# From Vanguard to Laggard: Germany in European Security and Defence Policy

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*Guided by a federalist vision of European integration, Germany used to be a staunch supporter of a European security and defence policy. Whereas Germany's rhetorical support has remained unchanged, it has turned into a laggard in implementing the commitments arising from a European Rapid Reaction Force. Drawing on an interactionist framework, this article demonstrates that Germany's change of course is neither in line with a Europeanised identity nor a result of any deliberate grand strategy to renationalise defence policy. Rather, Germany's failure to live up to its commitments is best understood as an unintended consequence of its integrationist policies in the early 1990s.*

## INTRODUCTION[1]

Since unification, Germany's policy on European integration has undergone some significant changes. Whereas Germany had promoted a communitisation of justice and home affairs in the early 1990s, it vetoed the introduction of majority voting on asylum and refugee policy during the intergovernmental conferences in 1996/97 and 2000 as well as during the deliberations of the convention. In doing so, it blocked an effective common asylum and refugee policy. As regards economic and monetary policy, Germany transmuted from a master of fiscal discipline to one of the Union's worst performers. A similar change from a champion to a laggard of European integration has been evident as regards another key project of European integration, namely security and defence policy. As this paper will elaborate in more detail below, Germany was a pioneer in Europeanising security and defence in the early 1990s. However, with European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) developing beyond institutions and symbols, Germany has lagged behind in implementing its commitments on transforming its armed forces and has thereby endangered the success of the entire project.

These changes in German EU policy are puzzling to those students of German policy that have pointed to a stable Europeanised identity[2] or political culture.[3] By the same token, the development of German EU policy thus seems to support those scholars who expected a changing EU policy after unification. According to Josef Janning, for example, 'German EU policy will have to replace its uncritical general support for integration with a calculated integration strategy in order to preserve its interests and freedom of manoeuvre'.[4] According to Anne-Marie Le Gloannec, Germany has even turned 'from a *Musterknabe* of Europe into a convert to British policies'.[5]

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As this case study of German policy on ESDP will demonstrate, however, changes in German policy are not simply the result of a more 'calculated' or 'British' definition of interests. Rather, Germany has been finding it increasingly difficult to meet the expectations of its EU partners and to play by the rules of European governance. It is important to note, however, that Germany had previously been a crucial actor in designing these rules in the first place. As a consequence, Germany's failure to live up to its commitments are best understood as an unintended consequence of its integrationist policies in the early 1990s when Germany pulled its weight in shaping the governance of issue areas such as economic and monetary union, asylum and refugee policy and, as this case study will demonstrate in more detail, security and defence.

In order to account for changes in Germany's EU policy, this paper presents an interactionist framework designed to capture the interplay between German policy on the one hand and European governance on the other. As the interplay between agency and structure is at the heart of the framework, the debate on the agency/structure problem in international relations is a natural point of departure. In order to remedy the neglect of agency in this debate, a pragmatist extension seems warranted. However, the bulk of the paper is dedicated to this framework's application to German ESDP policy. As will be demonstrated, Germany was instrumental in launching a European security and defence policy in the 1990s. However, ESDP assumed a dynamic of its own, and as a consequence, emphasis shifted from institutions to capabilities. Germany therefore faced mounting difficulties of living up to expectations it had helped to raise. As the concluding section will elaborate in more detail, the complex interplay between German policy and European governance may result in an unintended renationalisation of German EU policy.

## TOWARDS AN INTERACTIONIST FRAMEWORK

The debate on the agency/structure problem (ASP) in International Relations, and Alexander Wendt's prominent contribution to it, is an obvious starting point for developing an analytical framework that can account for the dynamic interplay between agency (e.g. German policy), on the one hand, and structure (e.g. European governance), on the other. However, Wendt has paid insufficient attention to the concept of agency. In particular, Wendt's model is ill suited to account for entrepreneurship and creativity inherent in social action. This paper therefore draws on a pragmatist theory of action to remedy this shortcoming. It should be noted that the pragmatist theory of action is not intended to replace the positivist model. In contrast, it will extend the framework by contributing further conceptual tools (most importantly, the concept of creativity) that have no systematic status within Wendt's model.

### *Moderate Structurationism*

The agency/structure problem arises from

> two truisms about social life which underlie most social scientific inquiry: 1) human beings and their organisations are purposeful actors whose actions help reproduce or transform the society in which they live; and 2) society is made

> up of social relationships, which structure the interactions between these purposeful actors.[6]

As a consequence, both (methodological) individualism and (methodological) structuralism appear as untenable positions. The most prominent mediating position has been 'structurationism'. The term was coined by Anthony Giddens[7] to denote a mode of theorising that takes neither agents nor structures as primitive units and focuses instead on the process of their mutual constitution.

The notion that agents and structures are co-constitutive and therefore subject to change poses a serious challenge to any positivist methodology dedicated to the detection of regularities ('laws') between clearly defined and measurable variables.[8] However, a *moderate structurationism* assumes that agents (or to be more precise: their interests and identities) as well as structures do not change permanently. Rather, for analytical purposes it is inevitable to conceive of them as if they were relatively fixed and stable during certain periods. On the basis of temporarily stable attributes of agents and structures, the process of co-constitution can be sequentialised and thus kept open for causal analysis. Wendt and others have referred to this analytical device as 'bracketing', 'that is, taking social structures and agents in turn as temporarily given in order to examine the explanatory effects of the other'.[9]

### *Agency: A Pragmatist Extension*[10]

Compared to the intense treatment of 'structure', the concept of agency has received less attention in Wendt's work. Notwithstanding the structurationist credo that 'structure' and 'agency' should be given equal status in social theory, agency is largely portrayed from a structuralist point of view, namely as *servicing* structure by reliably giving existence and effect to it. In contrast, agency is at the heart of pragmatist theory which, therefore, is well suited to further develop Wendt's model by describing, conceptualising and operationalising agency.

From a pragmatist point of view, the relatively stable and persistent structures which Wendt focuses on can be described as routinised habits. Actors follow implicit rules for action without further reasoning or examination in situations that are perceived as normal and routine. In addition to this unreflected form of acting, pragmatism is concerned with explicit and reflected forms of action. A reflected form of action occurs when actors perceive a situation as problematic or uncertain. In such situations actors cannot fall back on known or tested rules for action because these do not exist or are not considered available by actors and, in addition, the outcome is indeterminate.[11] As a result, actors cannot resort to an internalised repertoire of actions. In such situations, actors have real doubts about what to do next and how to cope with the situation because their belief system has been challenged.[12]

From a pragmatist point of view, problematic situations are not necessarily threatening to actors because they offer an accessible 'horizon of possibilities'.[13] Thus, actors may behave in new ways: Without self-evident rules about how to act appropriately and how to solve a given problem they have the chance to pursue their own interests and aims and to invent new ways of problem-solving and action. In doing so, they creatively produce new forms of actions[14] that may in turn influence the possible

worlds of the future.[15] These new forms of actions may then become habitualised and thus be stabilised if they contribute to problem-solving. If new forms of actions have been habitualised, structures in Wendt's terms have evolved.[16]

In sum, the mutual dependence and the reciprocal constituency of agency and structure is highlighted from a pragmatist point of view, as well. In addition, the structural bias in Wendt's model is diminished without contesting the most important feature of structure, i.e. its capacity to produce unintended consequences. A moderate-structurationist and a pragmatist approach are not (as some underlying epistemological differences may suggest) mutually exclusive but complementary. Taken together, they provide a number of analytical devices (such as 'bracketing') and a set of questions guiding empirical research.

### *'Summits' and 'Valleys': Alternating Perspectives on German Policy and European Governance*

The interactionist analysis starts with identifying what Thomas Christiansen and Knud Erik Jørgensen have called 'summits' and 'valleys'.[17] 'Summits' refer to periods during which European structures of governance are opened up for reform and EU member states may try to influence them. 'Summits' come to an end when agreement is reached and a new set of rules is established. Summits are then followed by 'valleys' during which the new rules of governance are implemented. Rather than giving an input to institutional reform, member states adjust to the new rules during these periods. During 'summits', we can bracket structure because its impact on agency is rather marginal as various actors are entitled to modify the rules. In contrast, we can bracket agency during 'valleys' because they leave little room for entrepreneurial action. Because actors have just endorsed a new set of rules, they are now busy living up to them.

## APPLYING THE INTERACTIONIST FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS: GERMANY AND THE ESDP

ESDP is a suitable field to study the mutual impact of German policy and European governance for at least two reasons. First, Germany is a crucial actor for any European defence policy. Though the Bundeswehr had been designed for territorial defence only and had, until recently, been lacking the means for out-of-area missions, a European Rapid Reaction Force (ERRF) has been considered unfeasible without German support.[18] Second, the governance structures in defence have become malleable in the 1990s. The failure of the European Defence Community and the consequential role for NATO had effectively foreclosed any possible assignment of responsibility in the defence of the European Community during the Cold War. However, the end of the Cold War dramatically changed the European security agenda and, as a consequence, reopened the debate on how European defence should be governed. From an agency's perspective, the 1989–91 period marked a major crisis. Many established beliefs about security and defence policy were challenged. As a consequence, all major international security organisations embarked on a process of reform: The United Nations' Agenda for Peace (1992) sought to strengthen peacekeeping and collective security; the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)

became the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and assumed new responsibilities for the protection of human rights and minorities; NATO adopted a new strategic concept, and the members of the European Community agreed to launch a single currency, to deepen cooperation in many issue areas and to invite its former adversaries to join. During this period, the division of labour between the international organisations and, as a consequence, the assignment of responsibility for security and defence, was open to debate.

In congruence with the interactionist framework, the point of view in this section will be switched several times. Periods during which the member states of the European Union as well as other players (including the USA, the European Commission, the European Parliament) undertook intensive efforts to rebuild the structures of European governance in security and defence ('summits') will be presented from an agency-based perspective that highlights German policy. In contrast, periods during which the governance structures in European security and defence are not open to changes but in a process of implementation ('valleys') will be presented from a 'bird's eye' view that discusses the new governance structures.

Over the course of the period covered by this case study (1989 to 2004), there were three major and a larger number of minor summits ('hills'): The intergovernmental conference of 1990/91 that was crowned by the Maastricht European Council was the first summit. Almost a decade later, the German Presidency in the first half of 1999 that led to the Cologne European Council marks another summit. Finally, the European Convention and the ensuing intergovernmental conference of 2002–04 was another occasion during which a remoulding of governance structures in security and defence was on the agenda.

Both the Maastricht and the Cologne summit resulted in a basic agreement the details of which had to be spelled out in the following years. Thus, the Petersberg meeting of 1992 and the meetings of the NATO Council in 1994 and 1996 were, among other things, concerned with implementing the basic agreement of Maastricht. In a similar way, the European Councils in Helsinki, Feira, Göteborg, Laeken, Seville, Copenhagen, etc. dedicated much effort to come to terms with the details of the Cologne decisions that had been left open in 1999. To be sure, these 'valleys' are not simply periods of 'technical' implementation and member state adjustment with no room or necessity for creative action. In contrast, new challenges arose with which the member states had to cope. For example, the consultation arrangements to be negotiated with those states that were members of NATO but not of the EU faced unexpected opposition from Turkey. Thus, the member states were confronted with a new problem for which a new solution had to be found. Therefore, the numerous meetings of the European Council and the NATO Council that were concerned with European security and defence policy should be also considered as minor summits ('hills') that have shaped the course of policy although broadly within the framework set in Maastricht and Cologne.

*Germany and the Governance of Security and Defence during the Cold War*

Given its position as a frontline state during the Cold War, Germany relied on the provision of its security by others, particularly the United States. As a consequence, NATO became the single most important framework for Germany's security and

defence policy whereas European integration became a primarily economic enterprise. As long as the pivotal role of NATO in security and defence remained unchallenged, Germany also supported European security institutions. In doing so, Germany was able to meet the demands of its most important partner, France, which had been semi-detached from NATO. Although the members of the European Community had made some effort to coordinate their foreign policies within European political cooperation (EPC), security and defence issues have, by and large, been missing from its agenda. In the 1980s, the Western European Union (WEU) resumed a role as a forum for consultation among the European members of NATO but never challenged the pivotal role of NATO.

In line with the interactionist framework, several decades of integration into the North Atlantic Alliance, on the one hand, and into the European Community, on the other, are considered to have left a deep imprint on Germany's identity and interests. Put in pragmatist parlance, Germany having part in the practices and habits of the Western institutions encouraged a particular set of rules for action. In stark contrast to the pre-World War II period, Germany 'assumed what might be called an "instinctive multilateralism"'.[19] Within that multilateralist identity, support for European integration had a particularly prominent place. According to Peter Katzenstein

> Germany's participation in European institutions ... has come to define Germany's identity and interests. Germany is the good European par excellence. It consistently advocates policies that support European integration, even if these policies reduce Germany's national power or run counter to its short-term interests.[20]

In addition to being 'multilateralist' and 'integrationist', Germany's politico-military culture had been characterised by antimilitarism which, in contrast to pacifism, does not refer to the unconditional rejection of military force but to the notion that diplomatic means are superior to military ones in addressing international conflicts. Part of Germany's antimilitarist policy was the replacement of a professional army by a conscript army.[21] Conscription served the purpose of having the Bundeswehr deeply embedded in society and thus to prevent the army from becoming a collecting point for the extreme Right. The Bundeswehr should never be able to become a 'state within the state' as the Reichswehr had been. Indeed, conscription has received broad support from the German public.

### *Giving the EU a Role in Security and Defence: German Policy during the Intergovernmental Conference 1990/91*

The end of the Cold War challenged the rules governing European security and defence. The negotiations on the Maastricht Treaty in 1990/91 soon became the most important forum for discussing a reform of European governance of security and defence. Therefore, this period will be treated as a 'summit', i.e. a period during which governance structures had become malleable and entrepreneurial policies were promising. Thus, the focus of this section will be on Germany as an entrepreneurial actor in European security and defence politics.

At the time of the Maastricht negotiations, German policy was most of all driven by concerns about renewed unilateralism. Although European Economic and Monetary

Union became the most prominent project to maintain a multilateralist and integrationist momentum, a European foreign, security and defence policy was a further welcome opportunity to establish close institutional ties among the members of the EU. By promoting security and defence cooperation, Germany sought to reinforce the multilateral structures governing European security and defence politics and, by extension, its own multilateralist and integrationist identity.

The proposal to establish a 'European Corps' may serve as an example to illustrate characteristic features of German policy. The proposal was made public in a letter to the Dutch Presidency of the EU and immediately led to concerns about the future of NATO in London and Washington. British and American diplomats wondered what military function this Eurocorps was to assume and what kind of missions it was designed to carry out. The military aspects of a European corps had hardly been discussed by French President Mitterrand and German Chancellor Kohl, who had been eager to exclude the defence ministries and even the foreign ministries from their negotiations. Instead, the Eurocorps was mainly designed as a political project. First, it was designed as a model for closer cooperation with the other WEU members, and as such aimed to give the negotiations on political union further impetus. Second, it was a welcome justification for keeping French forces in Germany after unification. German officials emphasised that no assignment of German troops to NATO would be reversed. In contrast, German troops might be assigned additional commitments.[22] For the German government, another reason for downplaying the military significance was strong domestic opposition to any possible Bundeswehr participation in out-of-area combat missions. The Eurocorps episode is characteristic of Germany's security and defence policy of that period: the initiative was driven by broader political considerations whereas issue-specific aspects only played a marginal role. The ministry most affected by the initiative was deliberately excluded from the negotiations in order to bypass professional scepticism. The initiative was designed to foster good relations with a key partner (France) and to add another layer to the existing pile of multilateral projects. The initiative is also significant in that its specific implications – where, when and under what circumstances the Eurocorps should be put into action – were largely ignored.

### *Post-Maastricht Governance of European Security and Defence Policy and its Implementation*

The negotiations on a post-Cold War European governance of security and defence came to a preliminary close at the Maastricht European Council on 9 and 10 December 1991, when agreement on a Treaty on European Union was reached. The period between the signing of the Maastricht Treaty and the opening of a further intergovernmental conference in 1996 was, most of all, a period of member states adapting to the new goals and rules they had endorsed. Whereas the European Council in Maastricht marks a summit during which new rules are debated and eventually agreed, the subsequent period can be regarded as a 'valley' during which implementation rather than creation is at centre stage. Following the interactionist framework, this is also reflected in a change of perspective: Instead of reporting from Germany's point of view, the paragraphs in this section take a bird's-eye view.

While the Maastricht Treaty did not (yet) assign a common defence policy to the EU, it marked a major step in that direction. It stipulates that 'the common foreign and security policy shall include all questions related to the security of the Union, including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence' (Art. J.4 TEU). The WEU was pictured as 'the defence component of the EU' and as 'a means to strengthen the European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance'. The Amsterdam Treaty of 1997 left these provisions largely untouched. However, it added that there may be a common defence and that WEU *could* be integrated into the EU 'should the European Council so decide'. A few months after the Maastricht summit, the WEU was given an operational role for the so-called Petersberg tasks (peacekeeping and peace enforcement measures). In order to preserve NATO as the major forum for consultation and to keep the United States committed to European security, negotiations were carried out to enable WEU-led out-of-area missions with recourse to NATO assets. The agreement was finalised at the NATO summit in Berlin in 1996.

This new set of rules came quite close to the goals that Germany had pursued since unification: emerging trends towards unilateralism were successfully countered by an ever denser network of multilateral institutions. Though the WEU acquired a role in security and defence, NATO remained the major forum for consultation and the major player in out-of-area missions. As a welcome side-effect, the participation of the Bundeswehr in out-of-area missions became an accepted feature of German policy.

### *'Creative Double-hatting': Germany during its 1999 EU Presidency*

The Amsterdam Treaty of 1997 brought about only few changes to the rules governing European security and defence that were agreed in Maastricht. A new impetus, however, came from the United Kingdom. Until the autumn of 1998, any further strengthening of European defence structures had been blocked by successive British governments. For many years, therefore, anticipated British opposition had stalled any entrepreneurial action in this area. Because the British change in policy had widened the 'horizon of possibilities', the ensuing months deserve to be treated as a 'summit', i.e. a period during which governance structures are malleable and entrepreneurial action seems promising. During the first half of 1999, Germany was in a particularly good position to influence the further course of events because it held the Presidency of both the European Union and the Western European Union. Indeed, the German government seized the opportunity to strengthen European security and defence. Therefore, an agency-centred perspective will be assumed in this section.

Initially, the new German government was sceptical about the Saint Malo declaration but became more enthusiastic about the project in the following weeks. Schröder and Defence Minister Scharping 'concluded that the initiative offered a real chance to overcome the sometimes painful tensions that had in the past torn Germany between French and British views on European defence'.[23] In a speech to the European Parliament in January 1999, Foreign Minister Fischer emphasised the importance of a European security and defence identity for a further deepening of European integration and for countering recent trends towards unilateralism.[24]

The issue of European security and defence cooperation received further impetus by NATO's campaign against Serbian targets that made the Europeans' dependence

on the US military highly visible and thus underlined Blair's analysis of European deficiencies. Moreover, US reluctance to discuss the selection of targets with the European allies highlighted the political dependence that resulted from missing capabilities as target selection required strategic intelligence that the Europeans have been lacking. Equally important for the further development of ESDP during the German Presidency was NATO's Washington summit on 24 April 1999, when NATO endorsed the European plans for ESDP.

During its Presidency, Germany managed to incorporate the Franco-British initiative into the European Union. For this achievement, the German government contributed to addressing and overcoming the concerns of the non-aligned as well as the 'atlanticist' member states. The concerns of the neutral states could be successfully addressed by adding a 'civilian' dimension to ESDP. As regards ESDP's repercussions on NATO, the German government argued that ESDP would strengthen, not undermine NATO. To underline this claim, Fischer suggested appointing the new High Representative for CFSP to the post of WEU Secretary General as well, with the right to attend NATO meetings as an observer. This 'double-hatting' emphasises that WEU/EU and NATO are complementary rather than competing. Moreover, the concept highlights that both institutions have largely overlapping membership and therefore, by and large, draw on the same resources and personnel. The thrust of the 'double-hatting proposal' was further highlighted by suggesting the appointment of Javier Solana, whose term as Secretary General of NATO was coming to a close. Solana's nomination was particularly welcomed by the atlanticists because his appreciation for NATO was beyond doubt and because his reputation in the US was very high. At the same time, the appointment of a Spaniard seemed more acceptable to the French than a possible appointment from an atlanticist member state such as Britain. Finally, the appointment of Solana meets the German aim to have a political heavyweight appointed to the post.

In sum, the German Presidency was successful in bringing the development initiated in St Malo back into the EU and in reaching a commitment by all EU members to give the EU 'the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them and a readiness to do so'.[25] In order to reach such an agreement and to realise a long-standing German policy goal, the Presidency invented innovative solutions, most importantly the double-hatted appointment of the High Representative and the Secretary General of WEU. During its Presidency of 1999, German policy well illustrates the pragmatist/interactionist notion of creative entrepreneurial action.

*Implementing the Cologne Decisions*

While the previous section highlighted Germany's efforts to strengthen the EU's role in security and defence and to build bridges towards the non-aligned and atlanticist member states, this section again switches perspectives according to the interactionist framework. In order to discuss the innovations agreed at the Cologne summit and their implementation over the course of the ensuing Presidencies, (German) agency is again bracketed and a 'bird's-eye' perspective is assumed.

At the Cologne European Council in June 1999, the member states envisioned the European Union to 'have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by

credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so'. The implementation of this goal required the 'maintenance of a sustained defence effort, the implementation of the necessary adaptations and notably the reinforcement of our capabilities in the field of intelligence, strategic transport, command and control'.

During the Finnish Presidency in the second half of 1999, the focus was on the specification of a 'headline goal' that the member states endorsed at the Helsinki European Council in December 1999. The United Kingdom and France proposed to define 'convergence criteria', partly because of scepticism about the German government's commitment to endow the EU with military capabilities. Although the establishment of convergence criteria failed, the European Council in Helsinki on 10/11 December established a headline goal that committed the member states to become 'able, by 2003, to deploy within 60 days and sustain for at least 1 year military forces of up to 50,000–60,000 persons capable of the full range of Petersberg tasks'. Although deficiencies, e.g. in long-range transport capabilities, remained, the Council declared ESDP fully operational in 2003 and assumed responsibility for the first EU-led military missions in Macedonia, Congo and Bosnia. In order to maintain the momentum in addressing shortcomings in equipment and armaments, however, a new 'headline goal 2010' was established that focused on high readiness forces for demanding tasks ('battle groups').

During the Portuguese and French Presidencies in 2000, a permanent Political and Security Committee, a Military Committee and a Military Staff were established. In addition, the Presidencies negotiated with NATO members that were not (yet) EU members about consultation and participation agreements. Because of Greco-Turkish quarrels, these negotiations were stalled until late 2002 when NATO also agreed to grant the EU access to its planning capacities.

*Germany and the Elaboration of a European Constitution*

While the implementation of the Helsinki headline goal proceeded and the first out-of-area EU missions were even carried out, the 'Convention on the Future of Europe' (usually abbreviated as 'European Convention' or 'Constitutional Convention') reopened the discussion about reforms in European security and defence policy. Thus, from an interactionist perspective, the period during which the convention deliberations and the ensuing IGC negotiations took place can be treated as another, third summit, i.e. a period during which governance structures were malleable and entrepreneurial action seemed promising. Thus, the focus of this section will be on the policy of the German government while the impact of European governance on Germany will be bracketed.

Soon after Foreign Minister Fischer had replaced Peter Glotz as the German government's representative in the convention, he presented an ambitious Franco-German proposal for a European Defence Union.[26] The proposal suggests inserting a new clause on 'solidarity and common security' into the constitutional treaty and extending enhanced cooperation to the realm of security and defence. For Fischer and Villepin, 'enhanced cooperation' is also the key to improving capabilities: all member states willing to do so shall make an additional commitment to harmonise military planning, to pool resources and capabilities and to agree on a distribution of tasks. Finally,

Fischer and de Villepin suggested establishing an armaments agency on the basis of enhanced cooperation. Such an agency was welcomed by the United Kingdom as well although the British government expected the agency to encourage the improvement of capabilities. In contrast, France preferred to have the agency support the industrial basis of European defence equipment. In a striking break with previous positions, German Foreign Minister Fischer tabled an amendment that argued for unanimous decision-making in specifying the agency's statute. According to the German government, qualified majority voting could lead to the assignment of competencies that included the coordination of armed forces. Because the German government wanted to avoid any further pressure on conscription, it aimed at securing a narrow mandate for the agency.

The European Convention appeared as a welcome occasion to resume the institutional and symbolic politics of the early 1990s. The issue of capabilities has again moved to the background or has been discussed in institutional terms (as with regard to new institutional arrangements for planning and acquisition of procurement).

### *The New Governance of European Security and Defence*

This section examines changes in the governance of European security and defence between the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the twenty-first century. In order to do so, German agency is again bracketed while a 'bird's-eye'-perspective is assumed. Most importantly, NATO has lost its unchallenged role in governing European security and defence. This has become most visible in the first out-of-area missions carried out by the European Union. These missions had been preceded by the finalising of the so-called 'Berlin plus' agreement that establishes a set of rules for EU–NATO cooperation. Notwithstanding this agreement, the appropriate degree of European unity and independence has continued to be a matter of dispute culminating in open confrontation over US President Bush's policy on Iraq. It is important to note, however, that the horizon of possibilities has significantly shifted towards greater European independence.

By becoming a proactive player in military crisis management, the EU for which the term 'civilian power' had once been coined[27] has changed its character. Although the deployment of troops remains a sovereign decision of the member states, the EU has assumed responsibility for military missions out of area. As a consequence, the terms of the debate on a European security and defence policy have shifted from primarily institutional, or even symbolic questions to 'capabilities' as the dominant issue. As regular commitment conferences and the European capability action plan demonstrate, the rules now governing European security and defence include an expectation that EU member states make significant contributions to a European security and defence policy already *in action*.

### *The Difficult Delivering of the Goods*

The previous sections have portrayed the interplay between German policy and European governance in security and defence. The sections that focused on German policy have demonstrated that, for most of the period under study, Germany has been a vanguard in promoting a European security and defence policy. Germany's

preference for unanimous decision-making as regards an armament agency has been a remarkable break with its traditional stance. The sections on European governance have shown that German policy was quite successful and many features of European security and defence governance come close to what the German government originally had in mind. At the same time, however, European security and defence policy has assumed a life of its own beyond the institutionalism and symbolism characteristic of German policy, particularly in the early 1990s. Most importantly, new emphasis is now put on delivering the goods necessary for a successful ESDP in action.

This section focuses on the difficulties Germany has had in living up to its own promises. In supporting the goal of a European defence policy, Germany made commitments to earmark some 18,000 troops and to acquire, among other things, 73 new long-range aircraft from the Airbus consortium. Moreover, Germany pledged to lead two battle groups and to participate in three more. In contrast to France and the United Kingdom, Germany forwent any purely national battle group and thereby emphasised its attachment to multinational force structures. However, Germany has been ill-prepared to live up to these commitments. The German defence budget had dropped from 2.2 per cent of GDP in 1990 to 1.6 per cent in 1998. Moreover, the bulk of expenditure was dedicated to personnel. Thus, the investment share has been shrinking dramatically. Little room was left for new acquisitions. This has become visible, for example, with regard to Germany's failure to implement one of the crucial procurement decisions for ESDP, i.e. to buy 73 long-range aircraft as promised to its European partners. After long arguments with Parliament and the Ministry of Finance, the Minister of Defence announced that a range of procurement projects had to be scaled down. Instead of 73, Germany would only order 60 A 400 M aircraft. During the cumbersome negotiations within Germany, the A 400 M project was on the brink of failing entirely because other participants had made their orders contingent on the German share.

An additional obstacle was brought about by the fact that almost all German policy-makers adhered to conscription as a basic principle of military policy. By contrast, most other member states had abolished conscription in favour of smaller professional troops that are better suited to carry out demanding out-of-area missions. As a consequence of the Europeanisation of security and defence politics, Germany has come under mounting pressure to follow the example of its partners, who had grown increasingly concerned about a possible failure in transforming and modernising the Bundeswehr.[28] In Germany as well, experts recommended a professionalisation in order to concentrate scarce resources. In spite of these pressures, however, most German decision-makers regarded conscription as a cornerstone of Germany's political culture that differed from the militarism of its past. As a consequence, efforts to abolish conscription have all been blocked by a majority of decision-makers. At the same time, however, conscription has indeed been hollowed out both in terms of extent (covering no more than 30 per cent of a year and duration (being reduced to nine months). Notwithstanding the maintenance of conscription in principle, therefore, a major feature of Germany's political culture and identity has been severely challenged by ESDP and has undergone some change.

## CONCLUSION

Over the course of the last decade or so, two major features of Germany's political culture and identity have come into conflict and, as a consequence, have undergone some significant changes. From the early days of European integration to the late 1990s, Germany's antimilitarism and its Europeanism have, by and large, gone hand in hand. Whereas conscription has been regarded as a crucial means to have the military embedded in a democratic civil society, European integration has been viewed as a necessary reassurance against the dangers of nationalism and unilateralism. Since the shift from institutionalist to substantive issues of ESDP in 1999, Germany faced mounting difficulties in living up to the expectations it had helped to raise.

The interactionist framework helps to highlight that the growing mismatch between symbolism and substance has an impact on both Germany's antimilitarist and its Europeanist identity. First, the pressure to modify and finally abolish conscription has been increasing with the expectation that Germany should contribute troops to out-of-area missions. Although this pressure has been reinforced by ESDP, however, it would almost certainly have emerged without a European context as well. However, because there has been a European context to security and defence policy, the growing mismatch between symbolism and substance has also left an impact on Germany's Europeanist identity: As a consequence of having the European Union as an additional multilateral layer in security and defence policy, Germany's failure to live up to its commitments damages its integration policy. In this crucial project of European integration, Germany has assumed the position of a laggard when it comes to delivering troops and equipment.

The interactionist framework applied in this paper has helped to *identify* these changes and, most importantly, to *interpret* them as resulting from a complex interplay between German policy and European structures of governance instead of attributing them to either a voluntary grand design or to necessary adaptations to a changed environment. Support for a European security and defence policy has not been sinking among German decision-makers or the public. Instead, the precarious German position is best understood as an unintended consequence of Germany's earlier integration policy.

It is important to note that this mismatch between Germany's continued support for enforcing European integration in general and its sinking capacities to meet the resulting commitments is likely to impact on Germany's Europeanist identity in general. For several decades, European politics used to be familiar home ground to German policy-makers where German governments frequently assumed a leadership role (often in a Franco-German framework) and even helped to secure the success of crucial projects by considerable side-payments. This record of Germany's traditional EU policy makes the changes discussed above even more striking. In security and defence policy, 'Brussels' has become a promoter of reforms that meet considerable resistance in Germany. As the example of conscription has illustrated, the German government may either endorse a reform that it aimed to avoid for a long time, or may start to block respective developments in European governance in the first place. A brief glance at asylum and immigration or economic and monetary policy

indicates that the development in security and defence policy may indeed be characteristic of a larger picture. Germany's preference for unanimity as regards the armaments agency's mandate indicates that the mismatch between symbolism and substance may be levelled out both ways, i.e. including an enhanced nationalism in European politics.

## NOTES

1. Research for this article was carried out in the context of a research project at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt that was led by Gunther Hellmann and funded by the German Research Association (DFG). For a more comprehensive account of the interactionist framework which forms the basis for both this article and the research project at large cf. Gunther Hellmann, Rainer Baumann, Monika Bösche, Benjamin Herborth and Wolfgang Wagner, 'De-Europeanization by Default? Germany's EU Policy in Defense and Asylum', *Foreign Policy Analysis* 1/1 (2005), pp.143–64.
2. See Peter Katzenstein, 'United Germany in an Integrating Europe', in Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *Tamed Power. Germany in Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp.1–48; Thomas Risse and Daniela Engelmann-Martin, 'Identity Politics and European Integration: The Case of Germany', in Anthony Pagden (ed.), *The Idea of Europe* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), pp.287–316.
3. John Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy After Unification* (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 1998); Thomas U. Berger, 'Norms, Identity, and National Security in Germany and Japan', in Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security. Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp.317–56.
4. Josef Janning, 'Deutschland und die Europäische Union: Integration und Erweiterung', in Karl Kaiser and Joachim Krause (ed.), *Deutschlands neue Außenpolitik. Interessen und Strategien* (München: Oldenbourg, 1996), pp.31–54, at 31f., my translation.
5. Anne-Marie Le Gloannec, 'Germany and Europe's Foreign and Security Policy: Embracing the 'British' Vision', in Carl Lankowski (ed.), *Break Out, Break Down or Break In? Germany and the European Union after Amsterdam* (Washington, DC: American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 1998), pp.21–30, at 21.
6. Alexander Wendt, 'The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory', *International Organization* 41/3 (1987), pp.335–70, at 337–8.
7. Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems of Social Theory* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1979).
8. Walter Carlsnaes, 'The Agency-Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis', *International Studies Quarterly* 36/3 (1992), pp.245–270, at 263.
9. Wendt, 'The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory', pp.364–5.
10. This section draws on Gunther Hellmann's work on pragmatism and foreign policy analysis.
11. Hans Joas, *Die Kreativität des Handelns* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1992), pp.193–6, 235–6.
12. See Hans Joas, *Pragmatismus und Gesellschaftstheorie* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1992), p.29.
13. Joas, *Die Kreativität des Handelns*, p.196.
14. Ibid., pp.187–306.
15. Geoffrey Hawthorn, *Plausible Worlds. Possibility and Understanding in History and the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
16. Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp.143, 145.
17. Thomas Christiansen and Knud Eric Jorgensen, 'The Amsterdam Process: A Structurationist Perspective on EU Treaty Making', *European Integration Online Papers* 3 (1999), p.10, available at http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/1999–001a.htm
18. See Kerry Longhurst, *Germany and the Use of Force* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 104 and Francois Heisbourg, 'Germany's Non-Revolution in Military Affairs', *Internationale Politik* (Transatlantic edition) 1/2 (2000), pp.79–85.
19. Wolfgang F. Schlör, *German Security Policy. An Examination of the Trends in German Security Policy in a European and Global Context*, Adelphi Papers 277 (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1993), p.6; see also Jeffrey Anderson and John Goodman, 'Mars or Minerva? A United Germany in a Post-Cold War Europe', in Robert Keohane, Joseph Nye and Stanley Hoffmann (eds.),

*After the Cold War. International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989–1991* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp.23–62, at 23–4.

20. Peter Katzenstein, 'The Smaller European States, Germany and Europe', in Katzenstein (ed.), *Tamed Power*, p.260.
21. See Berger, 'Norms, Identity, and National Security in Germany and Japan', p.334.
22. Chancellor Helmut Kohl, quoted from *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 November 1991.
23. Gilles Andréani, Christoph Bertram and Charles Grant, *Europe's Military Revolution* (London: Centre for European Reform, 2001), p.21.
24. Debates of the European Parliament, Sitting of Tuesday, 12 January 1999 (http://www3.europarl.eu.int/omk/omnsapir.so/debats?FILE = 99-01-12&LANGUE = EN&LEVEL = DOC&GCSELECTCHAP = 1&GCSELECTPERS = 2). Interviews in the Foreign Office also indicate that Fischer perceived a more efficient European foreign policy as an important vehicle to enhance the legitimacy of European integration.
25. Presidency Conclusions, European Council Cologne.
26. 'Contribution by Mr Dominique de Villepin and Mr Joschka Fischer, members of the Convention, presenting joint Franco-German proposals for the European Convention in the field of European security and defence policy' of 22 November 2002 (CONV 422/02).
27. Francois Duchêne, 'The European Community and the Uncertainties of Interdependence', in Max Kohnstamm and Wolfgang Hager (eds.), *A Nation Writ Large? Foreign Policy Problems before the European Community* (London: Macmillan, 1973).
28. See. Kerry Longhurst, *Germany and the Use of Force* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).