# Brexit and the CFSP

## A window of opportunity?

Rafael Sampson

## ABSTRACT

The United Kingdom's decision to withdraw from the European Union has thrown into question the future of the Common Foreign & Security Policy. Without the UK's obstruction in this policy field, scholars and decision-makers alike now envisage a window of opportunity for reform to the Common Foreign & Security Policy. This study will employ Kingdon's Multiple Streams Approach to ascertain the extent to which this is a reality. Using a mixed method of survey data and semi-structured interviews, this research finds that Brexit has created a window of opportunity for reform to the Common Foreign & Security Policy.

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**Student:**                  Rafael Sampson
                              Utrecht student ID: 5687780
                              Masaryk student ID: 451981
                              rafael.sampson@hotmail.co.uk


*Utrecht University*

Supervisor:   Dr. Ekaterina Rashkova | e.rashkova@uu.nl

Faculty of Law, Economics & Governance | Utrecht School of Governance

Bijlhouwerstraat 6, NL-3511 ZC Utrecht, The Netherlands


*Masaryk University*

Supervisor:   Dr. Petr Kaniok | kaniok@fss.muni.cz

Department of International Relations and European Studies | Faculty of
Social Studies

Office: 4.54, Joštova 218/10, CZ-602 00 Brno, The Czech Republic

## Acknowledgments

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## List of Abbreviations

| | |
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| **CFSP** | Common Foreign & Security Policy |
| **CSDP** | Common Security & Defence Policy |
| **EDA** | European Defence Agency |
| **EDU** | European Defence Union |
| **ENP** | European Neighbourhood Policy |
| **EU** | European Union |
| **EUGS** | European Global Strategy 2016 |
| **MSA** | Multiple Streams Approach |
| **NATO** | North Atlantic Treaty Organisation |
| **OHQ** | European Operational Headquarters |
| **PESCO** | Permanent Structured Co-operation |
| **UK** | United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland |

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# 1    Introduction

## 1.1    Reader's Guide

In this research I intend to investigate whether the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union (EU) has created a window of opportunity for the reform of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). I will first, give account of the background of this study and the justification for the research by enumerating the UK's historic obstruction of CFSP reform, the growing impetus for post-Brexit CFSP reform, and the significance of the European Global Strategy 2016 (EEAS, 2016). Second, I will enumerate Kingdon's (2011) Multiple Streams Approach (MSA) and evaluate its utility for this study by drawing from Kingdon's seminal work and from the wider literature also; this section constitutes the literature review and theoretical framework. Third, I will introduce my research methods, which consists of a survey design and semi-structured interviews both of which relied on participation from EU policymakers. Fourth, I will present my findings and analysis of the question in relation to Kingdon's MSA. Fifth, I will assess Kingdon's MSA theory as it pertained to the research herein. Finally, I will conclude with recommendations for EU policymakers as it pertains to the question of CFSP reform, an answering of the research questions and, lastly, an enumeration of avenues for future research in this field.

## 1.2 Research Context

### 1.2.1 Background

Over the past several years, an increasing number of external challenges have brought to the fore the debate over the effectiveness of the EU's foreign policy. From the refugee crisis, an aggressive Russia, destabilisation in the European neighbourhood, and a rise of illiberal global powers there has been an ever increasing call for the European Union to integrate further and increase the effectiveness of its foreign and defence policies (Besch, 2016; Biscop, 2016; Howorth, 2016; Niblett, 2016; Oliver & Williams, 2016; Whitman, 2016). The Common Foreign and Security Policy and its constituent component the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), are the primary policies through which the EU operates its external affairs. Traditionally however, the United Kingdom was one of the most vociferous opponents to any development that would have led to increased CSDP and CFSP integration (Bache, *et. al.*, 2015; Bond, 2016; Whitman, 2016). With the United Kingdom now leaving the EU it is pertinent to assess how the CFSP will be affected, specifically looking at whether Brexit offers a window of opportunity for reform of the CFSP. This research will focus on the European Global Strategy 2016 (EUGS) and will examine the extent to which Brexit has made it more likely that this strategy will be implemented. This document sets out the guiding strategy for the CFSP and proposes a series of significant reforms to the policy that many EU leaders after Brexit are now championing. Already throughout the continent there have been ruminations on the prospect of greater CFSP integration, in line with proposals laid out in the EUGS, with various policymakers and decision-makers indicating dispositions to that effect (Barigazzi, 2016; Briançon, 2016; EurActiv, 2016; Whitman, 2016; Gramer, 2017). Moreover, a number of EU policymakers have also spoken on the issue of realising the goals of the EUGS in light of the opportunity provided by Brexit (Banks & Foster, 2016; Khan, 2016; Summer, 2016).

### 1.2.2 Research Question

Accordingly, I will endeavour to answer one of the most salient questions that followed in the wake of Brexit:

> **R:** Does the Brexit vote offer a window of opportunity for CFSP reform?

In order to answer the above question in a systematic and scientific way, I will draw from the Multiple Streams Approach (MSA) of John W. Kingdon (2011). This posits that policy change depends on the convergence of three streams of the policymaking process, the result of which is a policy window, or colloquially, a window of opportunity through which policy change can be facilitated. These three streams are first, the Problem Stream, which denotes the process of problem recognition and the search for common solutions amongst policymakers. Second, the Policy Stream, which refers to the policy tools and initiatives that policymakers may or may not have available in order to implement policy change. Third is the Political Stream, which examines the political conditions of the policymaking process; these may or may not be conducive to policy change. For policy change to occur, these three streams must be aligned in support of the change, the culmination of which opens a policy window through which said policy change can be facilitated. In this research I will demonstrate that Brexit has contributed to the alignment of these three streams to the extent that a policy window has opened, and remains open, through which CFSP reform, by way of the EUGS, can be implemented.

Unlike the majority of previous studies, which have employed Kingdon's MSA in a retrospective manner (Rawat & Morris, 2016), this research will endeavour to employ Kingdon's framework in a predictive and prospective manner in order to gauge whether the prospect of Brexit has facilitated the opening of a policy window through which the strategy and vision of the EUGS can be realised. Herein lies the originality of this research, the prospective employment of Kingdon's MSA. From this framework a number of sub-questions can be considered (see **Figure 1** below).

**R² (Policy Stream)**

Do EU policymakers have the requisite policy tools to implement the reforms laid out in the EUGS?

**R¹ (Problem Stream)**

Does a problem exist that necessitates the implementation of the reforms laid out in the EUGS?

**R³ (Politics Stream)**

Has the prospect of Brexit changed the political conditions to the extent that implementing the EUGS is more likely?

**R**

Does the Brexit vote offer a window of opportunity for CFSP reform?

**Figure 1: Research Questions**

As shown, each sub-question corresponds to a stream of Kingdon's analysis and is constructed on the basis of this framework (see **Section 2.1**). $R^1$ for example deals with the Problem Stream, $R^2$ deals with the Policy Stream, and $R^3$ deals with the Political Stream. If all three of the above sub-questions are answered in the affirmative, we can hypothesise that the research question (R) is also answered in the affirmative by nature of an alignment of the three streams of Kingdon's analysis. It follows therefore, that Brexit has opened a policy window for CFSP reform. If either one or more of the three sub-questions are answered in the negative, it follows from Kingdon's MSA that a policy window is not likely to open and will remain closed until all three streams are aligned to CFSP reform. In such a scenario, the research question (R) would be answered in the negative and the Brexit vote will not have opened a policy window for CFSP reform. A policy window will remain unlikely so long as the three streams are unaligned.

### 1.2.3 UK Obstruction in CFSP

Following the research question, it is pertinent to outline what we already know about the UK relationship to the CFSP. To begin, on the 23$^{rd}$ June 2016 the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. The process of withdrawal, also known as Brexit, was formally commenced on the 29$^{th}$ March 2017, thus beginning the two-year timetable to negotiate a settlement for the UK's withdrawal. Once this timetable expires, providing that no transitional arrangement is concluded, the UK will formally withdraw its EU membership, ending a fruitful forty-year relationship that, despite its benefits, has, at its worst, exhibited elements of indifference and outright obstruction.

This obstructionist attitude has been most apparent in the UK's growing indifference to integrated EU foreign and defence policies. The UK initially championed EU integration and co-operation in these policy areas and under the Blair government the UK was instrumental in securing more co-operation amongst Member States in these fields (Howorth, 2000; Bache *et. al.*, 2015). This initial support however soon gave way to a more entrenched position that favoured NATO and bilateral co-operation. The return to power of the Conservative Party in 2010 led to the UK regressing and adopting a 'laggard' attitude to CSFP and CSDP (O'Donnell, 2011; Whitman, 2016: 45). For the past decade, the UK has fervently opposed any attempts to integrate deeper in these policy areas. The UK has for example frustrated even modest proposals such as the establishment of a European Operational Headquarters (OHQ) (Waterfield, 2011; Rettman, 2017) and an expansion of the European Defence Agency's (EDA) budget (Hennessy, 2010; Besch, 2016). The UK has also thoroughly resisted any notion of extended communitarisation of the CFSP, remaining content with the intergovernmental nature of the policy area (Whitman, 2016). The UK's indifference to reform in the CFSP is not only reflected in what the UK has blocked, but it is also evident in the level of tangible contributions that the UK has made. In the past decade for example, the UK's financial and personnel contributions to military and civilian EU

missions has decreased to such an extent that it 'barely qualifies as a gesture' (O'Donnell, 2011: 423). The UK has the largest defence budget in the EU at around €49bn (Eurostat, 2017) yet it is only the fifth and seventh largest contributor to military and civilian missions, respectively, under the CSDP deploying only 4.19% of available EU personnel (HM Government, 2014). The UK has largely spurned initiatives to take part in and to make more effective EU foreign and defence initiatives and has instead relied primarily upon exclusive bilateralism (Hug, 2013) as well as multilateral co-operation through NATO (O'Donnell, 2011). The primacy that the UK places on NATO is a principal reason why it is hostile to initiatives of deeper integration in CFSP and CSDP lest it prejudice NATO as the guarantor of European security (O'Donnell, 2011; Lidlington, 2013).

The scope of the UK's obstruction and opposition to CFSP reform is made clearer by an examination of voting in the Council of Ministers from 2004 to 2015, which shows that the UK voted against the majority in CFSP matters in around 35% of votes, the highest amongst any Member State; this stands in comparison with France and Germany who accepted the majority position in every single vote on this issue area (Hix & Hagermann, 2015). From this we may discern that once the UK leaves, there will be no sizeable single-state opposition to foreign and security policy initiatives. Consequently, this raises questions as to the future of CFSP and in particular whether this represents a window of opportunity for CFSP reform.

### 1.2.4  Post-Referendum CFSP Proposals

European policymakers, both from a national context and a supranational context, are keenly aware of this fact. They have, since the Brexit vote, explored various avenues through which to reform the CSFP and CSDP in light of the prospective absence of the UK and its veto.

> For the EU the most immediate impact on the foreign, security and defence policy area has been to give impetus to ideas on reforming EU defence policy which have been in circulation for some time. A set of proposals have been made for deepening the existing defence collaboration between the EU's other member states. (Whitman, 2016: 46)

Amongst EU policymakers, post-referendum proposals have included renewed calls for a common European Defence Union (EDU) (European Parliament, 2016), a revival of plans for a European OHQ (House of Commons, 2017) an increase in funding for and capabilities of the European Defence Agency (EDA) (Emmott, 2016), and a commitment to using Treaty provisions to the full with recourse to Permanent Structured Co-operation, or PESCO, (Beesley, 2017). This allows a core group of Member States to integrate further in CSDP matters. These proposals are also reflected amongst policymakers from a number of Member States. For example, in anticipation of the post-Brexit Slovakia Summit held in September 2016 the Czech and Hungarian governments voiced their support for creating a 'joint European army' (BBC News, 2016), echoing calls from their EU counterparts. We may consider that Slovakia and Poland also support this initiative for wider CSDP integration, given that the Member States of the Visegrad Group co-ordinate their foreign and defence policies (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016). The Italian government has also tabled proposals for post-Brexit deeper CSDP integration and has called for greater foreign and defence policy co-ordination akin to a 'Schengen for defence' (Gentiloni, 2016).

The most significant proposals however have emanated from a joint paper on defence published by the German and French foreign ministries (later endorsed by the Spanish and Italian government); for it is the aspirations and actions of these two Member States more than any that will dictate how post-Brexit CFSP is reformed (Angelini, 2016; Oliver & Williams, 2016). The paper explicitly refers to Brexit as providing an opportunity for and impetus to act on reforming CSDP (Rettman, 2016). It called for a revival of plans to establish a European OHQ and for joint command of future CSDP missions; it called for renewed action in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) as well as a commitment to the expansion of the Union. The paper also called for expanded capabilities and training for the EUROCORPS, an increase in the EDA budget, and a new European basic training course for officers (Senato, 2016). This paper and the renewed call for action in the foreign and defence policies emanating from the major EU Member States is reflective of the significance of Brexit for the CFSP and the perception amongst elites that political circumstances have substantively shifted in support of the above efforts.

As demonstrated from the above examples a number of common solutions exist. The majority of these proposals have either been inspired by or taken directly from the EUGS, which is in itself a document that proposes more integration in CFSP in order to make more effective the EU's role in the word. Accordingly, the research of this paper will be centred on the EUGS for it is a document that espouses a singular vision and reflects the proposals and current inclinations of European policymakers. It is pertinent therefore to examine this document and to assess, using Kingdon's MSA, whether Brexit has provided a window of opportunity to follow through with the implementation of the EUGS, chiefly, wider and deeper integration in CFSP.

## 1.2.5 European Global Strategy 2016

The European Global Strategy 2016 is a distinctly integrationist document in its subtext and reflects the dominant views of the Franco-German partnership in relation to foreign and defence matters. In their 2016 common defence paper, the French and German governments explicitly referenced the goals and objectives of the EUGS as a guideline with which to further integration in CFSP (Senato, 2016).

> This Strategy is underpinned by the vision of and ambition for a stronger Union, willing and able to make a positive difference in the world. Our citizens deserve a true Union, which promotes our shared interests by engaging responsibly and in partnership with others. It is now up to us to translate this into action. (EEAS, 2016: 11)

These are the guiding principles of the EUGS, a document that lays down the vision, objectives, and values for the EU's engagement in the wider world and sets out a 'collective sense of direction' for external matters (European Commission, 2017). The latest publication of the Global Strategy is imbued with a sense of urgency and coincided with a growing salience of a number of challenges to the EU's role in the world. The Global Strategy reflects this urgency for a common and credible foreign policy and accordingly promotes a more joined up, cohesive, and autonomous CFSP. The EUGS for example, proposes to revive efforts to create a European OHQ, widen command and control structures for CSDP missions, and share and co-ordinate strategic defence assets. It has a particular focus on investing in strategic enablers to facilitate power projection, and to establish a Common European Defence Fund for R&D and joint procurement. Calls for more integration in matters of hard power are also matched by the EUGS' vision of reforms to the ENP and new approaches to development policy. It is thus, a very ambitious plan for the EU's role in the world after Brexit and the decision to continue with its release, in the wake of the Brexit vote, is a signal that the EU intends to press on with integration in CFSP. The UK, as a Member State, opposed a number

of the proposals contained within the EUGS and feared that they would constitute the first steps to a parallel security structure to NATO (Black *et. al.*, 2017). Accordingly, the UK's departure now raises the opportunity for policymakers to pursue the above reforms to CFSP, which have for so long been blocked by the UK. This research will use Kingdon's Multiple Streams Analysis to ascertain whether Brexit has, as many commentators and policymakers believe, truly changed political conditions to such an extent that implementation of the EUGS and reform of the CFSP is now conceivable and likely.

# 2    Theoretical Framework

## 2.1    Kingdon's Multiple Streams Analysis

In his seminal work *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, Kingdon set out to answer a single question:

> What makes people in and around government attend, at any given time, to some subjects and not to others? (2011: 1)

It is this question, in relation to the CFSP that this research intends to answer. Before outlining the research and analysing the findings however, it is first pertinent to provide an examination of the theory and framework that Kingdon posits. Following the guidance laid out by Cairney and Jones, it is important to employ MSA in a contemporary and 'non-trivial' manner (2016: 38). This includes recognising the wider theoretical context of Kingdon's framework by drawing from contemporary applications and studies of MSA. The following examination of Kingdon's MSA will therefore draw not only from Kingdon's seminal piece, mentioned above, but also from more contemporaneous studies (Ackrill & Kay, 2011; Liu & Jayakar, 2012; Ackrill, Hay & Zahariadis, 2013; Gates & Rodgers, 2014; Jones *et. al.*, 2016; Rawat & Morris, 2016). MSA is a theory behind how ideas become solutions; it challenges the view that ideas are finite constructs that are adopted or rejected on the sole basis of their content, instead noting the importance of networks, resources, influence, and actors (Cairney & Jones, 2016). Fundamental to Kingdon's framework are three, independent yet mutually related, streams of analysis, the Problem Stream, the Policy Stream, and the Political Stream. Kingdon posits that when conditions in each of these streams align to facilitate the consideration of a given idea then that idea will stand a greater chance of being adopted by decision-makers. A further elaboration of these three streams is required as they form the basic tenets of Kingdon's MSA and will be employed to acquire and analyse the data in this research.

## 2.1.1 Problem Stream

The first stream of Kingdon's analysis is the Problem Stream. In this stream problems are identified and their salience and urgency assessed, with urgent problems receiving a higher probability of being addressed than non-urgent problems. In this stream, problems are taken to refer to any issue or clusters of issues that warrant attention of policymakers, decision-makers, and indeed, society at large (Ackrill, Kay & Zahariadis, 2013). This stream, and the process of problem identification, consists of two elements: the first consists of indicators for problems, and the second consists of problems as focusing events. In the case of the former, Kingdon posits that one can use metrics and other observable phenomena to gauge whether a problem is becoming salient or not. One might collate statistics on waiting times in a health service to ascertain whether a problem of service provision is looming. How a problem is framed is also of significance here, as one person's crisis may be another person's non-issue. Politicians, policymakers, and other actors for example often undertake advocacy campaigns to influence how identifiers are perceived by the public and by other actors in the policymaking process, thus manipulating how a problem is assessed. Problems can also be identified by what Kingdon terms, focusing events and crises, which draw attention to either the existence of a problem or may be indicative of a trend that culminates in a problem in the future. Focusing events reinforce existing perceptions of a problem and may add to the problem's salience. Moreover, focusing events can also be coupled with other pre-existing problems. By themselves these would not otherwise be considered as salient or in urgent need of address, but coupled together create the appropriate conditions that attracts the attention of policymakers and decision-makers.

In understanding how problems are identified, it is also worth considering how problems fade from the public and policymaking agenda. In these cases it may simply be that policies intended to address a problem achieve their objectives and the problem is resolved; the subject will drop from the policy agenda. Other problems may simply fade from the agenda; they may come to be accepted by the public as a necessary condition of life. Alternatively,

government action to address it may be deemed adequate enough to have reduced the urgency of the problem overall, irrespective of whether such action resolved the problem outright. Likewise, failure to address a problem can cause public fatigue and policymakers and stakeholders will 'cease to invest in it' if the subject will not yield policy action (Kingdon, 2011: 104). It is thus vital that an invested actor push for a problem to be identified and act with haste to address it, lest the problem fade.

The process of problem identification, outlined above, is not however a simple 'assessment of the facts' (Kingdon, 2011: 113). It is a process in which policymakers react to changing indicators or focusing events that are themselves accompanied by pre-existing perceptions of a given problem. If the problem is solved or proves to be unsolvable, then attention will move elsewhere. Problem recognition however, doesn't hinge exclusively on a sense of altruism and a cost-benefit analysis for society; other factors are at play. These include the desires of a politician to make a mark, that of a policymaker to secure their job or prove their worth, or that of an institution to expand their remit. Once a problem is recognised as urgent and requiring attention it is not enough to see it placed on the agenda, it must also be coupled with appropriate policy solutions. This may be found in the second stream of Kingdon's MSA, which outlines the process of policy formulation and is called the Policy Stream.

## 2.1.2  Policy Stream

The Policy Stream is the second stream of analysis and refers to a primordial soup of ideas and proposals that are circulated amongst policy communities. These are communities of policymakers in which alternatives and proposals to various issues are formulated, circulated, evaluated, and reformulated in perpetuity. The process is akin to 'biological natural selection' (Kingdon, 2011: 116), with some ideas combining with other ideas to create a new proposal whilst others are relegated and withdrawn from consideration. There are three components that contribute to an idea's longevity in the policy stream. Firstly, value acceptability, which denotes the idea's conformity to existing belief systems within the policy community; secondly, technical feasibility, which refers to whether the requisite skills and infrastructure are in place to implement said idea; and thirdly, resource adequacy, which refers to whether a given agency has the requisite resources to implement said idea. Ideas that survive and become adopted and pursued are reliant upon the role of policy entrepreneurs. These are actors in the policymaking process with a vested interest in a policy area, who work to soften up policy communities and the public in order to introduce new ideas and ways of thinking about problem resolution. Softening up entails floating trial policies or plans and creating a climate of acceptance for the idea. Policy communities then produce short lists of ideas for consideration to resolving a given problem. Consensus on a given set of ideas will spread through a policy community; this involves the adoption of a common awareness of a problem and a common acceptance of a solution.

Ultimately, the Policy Stream involves a process in which ideas compete against one another and evolve over time to eventually arrive at a shortlist of ideas that become adopted by a given policy community. Getting a community to adopt an idea involves time and effort; it involves a degree of softening-up. There is nothing new or novel; the process involves the amalgamation and combination of a variety of old and new solutions. For a solution to be adopted

by those in power, a third and final convergence must take place, for Kingdon's MSA, this takes place in the third stream, the Political Stream.

## 2.1.3  Political Stream

The term "political" in this sense is inspired by Easton's work and is taken to refer to 'any activity related to the authoritative allocation of values' (Easton, 1971: 129). For Kingdon, there are three elements that comprise this stream, the national mood, organised political forces, and the composition of government. Any change to either of these elements can substantively alter the political agenda of a given polity, making the impossible possible. In relation to the first component, the national mood, this refers to public opinion, to which decision-makers are keenly sensitive; they will thus only address problems that the public perceives as salient. Decision-makers wait for opportunities wherein the national mood changes to align with their own values and conceptions of the good, thus creating fertile ground on which to propose their policy.

Judging the national mood consists firstly, of communication between constituents and elected officials and secondly, of communication between elected officials and policymakers. In Kingdon's seminal research for example, policymakers implied that they could perceive changes in the national mood and would act accordingly to promote appropriate policies whilst relegating less popular or salient ones. These changes in national mood can often be the result of cyclical swings of elected government, the result of a concerted issue-awareness campaign, or they may be the consequence of a sudden crisis or event. It is important to note however that the national mood is a two-way street and a new government with new ideas and an radical will often draw significant media coverage and attention throughout the political arena, which in turn can affect the public's own perceptions of what is acceptable and salient. A change in the national mood may not necessitate appropriate action in an issue area, as other aspects of the Political Stream are just as influential.

One such aspect, the second of the components that make up the Political Stream, are the activities of organised political forces, such as interest groups and lobbyists. The concepts of conflict and consensus are critical to affecting the Political Stream and if decision-makers see that the majority of interest groups or political forces favour a given course of action then this provides a 'powerful impetus to move in that direction' (Kingdon, 2011: 150). Many policymakers for example, confided in Kingdon that it was true that "the squeaky wheel gets the grease". One of the principal determinants to sensing the preferences of these organised political forces is the flow of communication between them and policymakers and decision-makers. With whom are decision-makers liaising and about which issues?

> If they hear a lot from one side and not from the other, they assume that the balance lies with the first side. (Kingdon, 2011: 151)

When a balance occurs and there is fierce contestation around an issue area then it is unlikely for change to occur. Activists, policymakers, and decision-makers are opportunistic and will not therefore waste their resources on a fruitless issue that will either go unsupported or will result in endless conflict; they act in a similar manner as legislators who calculate when to bring a vote to the floor, they make a 'calculation of intensities' (Kingdon, 2011: 151). Should the balance of interests fall decisively on one side of an issue, then that particular side will be more likely to be attended to by decision-makers. If however, the government is not supportive of such a proposal or idea, despite a positive balance of interests and a shift in the national mood in favour of said idea, then it is still uncertain that the idea will be attended to.

It is important therefore, to also consider the composition of government, the third element of the Political Stream. Changes in administration for example, can be one of the most sinificant stimuli for change in a polity for it not only brings new policies, but also new personnel, new priorities, and new perceptions. Agenda change can encompass change within an incumbent administration or a change of said administration altogether. Kingdon's

research revealed a wealth of evidence and examples where political turnover had a 'dramatic impact' on policy agendas; it makes the impossible possible and can relegate hitherto salient issues to a low priority (2011: 153).

These three components, outlined above, are not however mutually equal and the national mood is the most influential determinant of action in the Political Stream to the extent that it can overpower the efforts and demands of the second and third components. Significantly, the Political Stream is the most important stream of Kingdon's MSA, as all the relevant actors in the policymaking process wait for the convergence of forces in this stream before acting one way or another. Some actors however, will not just wait but will take action to accelerate the convergence of the three streams; these actors are known as policy entrepreneurs.

### 2.1.4  Policy Entrepreneurs

A complimentary element to the three streams is the policy entrepreneur. Policy entrepreneurs are actors either inside or external to the policymaking process that invest resources to develop and push a policy initiative in return for future gains. The policy entrepreneur is a significant actor in softening-up the decision-making process for the adoption of a given policy. They lay the groundwork and will lobby the necessary actors to raise awareness of the problem and a given policy as a solution; they work to link the three streams together. Policy entrepreneurs range from governmental ministers, legislators, civil servants, lobbyists, or academics.

Whilst policy entrepreneurs are rarely single-handedly responsible for a major policy change, they are however typically central figures in the process. They are opportunists and lie in wait for a focusing event or a change in the Political Stream to draw attention to a policy proposal that they have been formulating and refining and which they currently champion. With the inclusion of the policy entrepreneur Kingdon posits both a structural and a personal perspective to his analysis whereby a policy window opens due to the

convergence of a number of structural elements, the three streams, but the opportunity is seized upon by policy entrepreneurs; this is beneficial for providing a holistic approach to policymaking.

### 2.1.5  Policy Window

This convergence of forces, priorities, and preferences across streams is known as a policy window and represents the final obstacle that an idea must overcome before being adopted by a polity. Policy windows are rare and short-lived; major policy change however is derived therefrom and it is thus important that policymakers and decision-makers understand this if they intend to pass their agenda. These windows are typically characterised by a tempering of positions of all sides of the argument, which move from the extremes to the centre as a change of policy becomes ever more likely. Advocates become more open to compromise and less dogmatic as the policy window opens. Fundamentally, a policy window opens due to a change in the Political Stream, such as a change of government, or the Problem Stream, such as the emergence of a new and pressing problem or a focusing event. Policy windows can be measured by a variety of indicators but can also exist as a perception of involved actors who themselves may feel that circumstances have substantively changed. It is for this reason why this research will study the perceptions of policymakers. Policymakers will often reveal significant insights into whether a policy window is open through their rhetoric. They tacitly reveal whether a window is open or not and whether a policy is feasible or not; they will not invest resources in policies that will not yield results, either personal or institutional.

> When windows open, advocates of proposals sense their opportunity and rush to take advantage of it… The probability of an item rising on the decision agenda is dramatically increased if all three streams… are joined (Kingdon, 2011: 175-178).

## 2.2    Evaluation

Having outlined Kingdon's MSA, it is now pertinent to evaluate why this framework has been chosen for this research question. Kingdon's Multiple Streams Approach is a modified theory of the garbage can model of policymaking, which posits that the policymaking process is 'a collection of choices looking for problems… solutions looking for issues… and decision makers looking for work' (Cohen, March & Olsen, 1972: 2). It is this proposition that orders Kingdon's framework around the analysis of the three streams. MSA provides two distinct advantages for the analysis of policymaking (Cairney & Jones, 2016). First, as an abstract theory it can be aptly applied to universal policymaking issues and is not restricted to either a specific policy field or a specific policy process; this is particularly useful for examining the effects of Brexit on the calculations of European policymakers. Secondly, the barrier to entry is low and it is a flexible and easy to apply framework; this is particularly useful for this research, which employs MSA prospectively and in a predictive manner and thus ought to be followed up by future research in order to validate the findings contained herein. The framework used ought therefore to be replicable and easy to employ.

Furthermore, MSA exhibits an 'unparalleled empirical richness', which allows it to provide insight into policymaking on a variety of levels, contexts, and policy fields (Jones *et. al.*, 2016: 31). To be applied to the EU policy field, MSA can be easily be adapted to take account of the multi-level nature of EU politics (Ackrill, & Kay, 2011; Ackrill, Kay & Zahariadis, 2013). Accordingly, researchers would do well to examine all the relevant levels from which a policy is affected. In the case of foreign policy in the EU, this is reserved for the supranational level of the European Commission and the national level represented in the European Council. MSA has been typically employed to analyse the policymaking process in a retrospective manner that makes use of case-study analysis (Plant, 2004; Lindquist, 2006; Farley *et. al.*, 2007; Owens, 2010; Simanjuntak *et. al.*, 2012; Maltby, 2013). It has however, also been employed to provide an analysis of a predictive nature (Ridde, 2009;

Elzen *et. al.*, 2011; Liu & Jayakar, 2012), as is the intention herein. In Liu and Jayakar's (2012) research this took the form of comparing contemporary conditions in Chinese and Indian telecommunications markets to predict the nature, direction, and likelihood of regulatory evolution in these two markets. The employment of MSA in this case showed how India's telecommunications market was likely to evolve in a traditionally incrementalist manner, responding to a plurality of interests, whilst China's market is influenced by changes in the Political Stream and macro-level political reformulations. Lastly, Kingdon's MSA has been employed in this research due to its utility in analysing the policymaking process of foreign policy. Neumann (2006), who undertook a case study of US foreign policy in Colombia, found that MSA was uniquely positioned to analyse policy change in the area of high politics because of the framework's focus on critical aspects of the decision-making process, particularly in relation to policy formulation. MSA's utility in foreign policy analysis is also noted in other contemporary studies (Doeser, 2013; Doeser & Eidenfalk, 2013).

Kingdon's MSA is thus uniquely positioned to provide a framework with which to undertake this research for three reasons. Firstly, it is an abstract theory that focuses on universal elements of policymaking and is thus widely applicable to a plethora of policy fields, such as foreign policy. Secondly, it is a flexible theory that allows for application in multiple modes of governance including the multi-level governance structures of the EU, to which this research pertains. Finally, although the majority of applications of MSA have been retrospective, it is a framework that can be employed in a predictive and prospective manner, which this research will endeavour to do. Ultimately, Kingdon's MSA is an incredibly useful tool with which to explain and analyse the policymaking process and is particularly useful at gauging whether political conditions are amenable to policy change.

> [It] is vague enough to be applicable to a broad range of situations and settings, but valid enough to be useful as an explanator [sic] of policy activity (Rawat & Morris, 2016: 627)

# 3    Research Design

## 3.1    Methodology

In order to study whether Brexit provides a window of opportunity for CFSP reform, I have elected to use Kingdon's MSA framework outlined above. In this research I use an online survey to reveal the preferences and assessments of EU policymakers in relation to the three streams of Kingdon's MSA. In addition to this survey, I undertake semi-structured interviews with policymakers from various institutions of the EU in order to acquire richer insight into the matter of Brexit and the EUGS and to also give context to the findings of the survey data.

I contacted 109 policymakers from four EU institutions involved in the CFSP. Due to the anonymity extended to participants, I will not disclose the names of these organisations, their distinguishing attributes, nor the names or positions of the participants. The decision to survey policymakers from these institutions was due to the work and remit of these organisations, which constitute the core of the CFSP. Policymakers from these organisations ought therefore to have comprehensive insight into the workings of the CFSP and indeed into the content, objectives, and post-Brexit prospects of the EUGS. For the semi-structured interviews, I focused on sector chiefs, department heads, and general 'higher-ups'. The intention behind this was to acquire the richest data possible and based on the rationale that those supervising an entire sector must have demonstrated in-depth and complete knowledge of the CFSP, as well as an understanding of the political context as it pertains to Brexit and wider EU policymaking.

## 3.2    Rationale

The primary advantage of using online surveys is the ease of both the data collection and the analysis of the data (Mason, 2002; Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2013). Online surveys offer creativity in design, layout, and accessibility of the

survey. Additionally, it is a low-cost method that, in comparison to other modes such as telephone surveys, postal surveys, or face-to-face questionnaires, provides for quicker responses, and frees up time for both the researcher and the respondent. There is also evidence to suggest that fewer questions are left unanswered in online surveys; this contributes to the reliability of the data and one's ability to generalise therefrom (Bryman, 2012). For these reasons and the fact that I wanted to contact a wide range of policymakers, I elected to use online surveys as my predominant method of research.

## 3.3    Survey Schema

In creating the survey design (see **Appendix 1**) I used a free online platform from www.thesistools.com. This platform was simple and accessible yet it also provided an opportunity to design a creative survey with various questioning styles and options. Moreover, it offered the opportunity to export the data to Microsoft Excel wherein I could analyse it and examine various datasets in relation to Kingdon's framework. The purpose of the survey was to uncover the underlying assumptions that these policymakers held about the CFSP and Brexit. In terms of the specific schema, firstly, I began with a problem statement taken from the EUGS, secondly, I presented eight statements related to the various streams of Kingdon's framework to which policymakers could indicate their level of agreement, thirdly I presented a final question that asked participants to select influential actors in the policymaking process. I will now enumerate each of these steps and explain the rationale behind their design.

### 3.3.1  Problem Statement

Firstly, I began with the following problem statement:

> This Strategy is underpinned by the vision of and ambition for a stronger Union, willing and able to make a positive difference in the world. Our citizens deserve a true Union, which promotes our shared interests by engaging responsibly and in partnership with others. It is now up to us to translate this into action. (EEAS, 2016: 11)

This was intended to remind the policymaker about the goals of the EUGS and to get them thinking about their role in the CFSP and how their position relates to the EUGS.

### 3.3.2  Statements

Secondly, I presented eight statements to which respondents could indicate their level of agreement by means of a closed response. I used the Likert scale to order the possible responses that respondents could give in a quantifiable and clear manner. This has the benefit of combining a 'measurement with opinion, quantity and quality' (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Participants could select five options of agreement:

**(1)** Strongly Disagree; **(2)** Disagree; **(3)** Neither agree nor disagree; **(4)** Agree; **(5)** Strongly Agree

The following section contains the statements as they appeared on the online survey and provides the rationale behind their formulation.

1.  The UK's withdrawal from the EU will mean that it is more likely that my organisation will realise the goals of the European Global Strategy 2016, as I understand them.

This statement was designed to provide insight into the issue of Brexit as it pertains to the EUGS and to reform of the CFSP. Agreement with this statement indicates that Brexit will positively impact the implementation of the EUGS and thus alludes to the fact that a policy window is possible, providing that a convergence of the three streams, in favour of CFSP reform, takes place. Disagreement would indicate that either Brexit negatively impacts the realisation of the EUGS or that it does not positively impact it. In thus case Brexit could be construed as a challenge to the effectiveness of the CFSP. This implies that it is unlikely that a policy window for CFSP reform will open in the near future.

2.  The aspirations of the European Global Strategy 2016, as I understand them, are not a top priority in my work.

This statement was designed to provide insight into the first stream, the Problem Stream. Disagreement would indicate that addressing the problems laid out in the EUGS was a top priority for policymakers. Majority disagreement would thus indicate that policymaker share common coneption of salient problems. Agreement would indicate the opposite and would demonstrate that policymakers do not consider tackling the problems laid out in the EUGS as a top priority above current day-to-day business; lack of integration or ineffectiveness thereof is not a pressing problem.

3.  The aspirations of the European Global Strategy 2016, as I understand them, are discussed frequently in my work.

In relation to the first stream, agreement would act as a second check against the answer to the previous statement and would indicate that CFSP reform is a top priority for the policymaker and thus constitutes a problem to be addressed. Disagreement would show the opposite and would indicate that CFSP reform does not constitute a pressing problem.

## *Policy Stream Statements*

4. In relation to meeting the objectives of the European Global Strategy 2016 after Brexit, existing mechanisms and policies are sufficient and should do the job.

This statement is simple and is designed to provide insight into the Policy Stream. Agreement with this statement would indicate that the policy stream is aligned with CFSP reform and the implementation of the EUGS. Disagreement would indicate the opposite and would imply that policymakers would have to re-engage with the policy primordial soup in order to search for new policy innovations or recalibrate existing measures for CFSP reform.

5. The withdrawal of the UK from the EU will hinder efforts to make EU foreign and defence policies more effective.

This statement also provides insight into the Policy Stream. 'Efforts to make… more effective' is taken to refer to the EUGS, the proposals of which are aimed at making the CFSP more effective and more integrated. Agreement would indicate that Brexit would have a negative effect on foreign and defence policies and by extension will make it harder to implement the policy goals of the EUGS. Disagreement would indicate that Brexit wouldn't affect current policy tools and would thus contribute to the notion that the Policy Stream is aligned with CFSP reform.

6. The withdrawal of the UK from the EU will impede the realisation of the European Global Strategy 2016.

This statement is designed to reveal policymaker's perceptions as to the negative consequences of Brexit on the implementation of the EUGS. Agreement would indicate that Brexit would change political conditions to such an extent that it is more difficult to implement the EUGS. Disagreement should be taken to mean that Brexit would not change the status quo, which as demonstrated in Section 1.2.4 is currently aligned with CFSP reform.

7. The withdrawal of the UK from the EU offers an opportunity for deeper integration in areas of foreign policy and defence.

This statement is designed to reveal policymaker's perceptions as to the explicit political consequences of Brexit on CFSP reform. 'Deeper integration' is taken to refer to initiatives that further co-operation and communitarisation of the CFSP, such as a permanent EU OHQ, PESCO, and other measures contained within the EUGS. Agreement would indicate that policymakers perceive the Political Stream to be aligned in favour of the proposals of the EUGS. Disagreement could indicate the opposite but by the same token it could also indicate that the status quo prevails, which in terms of the Political Stream is currently aligned with CFSP reform. In this case it will be taken to mean the opposite of the statement.

8. There is a political will and motivation to take advantage of Brexit and integrate further in foreign and defence policies.

This statement explicitly asks policymakers whether political conditions are in favour of post-Brexit CFSP reform. 'Integrate further' in this statement is taken to mean the same as the above statement, efforts that extend the

communitarisation of the CFSP, such as those policies contained throughout the EUGS. 'Political will and motivation' is taken to refer to the alignment of the Political Stream in relation to CFSP reform and implementing the EUGS. Agreement would indicate that the Political Stream has aligned to such an extent as to support CFSP reform, and thus the goals of the EUGS. Disagreement with this statement should be taken to indicate that the Political Stream, at least in reference to policy and decision-makers, is not yet aligned to CFSP reform and the goals of the EUGS.

In all of the above statements, the response **(3)** 'neither agree nor disagree' should be taken to mean that the respondent either did not know or did not want to say. If a statement receives a large proportion of neutral responses this may indicate that the statement was not clearly formulated, policymakers felt that the statement dealt in sensitive or contentious issues, or simply that the policymaker could not answer the statement with the level information that they possessed at the time.

### 3.3.3 Policy Entrepreneur Question

The final question on the third page asked respondents to choose the most influential actor, as they perceived it, in the policymaking process. The respondent could choose from the following:

1. Academics
2. EU civil servants
3. National civil servants
4. EU commissioners
5. Lobbyists
6. EU parliamentarians
7. National parliamentarians
8. Think tanks
9. Other (text box)

The design of this question was intended to reveal the policymaker's opinions regarding the arena from which policy entrepreneurs, Kingdon's fourth element, originate. Answers to this question were used to inform the semi-structured interviews and can also be used prospectively to understand which actors are the most likely to succeed at coupling the three streams. This is important to know because from Kingdon's research it is apparent that significant policy change is typically instigated or facilitated by the actions of a select individual or group of individuals, providing that the other conditions of Kingdon's MSA are also present and aligned to said policy change (2011).

## 3.4    Semi-Structured Interviews

In administering the semi-structured interviews, I, in correspondence with the participants, elected to undertake telephone interviews for the sake of convenience. Face-to-face interviews, or to a lesser extent video-conferencing, would have been optimal because they allow for a greater opportunity to build rapport as well as making more comfortable the participant in comparison to interviews where neither party can physically meet the other (Bryman, 2012); this, as noted however, was not possible. Future research would be well served to consider this and plan ahead by contacting respondents well in advance and co-ordinating with them common times and locations during which to conduct face-to-face interviews. The benefit of this would be richer data, for the respondents ought to feel more comfortable throughout and rapport could be built with ease, thus encouraging them to speak more freely. I conducted two telephone interviews and concluded an open written survey with one policymaker that could not participate in the interview, but nonetheless wanted to participate in this research (see Table 1 below). Transcripts of these interviews are held by this researcher.

**Table 1: List of interview participants**

| Participant | Interview Medium |
|---|---|
| Policymaker A | Written (open survey) |
| Policymaker B | Telephone |
| Policymaker C | Telephone |

In relation to the schema of the semi-structured interviews, I began in a similar manner to the surveys, by prompting participants to think about their role as a policymaker in the CFSP and to begin to think about the context in which they operate. I did this firstly, by explaining the research in general terms as well as providing them with my overall research question. I did not however divulge what I wished to achieve from the interview because I felt it that this could prejudice the participant's answers; I wanted rich and valid data from their point of view without them attempting to satisfy my own goals. Secondly, I provided a problem statement, the same as from the surveys, in order to impel the participants to begin thinking about the EUGS, CFSP, and their role as a policymaker. I asked questions from a pre-written interview guide (see **Appendix 2**) but I also pursued any lines of further enquiry that offered to yield more fruitful responses, for this reason it can be considered semi-structured. Accordingly, I followed guidelines to conducting a semi-structured interview as laid out by Thomas (2009) and Bryman (2012), which posit that questions for all interviewees should endeavour to retain a similar wording and focus on the same themes. It is acceptable to ask a variant of different question to different respondents providing that one enquire about the same themes. I used the themes explored in **Section 2.1** to construct questions related to each stream of analysis.

**Table 2: Semi-structured interview schema**

| Stream of analysis | Elements of discussion | Example question |
|---|---|---|
| I. **Problem Stream** | Challenges; concerns; crises; focus; issues; priorities; problems. | "What are the five most pressing issues in your role?" |
| II. **Policy Stream** | Change; discussions; initiatives; policy; progress; proposals; speeches; reforms. | "In light of Brexit, will your organisation have the requisite policy tools to implement the goals of EUGS?" |
| III. **Political Stream** | Consensus; conflict; decision-makers; executives; legislatures; lobbyists; pressure; public opinion; votes. | "Are decision-makers now, in light of Brexit, more or less receptive to CFSP reform?" |

The data from the interviews was analysed by taking account of the various elements of the three streams and the context in which they are mentioned. For example, should the policymaker speak in glowing terms about recent proposals and initiatives in CFSP we would posit that they had a positive outlook on the alignment of the Policy Stream.

## 3.5   Secondary data

To further inform the findings of the primary data and to provide a more valid picture of how Brexit might affect CFSP reform, I have also elected to analyse some secondary data where available. In relation to the Problem Stream for example, I will examine Eurobarometer and other public opinion polling to ascertain how the public ranks important issues and how this relates to the alignment of the first stream and implementing the EUGS. In the Policy Stream I will examine recent EU publications for indications of the policy progress in implementing the EUGS. Policymakers that Kingdon reviewed for example noted that when a concerted effort is made to promote an idea, then it would often appear in new policy initiatives and in the literature and speeches of decision-makers (Kingdon, 2011). Lastly, in relation to the Political Stream, I will examine prospective post-Brexit vote tallies in the

European Parliament and the European Council as they pertain to CFSP, using data from VoteWatch Europe. Fundamentally, if the primary data alongside the secondary sources indicate that all three streams are aligned with implementing the EUGS and undertaking CFSP reform, we can consider the research question to be answered in the affirmative. We could thus propose that Brexit has opened, or at least presents the opportunity to open, a policy window for CFSP reform. If one or more streams are not aligned then the opposite is suggested and we can consider the research question to be answered in the negative, since Kingdon's MSA expects all three streams to align in order for policy change to materialise.

## 3.6   Response Rate

The following table outlines the response rate for my methods.

**Table 3: Response rate**

|  | Survey | Interviews | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Policymakers contacted** | 98 | 11 | 109 |
| **Affirmative responses** | 18 | 3 | 21 |
| **Rate** | **18%** | **27%** | **19%** |

As shown by the above table, the response rate is low; around a fifth of those contacted participated. This is problematic because a 'higher response rate means less error' (Sue & Ritter, 2007: 17), with a response rate of around 20% the degree of error is high and this is a shortcoming of this method.

## 3.7   Critique

Despite this, the primary advantage of the above method is that it combines broad and thematically applicable quantitative data, obtained from the online surveys, with the in-depth and rich insight provided by the qualitative data of the semi-structured interviews. It is therefore a holistic approach that ought to

be useful in providing a comprehensive answer to the research question and indeed, to evaluating the applicability and utility of Kingdon's MSA on this issue. Immediate shortcomings are however apparent. Firstly, with respect to the online surveys, the use of the Likert Scale makes it hard to operationalise terminology for the benefit of the respondents. Language used may not be commonly understood in the way that the interviewer understands it due to the limited scope of the survey and the closed nature of the responses.

Secondly, one disadvantage of online surveys, as borne out in this research, is that response rates tend to be lower than other modes of survey (Bryman, 2012). This is problematic as it lowers the reliability of the results, which is already low due to the subjective nature of enquiry, and thus reduces the accuracy of generalisations made about the perceptions held by policymakers (Baruch & Holtom, 2008). To compensate for this Bryman recommends that the 'solicitation to participate must be especially persuasive' (2012: 677). In this research I endeavoured to follow this advice and compiled a compelling request that not only reassured participants of their anonymity and the survey's brevity but also referenced my previous employment with the European Commission. Further to this appealing request, I followed the guidance of Van Selm and Jankowski (2006) and Sue and Ritter (2007) and sent follow-up notifications to contacted policymakers. Unfortunately, this did not contribute to attaining a high response rate. It should be noted that my survey was released in the wake of the 12th May Global Cyber-attack and accordingly, the response rate may have been detrimentally affected by this, with respondents in sensitive organisations unwilling to access an unknown website.

Moreover, the sensitivity around Brexit should also be considered as an explanatory factor behind the low response rate. One policymaker told me explicitly that they had received instructions not to discuss personal or institutional views on Brexit with external individuals. I took account of this early on and tailored my survey to remove any questions that asked respondents for institutional perspectives but the response rate thereafter

remained low. Future research would benefit by considering a more personal mode of attaining the data so that the participant feels a degree of obligation to respond but also a greater level of trust in the researcher; this may take the form of a telephone survey or a face-to-face questionnaire. Whilst this method lacks in reliability due to the low response rate and subjective nature of questioning, it compensates for this by probing policymakers for their perceptions and thus reveals a number of rich and valid insights.

Lastly, one problem with asking about policymaker's priorities, such as in the semi-structured interviews and Statement 2 of the online survey, is that there will be a sample bias. For example, we might expect policymakers from the selected organisations to privilege problems of a foreign policy and external action nature and results derived therefrom will thus validate calls for, and show a positive outlook towards, current implementation of the EUGS and CFSP reform. This could then be construed as indicating a positive alignment of the Problem and Policy stream, in favour of CFSP related reforms, and this research acknowledges this. In order to acquire valid results however, a broad and yet detailed understanding of CFSP and the EUGS was needed, thus the sample drew from those organisations involved in CFSP.

# 4   Findings

The online survey data showed positive indications that a window of opportunity for CFSP reform has opened (see **Appendix 3** for aggregated results). In all three streams, the respondents' level of agreement positively signalled that the policymaking process was aligned in favour of CFSP reform.
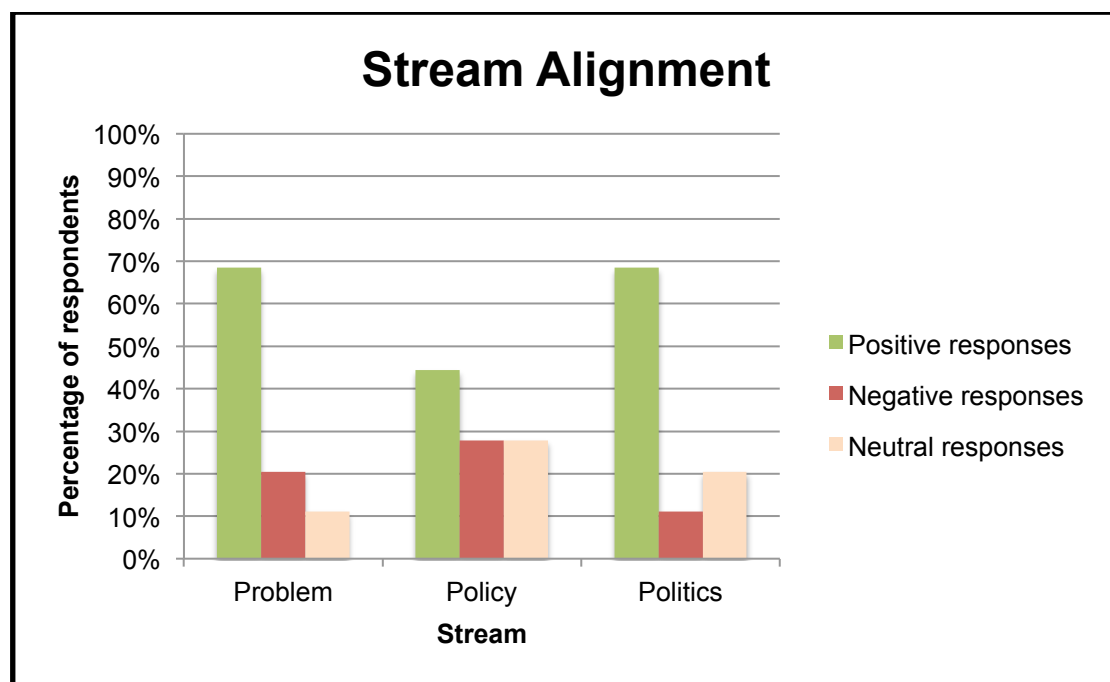


**Chart 1: Stream Alignment**

As the above chart shows, a majority of respondents gave positive responses in relation to the alignment of the Problem and Political Streams, whilst the number of respondents doing so for the Policy stream reached just under half, yet still nearly double that of those giving neutral or negative responses. Negative responses were highest in the first two streams whilst in the Political Stream they only registered around 10%. Neutral responses were few in the first stream but accounted for about a quarter and a fifth of all responses in the Policy and Political Streams respectively.

## 4.1    Problem Stream

### 4.1.1  Survey Findings

In relation to the first stream, the Problem Stream, and in relation to my first sub-question (see Section 1.2.2 for research questions), respondents were particularly positive about statements 2 and 3, both of which aimed to get insight into how policymaker's prioritised the EUGS. As demonstrated by Chart 2, the majority of surveyed policymakers indicated that CFSP reform and the priorities of the EUGS were important and pressing aspects of their work. The low instances of negative and neutral responses to statements 2 and 3 further emphasise that CFSP reform is seen as a priority amongst EU policymakers.
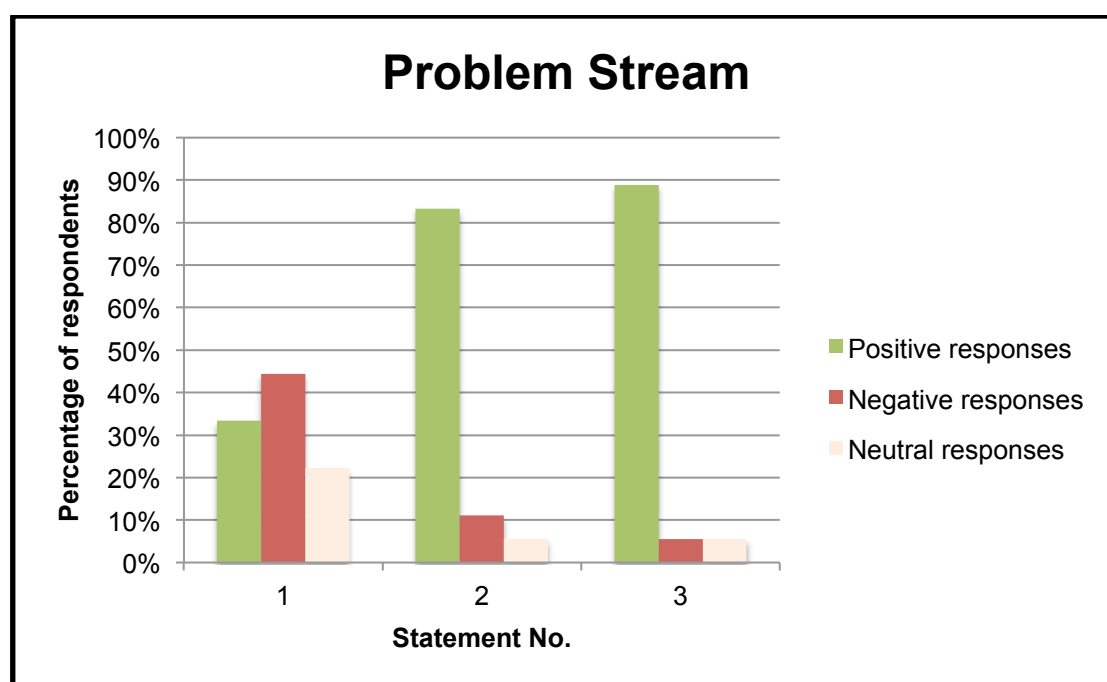


**Chart 2: Problem Stream**

The first statement unlike the latter two however, received more negative responses than positive, making it the only statement in the survey to have received such a reaction. This indicates that policymakers expect Brexit to be detrimental to realising CFSP reform. This could be interpreted that policymakers consider Brexit to be a problem itself, separate from the need to

reform the CFSP. The large number of positive and neutral responses however reflects the lack of consensus in relation to this issue amongst policymakers and thus cannot be indicative that policymakers share the same conception of the problem. This weakens the alignment of the Problem Stream somewhat, as Kingdon (2011) posits that policymakers ought to demonstrate a common conception of the problems and priorities in order for one to consider the Problem Stream to have aligned in favour of the initial idea, in this case CFSP reform. Despite this, policymakers demonstrated a markedly positive response to statements 2 and 3, which dealt with the degree to which policymakers prioritised the EUGS and the issues contained therein. Over three-quarters indicated that the aspirations and objectives of the EUGS were top priorities in their work and were frequently discussed. This suggests, in contrast to statement 1, that there is strong consensus amongst policymakers that the problems addressed in the EUGS are salient priorities and that CFSP reform is a pressing problem. Analysing these three statements together, we can see that policymakers, although concerned about the implications of Brexit, are focused on implementing the EUGS and that there is a consensus amongst those surveyed that the EUGS is a priority.

### 4.1.2  Interview Findings

In the semi-structured interviews the policymakers with whom I spoke also exhibited a striking degree of consensus as to the priorities and problems facing the EU. Common challenges that were frequently mentioned included the migration challenge, hybrid warfare threats from Russia, cyber security, the continued fight against terrorism, and most importantly, shoring up the neighbourhood, particularly in the East, through a new approach known as resilience building. This refers to supporting partner countries in the neighbourhood to avoid instability and decrease instances of fragility in said countries. In relation to whether policymakers perceived the EUGS to be a useful vehicle through which to address these problems, all answered in the affirmative.

Policymaker A noted that "considerable progress has been made" in implementing the EUGS in order to provide a "balanced but decisive" response to the abovementioned challenges. Policymaker B stated that the EUGS represented an important step in the necessary strategic communication between the EU and its citizens in relation to tackling these problems. This is indicative not only of a common conception of the problem but also of the solutions and thus, with the survey data, alludes to a positive alignment of the Problem Stream. Lastly, Policymaker C also shared this common conception of the problems and spoke about the need to support states in the neighbourhood through the new resilience approach. They also paid attention to the renewed effort towards prevention. This is a key element of the EUGS, which posits an approach to crisis management of early warning followed by early action. Clearly then, all three policymakers exhibited a common conception of the problems facing the EU and all spoke positively about the EUGS as an appropriate vehicle through which to tackle them.

However, from the survey results it would appear that where the Problem Stream is weakest is in the implications of Brexit and how that pertains to problem identification. As noted, there is disagreement amongst policymakers as to whether Brexit will make it easier or harder to realise the goals of the EUGS, with at least 44% of those surveyed saying that it will be harder. This is also reflected in the views of Policymaker B who over the course of the interview would return to the phrase "lose-lose" to describe the implications of the UK's withdrawal from the EU. This however was not a view shared by Policymaker C, who emphasised the fact that the inception and conception of the EUGS had been a 28 Member State affair. Policymaker C did however concede that Brexit, alongside a wider strategic recalibration, may have encouraged other Member States, who would otherwise have been content with slow and lacklustre progress in CFSP reform, to commit their states to supporting the direction laid out in the EUGS. Policymaker C also conceded that it is possible that some Member States are accounting for the prospective absence of the UK's obstructionism and are taking the opportunity presented by Brexit to bind themselves to CFSP reform. In this regard, the prospect of

Brexit is acting as a focusing event that sheds light on the EU's need to integrate more in CFSP in light of growing instability in the neighbourhood and strategic recalibrations taking place around the world. Ultimately, such common conceptions of the problems, challenges, and solutions, from policymakers in both the survey and semi-structure interviews, indicates that the Problem Stream is aligned in favour of implementing the EUGS and CFSP reform. There is however a degree of divergence on the implications of Brexit and how that may hinder or help the implementation of the EUGS.

### 4.1.3  Secondary Data

Drawing from secondary data, the picture is relatively similar. In the first Eurobarometer survey after the Brexit vote, at least 10% of EU citizens referenced the EU's influence in the world as the most important issue facing the EU (European Commission, 2016). Migration and terrorism topped the list with 45% and 32% of responses respectively. With the exception of economic issues and personal finances, the majority of citizens demonstrated a shared conception with EU policymakers surveyed in this research as well as with the priorities outlined in the EUGS. This is also reflected in a YouGov (2016) survey of European attitudes, which occurred after the Brexit vote. This study showed pluralities across the largest EU Member States selecting immigration, terrorism, and external aggression as some of the most important issues facing their countries. It is apparent that amongst the citizenry therefore, there is an appetite for more effective action in these issue areas, areas that are central pillars of the EUGS. Amongst national decision-makers there also seems to be evidence that conceptions about the challenges facing the EU are commonly held. The aforementioned joint Franco-German paper on defence, the support for a joint European army by the leaders of the Visegrad, comments by the Dutch defence minister in support of further CSDP integration (Emmott, 2015), and a plethora of other indications all suggest that there is a convergence around prioritising CFSP reform amongst national policymakers in the wake of Brexit. Given the results of the surveys, the semi-structured interviews, and the secondary data it

appears that there is a commonly held conception about the problems facing the EU and there is also a commonly held recourse to further integration in the CFSP. This amounts to a relatively strong case for concluding that the Problem Stream is aligned to support CFSP reform and realising the EUGS. Accordingly, we can consider the first sub-question (see **Section 1.2.2**) to be answered in the affirmative.

## 4.2    Policy Stream

### 4.2.1  Survey Findings

In relation to the second stream, the Policy Stream, and in relation to my second sub-question (see **Section 1.2.2** for research questions), respondents were less positive and no majorities of agreement were recorded. Positive responses were however the largest number at 44% for both statements, with negative and neutral responses at 28% each for both statements.
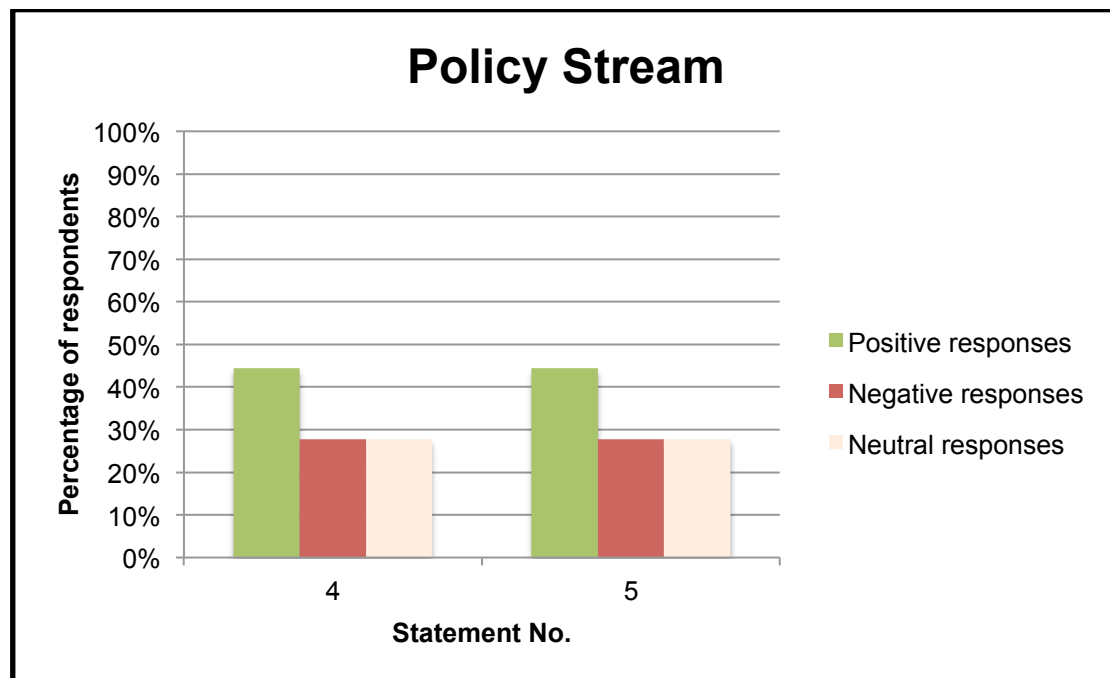


**Chart 3: Policy Stream**

These results reveal that a plurality of policymakers are optimistic about the alignment of the Policy Stream and believe that extant policy tools are sufficient to see through the implementation of the EUGS. Around a half of policymakers surveyed also believed that the prospect of Brexit facilitates more effective policies in foreign and defence matters. This indicates that the Policy Stream is marginally aligned to reform of the CFSP. It is not however as clear as the first and last stream since the remaining half of respondents signalled that they are not optimistic and that they did not agree or were neutral to the idea that extant policy tools were sufficient. On why this may be the case, Policymaker C posited that some policymakers may feel that the ambition of the EUGS is too great and that they do not have enough resources to implement such a grand strategy. Policymaker C noted however, that it is important to take into account that there is a "sequencing of priorities" in the EUGS. Consequently, it may appear daunting to some policymakers, viewing the EUGS as a whole, as a daunting process but in reality the sequencing of priorities will ensure that everything is addressed in time but the priorities come first. Despite this possible explanation, it is still clear that policymakers are less optimistic about the Policy Stream and as such we should consider this stream to be weakly aligned to CFSP reform but nonetheless still very much aligned given the net positive outlook.

### 4.2.2  Interview Findings

The findings from the interviews however did not reflect this negative outlook and aligned instead with the responses showing a positive outlook. Policymakers that I interviewed outlined a number of current policies and initiatives that were contributing to attaining the goals laid out in the EUGS. Policymaker A was very optimistic and lauded the "considerable progress" made in implementing the EUGS. They referenced for example the establishment of the Military Planning and Conduct Capability in particular as one solution, alongside a growing number of initiatives, to tackling some of the challenges and problems laid out in the EUGS. Policymaker B echoed these sentiments and spoke very positively about current policy tools and initiatives

in relation to the EUGS. They also referenced the Erasmus+, Horizon2020, and the focus on resilience building as particularly useful in contributing to the goals of the EUGS, as they pertain to the Neighbourhood Policy. On this point they also made it clear that whilst the EU possesses a broad and effective range of policy tools, there remains room for improvement. Increasing the financial resources available to migration management, deepening co-operation with NATO, and communicating more with citizens in the EU and in partner countries were some areas that would benefit the implementation of the EUGS. Finally, the most marked positive outlook in relation to the Policy Stream was given by Policymaker C who described the progress made in implementing the EUGS as "striking". From PESCO, renewed budgetary commitments, and financing of the EU Battlegroups, Policymaker C stated that the scale of progress, particularly in CSDP, had been remarkable when one considers that these issues have been circulated and debated without policy action for over a decade. The explanatory factor behind this sudden alignment of the Policy Stream, according to Policymaker C, is the shift in the strategic environment, of which the issue of Brexit, the election of Trump, and the rise of illiberal authoritarianism are all constituent elements. Ultimately, the policymakers that I interviewed contributed to the notion that the Policy Stream was aligned to CFSP reform and that ample policy tools and initiatives are available, or are being made available, to implement the EUGS. Although they touched on areas where improvement was necessary, they gave an overall positive picture about the progress towards implementing the EUGS.

This is further evidenced by the tangible initiatives put forth by EU policymakers and decision-makers the most significant of which are outlined in the recent *Implementing the EU Global Strategy: Year 1*. This document was published in mid-June 2017 and outlined the steps taken to implement the EUGS since its inception. These include an impressive list of policy initiatives such as the European External Investment Plan, a Joint Communication on Resilience, Military Planning and Conduct Capability, the European Defence Action Plan, and most significantly, an agreement by the Foreign Affairs Council to explore PESCO. These core policies, alongside a

wealth of other initiatives across a range of policy fields that have been undertaken, demonstrate the staggering scale of progress in realising the EUGS, which, for such a historically lethargic and contentious field as foreign and defence policy, is impressive.

This is reflected in the foreword of the document by HR/VP Mogherini:

> We have moved fast – and united – on concrete implementation, starting with security and defence. In this field, more has been achieved in the last ten months than in the last ten years. (EEAS, 2017: 5)

Despite a lower positive outlook from the survey results, the Policy Stream seems to be aligned to CFSP reform. Already, significant steps have been taken to implement the EUGS. Policymakers that I interviewed remarked on the considerable scale of progress made in this area and were particularly keen to stress the plethora of initiatives available to them. Furthermore, it is hard to ignore the definitive assessment of the *Implementing the EU Global Strategy: Year 1* report, which presents an overview of policy progress thus far. From this, it is clear that the Policy Stream is in alignment with reforming the CFSP and realising the EUGS. Accordingly, we can consider the second sub-questions (see **Section 1.2.2**) to be answered in the affirmative.

## 4.3    Political Stream

### 4.3.1  Survey Findings

In relation to the third stream, the Political Stream, and in relation to my third sub-question (see **Section 1.2.2** for research questions), a majority of policymakers gave positive responses to all three statements (see **Chart 4** below). This is significant because it is the only stream to exhibit such a high degree of alignment and consensus across all statements. The highest number of positive responses was recorded in statement 6, which asked

policymakers if they believed that Brexit would impede the realisation of the EUGS. 83% of respondents indicated that it would not, with only a sole policymaker indicating that it would. Moreover, in statement 8, which asked policymakers whether Brexit presents an opportunity for further integration in the CFSP, 67% of respondents gave a positive response and indicated that they perceived an opportunity for more CFSP integration to be present. The high levels of recorded agreement to these statements indicates therefore that policymaker perceive the political conditions around CFSP reform to have substantively changed since, and in light of, the Brexit vote.
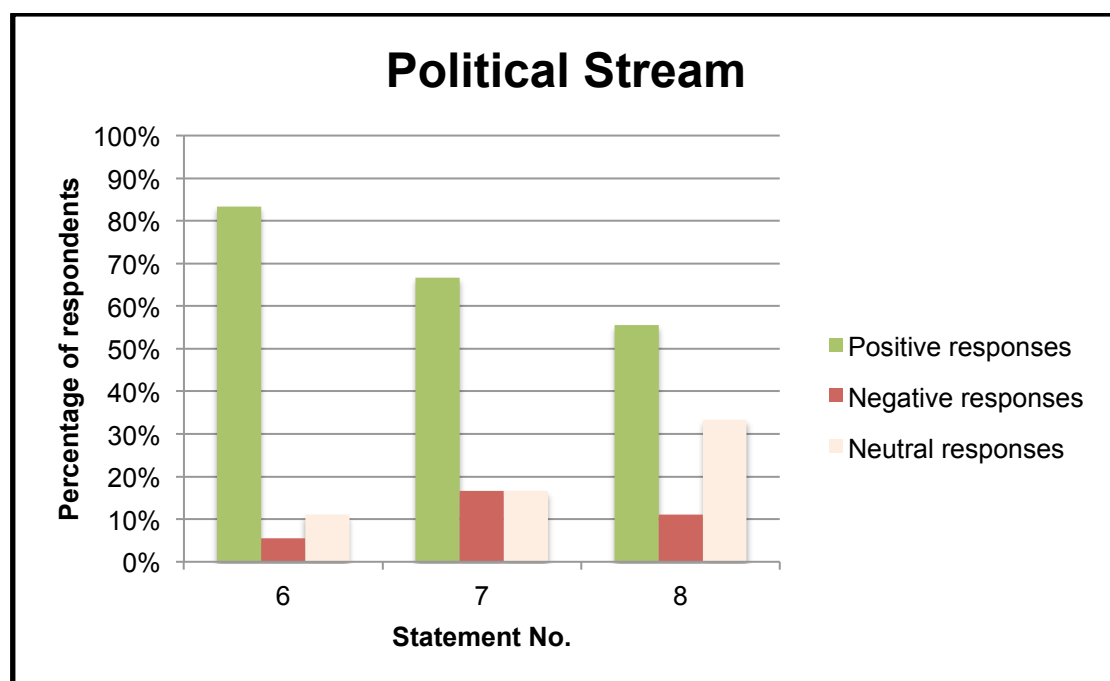


**Chart 4: Political Stream**

Finally, the positive responses to statement 8, whilst still a majority, were the lowest recorded in this stream at 56%. This statement asked participants whether they agreed that there existed a political will and motivation to take advantage of Brexit and integrate further in the CSFP. A third of all policymakers recorded a neutral response to this statement, the highest for the entire survey. This is interesting as it can indicate several things. First, that the notion of 'taking advantage of Brexit' is particularly contentious and thus policymakers preferred not to give an opinion. Second, that the notion of further integration remains contentious also. Third, and perhaps most likely,

that policymakers simply did not know. In any case, the relatively high instance of neutral responses to statement 8 indicates that the direction for the EU after Brexit remains an unknown for many policymakers.

### 4.3.2 Interview Findings

In relation to the Political Stream, the interviews produced interesting findings. Surprisingly, each interviewed policymaker took a positive, a neutral, and a negative outlook on the question of the political implications of Brexit as it pertains to the CFSP. The neutral stance was reflected by Policymaker A, who reiterated the official EU line that the UK remains a Member State until withdrawal and that it enjoys the full rights and obligations of membership. Policymaker B reflected the negative stance. As noted previously, Policymaker B referred to Brexit in negative terms throughout. Although they emphasised that it was still too early to predict, ultimately, Policymaker B saw Brexit as a "lose-lose" scenario. Policymaker B also stressed that even with the UK withdrawn, the CFSP, as an intergovernmental policy area, would remain resistant to swift policy change and would continue to lack the decisiveness and ease of consensus building of other policy areas. Accordingly, reflecting the negative stance, Policymaker B did not believe that Brexit would have positive political implications for CFSP reform. Paradoxically however, Policymaker B did concede that Brexit would have no direct impact on their policy field but that it remained negative in its implications. In contrast, Policymaker C believed the opposite and took a positive stance. Policymaker C did not see any negative implications in relation to the political conditions surrounding CFSP reform and the EUGS. They noted for example that whilst Brexit will bring challenges for the EU in terms of lost capabilities, ultimately, it has reinvigorated the political will around CFSP reform. Policymaker C referred to Brexit, alongside the wider global strategic recalibrations taking place, as a phenomenon that had "focused people's minds and actually brought them together" in relation to supporting and implementing the EUGS.

It is apparent therefore from the interviews that there is a range of opinion as to the political implications of Brexit on CFSP reform and the EUGS. On balance however, it is hard to ignore the overwhelming positive response to the three statements in the Political Stream from the survey respondents. Taking into account the survey findings and accounting for the views expressed in the interviews, it appears apparent that the prospect of Brexit has the potential to change the political conditions to favour action on CFSP reform and in implementing the EUGS.

### 4.3.3 Secondary Data

This is further reflected by prospective post-Brexit vote counts in the European Parliament, which indicate that with the UK withdrawn, the political conditions in the legislature will be more conducive to CFSP integration. From Votewatch Europe's data (Votewatch Europe, 2017), it is suggested that the balance of political power on the issue of increasing the CFSP budget would increase the "yes" vote from 62% before Brexit to 68% after Brexit. The Commission and the EP may exploit this as an opportunity to call for an increase in the CFSP budget (van Ham, 2016). Furthermore, on the question of a European Defence Union, Votewatch Europe envisages legislative support rising from 43% of votes before Brexit to 47%. Whilst still below a majority, such a development would reduce the opposition to the EDU from 55% to 51%. This is a considerable change in the balance of political power in the legislature and would contribute to 'rallying a majority' in favour of the EDU (Votewatch Europe, 2017). Clearly then Brexit offers the potential to change the political conditions surrounding CFSP reform. With the UK withdrawn, the opposition to such fundamental projects as the EDU, PESCO and the OHQ, fall by the way side or are at very the least are weakened. Taking into account the positive outlook from the survey results and the positions expressed in the interviews, the Political Stream appears aligned to CFSP reform. Although the CFSP will remain a divided policy area, due to its intergovernmental nature, the absence of the UK's obstructionist attitude will spur efforts to further integrate the CFSP and will be beneficial for the

implementation of more contentious aspects of the EUGS, such as the OHQ, a common European Defence Fund, and PESCO. Accordingly, we can consider the Policy Stream to be aligned to CFSP reform and the final sub-questions of this research (see **Section 1.2.2**) to be answered in the affirmative.

## 4.4    Policy Entrepreneur

On the final element of Kingdon's MSA, the Policy Entrepreneur, surveyed policymakers indicated that national and EU civil servants were the most influential actors in the policymaking process. As Table 4 (see below) shows, two-thirds of policymakers answered that civil servants were the most influential. Commissioners, lobbyists, national parliamentarians, and think-tank representatives were also named, each by a single policymaker respectively.

| Actors | Responses | % of respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Academics | 0 | 0% |
| Civil servants (EU) | 6 | 33% |
| Civil servants (national) | 6 | 33% |
| Commissioners | 1 | 6% |
| Lobbyists | 1 | 6% |
| Parliamentarians (EU) | 0 | 0% |
| Parliamentarians (National) | 1 | 6% |
| Think-tanks | 1 | 6% |
| Other | 2 | 11% |

**Table 4: Policy Entrepreneur results**

This shows that policymakers believe that it is the civil servant that has the most potential to influence the policymaking process and is thus an ideal candidate for policy entrepreneur. This has implications for this research as it indicates that the most successful actor in converging the above three streams on the question of CFSP reform is the civil servant, national or EU-based, according to the perceptions of fellow policymakers. With the three streams converged and a policy window open, implementing the EUGS ought

to continue before the window closes and other issues and policy areas rise in salience. To capitalise on this opportunity requires the patient persistence and advocacy of the policy entrepreneur, or groups of entrepreneurs, which work to converge the three streams and push their proposal through to adoption in its entirety. On the question of CFSP reform, the surveyed policymakers indicate that civil servants were the most influential in the policymaking process. Accordingly, we can posit that policy entrepreneurs that successfully advocate for the implementation of the EUGS to its entirety are likely to be civil servants. This is useful insight that holds implications for future research. Future studies wishing to build on the findings herein have a clearer indication of those actors perceived to be the most influential in the CFSP policymaking process.

## 4.5    Outlook

In sum, all three streams of analysis, the Problem, Policy, and Political Stream are perceived by policymakers to be aligned in favour of CFSP reform.
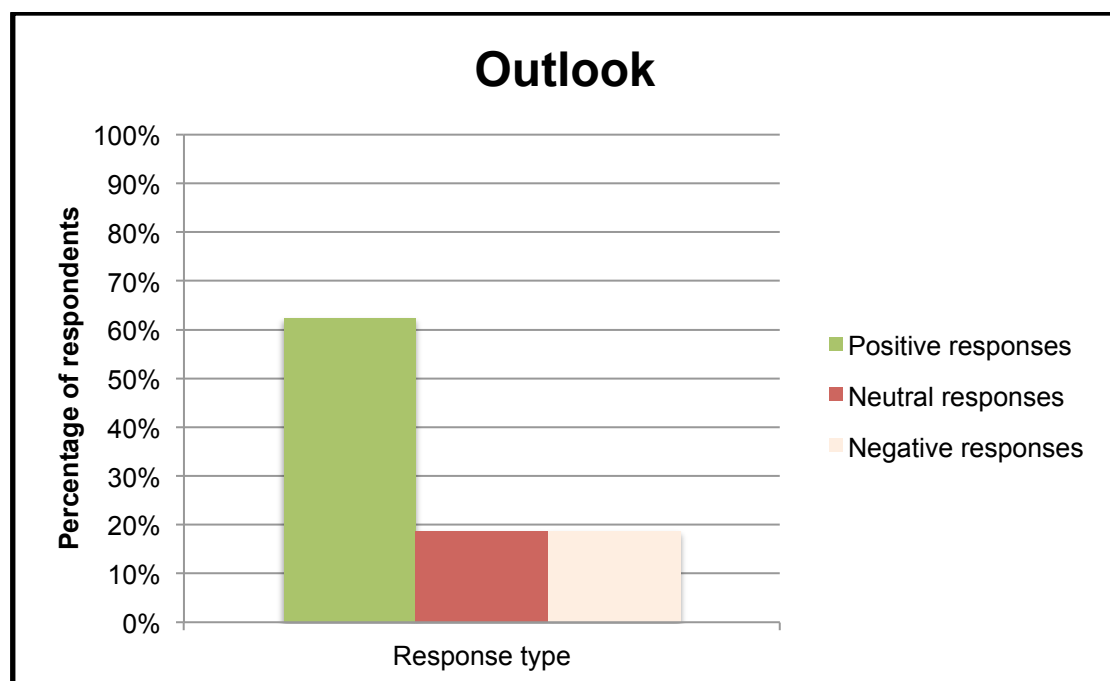


**Chart 5: Outlook**

**Chart 5** illustrates, for example, that a majority of policymakers have a positive outlook towards implementing the EUGS and reforming the CFSP in light of Brexit. This indicates that a policy window is open. Already, implementation of the EUGS is underway and a number of initiatives have come to fruition. In order to take full advantage of the opportunity provided by Brexit, according to Kingdon's MSA, policymakers must press on with implementing the EUGS and reforming the CFSP before the window closes (refer to **Section 2.1.5** for reasons why policy windows close).

## 4.6    MSA Assessment

With the analysis concluded and the findings showing a strong indication of alignment across the three streams, it is now pertinent to assess MSA's utility in this research. From this research three particular advantages of Kingdon's MSA are apparent. First, MSA has proven to be useful in exploring the policymaking process. By distinguishing between distinct yet related streams of analysis MSA allows one to explore how an idea progresses from inception to legislative adoption. In this research it has been shown that CFSP reform has passed from inception to legislative adoption due to the alignment of all three streams. This research has also shown how Brexit has affected this process and the findings indicate that it has facilitated the alignment of a number of elements in the above streams. By dividing the analysis into streams, Kingdon's MSA has the benefit of producing a composite picture of the process that an idea must go through before it is considered at the decision-making level. This is useful as it provides richer insight into the policymaking process. The division in this manner also allows for a comparative element, which this research has demonstrated. It has been shown in this research for example that the Policy Stream, although aligned, was weaker than the other two streams. This allows one to compare conditions in the three streams and hypothesise why one stream is weaker than others. In this research it was found that the ambition of the EUGS may have led policymakers to believe that they were overextending and that they did not believe that they had the requisite tools to adequately implement the

EUGS in its entirety. Such is the utility of Kingdon's MSA that differences in alignment between the streams of policymaking can be compared; this is an advantage. Secondly, as previously noted in **Section 2.2**, Kingdon's MSA is an abstract theory that is flexible and broadly applicable to a variety of policy fields and situations (Cairney & Jones, 2016). This was an advantage in this research as it provided the opportunity to use MSA in an experimental way that predicts whether CFSP reform is likely in light of Brexit. The research found that a policy window for CFSP reform had opened due to the prospective effects of Brexit. Whether this will be borne out as Brexit negotiations conclude will be an interesting avenue for future research.

Lastly, a number of studies have previously employed Kingdon's MSA in studies on foreign policy due to its insight into the decision-making process (Doeser, 2013; Doeser & Eidenfalk, 2013). For example, MSA's focus on problem identification, policy formulation, and the political environment, each represented by a stream of analysis, provides useful insight into key aspects of the decision-making process (Neumann, 2006). By dividing the analysis into these streams, I was able to tailor my research thematically and focus specific questions to each stream, the answers to which provided rich insight. Using the Multiple Streams Approach, the findings revealed key turning points in the decision-making process. For example, Policymaker C spoke frequently about a "focusing of minds", which referred to how the wider strategic recalibrations represented by Brexit had pressured actors involved in the policy process to reformulate their priorities and act on CFSP reform. This insight may have been missed by employing a theory that does not possess the distinctive approach to policy formulation that Kingdon's MSA possesses. Ultimately, through this research process, Kingdon's MSA proved itself to be a useful theory for analysing the policy making process. It provided unique and pertinent insight into the key turning points in the policymaking process as it pertained to the CFSP and Brexit, whilst its flexibility provided for an element of experimentation; it was used predictively in a prospective manner and therein lies the originality of this research.

# 5    Conclusion

## 5.1    Recommendations for Policymakers

To bring this research to a close, it is pertinent to outline the recommendations for policymakers by addressing a number of issues that this research has uncovered. In keeping with the theoretical framework employed in this research I will address the biggest challenge in each stream of analysis as it pertains to CFSP reform and implementing the EUGS.

### 5.1.1  Problem Stream

In the first stream of analysis, it became apparent from both the survey findings and the interviews that policymakers held a common conception of the problems facing the EU. These problems and challenges, as shown in the interviews, were also the same problems identified in the EUGS and to which that Strategy is addressed. Accordingly, the Problem Stream aligns to the goals of the EUGS and its implementation. In order for this to remain the case, policymakers must work to ensure that the salience of these issues, such as instability in the neighbourhood, hybrid warfare, and the threat of terrorism remain as top priorities amongst both decision-makers and the wider polity. This may involve contributing to or supporting advocacy coalitions that lobby to resolve these issues and keep them at the fore of public debate. It may also involve, as Policymaker C alluded to, pre-emptively tackling issues that are likely to rise in salience in the future. One such issue area was EU engagement on the Asian continent, which Policymaker C foresaw as rising in salience once the media focus on Brexit and the eastern neighbourhood subsided. By following these recommendations policymakers working on implementing the EUGS would be better equipped to take advantage of the policy window that the issue of Brexit has opened. These recommendations ought to contribute to maintaining the alignment of the Problem Stream in favour of CFSP reform and implementing the EUGS.

### 5.1.2  Policy Stream

In the second stream of analysis the survey results exhibited a lower level of alignment than in the other two streams. Following the remarks of Policymaker C, this may be indicative that the introduction of a number of novel approaches in the EUGS, such as the new preventative strategy to crisis management and the resilience building approach to the ENP, require more policy work. Policymaker C noted for example, that work will likely be needed in defining the policy framework with which to secure resilience in partner countries. Accordingly, policymakers would benefit from engaging in exploratory work on resilience building and employing an EU-wide, multi-level best-practices approach that capitalises on aspects of resilience building that attain positive results. In a similar vein, Policymaker B also touched on a challenge related to the ENP aspect of the EUGS. They noted for example that recent policy progress is irrelevant if partner countries do not meet the EU's actions with the same level of commitment, action, and ambition. Accordingly, it is recommended that policymaker and officials remain focused on building collaborative relations with partner countries that continues to take into account the different administrative cultures and needs. These recommendations ought to contribute to maintaining the alignment of the Policy Stream and keeping policy tools fit-for-purpose.

### 5.1.3  Political Stream

In the final stream, Policymaker C suggested that the renewed approach to crisis management and the emphasis on prevention might prove to be a difficult sell not only to the public but to decision-makers also. Due to the nature of preventative action, outcomes cannot be measured nor can they be presented as justification for its continuation in the face of a polity that demands tangible outcomes. Policymakers must take note of this and would do well to heed the recommendations of Policymaker B who, in this research, advocated for more strategic communication with the citizenry, particularly as it pertains to the CFSP. Policymakers engaged in implementing the preventative strategy of the EUGS would be well served therefore to

adequately communicate the successes of said approach with those to whom they are accountable. These recommendations ought to contribute to maintaining the alignment of the Political Stream and would ensure that political conditions remain supportive of implementing the EUGS in light of Brexit.

## 5.2 Critical Appraisal

Having provided policymakers with recommendations to problem solving as they emerged in this research, it is also appropriate to provide a critical appraisal of this research and how problems that arose herein can be adequately resolved in future studies.

First, in relation to the research question, one of the difficult aspects of beginning this project was trying to measure the effect of Brexit. Given that the outcome is such an unknown since it is yet to happen, the only data from which I could draw was the well-informed and professional views of involved policymakers. Whilst this was useful in acquiring rich data and gaining valid insight into the implementation of the EUGS, it struggled to provide a cohesive picture of the implications of Brexit. This was particularly problematic given the low level of consensus amongst policymakers as to the effects of Brexit. Accordingly, future research on Brexit or like phenomena would benefit from engaging in a preliminary comparison of instances of past geopolitical shocks that are analogous to Brexit in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the probable outcomes and consequences. With that said, such an approach would only guide the researcher in their expectations of the outcomes of Brexit since no-one can predict what will happen over the course of the negotiations. Nonetheless such a strategy would provide the opportunity to employ Kingdon's MSA to the past political shock and test whether MSA predicts the change to the policy process due to said geopolitical shock.

Secondly, in relation to the methodology, a number of shortcomings have already been addressed in **Section 3.7**. These were found to be the low response rate, the difficulty of operationalising terms in the survey, and an inherent sample bias. On the first shortcoming, the response rate of this research was around 20%; this is low and increases the probability of error. To be able to generalise more confidently and reliably about the perceptions and views of policymakers, it is advisable that future researchers endeavour to attain a higher response rate. Future research would benefit by considering a more personal mode of attaining the data so that the participant feels a degree of obligation to respond but also a greater level of trust in the researcher (van Selm & Jankowski, 2006; Rogelberg and Stanton, 2007); this may take the form of a telephone survey or a face-to-face questionnaire. Baruch and Holtom further recommend that researchers 'pre-notify participants, publicize the survey… manage survey length… foster survey commitment and provide survey feedback.' (2008: 1157). These recommendations ought to help attain a higher response rate in future studies that deal with such sensitive political topics as Brexit. In respect to the second methodological problem, the use of the Likert Scale in conjunction with a closed survey made it difficult to operationalise the terminology in some of the statements in the survey. The use of an online survey also made it difficult for policymakers to resolve any doubts they had in relation to the wording of the statements. Accordingly, an open survey or an expansion of the number of interviews conducted would be helpful in this regard. Moreover, future studies could consider appending a glossary of included terms at the beginning of the survey so that participants have a clearer understanding of what they are being asked. Lastly, in relation to the sample bias of this research, future researchers may consider expanding the participants beyond a single policy area in order to attain insight into the wider perceptions of policymakers form other fields. It is also recommended that future research endeavour to contact third sector actors in order to attain an understanding of their part in the EU policymaking process as it pertains to Kingdon's MSA framework. I envisage that including third sector participants would also yield insight into the issue of

policy entrepreneurs and this may be worth exploring in future research on the CFSP after Brexit.

## 5.3    Concluding Remarks

To conclude, I will address each sub-question from Section 1.2.2 and I will summarise the findings of this research to culminate in answering the main research question. In answering the main research question, the use of Kingdon's MSA showed that the Brexit vote has contributed to the alignment of the Problem, Policy, and Political Streams. For this reason we can conclude that Brexit has opened a policy window for CFSP reform, of which policymakers are already taking advantage. So long as the three streams remain aligned, the policy window will remain open and the implementation of the EUGS can continue until the programme has been implemented in its entirety. In order to keep the streams aligned, policymakers would be well served to heed the recommendations explored in Section 5.1.

> **R[1]**: Does a problem exist that necessitates the implementation of the reforms laid out in the EUGS?

In relation to the sub-questions, the first sub-question of this research is answered in the affirmative. It is apparent that a common core of problems exists and are recognised by both policymakers and the wider EU polity. These include the threat posed by Russian aggression, cyber security, hybrid warfare, the migration challenge, and instability in the neighbourhood. This was not just reflected in the views of policymakers but also amongst the public from recent opinion polls. These issues constitute the core of the EUGS and were seen by policymakers as necessitating further reform efforts in the CFSP, in line with proposals of the EUGS. Moreover, it was found from the interviews that the Brexit vote acted as a focusing event that encouraged policymakers to address these problems in light of a global strategic recalibration. Accordingly, to answer this sub-question, this research finds that the EU polity recognises a specific group of CFSP-related problems as salient

and also views the EUGS as the means through which to tackle them. The first sub-question is therefore answered in the affirmative.

$R^2$: Do EU policymakers have the requisite policy tools to implement the reforms laid out in the EUGS?

The second sub-question of this research is answered in the affirmative. It is apparent that EU policymakers are well equipped to tackle the above problems and to also implement the programme of the EUGS. As noted, a number of initiatives have already been implemented within the first year of the implementation phase of the EUGS and further progress is expected. Policymakers spoke highly of the new preventative approach to crisis management, resilience building in the ENP, and were particularly optimistic about recent reforms to the CSDP. On the CSDP especially, considerable progress has been made to implement the proposals of the EUGS, particularly in light of the UK's prospective absence. Accordingly, to answer this sub-question, this research finds that policymakers have made substantial progress in implementing the EUGS and indicate that further progress will follow. The second sub-question is therefore answered in the affirmative.

$R^3$: Has the prospect of Brexit changed the political conditions to the extent that implementing the EUGS is more likely?

The third sub-question of this research is answered in the affirmative. It is apparent that the prospect of Brexit has changed the political conditions to the extent that implementing the EUGS is more likely. Policymakers surveyed indicated that they were increasingly optimistic about the prospect of realising the goals of the EUGS in light of Brexit and they also expressed a real sense of political will to integrate further in the CFSP after Brexit. This contrasted with a negative perspective expressed in an interview however. On balance though, the survey results and the prospective post-Brexit vote count in the Council and Parliament are indicative of a political environment that is

conducive to implementing the EUGS and CFSP reform. The third sub-question is therefore answered in the affirmative.

**Research Question**: Does the Brexit vote offer a window of opportunity for CFSP reform?

Combined, the answers to these sub-questions indicate that the prospect of Brexit has contributed to the opening of a window of opportunity for CFSP reform. The use of Kingdon's MSA has shown that the Problem, Politics, and Policy Streams have aligned in favour of implementing the EUGS and that Brexit has spurred action in this regard. In the Problem Stream, the findings showed that policymakers and the wider EU polity held a common conception of the salient issues facing the EU, the resolution of which formed the centre of the EUGS. In the Policy Stream, the findings showed that policymakers were well equipped to implement the EUGS and had already made considerable progress in this regard, particularly on CSDP reform. In the Political Stream, the findings showed that the Brexit vote had changed the political conditions across the EU to the extent that policymakers indicated that implementing the EUGS was now more likely. To answer the research question, the use of Kingdon's MSA in this study indicates that Brexit has opened a policy window for CFSP reform; the research question is therefore answered in the affirmative. Ultimately, it would appear that by the virtue of the timing of its launch, the EUGS has become a distinctly integrationist document that stands symbolically and substantively in contrast to the forces and actors of anti-EU populism.

The Global Strategy has served as a springboard to relaunch the process of European integration after the British referendum. One year ago, after that referendum, many predicted an "inevitable" decline of the European Union, and imagined that the Global Strategy would stay in a drawer or would very soon look outdated… This has not been the case. (EEAS, 2017: 5)

# 6    Directions for Future Research

Unlike the majority of previous studies, which have employed Kingdon's MSA in a retrospective manner (Cairney & Jones, 2016), this research has added to the existing body of literature by employing Kingdon's MSA in a prospective and predictive manner.  It has been shown in this research for example that the prospect of Brexit has contributed to the alignment of the three streams and has thus facilitated the opening of a policy window for CFSP reform. This research has shown for example, that policymakers have been spurred into action by the strategic recalibration that Brexit represents and that the prospective lack of the UK's veto and obstructionism is conducive to CFSP reform. Moreover, this study has added to the body of literature by using Kingdon's MSA to analyse the implications of a geopolitical shock, such as Brexit, on the policymaking process. By focusing the analysis on the three streams, Kingdon's MSA has provided valuable insight into the key turning points of the decision-making process, as it pertains to the prospect of Brexit. Consequently, this research has demonstrated that Kingdon's MSA can be used prospectively and insightfully in relation to Brexit and its potential implications on CFSP reform.

Future research can build on this study by taking forward Kingdon's MSA and applying it prospectively to future instances of geopolitical shock. By focusing on the three streams of analysis, Kingdon's MSA provides for unique insight into the key points of the policymaking process and as such is well suited to analysing large changes in the political environment. It is able to track changes throughout the policymaking process and across the different streams, thus providing a unique and comprehensive insight into how the policymaking process responds to such shocks. Additionally, there is further scope for a more comprehensive analysis of EU policymaking. As noted by Ackrill, Kay & Zahariadis (2013), MSA can be widely applied but the advantage of its flexibility can also be its shortcoming. For a deeper analysis of policymaking in the CFSP an adapted version of Kingdon's MSA should be

considered. A framework that takes into consideration the intergovernmental nature of the policy field would be apt. Such an undertaking would be large, as it would necessitate an analysis of the motivations, preferences, and actions of policymakers and decision-makers from over 27 Member States, whilst also engaging in stream analysis on a larger scale. Nonetheless, results of such a study would be rewarding and ought to be very insightful into the policymaking processes behind the CFSP.

Lastly, future research can also benefit from this study by building on Kingdon's stream analysis and applying this to the policymaking cycle. This research, for example, treated the policymaking process as a monolithic process for simplicity and in order to generalise broadly about the EUGS and the CFSP. However, for a richer and more detailed study future research should consider Ridde's (2009) suggestions and apply Kingdon's framework separately to distinct phases of the policymaking process. There is scope for future research to divide their enquiries and deal separately with the Agenda-Setting, Formulation, and Implementation phases of the policymaking process. The findings from which can be brought together at a later stage. This would be conducive not only to acquiring richer data and greater insight into the policymaking process but also to introducing the possibility for comparison between the different phases and how each stream of MSA changes as the policy cycle progressed.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Survey Design

### European Global Strategy

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this brief survey, it will take no longer than five minutes of your time.

I kindly remind you that the survey is **anonymous**, the results are **inaccessible** to anyone other than myself or the respondents, and my MA thesis will be **confidentially** reviewed.

The survey contains eight statements pertaining to the European Global Strategy 2016, about which you can indicate your level of agreement, and an additional question.

Please read the following paragraph from the European Global Strategy 2016 before beginning:

*'This Strategy is underpinned by the vision of and ambition for a stronger Union, willing and able to make a positive difference in the world. Our citizens deserve a true Union, which promotes our shared interests by engaging responsibly and in partnership with others. It is now up to us to translate this into action'* - EUGS2016, p. 11.

Start

1.

**Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements using the key: (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly Agree**

| | 1 (Strongly disagree) | | | | 5 (Strongly agree) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The UK's withdrawal from the EU will mean that it is more likely that my organisation will realise the goals of the European Global Strategy 2016, as I understand them. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The aspirations of the European Global Strategy 2016, as I understand them, are not a top priority in my work. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The aspirations of the European Global Strategy 2016, as I understand them, are discussed frequently in my work. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| In relation to meeting the objectives of the European Global Strategy 2016 after Brexit, existing mechanisms and policies are sufficient and should do the job. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The withdrawal of the UK from the EU will hinder efforts to make EU foreign and defence policies more effective. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The withdrawal of the UK from the EU will impede the realisation of the European Global Strategy 2016. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The withdrawal of the UK from the EU offers an opportunity for deeper integration in areas of foreign policy and defence. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| There is a political will and motivation to take advantage of Brexit and integrate further in foreign and defence policies. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

**2.**

**Please indicate which of the following actors you perceive to be the most influential in the policymaking process.** *

- ◯ Academics
- ◯ Civil servants (EU)
- ◯ Civil servants (National)
- ◯ Commissioners
- ◯ Lobbyists
- ◯ Parliamentarians (EU)
- ◯ Parliamentarians (National)
- ◯ Think-tanks
- ◯ Other [_____]

## Appendix 2: Interview Guide

Hello *xxx*

How are you?

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. I aim to finish in around thirty to forty-five minutes as I appreciate that you hold a very busy position, is this acceptable for you?

Before we begin I want to ask if you consent to this conversation being recorded?

I am researching whether Brexit has opened a window of opportunity for reform to the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Accordingly, I am focusing on the policy proposals laid out in the European Global Strategy 2016.

I want to begin by reading a short problem statement, taken from page 11 of the European Global Strategy:

> *This Strategy is underpinned by the vision of and ambition for a stronger Union, willing and able to make a positive difference in the world. Our citizens deserve a true Union, which promotes our shared interests by engaging responsibly and in partnership with others. It is now up to us to translate this into action*

And with that read, please allow me to ask my first question:

**Problem Stream**

1. In your personal opinion, what are the most urgent problems or issues facing your organisation?

2. Do the proposals set out in the EUGS make it more likely or less likely for your organisation to effectively deal with these problems?

3. Will the UK's withdrawal from the EU make it more likely or less likely for you to address these problems?

**Policy Stream**

4. Does your organisation have the requisite policy tools to implement the goals of the EUGS?

    a. If yes, please give some examples.
    b. If no, what more can be done?

5. When I asked this question in my online survey 1/3$^{rd}$ of your colleagues expressed that they did not believe that existing policy tools were sufficient to implement the EUGS. Why do you think that they believe this?

**Political Stream**

6. Has Brexit changed the political conditions to the extent that implementing the EUGS is now more likely or less likely?

    a. Why?
    b. How?

7. In your professional opinion, does Brexit offer a window of opportunity for CFSP reform?
    a. Why?
    b. How?

And that brings the interview to an end. I want to take this opportunity to ask you if you have any questions for me?

I thank you again for participating in this interview and for contributing to my research.

## Appendix 3: Aggregated Survey Data

| Respondent | Organisation | The UK's withdrawal f | The aspirations of th | The aspirations of the | In relation to meeting | The withdrawal of the | The withdrawal of the | The withdrawal of the | There is a political will | Please indi | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Respondent 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 5 | |
| Respondent 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | |
| Respondent 3 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 8 | |
| Respondent 4 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 2 | |
| Respondent 5 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 2 | |
| Respondent 6 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | |
| Respondent 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 9 | EU govern |
| Respondent 8 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | |
| Respondent 9 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | |
| Respondent 10 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 2 | |
| Respondent 11 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 4 | |
| Respondent 12 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 2 | |
| Respondent 13 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 3 | |
| Respondent 14 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 7 | |
| Respondent 15 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 3 | |
| Respondent 16 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | |
| Respondent 17 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 3 | |
| Respondent 18 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 9 | APA |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | |