and secondary source material while using quantitative data will involve analysis of numbers and statistics. Case studies will also be used within the methodology such as the current conflict in the Ukraine. While some researchers feel that case studies are not a good research tool to use due to the number of uncontrolled variables within a given case study which can lead to analysis of results which are too specific to individual cases meaning the data is no good for drawing general conclusions on a topic other researchers find that the case study approach is useful in allowing for a number of observations to be made. (Van Evera 1997).

The research process will also provide clarity as to where the research data has come from and it is important to define the various types of source material used (Kumar 2019). In addition to the collection of data via qualitative and quantitative methods both these methods can be incorporated into a mixed method approach of data collection. Whether to use both quantitative and qualitative methods in the research study is determined by both the research question and the opinion of the researcher. A 'purist' researcher may reject the mixed method combination of using both the quantitative and qualitative methods when studying a research question while other researchers feel that using both quantitative and qualitative methods complement each other and are therefore keen to combine both quantitative and qualitative methods as they feel such an approach will provide more comprehensive results. (Kuada 2012).

In terms of the thesis study area a mixed method data collective approach would seem to be the most practical to adopt when researching the relationship between EU Climate & Energy Policies and EU Foreign Policy & Security as it allows for comparative analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data which will give more robust answers to the research question as the mixed method approach gives more in depth data analysis allowing the research student to address various aspects of a research topic when testing # their hypothesis (Surbhi 2019). While many aspects of any given research topic can be satisfactorily analysed using quantitative data other aspects of the same research topic can be analysed in more depth by using a qualitative data collection method. The adoption of a mixed method data collection process allows for the usage of both quantitative and qualitative data giving more robust results. The understanding and interpretation of a



concept or a perception for example will vary from one commentator to another and the researcher must therefore be aware of this potential bias. (Lamont 2015). In the case of analysing data on the European Union the researcher must be aware if the source material has a built in bias of being either pro-European Union or anti-European Union, this is particularly prevalent in recent publications given the rise of populist parties within the EU with national agendas and also the recent Brexit vote in the UK. In addition a recent EU law on data protection, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU Commission 2018) which is an EU regulation which applies to the protection of private individuals' data and which impacts on governments and companies within the EU in terms of what data they can make publicly available. The complex nature of EU policy and legislation must also be considered when analysing EU foreign policy in terms of the processes involved in agreeing policy and the relationship between the various EU institutions and bodies. (Georgakakis & De Lassalle 2012). Measuring the impact of global emissions on the environment and therefore on climate economics and policy is also quite complex as there has been intense debate and ongoing revisions within the scientific community on the relative impact of greenhouse gases and their role in climate change. (Fusheng & Han 2021) and so the various bias within scientific source material on climate change impacts must also be considered when analysing data. The analysis of the data will form the basis of the conclusion which will determine if the hypothesis as outlined above has been proven or not. (Swetnam 1997). In order to make analysis of the data clear and easy to understand it will be presented in both text and table form in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 4 – Analysis of Research**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Based on the literature review outlined in the previous chapter the hypothesis formulated is that the relationship between current EU foreign policy tools and EU climate and energy policies make a coherent cohesive EU foreign policy on climate policy and energy security problematic and difficult to achieve. A number of research sub-questions to help answer the main research question have therefore been outlined and analysed below;

### **4.2 What is the existing climate change and energy policy of the EU?**

The research has identified and outlined the existing climate change and energy policy of the EU in terms of policy contained within EU treaties and legislative documents, particularly in regard to the National Climate and Energy Plans (NECPs) which each EU member state must develop and deliver by 2030. This chapter examines the content of these NECPs and evaluates to what extent each member state has genuinely attempted to meet the targets as outlined by the EU. The EU commission assessment of each member states NECP has been used in this regard as has existing secondary research papers on the topic.

As previously outlined EU member states are required by the EU to establish a 10-year NECP for the period from 2021 to 2030 in order to meet the EU's energy and climate targets for 2030. The 2020 EU-wide assessment report on the National Energy and Climate Plans states that *“the assessment shows that Member States are accelerating their energy and climate transition driven by the EU wide objective of climate neutrality”* (European Union 2020). Member States submitted their draft NECPs for the period 2021-2030 to the EU Commission in 2018 which were then analysed by the EU Commission with specific recommendations published in June 2019. On 17 September 2020, the EU Commission published a detailed EU-wide assessment of the final NECPs and the extent to which they have addressed the various targets set out within EU energy and climate targets for 2030 which have been summarised in the table below;

Table 1 : Analysis of EU Member States National Climate & Energy Plans

Member State	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Renewable Energy	Energy Efficiency	Energy Security
Austria	Partially addressed	Largely addressed	Partially addressed	Not addressed
Belgium	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Largely addressed
Bulgaria	Largely addressed	Largely addressed	Partially addressed	Largely addressed
Croatia	Partially addressed	Not addressed	Not addressed	Not addressed
Cyprus	Largely addressed	Partially addressed	Largely addressed	Largely addressed
Czech Rep.	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Not addressed	Partially addressed
Denmark	Has not addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Not addressed
Estonia	Largely addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed
Finland	Partially addressed	Largely addressed	Partially addressed	Largely addressed
France	Largely addressed	Largely addressed	Largely addressed	Not addressed
Germany	Fully addressed	Largely addressed	Largely addressed	Partially addressed
Greece	Partially addressed	Largely addressed	Partially addressed	Largely addressed
Hungary	Largely addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed
Ireland	Largely addressed	Largely addressed	Partially addressed	Fully addressed
Italy	Largely addressed	Largely addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed
Latvia	Has not addressed	Partially addressed	Largely addressed	Partially addressed
Lithuania	Largely addressed	Largely addressed	Largely addressed	Largely addressed
Luxembourg	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed
Malta	Has not addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed
Netherlands	Largely addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed
Poland	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Largely addressed
Portugal	Partially addressed	Largely addressed	Largely addressed	Largely addressed
Romania	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Largely addressed
Slovakia	Has not addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed
Slovenia	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Partially addressed	Largely addressed
Spain	Partially addressed	Largely addressed	Partially addressed	Fully addressed
Sweden	Partially addressed	Largely addressed	Partially addressed	Largely addressed

Source : Flouros & Maris (2021).

The EU 2030 climate and energy framework key targets for 2030 are as follows;

- At least 40% cuts in greenhouse gas emissions (from 1990 levels)
- At least 32% share for renewable energy

- At least 32.5% improvement in energy efficiency. (European Union 2021).

The data outlined in Table 1 above shows that only one member state has fully addressed greenhouse gas emission targets in their NECP, no member states have fully addressed these renewable energy targets in their NECP and no member states have fully addressed energy efficiency targets within their NECP. While a number of member states have been seen to have ‘largely addressed’ these targets, (9 member states in terms of greenhouse gas emission targets, 12 member states in terms of renewable energy targets, 6 member states in terms of energy efficiency and 11 member states in terms of energy security) these ‘ratings’ are based on projections and assumptions that various domestic policies and legislation will be introduced in these member states (European Union 2020). The majority of member states have however either only ‘partially addressed’ or in some cases ‘have not addressed’ these key EU 2030 climate and energy framework targets within their National Energy and Climate Plans which highlights a very significance variance in terms of progress by EU member states in achieving these 2030 targets and in how they intend to implement strategies to do so. (Flouros & Maris 2021). These statistics would seem to suggest that EU climate and energy policy targets are not being translated by member states into feasible and achievable targets by 2030.

The 2020 EU-wide assessment report on the National Energy and Climate Plans published by the EU Commission acknowledges that gaps remain but that, “*The shortcomings and remaining gaps emerging from this EU wide assessment will have to be addressed through a collective effort both by Member States and at EU-level..... action at national level will be reinforced and complemented by further policy measures at EU level, to close the remaining gap*” (European Union 2020). This somewhat optimistic outlook adopted by the EU Commission in terms of the achievability of the 2030 targets based on the NECPs does not seem to take account of other variables such as national priorities, fluctuating energy crisis issues or changing political ideologies within member states domestic governments, so while the EU Commission can argue that the targets set within the NECPs are still achievable a great many variables still exist which could limit the effectiveness of the NECPs and to quote an old English proverb, ‘there is many a slip between cup and lip’.

### 4.3 What is the existing foreign policy of the EU?

The existing foreign policy of the EU has been examined and evaluated using primary EU sources and existing secondary research papers. In particular the extent to which the EU has an effective cohesive foreign policy framework or if national agenda and self-interest from member states means achieving the EU goal of European integration at a high level remains elusive has been examined. Chapter 2 of this thesis outlined a number of EU foreign policy tools such as the EU the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), established under the Maastricht Treaty (1992) and the attempts by the EU to extend to centralise foreign policy structures under the Lisbon Treaty (2007) through the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) for example. These policies and tools were introduced by the EU as it was generally accepted by member states that the EU had failed to implement a coherent foreign policy due not only to a lack of will in certain instances by member states but also as a result of poor governing arrangements between member states foreign ministries within the EU political system and to tackle problematic and divisive issues such as climate change and energy security a more effective foreign policy structure for the EU was required. The effectiveness of these foreign policy tools in practice will now be examined.

Article 24 of the Treaty of the European Union covers the foreign and security policy of the EU, specifically the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and states that “*The Member states shall support the Union’s external and security policy actively and unreservedly in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity*”. (European Union 2012). Article 24 goes on to state that “*The Court of Justice of the European Union shall not have jurisdiction with respect to these provisions*” (European Union 2012). The European Court of Justice oversees the application and enforcement of EU law and so the fact that the CFSP cannot be enforced within the Court of Justice would seem to make this foreign policy tool non-binding on member states, the language of Article 24 which refers to the implementation of external and security policy in ‘a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity’ which also seem to suggest the non-binding nature of the CFSP and Article 24. This point is further emphasised when we consider the fact that the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs, a role established by the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) has no legal or political control over member states. (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014).

The European External Action Service (EEAS) established under the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) is the diplomatic service of the EU and assists the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs as mentioned above and works closely with the foreign ministries of EU member states, the European Commission, European Parliament, European Council and external agencies such as the United Nations (European Union 2021). It has been argued though that the intention of EU member states when establishing the EEAS and the other foreign policy reforms under the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) was not to allow the EU more control over member states foreign policy but to strengthen the EU structures available to support the existing foreign policy ministries of member states (Maurer & Wright 2021). The independent recruitment of staff to the EEAS by the EU directly rather than taking staff from members states foreign ministries does however give the EEAS some level of independent administrative capacity. (Murdoch et al 2014). In this respect the introduction of the EEAS can be said to have addressed the issue of poor governance arrangements and diplomatic tools within the EU system to allow member states foreign policy ministries to co-operate closely together.

However, despite these relative successes in establishing the EEAS and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs, achieving a coherent EU foreign policy continues to be problematic for the EU especially due to disagreements within member states over how best to deal with foreign policy issues such as Russia, the continued rise of China, issues in the Middle East and the global economic crisis. (Friis & Juncos 2019). EU member states are also aware however that they cannot address these foreign policy issues and threats on an individual basis and that it is imperative that they act together on these issues to achieve the objective of a coherent foreign policy on the role to be played by the EU in these matters and how that role is to be successfully implemented. (Solana 2016). The implementation of climate change and energy policy being a key issue which EU member states must commit to taking a concerted cohesive approach to addressing. While the National Energy and Climate Plans of member states, discussed above, represent a step towards this, a more coherent foreign policy is clearly required in order to implement them effectively if the EU is to achieve 2030 targets for climate and energy.

#### **4.4 The effectiveness of EU climate change and energy policy**

This research sub-question involves analysis of the figures and data in terms of the implementation of EU climate targets in each member state and also analysis of energy usage within member states in terms of percentage of fossil fuel usage versus renewable energy sources. This will help illustrate the impact of EU climate and energy policies within member states.

The EU aims to be climate-neutral by 2050 aiming for an economy with net-zero greenhouse gas emissions (European Union 2019). Analysis of some recent statistics and publications helps analyse the extent to which the EU is on target with this. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which is an intergovernmental body established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), recently published “Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability Working Group II Contribution” (IPCC, 2022) which gives an up to date assessment of the observed impacts and projected risks of climate change as well as analysis of progress against climate change adaptation. This IPCC report identifies a number of key risks to Europe from climate change including a risk of increased global warming levels, risk of increased mortality, ecosystem disruptions, water scarcity in some areas and increased risks of flood impact on both the economy and infrastructure. (IPCC, 2022). Despite these stark warnings the report does acknowledge that through a number of increased policy frameworks including increased economic investment in climate change mitigation the EU has introduced a number of climate change adaptation measures within both the public and private sectors and implemented a number of policy measures designed to build resilience and address the climate change risks outlined in the IPCC report. (IPCC, 2022). One key EU target to achieving climate neutrality by 2050 is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels and statistics released by the EU have estimated that between 2004 and 2019 the EU reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 19.8% (European Union 2020), so while significant progress has been made there is still a long way to go to meet the 55% minimum target by 2050.

One key climate change adaptation target of the EU designed to meet greenhouse gas emission targets, and which is highlighted in the National Energy and Climate Plans is for increased usage of renewable energy with the EU Renewable Energy Directive setting a

target of 32% renewable energy targets by 2030. (European Union 2009). The 2021 EU monitoring report on progress towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) gives an update on the extent to which the EU is on course to achieve this target by updating on renewable energy usage levels within member states with some interesting results highlighted in the table below.

Table 2. EU Progress towards Sustainable Development Goal Targets

<b>Climate Change Mitigation/Impact</b>	<b>Status on Progress towards SDG Targets</b>
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Insufficient progress towards EU targets
Share of Renewable Energy in Energy Consumption	Significant progress over the past 15 years towards EU targets.  Moderate progress over the past 5 years towards EU targets
Climate related economic losses	Movement away from EU targets

Source : European Union (2021).

This monitoring information published by the EU in 2021 would seem to confirm that the EU is still behind in terms of progress in towards meeting 2050 greenhouse gas emission targets and that while progress in meeting renewable energy targets has increased it has begun to slow over the past five years. Recent statistics published by the EU statistics and data office Eurostat would seem to confirm this with current energy sources within the EU published as being made up of 35% petroleum products (including crude oil) (35 %), natural gas (24 %), renewable energy (17 %), nuclear energy (13 %) and solid fossil fuels (12 %). (Eurostat 2021).

Analysis of these energy sources within EU member states as published by Eurostat show considerable variety amongst member states with geographic energy clusters emerging such as usage of petroleum products prevalent in southern Europe and the Mediterranean, renewables in northern Europe, nuclear energy in western Europe and solid fossil fuels in eastern Europe. (Eurostat 2021). These statistics highlight the role that national agenda



and regional energy security issues play within the wider context of EU climate change and energy policy.

#### **4.5 The impact of EU climate change and energy policies on third countries.**

The impact of EU climate and energy policy has been examined in terms of trade agreements with third countries. In order to implement climate and energy policy outside European member states the EU attempts to influence the climate and energy policies of other countries through influence within trade agreements by inserting a Trade and Sustainable Development clause which covers areas such as renewable energy, protection for the environment, biodiversity and limiting the use of fossil fuels and also wider issues such as human rights and employment legislation.

The research has examined these trade agreements to evaluate how effective these Trade and Sustainable Development clauses have been and by extension therefore the success of EU climate and energy policies in effecting EU foreign policy. At present the EU has a number of Trade and Sustainable Development clauses in force with a variety of third countries including Canada, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Georgia, Japan, Moldova, Singapore, South Korea, Ukraine, the United Kingdom & Vietnam. (European Union 2022). In 2022 the EU Commission published “The Power of Trade Partnerships : Together for Green and Just Economic Growth” (European Union 2022) which outlined that these Trade and Sustainable Development clauses are legally binding and can be enforced by the EU based on ‘engagement through dialogue and cooperation’. (European Union 2022). In addition The EU Commission have also proposed the possibility to extend trade sanctions in cases where a third country has failed to comply with the aims and objectives of the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change which aims to limit global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels. (European Union 2022). In addition to these Trade and Sustainable Development clauses the EU also attempts to influence the climate and energy policies of third countries via funding for trans-national co-operation programmes between EU member states and third countries. An example of this is within INTERREG programmes such as the Northern Periphery & Arctic Programme which encourages trans-national co-operation between EU member states Finland, Sweden and Ireland with non-EU member states Norway, Iceland the Faroe

Islands and Greenland. These INTERREG programmes provide a framework for regions to work together with a strong focus on promoting sustainable development and increasing the capacity of these regions for climate change capacity and resource efficiency and has been quite successful in terms of investing funding into successful co-operation programmes which address renewable energy and climate change adaptation (Dalsgard 2020).

The extent to which the EU has however been successful in extending regulatory reach to third countries is still debatable. For example, a challenge which the EU faced in terms of the expansion and inclusion of EU membership to a number of states in Eastern Europe was the dependence which these states have on Russian energy and the increased costs which these states would subsequently face to incorporate EU green energy targets into their national policies. (Schunz 2015). One solution for this was the establishment, by the EU, in 2006 of the Energy Community Treaty which attempted to create an internal market in electricity and natural gas between all EU member states and six European states in the Balkans, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo. The lack of any effective enforcement powers of this Energy Community Treaty has however made it difficult for the EU to regulate or influence energy policy in this region. (Schunz 2015).

Some of the third countries with which the EU has Trade and Sustainable Development agreements in place with also appear on the United Nations 'State of the Climate' list (United Nations 2021) as being amongst the largest emitters of greenhouse gas emissions with Japan for example responsible for 2.57% of emissions, Canada 1.54% and South Korea 1.53% while Vietnam has had one of the biggest increases in greenhouse gas emissions since 1990 rising by a staggering 305% (United Nations 2021). To put these statistics in context however the worlds largest emitters of greenhouse gas emissions are still China (27.79%), the United States (12.74%), India (7.32%) and Russia (4.68%). (United Nations 2021). The fact that these third countries are so reliant on trade agreements with the EU means that these Trade and Sustainable Development agreements between the EU and third countries can be very effective in implementing change desired by the EU within these countries in regard to a variety of issues including climate and energy policy and as such can be viewed as effective foreign policy tools. (Keukeleire & Delreux 2014).

A recent research study on Comparative Analysis of Trade and Sustainable Development Provisions in Free Trade Agreements published by the London School of Economics and Political Science (2022) found that the majority of the third countries studied included provisions on climate change and renewable energy targets and that while stronger economies such as Japan and Australia have resisted too much regulatory interference and while enforcement practices vary across countries Trade and Sustainable Development clauses can in many cases lead to environmental reforms. (Velut 2022). The fact that the EU represents the largest market in the world means that climate and energy policy clauses within trade agreements with countries who wish to enter that marketplace can be very effective tools for the EU to influence both the foreign and domestic policy of these countries.

#### **4.6 Has the ongoing conflict in Ukraine post-February 2022 impacted on EU Climate Change and Energy Policy?**

The 2022 conflict in Ukraine has been used as a case study to determine if the energy crisis which Europe is now suffering from has had any effect on member states in terms of their desire to meet EU NECP and climate change targets or if the conflict has impacted on foreign policy of the EU or of individual member states. The conflict could potentially galvanise EU member state opinion and desire to develop new renewable energy sources in order to escape reliance on Russian oil and natural gas, or alternatively it could fragment EU member state opinion on the topic with some states potentially prioritising short term economic needs and reverting to fossil fuels or seeking an accord with Russia to secure energy resources.

Since coming to power in Russia in 2000 Vladimir Putin has drastically changed the economic and political landscape in Russia. Primarily through natural resource extraction of oil and gas he has strengthened the economy. (Sauvageot 2020). This economic strengthening then laid the basis for a stronger foreign policy which was designed to resist the perceived advances of NATO into eastern Europe. He did so by strengthening and revitalising the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) which had been formed in 1992 consisting of fractional states of the former Soviet Union in Eurasia such as Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (Maulidia 2017). Under Vladimir Putin Russia has also strengthened military

co-operation and ties with these states and the policies of Vladimir Putin which were initially viewed as being only economic reforms within Russia and not any attempt to change the balance of power in the region are now subsequently being viewed as President Putin strengthening Russia economically as part of a longer-term strategy of power expansion within Eastern Europe. (Natsios 2018). Key to this economic strengthening has been the export of natural oil and gas to European Union member states.

In 2020 the EU imported 29% of its oil resources from Russia and 43% of its natural gas resources. (European Union 2021). A breakdown of the top % energy imports from Russia per member state (oil and natural gas) is outlined in the table below;

Table 3 : Percentage of EU Energy imports from Russia per member state

<b>Member State</b>	<b>% of Oil imported from Russia (2020)</b>	<b>% of Natural Gas imported from Russia (2020)</b>
Austria	5.8%	86%
Belgium	22.2%	14%
Bulgaria	8%	79%
Czech Rep.	29.1%	55%
Estonia	32%	12%
Finland	66.8%	75%
France	13.3%	15%
Germany	29.7%	49%
Greece	26.3%	64%
Hungary	44.6%	61%
Ireland	4.7%	10%
Italy	12.5%	38%
Latvia	20.3%	93%
Lithuania	68.8%	27%
Netherlands	21%	11%
Poland	67.5%	50%
Romania	32.8%	24%
Slovakia	78.4%	68%
Slovenia	8.9%	60%

Source : Statista (2022).

The table above highlights the huge dependence the EU has on Russian fossil fuels imports and so the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022 was likely to significantly impact on a number of EU member states climate change and energy policies. In response to this invasion of Ukraine by Russia the EU adopted a number of economic sanctions on Russia over the course of 2022 that have included a ban on the import of certain crude oil and petroleum products into the EU from Russia and a price cap on

imports on other energy sources from Russia. It is estimated that by the end of 2022 these sanctions will cover almost 90% of Russian oil imports into the EU. (European Union 2022). In response to this Russia cut off access to the Nord Stream gas pipeline which supplies natural gas to many EU member states, including Germany, by initially limiting natural gas exports by Russian state-owned energy company Gazprom, via the Nord Stream pipeline, and then finally closing access to the pipeline completely in late 2022. (Nord Stream 2022). The result of these various sanctions by the EU and counter measures adopted by Russia was increasingly spiraling energy costs within the EU and a call from EU political leaders for EU member states to move away from fossil fuels in order to decrease the dependence on Russian oil and natural gas imports. This led to the EU publishing their 'REPowerEU plan for more affordable, secure and sustainable energy' which outlines measures to reduce Russian fossil fuel imports through the production of increased renewable energy sources and improved infrastructure by 2030 which will involve an initial investment of approximately €12billion. (European Union 2022).

While the Russian invasion of Ukraine has undoubtedly increased the desire of the EU to speed up the green transition in order to achieve 2030 climate and energy targets the cost involved in achieving this could be problematic for many EU member states. This has led to some EU member states, such as France, Austria, Greece, Germany, Poland and the Netherlands using their own fossil fuel resources such as coal to meet the short-term pressures of energy supply and security. (Europe Beyond Coal 2022). This obviously contradicts the commitments made in the National Climate and Energy Plans of these member states and once again emphasizes the difficulty the EU has in achieving a coherent cohesive policy on climate change and energy security. While the long terms effects of the war in Ukraine should lead to increased renewable energy production the short term effects have led to an energy crisis which has encouraged increased fossil fuel production and potentially threatened EU 2030 climate and energy targets being met.

#### **4.7 To what extent has EU integration been successful at the highest level?**

The question on how successful the EU has been in achieving European integration is a key one in terms of the research question and must be analysed within the context of the ongoing friction between Europeanisation and the national self-interest of member states. The EU in its current guise is the culmination of the post-war process of European

integration which started in earnest with the Treaty of Rome in 1957. The research question on the relationship between EU climate and energy policy and EU foreign policy and security must be examined within the overall context on the success of the European integration project. In this regards the effectiveness of EU climate and energy policy and legislation being implemented domestically by member states and the recent rise of populist national parties will be examined to determine if Europe is currently more unified or more disjointed than in previous decades.

The reasons for these recent criticisms and attacks on the EU system and other international liberal organisations are due to the rise in nationalism, populism and anti-globalism within western democracies. Examples such as the election of Donald Trump as President of the USA with the ‘America First’ mantra and the UK decision to leave the EU for similar reasons which both occurred in 2016 precipitated political attacks on institutions such as the World Trade Organisation and European Union by both the UK and USA. (Lake et al 2021). This rise in populism and nationalism is eroding the global liberal values of organisations such as the European Union with a more insular approach being adopted by these nations. As referenced, the 2016 UK decision to leave the EU is the biggest challenge to European integration faced by the EU but it is not the first. The attempt at monetary union by the EU in the 1990s, for example, with the introduction of the Euro was resisted by a number of member states, most notably the UK, Sweden and Denmark with a total of seven EU member states currently not using the Euro. (Tsoukalis 2016).

Since 1972, there have been 58 referendums in Europe on EU matters regarding membership, treaty ratification and policy issues, 44 of the 58 referendums were called by EU Member States while the other 14 referendums were called in non-EU countries on EU issues which affected them. (European Parliament 2022). The 2022 publication by the European Parliamentary Research Service entitled “Referendums on EU issues Fostering civic engagement” acknowledges that while the majority of these referendums concerned membership of the EU a number of more recent referendums have concerned national self-interest and whether member states should follow certain EU policies at a domestic level. Examples cited include the 2005 rejection of the proposed constitution for the EU by France and the Netherlands, the rejection of the Lisbon Treaty by Ireland in 2008, and subsequent approval in 2009 when it was put back to the Irish electorate, the 2015 referendum on the EU bail out proposals in Greece and the 2016 referendum on the EU

resettlement scheme for refugees which was rejected by Hungary which both Hungary and Slovakia took legal action against the EU over. (European Parliament 2022). These various referendums highlight the difficulty which a 27 member state EU has in terms of integrating all these member states to agree on various policy issues at international level.

Despite these difficulties the EU has demonstrated the ability to act as one voice on the international stage in regard to various trade agreements with countries outside the EU bloc and in this respect can argue that the European integration project is working. To support this point of view analysis of research recently published by The Pew Research Center based in Washington, D.C. of surveys of citizens from 19 countries, from both within the EU and from further afield which states that 69% of those surveyed had a favourable opinion of the EU while 27% had an unfavourable opinion. Ten of the countries surveyed were from within the EU with 72% of those surveyed in these member states expressing a favourable view of the EU. (Pew Research Center 2022). This data arguably illustrates that at a citizen level the EU is still viewed positively and has an important role to play in international relations as outlined within Article 3 of the Treaty of the European Union in offering “*its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice*” (European Union 2012). The goal of achieving agreement amongst member state governments on how best to, “*achieve sustainable development based on balanced economic growth and price stability and a highly competitive market economy with full employment and social progress*” (European Union 2012), being more problematic.

One test for how effective the EU is in terms of integrating policy across the EU bloc, at a governmental level, is the extent to which EU policy is adhered to in member states and how strong the EU is in enforcing policy and legislation. In terms of climate change policy and targets the 2016 EU communication law ‘Better results through better application’ explains how the commission ensures “*the application, implementation and enforcement of EU law for the benefit of all citizens and businesses*”. (European Union 2016). The European Green Deal in 2019 extended enforcement initiatives to ensure that EU legislation and policies relevant to the Green Deal are enforced and effectively implemented in EU member states. (European Union 2019). If the EU is to meet climate and energy targets by 2030 then it is important that the EU is able to ensure that member states effectively implement their National Climate & Energy Plans. Under Article 258 of the Treaty of the European Union if the EU Commission is made aware that a member state has infringed EU law then the EU can initiate a formal enforcement process against

that member state which can culminate with taking that member state in front of the Court of Justice of the European Union. While these enforcement powers seem effective the reality is that the Court of Justice of the European Union gives considerable discretion to the EU Commission in terms of how they deal with infringements of EU law to such an extent that issues can drag on unresolved for years (Krämer 2014). The EU Commission states that its policy on environmental compliance assurance involves working closely with and supporting member states to ensure that national authorities promote and enforce compliance with EU environmental laws effectively but that ultimately the implementation of these environmental laws rests with the member states national government. (European Union 2022). Critics of this approach would argue that this merely involves the EU giving member states a series of rules to follow none of which are legally binding and if they break these rules due to short term national self-interest there will be limited repercussions from the EU. (Fisher et al 2013). Without effective enforcement provision it is difficult to see how the integration of EU climate change and energy policy will work at a European level as member states will continue to implement their National Climate and Energy Plans with varying levels of commitment and effectiveness as has been demonstrated in Section 4.2 above. One counter argument to this in support of European integration is that the more influence EU member states have on developing EU policy then the fewer problems they will have when implementing it, making the need for enforcement by the EU less likely and therefore this approach of Europeanization should lead to a less problematic more integrated EU (Borzal 2002). At present it would therefore seem that EU integration has worked well up to a point on common areas of cooperation but on more contentious issues such as climate policy and energy policy, while there is agreement on long term objectives, the speed of development in reaching these objectives varies across member states as a result of national agenda and self-interest and the goal of the EU of achieving European integration at a high level, where member states put the best interests of the EU as a whole above their own national interests, is still some way short of being achieved.

## **4.8 Conclusion**

While it is therefore clear from the available research information that the EU has put in place a number of policies that are designed to meet 2030 climate change and energy targets it seems that the effective implementation of these policies is being curtailed by a variety of factors including the national interests of member states, lack of enforcement tools and external influences such as the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. This is emphasized



in The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) “Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability Working Group II Contribution” report which states that, “*Although adaptation is happening across Europe, it is not implemented at the scale, depth and speed needed to avoid the risks*” (IPCC 2022). An example of this is the fact that while usage of fossil fuels in Europe has decreased by 10.9% from 1990 levels fossil fuels still make up 71% of energy usage in the EU (Eurostat 2021). The EU is collectively moving towards their set targets but arguably not quickly enough due to the factors outlined above. Challenges still include the ongoing competition between Europeanization and national interests and the lack of an effective EU foreign policy that is enforceable or at least fully embraced by all EU member states.

## Chapter 5 – Conclusion

The preceding chapters have illustrated that the relationship between EU climate and energy policies and EU foreign policy and security is an extremely complex one. Dealing with climate change is arguably the single biggest challenge facing society over the next number of decades as addressing climate change involves managing the complex dynamics between science and economics, energy, new technologies, socio-cultural issues and public policy. (Incropera 2016). The ongoing global climate crisis will therefore dominate international relations for many decades to come and therefore for international organisations such as the European Union will require a raft of wide-ranging policies and partnerships with other stakeholders and actors within the wider global framework of international relations in order to be effective. (Wallas 2022).

The EU has for a number of decades attempted to exert some influence over member states in terms of climate and energy policy. This process has culminated in the current National Climate and Energy Plans (NECPs) which each EU member state must develop and deliver by 2030. These NECPs are designed to meet the quite ambitious targets set by the EU of a 40% cut in greenhouse gas emissions (from 1990 levels), a 32% share for renewable energy and a 32.5% improvement in energy efficiency all to be achieved by 2030. While these targets are ambitious the data analysed in Chapter 4 shows that the EU have begun to make significant strides towards meeting these targets but that this progress has slowed over the past few years. The reasons for this slowing down in progress towards achieving the 2030 targets lies in the complex relationship between the implementation of climate change policy and the economic ramifications of this combined with other external factors which influence the delivery of the NECPs which include national agenda, fluctuating energy crisis and financial crisis which all play a part, again illustrating the complex relationship between EU climate and energy policies and EU foreign policy and security. The fact that so many of the EU member states have not sufficiently addressed the targets within their NECPs is worrying for those who hope that the EU will reach their 2030 climate and energy targets.

The general lack of significant progress with NECPs targets across the EU calls into question the effectiveness of EU foreign policy when dealing with member states. While the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the subsequent establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) has strengthened the coherence of the EU's

foreign policy structures it seems to be ineffective in enforcing the delivery of the NECPs by member states. This lack of enforcement by the EU is a major stumbling block towards achieving the 2030 climate and energy targets. The fact that the EU's High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs has no legal or political control or jurisdiction over member states and in addition the fact that Article 258 of the Treaty of the European Union, which gives the EU Commission enforcement powers to take a member state to the EU Court of Justice, is rarely used makes it extremely difficult of the EU to put an effective coherent climate change and energy policy in place as there are too many variables which affect the delivery of these policies. In terms of enforcement of EU policy on EU member states however there is a fine line to be drawn as too much interference in the domestic governance of member states may not be taken kindly with the memory of the Brexit vote in the UK in 2016 still fresh in the minds of EU policy makers. The research in Chapter 4 has shown however that EU foreign policy in terms of climate change has been reasonably effective on third countries outside the EU with the introduction of Trade and Sustainable Development clauses within trade agreements which requires these third countries to implement green energy targets within their national policies. Many of these countries are financially very reliant on the EU for trade agreements and so have made an effort (with in many cases EU financial assistance) to implement these green energy targets. This 'trade agreement encouragement' to implement green energy targets does not work however for EU member states who already have free trade within the EU and in terms of national finance could find themselves significantly worse off should they fully implement their NECPs as per EU policy. The financial implications of implementing climate change and green energy policy have become more evident in recent years which is a key factor in causing the slowing down of progress across the EU in meeting 2030 climate and energy targets.

Another factor which has affected the implementation of EU climate and energy policies is the lack of stability in eastern Europe in recent years due to the foreign policy of Russia, the interaction of Russia with EU member states and the dependence of a number of EU member states on Russian oil and gas. While political instability and energy security in eastern Europe have been issues since the 2014 conflict between Russia and Ukraine (Sauvageot 2020) and the foreign policy of Russia long highlighted as a potential threat to energy security in the EU (Pantelis et al 2018) the current conflict in the Ukraine initiated by the Russian invasion on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022 seems to have taken the EU by surprise and left the bloc unprepared for the energy security crisis which has subsequently ensued. The

statistics outlined in Chapter 4 illustrate the dependence of the EU on Russian oil and natural gas and how vulnerable EU member states are in terms of energy security, particularly in regard to the Nord Sea Pipeline. The resulting energy crisis and spiraling fuel costs have also been counter-productive in terms of member states meeting their NECP targets as many have resulted to using their own fossil fuel resources such as coal in order to meet energy demands which will affect greenhouse gas emission targets. The lack of effective enforcement powers within the EU makes it difficult for the EU Commission to do anything about this and further slows down progress on delivering on NECPs and 2030 EU climate and energy targets. While the crisis in Ukraine has led to an energy security crisis and, in the short term anyway, has led to an increase in the use of fossil fuels, the crisis has galvanized opinion and a realization within the EU that the bloc must seek alternative energy sources and move away from the current over reliance on energy from Russia. This will undoubtedly lead to the development of more renewable energy resources and research into new technologies to facilitate this such as energy storage for wind energy etc. EU member states must now focus with a renewed vigor on strategies to mitigate against future energy security crisis, this will involve investment in new forms of energy and in the infrastructure required to implement and manage new alternative energy resources while balancing the economic ramifications for this in the future. (Kalicki et al 2013). The current energy security crisis in Europe could therefore be the catalyst to crystalize the thinking of the leaders of EU member states to seek alternative sources of green energy in order to limit the current over reliance on Russian oil and gas. Such developments will therefore enable the EU to continue on a path towards achieving their current climate and energy targets.

This thesis has demonstrated that achieving a coherent cohesive policy on climate and energy is difficult for the EU to achieve due to the differences within EU member state regions in terms of the effects of climate change, energy usage and challenges, the preparedness and resilience of member states to react to these challenges differ across the EU and the political framework and policy instruments available to each member state also vary considerably across the EU. In addition the EU is also attempting to address a number of other issues collectively amongst member states besides climate change and energy security, these include internal migration, the influx of refugees and asylum seekers from outside the EU, poverty, inequality and a variety of social issues across member states. The hypothesis proposed in Chapter 3 that the relationship between current EU foreign policy tools and EU climate and energy policies make a coherent cohesive EU

foreign policy on climate policy and energy security problematic and difficult to achieve has therefore been proven.

Despite all this however and given all the various issues highlighted above and the many variables contained within these across 27 member states the EU has arguably done a very effective job in integrating member states into one overall international union. The fact that agreement has been reached across member states on climate and energy targets and also in agreeing to develop and deliver the NECPs is a triumph for the EU given all the adverse issues which affect the ability of the EU to act as one bloc in terms of foreign policy. The fact that EU is still some way off meeting the ambitious climate and energy targets for 2030 should not detract from the significant progress made over the past number of decades in terms of developing a coherent and cohesive climate and energy policy. The limitations of the effectiveness of EU foreign policy tools and national agendas in terms of economic and security issues are currently however limiting the ability of the EU to reach these 2030 targets. Continued collaboration between EU member states and third countries is required in order to effectively address the challenges society faces in terms of climate change and also energy security. The research analysed in this thesis has also illustrated the importance of international initiatives in tackling climate change which involves a number of partner organisations and relevant stakeholders working together. The future mainstreaming of climate change adaptation policy across all EU member states is key to this. (Flood 2019). EU member states must therefore work more closely in collaboration in the delivery of their NECPs rather than delivering them in isolation, this will assist with climate change adaptation planning which should involve knowledge sharing between member states, best practice examples for delivery of NECPs including climate change adaptation planning at a national level involving citizens through communication strategies, public events and environmental and energy scheme support for businesses and individuals. At present EU citizens are too far removed from delivery of the NECPs within each member state and this situation needs to change if member states are to effectively embrace the EUs current 2030 targets for climate and energy.

Another future challenge facing the EU in terms of climate and energy policy relates to foreign policy and specifically interaction with third countries outside the EU. These interactions are increasingly being focused on the Arctic region. The EU has already signified a willingness to ensure that pollution in the Arctic is kept to a minimum in order to limit the effects of climate change and to ensure the sustainable use of Arctic resources.

(Wallas et al 2022). In 2021 the EU published an updated Arctic policy entitled '*A stronger EU engagement for a peaceful, sustainable and prosperous Arctic*' (European Union 2021) which outlines the EU's attempt to bring an integrated approach to development in the Arctic within the key themes of climate change and environment, sustainable development of resources and a desire for international co-operation. The major challenge faced by the EU is the fact that despite a number of EU member states in the Arctic region such as Finland and Sweden, with Denmark also having a number of overseas Arctic territories there is a significant number of non-EU states in the Arctic such as Russia, Canada, Iceland, Greenland and Norway which makes co-operation key to the effectiveness of the EU Arctic Policy but also highlights issues and challenges with EU foreign policy. While the Nordic countries within the Arctic have agreed greenhouse gas emission targets this is not the case with all the countries in the Arctic, specifically those countries outside the EU. (Greaker et al 2019). Many of these countries are resistant to any influence the EU wishes to exert in the Arctic for a variety of reasons, such as disputed fishing rights (Iceland, Norway, Russia and the Faroe Islands), objections to EU ethical policy on hunting whales and seals (Norway and Canada) to the battle for the sustainable use of the many mineral resources in the Arctic. These mineral resources include coal, iron-ore, lead, zinc and nickel as well as precious metals such as diamonds and other gemstones. (Avango 2020). Russia and more recently China have attempted to exert significant influence over mining within these Arctic regions with environmental practices which are at odds with EU climate, energy and environmental policies. Over the next decade or so The Arctic will therefore be a testing ground for the effectiveness of EU foreign policy in influencing third countries to meet climate and energy targets set by the EU. Trans-national co-operation will be vital in achieving this and international partnerships and effective policy instruments which engage the citizens of the Arctic should be key components of any future EU Arctic strategy.

The EU therefore faces many challenges to overcome in the future if their current climate and energy policy targets are to be met, while some of these challenges come internally from the national agendas of member states, many are external to the EU and linked to the energy security and foreign policy of states outside the EU. In order to address both these internal and external challenges the EU needs to develop robust policy tools for implementing and enforcing climate and energy policy within their own member states which will lead to a stronger more cohesive foreign policy with the EU bloc able to effectively speak and act as one voice on climate change and energy security issues. At

present, however, the lack of internal tools to effectively ensure that EU member states are meeting their climate and energy targets and obligations makes it more difficult for the EU to demonstrate an effective foreign policy in their interactions with both EU member states and third countries, this in turn makes achieving current internal climate change and energy policy targets within the EU more difficult and problematic.

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