

The European Union Trust Fund for Africa: How Normative is EU Development Policy?

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Cover photo: Two unaccompanied irregularly migrated brothers from The Gambia, both 16 years old, at a beach in Trabia, Italy © UNICEF/Gilbertson.

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List of abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and overseas territories
AU	African Union
CPE	Civilian Power Europe
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DG DEVCO	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
DG HOME	Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs
DG ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
DG NEAR	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
EEAS	European External Action Service
EU	European Union
EUTF	European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa
EC	European Commission
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EP	European Parliament
EDF	European Development Fund
EEC	European Economic Community
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
IDP	Internally displaced person
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LDC	Least developed country
MFF	Multiannual Financial Framework
NPE	Normative Power Europe
ODA	Official Development Aid
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Introduction

With 1.26 million people applying for asylum in Europe, and thousands who had lost their lives while crossing the Mediterranean, the European migrant crisis reached its peak in 2015.¹ Although large migration flows are not unprecedented phenomena, the numbers of arrivals on the European shores marked a significant increase compared to earlier years, and were viewed by both the European public and politicians with a sense of urgency, fuelled by extensive media coverage. Strong pressure was put on the European Union (EU) and its Member States to put a stop to the influx of refugees and migrants along the Central and Eastern Mediterranean route.² Meanwhile, it was increasingly acknowledged within the Union and among Member State governments that existing EU instruments for tackling migration flows to Europe were no longer sufficient to cope with such large numbers.³ There was a need for a more coherent policy, in which rapid response actions would be combined with long term measures. Moreover, the EU felt more than ever an urge to foster cooperation with African countries on migration and to encourage them to take back their rejected nationals who had migrated to Europe. Additionally, the EU and its Member States wanted to show political action in the heat of the crisis.⁴ Therefore, the high level Valletta Summit on migration was held in November 2015. At this summit heads of EU Member States launched the EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (EUTF).⁵ Currently, EUR 3,3 billion has been allocated to the fund.⁶ It finances development

¹ European Parliament, 'EU Migrant Crisis: Facts and Figures' (June 30, 2017), <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20170629STO78630/eu-migrant-crisis-facts-and-figures> (consulted: January 23, 2018); The 'European migrant crisis' refers in this master thesis to the period of time, with its peak in 2015, in which the numbers of refugees and economic migrants from Africa and the Middle East were significantly higher than the years before. It led subsequently to political difficulties within the European Union as well as within Member States, regarding how to respond to this influx, in the light of rising right-wing political parties, deaths in the Mediterranean, increasing EU skepticism, and terror attacks on European soil. Of course, the magnitude of the influx and the level of 'crisis' is relative.

² The Central Mediterranean route comprises the migration flow from Libya to Italy. The Western Mediterranean route departs from Algeria and Morocco to Spain, whereas the Eastern Mediterranean route departs from Turkey, with Greece as its destination (C. Cummings, J. Pacitto, D. Lauro, and M. Foresti, *Why People Move: Understanding the Drivers and Trends of Migration to Europe* (London 2015) 10); According to the UNHCR, refugees 'are persons fleeing armed conflict or persecution. (...) They are so recognized precisely because it is too dangerous for them to return home, and they need sanctuary elsewhere. These are people for whom denial of asylum has potentially deadly consequences.' Migrants, on the other hand, 'choose to move not because of a direct threat of persecution or death, but mainly to improve their lives by finding work, or in some cases for education, family reunion, or other reasons. Unlike refugees who cannot safely return home, migrants face no such impediment to return. If they choose to return home, they will continue to receive the protection of their government' (UNHCR, 'UNHCR viewpoint: 'Refugee' or 'migrant' – Which is right?' (July 11, 2016), <http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/7/55df0e556/unhcr-viewpoint-refugee-migrant-right.html> (consulted: March 25, 2018)); An internally displaced person (IDP) flees within its own country.

³ C. Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa: A Glimpse of the Future for EU Development Cooperation* (Bonn 2016) 3.

⁴ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 3-6.

⁵ This master thesis will use the definition of 'irregular migration' by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). According to the IOM, irregular migration refers to 'movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries. (...) From the perspective of destination countries it is entry, stay or work in a country without the necessary authorization or documents required under immigration regulations. From the perspective of the sending country, the irregularity is for example seen in cases in which a person crosses an international boundary without a valid passport or travel document or does not fulfil the administrative requirements for leaving the country' (International Organisation for Migration, *Glossary on Migration* (Geneva 2011) 54).

⁶ At the time of writing: March, 2018; L. Barana, 'The EU Trust Fund for Africa and the Perils of a Securitized Migration Policy', *Instituto Affari Internazionali* 17 (2017) 31, 2.

programmes that combat root causes of African migration, such as poverty, insecurity and a lack of job opportunities, complemented by more direct migration governance programmes, such as the advancement of African border control and policy reform for effective return and readmission.⁷ The EUTF was presented as an innovative and flexible mechanism to combat the influx of migrants and refugees heading to Europe.⁸ It runs from 2015 to 2020, with a possible extension if needed, and it focuses on three regions: North Africa, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel and Lake Chad region.⁹

The debate on the nature of the EU as an international power has a long history. In the 1970s, François Duchêne initiated the academic discussion by introducing the concept of Civilian Power Europe (CPE), with Hedley Bull as the foremost realist critic.¹⁰ The debate was for decades dominated by notions of civilian and military power. In 2002, scholar in political science Ian Manners revitalised the academic discussion by introducing a new concept: Normative Power Europe (NPE).¹¹ With this theory, Manners aimed to move beyond the traditional military versus civilian power debate. The EU would distinguish itself from other world powers in its ability to shape and influence norms beyond its borders. This difference would be a result of its post-war origin, unique hybrid political structure and political-legal constitution. The EU would represent a new political form that breaks with the traditional Westphalian system of state-centrality.¹² According to Manners, EU external policy is shaped by ideational values, such as peace, liberty, human rights, democracy and rule of law. The EU would be a normative power with an ideational impact, that would originate from its unique experience of rising up from the ruins of extreme nationalism, and subsequently achieving peace, reconciliation and unification.¹³ It would have strong commitment to multilateralism and would prefer the use of non-military and non-coercive tools: ‘carrots rather than sticks’.¹⁴ Development aid is considered to be an exemplary instrument and one of the primary means of the EU to promote normative principles.¹⁵ After all, the EU is by far the largest donor of development aid worldwide.¹⁶ To make his theory more tangible, Manners argues that the normative ethics of the European Union in world politics should be judged by (1) the principles it seeks to promote, (2) the actions through which these

⁷ European Commission, ‘EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa’, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/africa/eu-emergency-trust-fund-africa_en (consulted: January 23, 2018).

⁸ Concord, *Partnership or Conditionality? Monitoring the Migration Compacts and EU Trust Fund for Africa* (Brussels 2018) 8.

⁹ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 3.

¹⁰ See: F. Duchêne, ‘Europe’s Role in World Peace’, in: R. Mayne (ed.), *Europe Tomorrow: Sixteen Europeans Look Ahead* (London 1972) 32-47; F. Duchêne, ‘The European Community and the Uncertainties of Interdependence’, in: M. Kohnstamm and W. Hager (ed.), *A Nation Writ Large? Foreign Policy Problems before the European Community* (London 1973) 1-21; H. Bull, ‘Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?’, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 21 (1982) 2, 149-164.

¹¹ I. Manners, ‘Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?’, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40 (2002) 2, 235-258; J. Orbie, ‘Civilian Power Europe: Review of the Original and Current Debates’, *Cooperation and Conflict* 41 (2006) 1, 123-128.

¹² Manners, ‘Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?’, 240.

¹³ L. Aggestam, ‘Introduction: Ethical power Europe?’, *International Affairs* 84 (2008) 1, 6-7.

¹⁴ S. Scheipers and D. Sicurelli, ‘Empowering Africa: Normative Power in EU-Africa Relations’, *Journal of European Public Policy* 15 (2008) 4, 609.

¹⁵ I. Manners, ‘European Union ‘Normative Power’ and the Security Challenge’, *European Security* 15 (2006) 4, 415.

¹⁶ European Union, ‘Development and Cooperation’, https://europa.eu/european-union/topics/development-cooperation_en (consulted January 18, 2018).

principles are promoted, and (3) the impact of these actions.¹⁷ Subsequently, these aspects of the EU can be characterized by: ‘living by example, being reasonable, and doing least harm.’¹⁸ Living by example would ensure normative consistency in EU foreign policy and avoids hypocrisy in promoting norms it does not stick to itself.¹⁹ When it comes to actions, the EU’s normative power would primarily rely on persuasion. Actions are based on a process of engagement and dialogue. It entails transparent communication and two-way deliberation and discussion.²⁰ Regarding impact, doing least harm means that the EU thinks about the consequences of its actions in other countries and regions, and aims for local empowerment and positive conditionality.²¹ Especially the latter is an important concept in EU foreign and development policy. Positive conditionality is explained as the ‘golden carrot’ of the EU.²² It is motivated as an important method to pursue social, political and economic progress, for both the target state and the EU.²³ This entails that certain normative conditions have to be met by a target country or region to establish a cooperative relationship with the EU, which ultimately would benefit both.²⁴ According to Manners, the normative principles should be traceable in all phases of the political process; from formation, to implementation to evaluation.²⁵ By exporting its norms and laws beyond its borders, the EU ultimately contributes to shaping what is ‘normal’ in international relations.²⁶

Manners’ theory sparked an extensive debate and is both supported and contested by academics. Whereas scholars generally agree upon the uniqueness of the institutional set-up of the EU, many doubt whether this actually leads to a distinctive normative foreign policy, different from any other world power.²⁷ Academics such as Louise van Schaik and Simon Schunz, Marianne Riddervold and Annika Björkdahl, affirm in their research that EU external policy is shaped by normative considerations.²⁸ They conclude that the EU upholds values of peace, human rights and sustainable development in its actions abroad and its negotiations with third countries. Realist scholars, on the contrary, such as Adrian Hyde-Price, Hubert Zimmermann and Steve Wood, argue that EU foreign policy is mainly driven by economic interests or

¹⁷ Manners, ‘Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?’, 235-258.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, 247.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, 56.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, 58.

²¹ *Ibidem*, 59.

²² V. Veebel, ‘European Union’s Positive Conditionality Model in Pre-Accession Process’, *Trames* 13 (2009) 3, 207.

²³ Veebel, ‘European Union’s Positive Conditionality Model in Pre-Accession Process’, 207.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, 208-209; An often used example of positive conditionality is the fact that countries who want to join the EU must abolish the death penalty if they have so. Thus, they have to conform their laws to the ideational norms of the EU to become part of it. Also, the EU enlargement towards post-Soviet republics in Central and Eastern Europe is often perceived a triumph for NPE, as it would exemplify the spread of EU norms of democracy and free markets (M. Pollack, ‘Living in a Material World: A Critique of ‘Normative Power Europe’’, in: H. Zimmermann and A. Dür (ed.), *Key Controversies in European Integration* (London 2016) 199).

²⁵ N. Zahariadis, *Frameworks of the European Union's Policy Process: Competition and Complementarity Across the Theoretical Divide* (London 2014) 105.

²⁶ D. Sicurelli, ‘The EU is a Normative Power in World Politics’, in: H. Zimmermann and A. Dür (ed.), *Key Controversies in European Integration* (London 2016) 193.

²⁷ Aggestam, ‘Introduction: Ethical power Europe?’, 4.

²⁸ See: L. van Schaik and S. Schunz, ‘Explaining EU Activism and Impact in Global Climate Politics: Is the Union a Norm- or Interest-Driven Actor?’, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 50 (2012) 1, 169-186; M. Riddervold, ‘A Matter of Principle? EU Foreign Policy and the International Labor Organization’, *Journal of European Public Policy* 17 (2010) 4, 581-598; A. Björkdahl, ‘Normative and Military Power in EU Peace Support Operations’, in: R. Whitman (ed.), *Normative Power Europe. Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives* (Basingstoke 2011) 103-126.

pragmatism.²⁹ In an anarchic world, they state, it is impossible for an international actor to base policy solely on normative values. The EU acts in the end, just as traditional powers, on the basis of self-interest. International relations scholar Mark Pollack points at the material interests that would accompany normative motives, and EU policies that would clash with its own proclaimed normative values, such as the protectionist Common Agricultural Policy, which is one of the greatest obstacles to trade liberalisation and economic development in poor regions of the Global South.³⁰ Another critique on Manners' theory is that he would focus too much on the discourse of European federalists and the political elites in Brussels, whilst ignoring dynamics in Member States, especially in current times when support for the European integration project seems to be crumbling. Moreover, some critics argue that Normative Power Europe resembles more an ideology rather than an academic theory.³¹

Many scholars have investigated the nature of the motivations in EU development policy. This values versus strategic interests debate goes back to the 1970s, with the works of scholars McKinlay and Little.³² They conclude that development aid allocation of France and Great-Britain was led by foreign policy agendas of the donor governments; development aid would be used as an instrument to pursue foreign policy interests. In her research on the 2000 Cotonou Agreement between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, Professor in International Relations Mary Farrell argues that EU policy towards Africa is 'strongly realist'. It would pursue a clearly neo-liberal agenda of liberalisation and privatisation, thereby harming the developing economy of poorer African countries. She concludes that the perceived partnership is in fact 'an asymmetrical relationship between two groups with very unequal political and economic strength.'³³ More recently, in 2013, Wil Hout elaborated on this realist approach and investigated the decision making process of the EU in the allocation of development funds to support governance in fragile states.³⁴ With his quantitative research, he comes to the conclusion that normative motives have only a very limited role in the allocation of EU development aid. Political and economic motivations appear to be much more prevalent in allocation decision making. In a joint research in 2015, Bountagkidis, Fragkos and Frangos partly agree on the conclusion of Hout, but temper it to some extent. Their research focused on the normative motivations for EU development aid in Sub-Saharan Africa

²⁹ See: A. Hyde-Price, 'Normative' power Europe: a realist critique', *Journal of European Public Policy* 13 (2006) 2, 217-234; H. Zimmermann, 'Realist Power Europe? The EU in the Negotiations about China's and Russia's WTO Accession', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 45 (2007) 4, 813-832; S. Wood, 'Pragmatic Power Europe?', *Cooperation and Conflict* 46 (2011) 2, 242-261.

³⁰ Oxfam, *EU Hypocrisy Unmasked: Why EU Trade Policy Hurts Development* (London 2003); Pollack argues that the EU has not so much 'hidden motives', in which normative proclamations would cover up economic self-interests, but rather that EU normative motives are often mixed with political and economic benefits or that normative values are hypocritical regarding its own behavior (M. Pollack, 'Living in a Material World: A Critique of 'Normative Power Europe', in: H. Zimmermann and A. Dür (ed.), *Key Controversies in European Integration* (London 2016) 200).

³¹ T. Palm, lecture at Utrecht University (October 17, 2017).

³² R. McKinlay and R. Little, 'The French Aid Relationship: A Foreign Policy Model of the Distribution of French Bilateral Aid, 1964-70', *Development and Change* 9 (1978) 3, 459-478; R. McKinlay and R. Little, 'A Foreign-Policy Model of the Distribution of British Bilateral Aid, 1960-70', *British Journal of Political Science* 8 (1978) 3, 313-331.

³³ M. Farrell, 'A Triumph of Realism over Idealism? Cooperation Between the European Union and Africa', *Journal of European Integration* 27 (2005) 3, 279-280.

³⁴ W. Hout, *Normative Power vs. Political Interest: EU Aid Selectivity Beyond the European Consensus on Development, 2008-2013* (Rotterdam 2013).

between 2000 and 2010. The authors argue that there are certain instances in which aid allocation has indeed been driven by donor interests, instead of focusing on the needs of the recipient country.³⁵ However, they conclude too that normative values and strategic interests do not always exclude one another.³⁶ Therefore, blunt conclusions criticising the Normative Power Europe theory are too short-sighted. Concerning NPE and EU-Africa relations, scholars Scheipers and Sicurelli argue that the EU uses the concept of normative power to define its identity.³⁷ However, Scheipers and Sicurelli conclude too, that the EU uses coercive material instruments to enforce the support of developing countries. The authors stress that this is contrary to the self-portrayal of the EU as normative power that does not rely on coercive measures.³⁸ Scheipers and Sicurelli, therefore, conclude that research should focus on the difference between what the EU claims to be doing and what it actually does. With regards to the traditional norms versus strategic interests debate on EU development policy, Sicurelli provides also a new approach. In her book on norms and interests in EU Africa policy, she concludes that the two views of Normative Power Europe and self-interest driven Europe are both too constrained.³⁹ She argues that EU Africa policy is much more diverse, and sometimes not even coherent. Because of this lack of coherence, Sicurelli asserts that the EU cannot be considered a self-interest driven hegemonic power, nor a power acting solely in the normative framework. She ascribes this lack of coherence to the diversity of institutions that influence the policy making of the European Union.

In relation to the norms versus strategic interests debate, the increasing securitisation of EU development policy has become more prevalent in academic works.⁴⁰ In 2010, Hout made an important contribution to this subject.⁴¹ He argues that the European Union increasingly focuses on development cooperation as a tool for security, by addressing for instance the governance deficits of fragile states. Scholars Furness and Gänzle elaborated on this trend of securitisation. They argue that the securitisation of EU development cooperation is not a goal in itself, but that it should be seen as an effort to establish coherence between development and security policy, ever since the EU stepped up as an international actor in the security field.⁴² Furness and Gänzle argue, too, that it is difficult to say whether the securitisation of development policy has modified the distribution of aid, as multiple actors influence EU development

³⁵ G. Bountagkidis, K. Fragkos and C. Frangos, *EU Development Aid Towards Sub-Saharan Africa: Exploring the Normative Principle* (London 2015).

³⁶ This is also the conclusion in the work of Esther Barbé and Elisabeth Johansson-Nogués on the European Neighbourhood Policy, as they argue that the EU seeks to combine ethical considerations with strategic interests (E. Barbé and E. Johansson-Nogués, 'The EU as a modest 'force for good': the European Neighbourhood Policy', *International Affairs* 84 (2008) 1, 81-96).

³⁷ Scheipers and Sicurelli, 'Empowering Africa: Normative Power in EU-Africa Relations', 607-623.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, 614.

³⁹ D. Sicurelli, *The European Union's Africa Policies: Norms, Interests and Impact* (New York 2010).

⁴⁰ Securitisation refers to the trend in which 'security has become a prominent feature in official EU development discourse (...), and references to security concerns are routinely included in policy statements and documents' (M. Furness and S. Gänzle, *The European Union's Development Policy: A Balancing Act Between 'A More Comprehensive Approach' and Creeping Securitization* (Krisitiansand 2012) 3).

⁴¹ W. Hout, 'Between Development and Security: the European Union, Governance and Fragile States', *Third World Quarterly* 31 (2010) 1, 141-157.

⁴² Furness and Gänzle, *The European Union's Development Policy: A Balancing Act Between 'A More Comprehensive Approach' and Creeping Securitization* (Krisitiansand 2012).

policy. The EU's internal diversity of institutions and policies make it hard to assign differences in aid allocation just to securitisation.⁴³ In addition, their work makes clear that development programmes are often not established to foster directly European security, but rather that new general discourses emphasise the need for security as a condition for development.

Building on the theoretical and historiographical context, this master thesis will shed light on the norms versus interests debate regarding the EUTF, providing an answer to the research question: *How does the European Union justify the establishment and policy of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa in terms of value- and utility-based concerns, and how does this relate to its actions in the Sahel and Lake Chad region?*⁴⁴ The thesis is built up into three sub questions:

- a) How did the context of the 2015 European migrant crisis lead to the establishment and of the EUTF?
- b) To what extent is the establishment and the policy of the EUTF in the Sahel and Lake Chad region justified in terms of value- and utility-based concerns by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Council, and if these differ per institution, how do they interact?
- c) How do value- and utility-based concerns resonate in the EUTF financed programs in the Sahel and Lake Chad region, and more specifically in Niger and Nigeria?

It should be underscored that the intended objective of the EUTF, namely combatting African irregular migration to Europe, is undoubtedly utility-based. The fund marks a decisive new chapter in EU foreign policy, as it makes development cooperation an integral instrument to counteract a perceived threat for Europe.⁴⁵ The importance of this master thesis lays in its examination of the extent to which this utility-based instrument still contains normative elements and reasonings, both in EU rhetoric and in the actions in EUTF programmes.

The historiographic debate makes clear that the nature of EU development policy is already widely discussed. However, the EUTF is barely studied by scholars and the very few that have examined it, focus only on the first year of its existence.⁴⁶ The vast majority of reviews on the fund have been executed by

⁴³ Ibidem, 23-24.

⁴⁴ As stated earlier, Manners makes a distinction between principles, actions and impact. This research will, however, solely focus on principles and actions, namely by analyzing EU officials discourse and examining the funded development programmes and resource allocation. The impact indicator is excluded for two reasons. Firstly, it is too early to measure the long term impact of the EUTF financed programs, since they have only been installed in 2016. With the task of addressing the root causes of migration, such as poverty and insecurity, it will inevitably take years before any impact is measurable. Secondly, measuring the effect of development programs will require extensive quantitative research and field work, which both transcend the time period of this research and goes beyond the scope of history and political science; This thesis uses the following definition for 'utility/interest-based' behavior: 'it reasons on the basis of instrumental calculations concerning its self-interest – that is, in defence of its very own benefit'. The used definition for 'value/norm-based' behavior is: 'it decides and behaves in accordance with norms that it has internalized and that it considers to be the most appropriate in a given context' (L. van Schaik and S. Schunz, 'Explaining EU Activism and Impact in Global Climate Politics: Is the Union a Norm- or Interest-Driven Actor?', *Journal for Common Market Studies* 50 (2012) 1, 171).

⁴⁵ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 27.

⁴⁶ The only extensive academic research on the EUTF is done by Clare Castillejo in 2016, on behalf of the German Development Institute. Her valuable work focuses on the establishment and the first year programmes of the fund. This master thesis differs from Castillejo's research in its examination of NPE theory, its more explicit distinction in

development aid organisations, which are also actors with interest in EU development policy. Academic research is therefore needed. The impact of the European migrant crisis has changed the nature of EU policy regarding African countries.⁴⁷ Whilst elaborating on earlier academic works on the trend of securitisation, this thesis is essentially innovative because of the targeted time period that shows changes in political and societal contexts, such as the rise of anti-immigration parties. Furthermore, the EUTF is considered to be a forerunner of future EU development policy.⁴⁸ Research on this topic will provide crucial new insights regarding trends in development cooperation and overall EU foreign policy. Studying the value- and utility-based justifications and actions of the EU regarding the EUTF can greatly enrich the academic debate on NPE. Especially with regards to EU scepticism in Europe and a more instable US administration, it is important to examine EU values and actions. At the same time, it is crucial, and not yet investigated by earlier scholars, to investigate the difference in viewpoint and justifications between the three EU institutions. As stated by Sicurelli, EU Africa policy is diverse and sometimes incoherent because of the different EU institutions that shape the foreign strategy. Making a distinction between the three institutions, instead of viewing the EU as one homogeneous entity, will provide new insights regarding the NPE debate on EU foreign policy. Finally, the combination of analysing both justifications in EU discourse and the actual development programmes financed by the EUTF, will counter criticism of academics such as Helene Sjørnsen, who argue that NPE research is focused too much on the idealised discourse of EU officials.⁴⁹ In her view, scholars who support the concept of normative power, run the risk of plainly adopting the EU officials language. By studying the justification of EU officials within the new context of the European migrant crisis, and subsequently examining the correspondence of this discourse with the actual development programmes installed, this master thesis takes that criticism into account.

The geographical focus of this research will be the Sahel and Lake Chad region.⁵⁰ With EUR 988 million, this region receives currently the largest share of the EUTF. Countries in the Sahel and Lake Chad region suffer from insecurity, poverty and food crises. Moreover, this region has vast population rates and a relatively high percentage of irregular migration to Europe.⁵¹ Hence, the Sahel and Lake Chad region finds itself at the core of the problems that the EUTF is supposed to combat. Moreover, whereas EUTF financed programmes in North of Africa focus mainly on migration management, the policy in the Sahel and Lake Chad region combines both migration management measures with economic development and governance

EU institutions, and the use of new EUTF data on programmes and resource allocation that came available only in February 2018.

⁴⁷ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 3.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, 2.

⁴⁹ H. Sjørnsen, 'The EU As a 'Normative' Power: How Can This Be?', *Journal of European Public Policy* 13 (2006) 2, 235-251.

⁵⁰ Adopting the definition as articulated by the Commission in the Constitutive Decision on the establishment of the EUTF, the Sahel and Lake Chad region consists of the following countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal (European Commission, 'Commission Decision on the establishment of a European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa' (October 10, 2015), 8).

⁵¹ European Commission, 'EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: Sahel and Lake Chad', https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region/sahel-lake-chad_en (consulted January 18, 2018).

advancement.⁵² In short, all aspects of the proposed integrated approach of the EUTF come together in this region. The analysis of EUTF actions will be supplemented with two case studies: Niger and Nigeria. The choice to use case studies is based on three arguments. Firstly, the EUTF programme action documents provide more in-depth information on the actual actions carried out on the ground compared to the general EUTF documents on the region as a whole. Secondly, the documents are written by implementing partners. This prevents a disproportionate use of documents produced by the EU itself. Lastly, the Sahel and Lake Chad region is too large to examine the programme action documents of all countries. Hence, a selection is needed. Niger and Nigeria are selected as case studies because of their crucial roles in the irregular migration flow and consequently their importance in the EUTF framework. Countries in this region can generally be divided into two groups: transit countries and countries of origin. As Niger is the main transit country in the region and Nigeria is the foremost country of origin for African irregular migration to Europe, they constitute combined a solid representation of the region as a whole.⁵³

The method of this research is based on Manners' NPE theory and the associated EU norms: peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law, human rights, social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development and good governance.⁵⁴ Following the introduction to the history of EU development cooperation and the context in which the EUTF was established, the documents of the three EU institutions will be examined. This part concerns the principles section in NPE theory. The EU documents, which pronounce the motivations for the establishment and the policy of the fund in the Sahel and Lake Chad region, will be researched on their correspondence with NPE norms or, alternatively, their expression of utility-based concerns. The same method is applied to the analysis of the actions of the EUTF. The resource allocation in the overall Sahel and Lake Chad region, as well as the action documents of the programmes implemented in the specific case studies of Niger and Nigeria, will be examined on the extent of value- and utility-based concerns. In both the principles and the action section of this thesis, the content is subdivided into the themes that stand out most in the analysis. The conclusion will come back to the norms of NPE theory in order to articulate a weighed statement on the extent of normative value- and utility-based concerns in EU discourse and actions regarding the Sahel and Lake Chad region.

Whereas the introductory chapter on the historical context of the EUTF is based on secondary literature, the two analysis sections of this thesis are primarily based on primary sources. The study on the justifications of the EU institutions for the establishment and policy of the EUTF is based on primary sources of the EU, supplemented by secondary literature. It should be taken into account that the European Commission (EC) is the dominant EU institution in the establishment and the implementation of the EUTF. This explains the large amount of EC primary sources, compared to the sources of the European

⁵² Also, programmes in North Africa are not financed with EDF resources, which makes the region not relevant for this research (European Commission, '2017 Annual Report EU Trust Fund for Africa', 70).

⁵³ EUTF, 'Création d'une Equipe Conjointe d'Investigation (ECI) pour la lutte contre les réseaux criminels liés à l'immigration irrégulière, la traite des êtres humains et le trafic des migrants', 4 ; UNHCR, 'Operational Portal Refugee Situations: Mediterranean Situation' (May 9, 2018), <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean> (consulted: July 9, 2018).

⁵⁴ Manners, 'Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?', 242-243.

Council and the European Parliament (EP). Especially the latter has a considerably smaller role in the EUTF framework. Regarding the European Commission, one of the key documents is the ‘Commission Decision on the establishment of the EUTF’.⁵⁵ This document provides insight in the discourse of the European Commission in the declaration that called for the establishment of the EUTF. Another crucial document is the ‘Operational Framework for the Sahel & Lake Chad Window’.⁵⁶ This document gives detailed information on the strategy of the EUTF in the Sahel and Lake Chad region. Furthermore, the ‘Strategic Orientation Document’ provides insight in the purposes of the EUTF in general.⁵⁷ Lastly, the ‘Annual Report 2016’ and ‘Annual Report 2017’ of the EC give information on the aims and results of the fund and make it possible to analyse the way in which these results are framed. To examine the justification of the European Council, there are four key documents. The ‘Political Declaration’ on the establishment of the EUTF at the Valletta Summit, provides information on the priorities and interests of the heads of Member States.⁵⁸ Next to this, the ‘Action Plan’ and ‘Constitutive Agreement’, also composed at the summit, shed light on the legal obligations and general strategy that the individual Member States support.⁵⁹ Lastly, the ‘Action Plan for the Sahel Region 2015-2020’ of the Council of the European Union, provides detailed information on the EUTF strategy in the targeted region of this research. Regarding the European Parliament, the key document is the ‘European Parliament resolution of 13 September 2016 on the EU Trust Fund for Africa: the implications for development and humanitarian aid’.⁶⁰ This document sheds light on the stance of the Parliament towards the establishment of the fund. Another key document is the Report of the Committee on Development, which was installed by the European Parliament to investigate the implications of the EUTF.⁶¹

Finally, to examine how value- and utility-based concerns resonate in the actions of the fund, the EUTF funding allocation and development programmes need to be investigated. This is based, on the one hand, on general EUTF documents which show the flow of resources to countries in the Sahel and Lake

⁵⁵ European Commission, ‘Commission Decision on the establishment of a European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa’ (October 10, 2015), https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/commission-decision-2015-7293-20151020_en.pdf (consulted: January 19, 2018).

⁵⁶ European Commission, ‘Operational Framework for the Sahel & Lake Chad Window’, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/operational-framework_en (consulted: January 19, 2018).

⁵⁷ European Commission, ‘The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa: Strategic Orientation Document’, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/eu-emergency-trust-fund-strategic-orientation-document_en (consulted: January 19, 2018).

⁵⁸ European Union, ‘Valletta Summit, 11-12 November 2015. Political Declaration’ (November 12, 2015), https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21841/political_decl_en.pdf (consulted: January 19, 2018).

⁵⁹ European Union, ‘Agreement Establishing the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa, And Its Internal Rules’, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/constitutive-agreement-annexe-2015-7293-20151020_en.pdf (consulted: January 19, 2018); European Union, Valletta Summit, 11-12 November 2015, Action Plan’, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21839/action_plan_en.pdf (consulted: January 19, 2018).

⁶⁰ European Parliament, ‘European Parliament resolution of 13 September 2016 on the EU Trust Fund for Africa: the implications for development and humanitarian aid (2015/2341(INI))’ (September 13, 2018).

⁶¹ European Parliament, ‘Committee on Development: Draft Report on the EU Trust Fund for Africa: the implications for development and humanitarian aid (2015/2341(INI))’, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+COMPARL+PE-578.554+01+DOC+PDF+V0//EN&language=EN> (consulted: January 20, 2018).

Chad region. Key documents are the 2016 and 2017 Annual Reports of the European Commission. The specific case studies of Niger and Nigeria, on the other hand, are based upon the programme action documents of the executive partners. These documents give detailed information on the aims, methods, financing and practices of the programmes installed. In total, 31 programme action documents will be examined on value- or utility-based concerns.⁶² The study of primary resources is supplemented with secondary literature.

⁶² All programme action documents are available on the following website:
https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region_en.

1. Historical context

1.1. Introduction

'If Europe fails on the question of refugees, then it won't be the Europe we wished for.' German Chancellor Angela Merkel on the European migrant crisis in 2015.⁶³

Development assistance is intrinsically connected to the Union's perception of its own identity.⁶⁴ This chapter discusses briefly the key historical events in EU-ACP aid relations and the institutional make-up of EU development policy. Furthermore, it sheds light on the context of the European migrant crisis in which the EUTF was established. Lastly, the organisational structure of the EUTF is expounded.

1.2. History of EU development policy

European development assistance goes back to the very creation of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957. It functioned mainly a tool for former colonial powers, most notably France, to maintain the special relationship with their ex-colonies. Consequently, development assistance has through time predominantly been focused on ACP countries. The historical connection with the ACP gave Europe a unique and powerful position in the Global South, which has been reaffirmed overtime by three key agreements. In 1963, the EEC signed the First Yaoundé Agreement with 18 African states that recently had gained their independence. It marked the beginning of a reciprocal preferential trade access between the EEC and the former colonies of Member States, as well as the establishment of the European Development Fund (EDF). The second agreement, the Lomé Convention of 1974, is widely viewed as the most revolutionary in the history of EU-ACP relations and North-South relations in general. It came to symbolise European development cooperation, more than any other agreement.⁶⁵ The Lomé Convention comprised many more countries than the Yaoundé Agreement, as former British colonies were now included. Even more important, the agreement was innovative and progressive, as it proclaimed to operate on the basis of equality of partners. The Convention led to the formal establishment of the ACP group, which made these countries able to speak through a collective voice. With the opening of the ACP Secretariat in Brussels, they gained institutionalised representation. Moreover, the signed agreement contained remarkable novelties

⁶³ BBC, 'Migrant crisis: Merkel warns of EU 'failure'' (August 31, 2015), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34108224> (consulted: July 13, 2018).

⁶⁴ In the Document on the European Identity (1973) nine European foreign ministers expressed the core characteristics of the European identity, in the light of the bi-polar world and the oil crisis. The document states that: 'There can be no real peace if the developed countries do not pay more heed to the less favoured nations. Convinced of this fact, and conscious of their responsibilities and particular obligations, the Nine attach very great importance to the struggle against under-development. They are, therefore, resolved to intensify their efforts in the fields of trade and development aid and to strengthen international co-operation to these ends' (European Union, 'Document on The European Identity published by the Nine Foreign Ministers on 14 December 1973, in Copenhagen' (December 14, 1973) 4).

⁶⁵ Arts and Dickson, *EU Development Cooperation: From Model to Symbol* (Manchester 2004) 1.

such as the non-reciprocal trade preferences and schemes to support ACP agricultural prices.⁶⁶ However, the Lomé Convention did not live up to its high expectations. The very modest results of EU development policy and the end of the Cold War encouraged EU officials to rethink their policies. Consequently, the twenty-year Cotonou Agreement in 2000 pursued a drastically different approach which emphasised bottom up processes; increased ACP ownership became a key aspect of development policy.⁶⁷ Meanwhile, the enlargement of the EU towards the east and the finalisation of the Monetary Union made the EU more preoccupied with internal affairs and shifted its priorities away from ACP objectives. As a result, the special relationship between the EU and the ACP group has become increasingly normalised in the last decades.⁶⁸ Development aid is currently allocated to a wider range of recipients than just the traditional target regions.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, the EU intends to maintain its historical influence in Africa.⁷⁰ The EU also seeks within the Cotonou system to enhance its political and normative influence in developing countries by inserting the principle of conditionality; provisions that set certain conditions to be met in matters of good governance, human rights and liberalisation of markets, in order to be granted economic support.⁷¹ In doing so, development assistance has become increasingly politicized, rather than viewed as solely an economic matter. According to the work of Arts and Dickson, EU development policy is now mainly ‘a symbolic gesture’ for its relationship with the South to enhance its perceived role as an important international actor.⁷²

Whereas EU trade and commercial policy are subject to the Community method, the area of development assistance is shaped by a so-called ‘mixed system’.⁷³ EU Member States have their own autonomous strategies that coexist with collectively managed EU aid. So, although the EU repeatedly claims to be the largest donor worldwide, it actually consists largely of bilateral aid relations of Member States.⁷⁴ This does not come as a surprise, as all individual EU countries have their own economic and political objectives.⁷⁵ After all, development assistance is closely connected to foreign policy, which is on its turn perceived firmly linked to national sovereignty. In practice, Member State have the ultimate legal authority, whilst the Commission has been delegated control over programming and implementation through the

⁶⁶ M. Smith, ‘European Union External Relations’, in: M. Cini and N. Borragán (ed.), *European Union Politics* (Oxford 2010) 230.

⁶⁷ P. Hoebink, *European Development Cooperation: In Between the Local and the Global* (Amsterdam 2010) 7-8.

⁶⁸ According to Arts and Dickson, ‘normalised’ entails that ‘they are being brought more in tune with the types of agreement offered to other groups of states’ (Arts and Dickson, *EU Development Cooperation*, 5).

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, 2; Whereas France and the United Kingdom argued for continuing the traditional focus on the ACP countries that correspond with their historical ties with ex-colonies, countries like Germany and the Netherlands successfully demanded a more global approach (Arts and Dickson, *EU Development Cooperation*, 5).

⁷⁰ P. Holden, *In Search of Structural Power: EU Aid Policy as a Global Political Instrument* (Surrey 2009) 23; Africa’s importance to Europe was marginalised in the 1990s, but it gained significance in the 2000s as a tool to support western dominated global governance, especially in the light of rising powers such as China (Holden, *In Search of Structural Power*, 123).

⁷¹ Smith, ‘European Union External Relations’, 230.

⁷² Arts and Dickson, *EU Development Cooperation*, 3.

⁷³ *Ibidem*, 5; The Lomé Convention and the Cotonou Agreement are also mixed agreements. Both the collective Council and individual Member States have the power to ratify or not to ratify them (Smith, ‘European Union External Relations’, 231).

⁷⁴ The EDF, the EU’s largest financing instrument for development cooperation, is governed through an intergovernmental structure outside the EU budget (European Parliament Think Tank, *The budgetary tools for financing EU external policy* (Brussels 2017) 14).

⁷⁵ Holden, *In Search of Structural Power*, 41.

Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO) and the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO).⁷⁶ So despite the final say of Member States, the role of the Commission is still significant. However, due to the variety of EU institutions, Member States' stances and development instruments, the overall institutional set-up of EU development cooperation is complex and at times problematic. As a result, the Commission cannot claim to speak for Europe in this field.⁷⁷ In short, EU development assistance is not a united instrument with a shared collective goal but reflects rather a delicate balance between national interests of Member States and an aim for European impartiality by the Commission.⁷⁸

1.3. The EU migrant crisis and the establishment of the EUTF

Despite the fact that large scale migration flows are not unprecedented phenomena, the sharp rise in numbers of refugees and migrants crossing irregularly the European border at the beginning of 2015 has been remarkable.⁷⁹ In the first nine months of 2015, more than 487.000 people arrived at Europe's Mediterranean shores.⁸⁰ These numbers are a substantial increase compared to earlier years. According to the research of Cummings et al, 'from January to June 2015, 137,000 refugees and migrants arrived in Europe, an increase of 83% over the same period in 2014.'⁸¹ The people that arrived originated mainly from Syria, Eritrea and Afghanistan and the journeys that they undertook and still undertake, are dangerous (figure 1). Between 2015 and 2017, almost 12.000 people lost their lives in the Mediterranean Sea, making it 'by far the world's deadliest border' according to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).⁸² Although the numbers of refugees and migrants arriving in Europe dropped significantly in the last years, still over 1,400 people died in the Mediterranean in 2018 alone.⁸³

These circumstances, fostered by extensive media coverage, sparked a political crisis within the EU, as some Member States had difficulties coping with the large numbers of people seeking asylum. In the context of the Brexit-referendum and crucial prospective elections in the Netherlands, France and Germany,

⁷⁶ Ibidem, 44.

⁷⁷ Smith, 'European Union External Relations', 231.

⁷⁸ Arts and Dickson, *EU Development Cooperation*, 6.

⁷⁹ As stated in the work of Cummings, Pacitto, Lauro and Forresti, the migration crisis 'is not only a matter of high numbers of entrants. Rather, it is the significant numbers of migrant deaths at Europe's borders, scenes of boat arrivals, of camps housing migrants in cities in Europe and the European neighbourhood, and of large groups of people being confronted by border guards which evoke a sense of crisis' (Cummings (et al.), *Why People Move*, 9).

⁸⁰ N. Banulescu-Bogdan and S. Fratzke, 'Europe's Migration Crisis in Context: Why Now and What Next?' (September 24, 2015), <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/europe%E2%80%99s-migration-crisis-context-why-now-and-what-next> (consulted: April 20, 2018); Numbers on irregular migration to Europe are estimations. They are not conclusive but do give a legitimate indication (Cummings (et al.), *Why People Move*, 11).

⁸¹ Cummings (et al.), *Why People Move*, 16.

⁸² European Commission, 'Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council: Commission contribution to the EU Leaders' thematic debate on a way forward on the external and the internal dimension of migration policy' (December 7, 2017) 1; Reuters, 'Mediterranean "by far world's deadliest border" for migrants: IOM' (November 24, 2017), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants/mediterranean-by-far-worlds-deadliest-border-for-migrants-iom-idUSKBN1DO1ZY> (consulted: July 13, 2018).

⁸³ At the time of writing: July 9, 2018 (Missing Migrants, 'Total of deaths recorded in Mediterranean from 01 January to 20 April' (April 20, 2018), <http://missingmigrants.iom.int/region/mediterranean> (consulted: July 9, 2018).

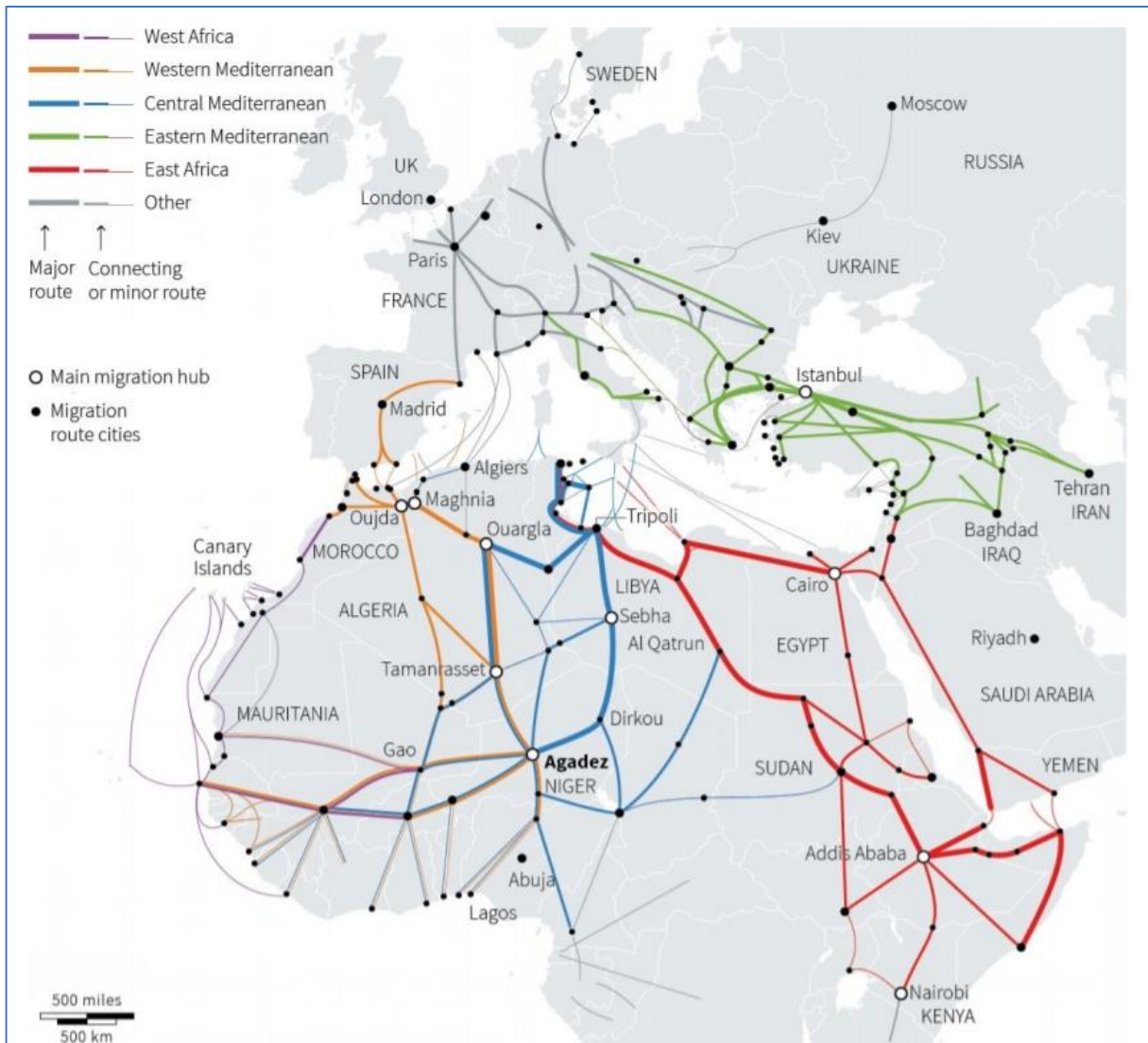


Figure 1: The main irregular migration routes to Europe in 2015 (source: International Centre for Migration / Reuters, 2015).

concerns about security and sovereignty gained a central position in national politics with discourses increasingly supporting restrictive immigration policies.⁸⁴ With speculations about another 1 million refugees and migrants to come, the European Commission declared it in 2015 to be the ‘largest global humanitarian crisis of our times’.⁸⁵ Moreover, European Parliament elections in 2014 saw an increase of nationalist parties that articulated anti-EU and anti-immigration resentment on the European stage, next to their firmly established equivalents in national assemblies.⁸⁶ Resulting from mounting pressure by Member States, the European Commission adopted the European Agenda on Migration in May 2015.⁸⁷ It aimed for better migration management by focusing on four pillars: (1) reducing incentives for irregular migration, (2) stepping up border management, (3) reforming the Common European Asylum System, and (4) developing

⁸⁴ Concord, *Partnership or Conditionality?*, 8.

⁸⁵ As cited in: S. Holmes and H. Castañeda, ‘Representing the “European refugee crisis” in Germany and beyond: Deservingness and difference, life and death’, *American Ethnologist* 43 (2016) 1, 12.

⁸⁶ Concord, *Partnership or Conditionality?*, 8.

⁸⁷ Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom? The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa – Migratory Routes and Development Aid in Africa* (Oxford 2017), 9.

a new policy on legal migration.⁸⁸ The adoption of this agenda marked a major shift in migration and development policy, because internal and external instruments and goals were now put together in one overall approach.⁸⁹ The European Agenda on Migration, in the wake of a perceived sense of urgency, evoked a large number of policy decisions and legislative acts in a relatively short period of time.⁹⁰ In November 2015, the Valletta Summit on Migration took place in Malta. On 18 March 2016, the European Union and Turkey agreed upon the EU-Turkey statement, which made the numbers of people arriving via the Eastern Mediterranean route drop drastically.⁹¹ Subsequently, the EU shifted its migration policy focus to the Central Mediterranean route, which has been a traditional route for Sub-Saharan African migrants.⁹²

The EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa was launched, together with other initiatives, at the earlier mentioned Valletta Summit on migration. Trust funds are a relatively new instrument that are placed outside the EU budget, which does not make them subject to lengthy procedures. Hitherto, they have been used primarily for humanitarian purposes.⁹³ The EUTF was designed to be an emergency instrument with swift programme implementations and quick results.⁹⁴ In comparison with existing development assistance instruments, the Commission envisioned that the EUTF would be more flexible, with less complicated contractual procedures.⁹⁵ For instance, programme proposals require only eight pages.⁹⁶ Working outside the traditional development framework would also provide greater opportunities for innovation. The EUTF was established to experiment with different approaches and to pool together a variety of financial sources, without being limited to the standards of traditional development aid.⁹⁷

The EUTF is the main financial instrument for the EU's political interaction with African states on the issue of migration.⁹⁸ By December 2017, EUR 3.3 billion has been allocated to the fund.⁹⁹ The largest share, EUR 2.3 billion, comes from the 11th EDF reserve.¹⁰⁰ This represents around 8% of the total EDF. The bulk of the EDF, on its turn, is funded by six Member States: Germany, France, the United Kingdom,

⁸⁸ European Commission, 'European Agenda on Migration', https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration_en (consulted: April 20, 2018).

⁸⁹ Concord, *Partnership or Conditionality?*, 8.

⁹⁰ Ibidem, 8.

⁹¹ European Council, 'EU-Turkey Statement, 18 March 2016' (March 18, 2016), <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/> (consulted: April 20, 2018); The statement entailed that Turkey would enforce its borders so that refugees and migrants would not be able to leave Turkey for Europe. In doing so, the EU tried to lower the death rate of the Eastern Mediterranean route and to end irregular border crossings. In return, Turkey would receive EUR 6 billion to support the shelter of refugees. The deal is both criticised by human rights organisations and celebrated by the Commission and Member States (Concord, *Partnership or Conditionality?*, 9).

⁹² Barana, 'The EU Trust Fund for Africa and the Perils of a Securitized Migration Policy', 1; Cummings (et al.), *Why People Move*, 18; 'According to UNHCR, the main nationalities arriving in Italy in 2015 were Eritreans (25%), Nigerians (10%), and Somalis (10%), followed by Syrians (7%) and Gambians (7%)' (Cummings (et al.), *Why People Move*, 18).

⁹³ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 3.

⁹⁴ Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom?*, 9.

⁹⁵ Barana, 'The EU Trust Fund for Africa and the Perils of a Securitized Migration Policy?', 2.

⁹⁶ Concord, *Partnership or Conditionality?*, 12.

⁹⁷ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 6.

⁹⁸ Concord, *Partnership or Conditionality?*, 9.

⁹⁹ Barana, 'The EU Trust Fund for Africa and the Perils of a Securitized Migration Policy', 2.

¹⁰⁰ Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom?*, 11.

Italy, Spain and the Netherlands.¹⁰¹ The financial resources of the EUTF are further supplemented by other EU instruments, such as the Development Coordination Instrument (DCI) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI).¹⁰² In addition, Member States are requested to individually contribute to the fund, which accounts together with other donors for 7% of the total EUTF.¹⁰³ As is captured in the establishment documents of the EUTF, the implemented programmes should follow the legislative requirements and geographical scope of the financial instruments they are withdrawn from.¹⁰⁴ This means that the vast majority of the EUTF programmes should be in line with the legal requirements of the EDF.

The EUTF is governed by a Strategic Board and three Operational Committees, one for each geographical window (figure 2). Whereas the Strategic Board sets the global strategy, the Operational Committees are responsible for the approval of the programmes.¹⁰⁵ All are chaired by the DG DEVCO and Board and Committee members consist of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and individual Members that contribute at least EUR 3 million to the fund. Concerning the latter, this led already in the early stages of the fund to division amongst Member States. Whereas countries that felt more severe impact of the migration crisis, such as Italy, were persistently pushing for additional funding, other Member States

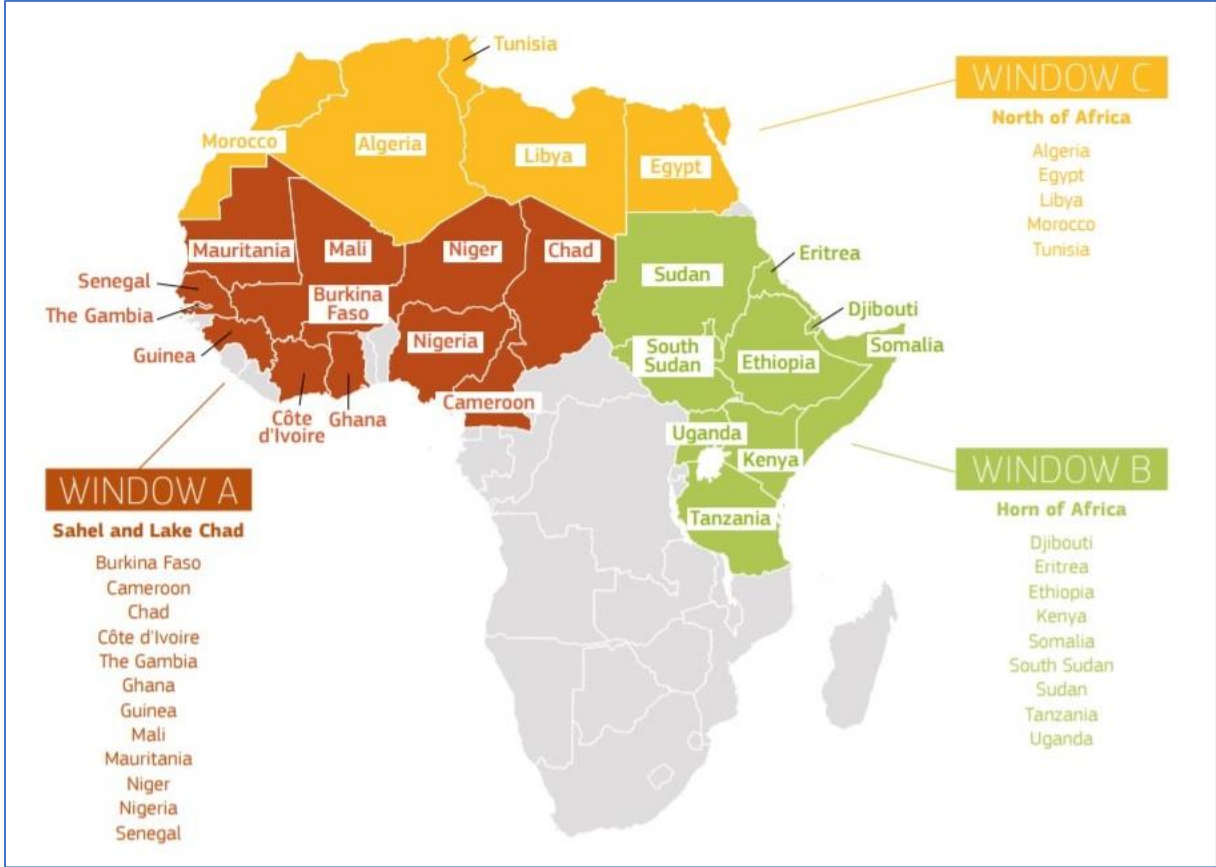


Figure 2: The geographical focus of the EUTF (source: European Commission, 2018).

¹⁰¹ European Parliament Think Tank, *The budgetary tools for financing EU external policy*, 14.
¹⁰² Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 7-8.
¹⁰³ Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom?*, 12.
¹⁰⁴ European Commission, 'The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa: Strategic Orientation Document', 15.
¹⁰⁵ European Commission, 'Fact Sheet: EU Trust Fund For Africa: Governance and Procedures', 1-2.

were unwilling to contribute, as they were sceptical about the utility and effectiveness of the EUTF.¹⁰⁶ It is important to note that African partner countries and regional organisations, such as the African Union, are only assigned the position of observer in both the Strategic Board and the Operational Committees. Hence, they are not granted a vote in the decision making process.¹⁰⁷ According to a report by Concord, ‘their opinion seems to be taken into account during meetings, although the formal requirement to do so is not guaranteed in the current EUTF’s governance structure.’¹⁰⁸ During the entire procedure of programme identification and approval, the Commission is in the lead.

1.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, the historical context of the establishment of the EUTF has been discussed. The first part described very briefly the historical trends and events in the relation between the EU and the ACP countries. The nature of EU development policy in these regions has significantly changed overtime, but the historical ties with former colonies remained. The cautious balance between intergovernmentalism and supranationalism of the Union is all too much visible in the mixed system of EU development assistance. Furthermore, the context of drastically increased numbers of refugees and migrants crossing European borders irregularly, together with societal strains, enforced a new EU approach on migration, and ultimately led to the establishment of the EUTF. The following chapter will provide an analysis of Commission, Council and Parliamentary documents to clarify the justifications for the establishment and policy of the fund.

¹⁰⁶ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 8-11.

¹⁰⁷ European Commission, ‘Fact Sheet: EU Trust Fund For Africa: Governance and Procedures’, 1.

¹⁰⁸ Concord, *Partnership or Conditionality?*, 12.

2. Principles: an analysis of justifications in EU documents

2.1. Introduction: NPE and the security challenge

I see Europe as a new form of power. A force for good around the world. (...) Europeans want their values - human rights, solidarity, justice and peace – promoted around the world. High Representative Javier Solana in his speech at the Sound of Europe Conference in 2006.¹⁰⁹

When Manners wrote his NPE theory in 2002, he argued that EU external policy is shaped by five core norms: peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law and human rights. Furthermore, he appointed four minor EU norms: social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development and good governance.¹¹⁰ However, during the years after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the subsequent global war on terror by the Bush administration, questions were raised about the validity and applicability of Manners' theory with regards to an increasing 'security challenge'. Academics wondered how the EU should combat terrorist threats and global insecurity whilst not losing its perceived normative character. In 2006, Manners wrote an article on the way a normative EU should respond to terrorism, war and insecurity.¹¹¹ In this article, he expresses his concerns about an imminent prevalence of strategic objectives and security concerns in EU development policy. This could result in 'a Eurocentric threat perception (...) [which] fails to listen to the concerns of partner developing countries (...)'.¹¹² According to Manners, addressing the security challenge in a normative way would begin with resolving the complex causes of insecurity and unsustainable peace.¹¹³ In doing so, the EU should focus on eight aspects: (i) the legitimacy of the state, (ii) rule of law, (iii) respect for fundamental rights, (iv) civil society and media, (v) relations between communities and dispute-solving mechanisms, (vi) sound economic management, (vii) social and regional inequalities, and (viii) the geopolitical situation.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ European Union, 'Speech by Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy - The Sound of Europe Conference' (January 27, 2006), http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/discours/88179.pdf (consulted: July 13, 2018).

¹¹⁰ Manners, 'Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?', 242-243.

¹¹¹ Manners, 'European Union 'Normative Power' and the Security Challenge', 405-421.

¹¹² Ibidem, 412.

¹¹³ Ibidem, 414.

¹¹⁴ The article provides a more detailed description of each aspect: i) Legitimacy of state focuses on the democracy, equality, and good governance in political systems, including questions about pluralism, inclusivity, resentment, and corruption; (ii) rule of law looks at the role of independent, civil judicial systems in a society, including questions about equality, human rights, civilian security, and organised crime; (iii) respect for fundamental rights asks whether freedom and human rights are respected in society, including questions about civil and political freedom, religious and cultural rights, and human rights; (iv) civil society and media questions the vibrancy of civil groups, in particular the free and efficient activities of civil groups, and the independence and professionalism of the media; (v) relations between communities and dispute-solving mechanisms interrogates democratic processes, rule of law and good governance in order to ensure good relations between identity groups, to facilitate arbitration between communities, and to manage migrant/refugee flows; (vi) sound economic management examines the extent of sustainable development in a society by questioning the robustness, stability and sustainability of a state's economic and environmental policies; (vii) social and regional inequalities concentrate on the achievement of social solidarity in a state through questioning social welfare policies, social inequalities, and regional disparities; (viii) geopolitical situation asks whether a state has achieved

This specification on security challenges within NPE theory is relevant regarding the EUTF. Academic studies show that EU migration policy has become increasingly securitised.¹¹⁵ Since the 1980s, the phenomenon of migration has been more and more politically framed as having destabilising effects on domestic integration and public order in Europe. In this trend, migration is often linked to presumed abuses by criminal networks and terrorist organisations. Moreover, refugees and migrants are sometimes considered as a threat to national identities and social welfare provisions.¹¹⁶ In the light of the European media and political framing of the migrant crisis in 2015, together with terrorist attacks in European cities and the rise of anti-immigration parties, this trend gained new relevance.¹¹⁷ In current EU documents, migration and security are often mentioned in the same sentence.¹¹⁸ This is also the result of the EU stepping up as an international actor in the security field and Europe's aim to converge different external action instruments into a coherent external policy.¹¹⁹ So, even though the magnitude of the influx of refugees and migrants and its impact on European security is relative, the link between security and migration should be taken into account whilst studying the EUTF. Consequently, Manners' remarks on NPE and the security challenge are valuable to keep in mind. In this master thesis, however, the examination of EU principles and action through the EUTF is based solely on the nine norms as formulated in his original NPE theory in 2002. Not only do these norms form the core of the academic NPE debate, but also do they strongly relate to the eight aspects in Manners' article on NPE and the security challenge.

2.2. EUTF Analysis: European Commission

As the executive institution of the EU, the role of the European Commission in the establishment and policy of the EUTF is powerful; DG DEVCO chairs both the Strategic Board and Operational Committees of the fund.¹²⁰ Moreover, the European Commission is responsible for the submission of the programmes to be financed by the EUTF. Therefore, the EC documents are the most prevalent in the overall analysis of EUTF policy justifications. They are also the most numerous, compared to the distinctly more limited

sustainable peace dependent on questions regarding regional geopolitics, external threats, and destabilising state policies (Manners, 'European Union 'Normative Power' and the Security Challenge', 414-415).

¹¹⁵ L. Raineri, 'Human smuggling across Niger: state-sponsored protection rackets and contradictory security imperatives', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 56 (2018) 1, 81; L. Aggestam and C. Hill, 'The Challenge of Multiculturalism in European foreign policy', *International Affairs* 84 (2008) 1, 106.

¹¹⁶ J. Huymans, 'The European Union and the Securitisation of Migration', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 38 (2000) 5, 751; Especially after the 9/11 attacks and subsequent terrorist attacks in Madrid and London, political debate has been raised on the role of culture, identity and the role of Islam in European societies, together with an increasing discussion on European models of multicultural integration and 'the fear that the old notion of "the enemy from within" (...) now applied to communities whose loyalty to a transnational religion might lead them into acts of violence against their own fellow citizens.' (Aggestam and Hill, 'The Challenge of Multiculturalism in European foreign policy', 97 and 106).

¹¹⁷ Barana, 'The EU Trust Fund for Africa and the Perils of a Securitized Migration Policy', 3.

¹¹⁸ For instance, this can be seen in communication on security by DG HOME in 2017 (European Commission, *From Research to Security Union* (Brussels 2017) 10).

¹¹⁹ Furness and Gänzle, *The European Union's Development Policy*, 22-23. N. Woods, 'The Shifting Politics of Foreign Aid', *International Affairs* 81 (2005) 2, 406-407.

¹²⁰ The European Commission is the political executive and administrative institution of the European Union. It is responsible for policy initiation and formulation, the monitoring of policy implementation, and the management of European programmes (M. Egeberg, 'The European Commission', in: Cini, M., and N. Borragán (ed.), *European Union Politics* (Oxford 2010) 126-127).

amount of Council and Parliament documents. The analysis shows that the communication of the Commission to the other EU institutions and the European public is explicitly marked by normative justifications. However, the documents contain a Eurocentric threat perception of irregular migration. They follow the securitised development discourse that has been established in the last decades. This is mainly the result of an aim to create a coherent, holistic approach on the issue, in which the EUTF should complement other EU instruments, such as traditional development cooperation and CSDP missions. In addition, secondary research shows that there exists internal division between the DG's of the Commission.

Normative principles: development, good governance and dialogue

Even though the Commission's references to European security and issues such as African border control are overtly present in EC documents, the establishment and policy of the EUTF is above all justified in a normative manner. It can be divided into three main normative values.

Firstly, there is clear focus on sustainable development. This does not come as a surprise, since approximately 73 per cent of the total EUR 3.3 billion comes from the EDF.¹²¹ DG DEVCO dominates the guidance of the fund. The EC Decision document opens by listing all the challenges that the Sahel and Lake Chad region has to face, such as demographic pressure, environmental stress, extreme poverty, open conflict and displacement. It emphasises the humanitarian needs of vulnerable people, and is concerned about growing inequalities that would enforce widespread senses of exclusion, in particular affecting the youth.¹²² The EC has established four strategic lines of action, of which two are clearly in line with normative principles of sustainable development and social solidarity: *greater economic and employment opportunities* and *strengthening resilience of communities*. The Commission wants to enhance economic possibilities for youth, provide protection to refugees and IDP's, and improve communities' access to basic services, such as food, health and education.¹²³ More specifically, EUTF economic programmes in the Sahel and Lake Chad region focus on the support of small and medium-sized enterprises, increasing access to finance and foster a culture of social accountability.¹²⁴ With these economic policies, the Commission also aims to combat religious extremism. According to the EC, frustrated aspirations and hopelessness of younger generations would provide fertile ground for the spread of terrorist ideologies.¹²⁵ Furthermore, the documents pay also significant attention to fighting gender inequality and the empowerment of excluded groups, which underscores its devotion to the normative value of anti-discrimination.¹²⁶ Economic programmes should focus on the employment of women as entrepreneurs and workers. Moreover, the Strategic Orientation Document states that the Commission wants to reduce the risks of uprooted boys, girls and women falling into prostitution or forced labour.¹²⁷ It should be mentioned that EUTF policy in the Sahel and Lake Chad

¹²¹ Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom?*, 11.

¹²² European Commission, 'Commission Decision', 2.

¹²³ *Ibidem*, 3.

¹²⁴ European Commission, 'Operational Framework for the Sahel and Lake Chad Window', 4.

¹²⁵ *Ibidem*, 8.

¹²⁶ European Commission, 'Strategic Orientation Document', 12.

¹²⁷ *Ibidem*, 13.

region, because of its severe insecurity and widespread poverty, is significantly more normative than in the North African region. In the latter, being a transit region with substantially better economic conditions, the EUTF only finances migration management programmes.¹²⁸ However, these programmes are not financed with EDF resources.

The core assumption behind the EUTF's predominant development focus is that investments in equal economic opportunities, sustainable development and strengthening the resilience of vulnerable communities would take away the root and acute causes of instability, forced displacement and irregular migration.¹²⁹ Addressing root causes, together with more direct migration management tools, would decrease the amount of irregular migrants heading to Europe:

'Development measures that specifically address the needs and aspirations of potential migrant and high levels of inequality, and that seek to build stable, inclusive societies are likely to be most effective in reducing the challenge of irregular migration.'¹³⁰

However, whereas the causal link between conflict and forced displacement is valid, the logic between increasing development and decreasing migration is denied by scholars Cummings, Pacitto, Lauro and Foresti, who state that 'as a country's economy grows, emigration is likely to increase as more people have the necessary financial resources and information to make the journey.'¹³¹ This is also supported by François Crépeau, UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, arguing that more development will inevitably lead to more migration: 'Because all those people that have for long time been wanting to leave, but could not afford to do so, can now leave their country.'¹³² In other words, forced displacement and migration are two totally different phenomena, but the EC names them all in one. Whereas forced displacement can indeed be addressed by taking away root causes such as environmental disasters and conflict, migration is a natural process, which has always been vital for economic resilience. Therefore, the latter cannot be addressed in the same way.¹³³ But despite the lack of academic evidence for the effectiveness of this development-migration reasoning, the Commission's focus on development and humanitarian programmes as a solution to irregular migration relates strongly to normative principles.

Secondly, the EC documents show strong commitment to good governance. *Improved governance and conflict prevention* is the third strategic line of the fund and seeks to promote conflict prevention, address human rights abuses, and enforce rule of law.¹³⁴ EUTF programmes should combat widespread institutional

¹²⁸ European Commission, '2017 Annual Report EU Trust Fund for Africa', 15.

¹²⁹ Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom?*, 6.

¹³⁰ European Commission, 'Operational Framework for the Sahel and Lake Chad Window', 3-4.

¹³¹ Cummings (et al.), *Why People Move*, 6-7.

¹³² C. Barbière, 'EU aid an ineffective tool to end the migration crisis' (April 11, 2016), <https://www.euractiv.com/section/development-policy/news/eu-aid-an-ineffective-tool-to-end-the-migration-crisis/> (consulted: March 29, 2018).

¹³³ Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom?*, 14-15.

¹³⁴ *Ibidem*, 9.

weaknesses, as described in the Commission Decision document.¹³⁵ Promoting good governance, peaceful and inclusive societies and non-violent conflict resolution would enhance the stability and economic prosperity in the region, and therefore reduce the challenge of irregular migration.¹³⁶ Good governance would not only entail the support of governments so that they can offer their citizens inclusive services, predominantly security and justice, but also addressing gender discrimination. The Commission assumes that: ‘reducing inequality and discrimination will not only reduce causes of irregular migration but also protect women and children from systematic abuse throughout the migration cycle.’¹³⁷ Moreover, good governance should also promote the social and political inclusion of youth and traditionally discriminated groups in order to improve social cohesion and prospects for peace.¹³⁸ Concerning the EUTF’s own programme governance, the EC emphasises its ‘do-no-harm approach’, very similar to Manners’ concept of ‘doing least harm’. This conflict-sensitive policy procedure would ensure that EUTF programmes contribute to peace and stability.¹³⁹ But whereas the first two strategic lines are clearly development-focused, this third strategic line of improved governance and conflict prevention is more mixed with European utility-based concerns. Good governance is often connected to migration and border management. It is also more securitised than the first two, with emphasis on institutional improvements for addressing terrorism, organised crime and smuggling of migrants.¹⁴⁰

Lastly, the EC expresses its commitment to dialogue, local empowerment, and multilateralism. The Commission articulates two principles behinds its policy: *strategic and efficient processes through political dialogue with partner countries (...)* and *local ownership and partnership to understand local contexts and respond to partner countries and beneficiary communities’ needs*.¹⁴¹ The identification of programmes should thus be done through sustained dialogue with African stakeholders, and regional partners, and should pursue ownership and primary responsibility of the countries concerned.¹⁴² For instance, the focus of the EUTF on youth resulted from a EU-AU summit in which African countries called for specialised programmes for this group.¹⁴³ All EC documents refer to the commitment to dialogue and cooperation. The Commission also mentions earlier dialogues with African partners on migration, such as the Rabat and Khartoum processes.¹⁴⁴ It clearly wants to show that it does not act unilaterally, but seeks to embed its policy in the framework of partnerships, such as the African Union, Sahel G5, ECOWAS and the UNHCR.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁵ European Commission, ‘Commission Decision’, 1.

¹³⁶ European Commission, ‘Strategic Orientation Document’, 13.

¹³⁷ *Ibidem*, 13.

¹³⁸ *Ibidem*, 13-14; European Commission, ‘Operational Framework for the Sahel and Lake Chad Window’, 8.

¹³⁹ European Commission, ‘2017 Annual Report EU Trust Fund for Africa’, 13.

¹⁴⁰ European Commission, ‘EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa’, 3.

¹⁴¹ European Commission, ‘2017 Annual Report EU Trust Fund for Africa’, 13.

¹⁴² European Commission, ‘Operational Framework for the Sahel and Lake Chad Window’, 1; European Commission, ‘Strategic Orientation Document’, 1 and 19.

¹⁴³ This focus has been reaffirmed at the 5th AU-EU Summit in Abidjan (European Council, ‘5th African Union - EU Summit, 29-30/11/2017’ (November 30, 2017), <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-summit/2017/11/29-30/> (consulted: April 4, 2018)).

¹⁴⁴ European Commission, ‘Strategic Orientation Document’, 1.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, 19.

Eurocentric threat perception

The Commission's justification of its EUTF policy is at best based on mutual interests, at worst based on European self-centred concerns. The fund unquestionably supports EU strategic interests. The EC aims to target only countries that are part of the migration flows towards Europe.¹⁴⁶ For instance, it does not articulate the need to finance programmes in Southern African countries that cope with the same migration difficulties, but then with South-Africa as its destination. Nevertheless, the EC does make extensive remarks to its concerns about people in need, the shared interests of combatting irregular migration, and the benefits of the EUTF for African partner states. The Commission underscores its commitment to social solidarity, by stressing that fighting irregular migration would be in favour of refugees and migrants themselves. The EUTF would prevent that people from African countries undertake the dangerous journey to Europe, leading to deaths in the Mediterranean, human trafficking and other human rights abuses.¹⁴⁷ Moreover, the EC underscores the importance of awareness raising campaigns on the dangers of engaging in irregular migration and the need for legal alternatives to it.¹⁴⁸ The Commission expresses its aim to enhance legal mobility, especially for educational, cultural or professional purposes.¹⁴⁹ Thus, the EUTF is partly justified by arguing that it benefits the people in need; the programmes support both the development and security of their home communities and prevents them from risking their life en route. As stated in the 2017 Annual Report, the EUTF is saving lives at sea and in the desert.¹⁵⁰ Next to the EC's claims to social solidarity with uprooted people, it also emphasises the shared interests of the EU and its African partners. The EUTF would target the 'multifaceted migration phenomenon with which Europe and Africa are both confronted' in a way that it contributes to 'the common goals and interests of the EU and its African partners in managing migration flows and promoting stability.'¹⁵¹ On the effects of youth with limited economic opportunities in the Sahel and Lake Chad region, the Strategic Orientation Document states: 'A lack of success in integrating these young people would be a collective failure, and potentially destabilising for both Africa and Europe.'¹⁵² In short, the EU would take into account 'the interest of all parties – the EU, partner countries and migrants themselves.'¹⁵³

However, the Eurocentric threat perception is prevalent throughout EC documents. As stated earlier, the Commission aims to address only regions and countries of origin and transit of migratory routes towards Europe.¹⁵⁴ According to the Operational Framework document 'the scale and nature of current migratory flows reaching the EU is unprecedented, and requires stepping up the action to address it in a

¹⁴⁶ European Commission, 'Factsheet: EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa', 1.

¹⁴⁷ European Commission, 'Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council', 7.

¹⁴⁸ European Commission, 'Operational Framework for the Sahel and Lake Chad Window', 4.

¹⁴⁹ European Commission, 'Commission Decision', 3.

¹⁵⁰ European Commission, '2017 Annual Report EU Trust Fund for Africa', 4.

¹⁵¹ European Commission, 'Strategic Orientation Document', 1; European Commission, 'Operational Framework for the Sahel and Lake Chad Window', 1.

¹⁵² European Commission, 'Strategic Orientation Document', 4.

¹⁵³ *Ibidem*, 1.

¹⁵⁴ European Commission, 'Commission Decision', 3.

sustainable way.¹⁵⁵ The physical proximity of the Sahel and Lake Chad region is often mentioned as a crucial motive for establishing the EUTF:

‘Security and development in the Sahel and Lake Chad basin are crucial to the European Union. Given the proximity of the Sahel to the EU and its immediate neighbourhood, the EU is committed to work closely with the countries of the Sahel and Lake Chad regions to support their efforts to achieve peace, security and development.’¹⁵⁶

Investments in migration management and development are thus based on strategic concerns of the EU. This is also visible in the use of the word ‘stability’. In all EC documents, the Commission underscores the importance of stability in the region. Yet stability is not the same as Manners’ normative principle of peace. Stability implies a political situation which is calm, steady, or firmly established. Stability is more functional, a state of certainty and reliability. It does not necessarily entail normative values such as peace, liberty or democracy. Yet, of course it could be defended too as an indispensable condition for sustainable peace on the long term.

The Eurocentric threat perception is a result of the framework in which the EUTF needs to operate. As stated before, the Commission seeks to use the fund as a flexible and complementary means to fill the gaps of other EU instruments.¹⁵⁷ Therefore, it inevitably follows broader EU external strategies, in this case the Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel. Whereas the next paragraph will go more in detail into the security-focused justification of the EC, it is crucial to look at this strategy to explain the Eurocentric threat perception. The Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel is explicitly focused on European strategic interests, which is normal for an external relations policy of a political entity. It becomes, however, problematic concerning NPE when a development instrument such as the EUTF is shaped by it. The strategy document states that:

‘This strategy therefore proposes a framework for the coordination of the EU’s current engagement in the region with the common objective of reinforcing security and development, thereby strengthening also the EU’s own security.’¹⁵⁸

And:

‘Improving the security and development in the Sahel has an obvious and direct impact on protecting European citizens and interests and on the EU internal security situation.’¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ European Commission, ‘Operational Framework for the Sahel and Lake Chad Window’, 3.

¹⁵⁶ European Commission, ‘Strategic Orientation Document’, 4.

¹⁵⁷ European Commission, ‘Commission Decision’, 5-6.

¹⁵⁸ European Union External Action Service, ‘Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel’, 2.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, 4.

Given this security and development strategy, the EUTF policy in the Sahel and Lake Chad region becomes inevitably marked by EU utility-based justifications. However, it should also be taken into account that the attitude of the Union is shaped by the normative value of democracy. Eurobarometer polls show that migration is the most important theme for European citizens and that they want the EU to do more to manage the situation.¹⁶⁰ The Eurocentric threat perception is therefore for a significant part the result of the normative principle of democracy.¹⁶¹ This reveals a difficulty in Manners' NPE, too. In his article on NPE and the security challenge, he refers to: 'promoting normative values in a democratic EU.'¹⁶² Yet the rise of democratically elected anti-immigration and anti-EU political parties shows that Manners' notion can be contradictory. Resulting from a democratic and thus normative process of elections, it is possible that the European electorate chooses to drift away from normative principles into a more utility-based direction. The relation between the Eurocentric approach of the EUTF and the European electorate is supported by observers from international organisations and civil society who argue that:

'[the] central aim of the EUTF is simply to demonstrate to the European public that leaders are taking action on migration. (...) European leaders are under extreme public pressure over this issue – in particular given the complete failure of plans to share refugee populations across European countries – and hence needed a new initiative to demonstrate action.'¹⁶³

The underlying justification that the EU wants to show political action is further supported by the fact that the EUTF programmes are obliged to deliver fast results.¹⁶⁴ First of all, the emergency nature of the EUTF is contrary to the accurate self-appointed notion that migration flows are long term phenomena which are not be retained on the short term, if ever.¹⁶⁵ Secondly, the total amount of funds, though they increased over 2016 and 2017, are not likely to be sufficient to reach the ambitious goals of the EUTF.¹⁶⁶ This is also recognised by EU officials themselves.¹⁶⁷ The security, development and demographic challenges in the

¹⁶⁰ European Parliament, 'Migration crisis: 73% of Europeans wants EU to do more' (May 11, 2017), <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/eu-affairs/20170505STO73515/migration-crisis-73-of-europeans-wants-eu-to-do-more> (consulted: March 30, 2018).

¹⁶¹ The communication document of the EC underscores the connection with the European electorate: 'In this context, migration policy needs to be effectively managed in line with the importance citizens attach to it.' (European Commission, 'Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council', 1).

¹⁶² Manners, 'European Union 'Normative Power' and the Security Challenge', 416.

¹⁶³ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 6.

¹⁶⁴ European Commission, 'Fact Sheet: EU Trust Fund For Africa: Governance and Procedures', 2; As stated by the Parliamentary Committee on Development: '(...) EUTFs are mainly designed to leverage the contribution of EU Member States and increase the global visibility of European efforts' (European Parliament, 'Committee on Development: Draft Report on the EU Trust Fund for Africa: the implications for development and humanitarian aid (2015/2341(INI))' (February 26, 2016) 4).

¹⁶⁵ European Commission, 'Operational Framework for the Sahel and Lake Chad Window', 2; Barana, 'The EU Trust Fund for Africa and the Perils of a Securitized Migration Policy', 2.

¹⁶⁶ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 9.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, 4-5.

Sahel and Lake Chad region are enormous.¹⁶⁸ Yet the EUR 3,3 billion has to be shared between a total of 23 countries. For instance, Turkey alone received EUR 3 billion to support refugees as part of the EU-Turkey Statement.¹⁶⁹ Therefore, the fund can be considered to be used as a measure to show political action and as an incentive to encourage African cooperation on the issue of migration, rather than a serious solution to the widespread issues the EUTF is appointed to.¹⁷⁰

Security-focused policy

The EUTF is not an isolated tool in the battle against irregular migration. On the contrary, it is an instrument that has for a great part been established to advance a coherent approach and fill the gaps of other EU external action means.¹⁷¹ As stated in the introduction, scholars Furness and Gänzle argued that the securitisation of EU development policy is the result of an aim for policy coherence.¹⁷² This is also visible in the Commission's justification for the EUTF.

Irregular migration as a security threat is prevalent throughout EC documents, especially in the fourth objective of the EUTF, stated in the Strategic Orientation Document: *Improved migration management in countries of origin, transit and destination*. Whereas the other pillars are more development-focused, this pillar is clearly directed at utility-based migration measures:

'Improving migration management in all its aspects in line with the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (...) including contributing to the development of national and regional strategies on migration management, containing and preventing irregular migration and fight against trafficking of human beings, smuggling of migrants and other related crimes, effective return and readmission, international protection an asylum, legal migration and mobility, enhancing synergies between migration and development.'¹⁷³

Because of the fact that migration is primarily seen by the Commission as a threat, the measures it seeks to install to combat this phenomenon can be seen as a security driven policy. Since general EU external policies on migration, such as the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility, are securitised, the EUTF as an instrument working in the context of the EU's broader policy on migration, runs automatically the risk of becoming securitised too. For instance, the EUTF Operational Framework for the Sahel and Lake Chad

¹⁶⁸ In the next 15 years, 330 million young people will enter the labour market in Sub-Saharan Africa (European Commission, 'Strategic Orientation Document', 4).

¹⁶⁹ European Parliament Think Tank, *The budgetary tools for financing EU external policy* (Brussels 2017) 24.

¹⁷⁰ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 3; 'Through the implementation of its programmes, the EUTF for Africa has facilitated progress on political dialogue (...)' (European Commission, '2017 Annual Report EU Trust Fund for Africa', 4).

¹⁷¹ European Commission, 'Strategic Orientation Document', 1; Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom?*, 4; 'A holistic, integrated and coordinated approach' and 'principles of subsidiarity and complementarity' are among the key principles of the EUTF's activities (European Commission, Strategic Orientation Document, 10-11).

¹⁷² Furness and Gänzle, *The European Union's Development Policy*.

¹⁷³ European Commission, 'Strategic Orientation Document', 12-13.

Window states that enforced border control is needed, since ‘terrorism-related activities are also facilitated by porous borders as well as transnational crime and trafficking networks.’¹⁷⁴

Internal division and contradiction

Lastly, it is important to emphasise that the European Commission is not one unified entity, but consists of different DGs that all have different perceptions and expectations of the EUTF. Within the EC, it is mainly the Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) that leads migration and asylum policy. However, since the internal dimension of migration is considered closely connected to national sovereignty, DG HOME has had only limited space for manoeuvre within the boundaries of the EU. It therefore moved towards the external dimension of migration, operating in negotiations and dialogues with third countries. In doing so, the concerns of DG HOME about internal security have also been transposed into the external dimension of migration and asylum, which has consequently led to a more short-term based policy, focused on security threats. As a result, the actions of DG HOME predominantly aim to restrict human mobility and restrain irregular migration.¹⁷⁵ In the case of the EUTF, DG HOME has been very influential and pushed hard on migration, return and readmission.¹⁷⁶ DG DEVCO, on the other hand, is more concerned about the diversion of development resources and keeping a balance in the nature of the funded programmes. Moreover, DG DEVCO officials emphasise often that the envisioned goals of the EUTF demand long-term interventions, whereas DG HOME officials generally argue that it is possible to take away root causes of irregular migration on the short term.¹⁷⁷ In other words, it is important to take into account the different and at times conflicting perception and reasoning of what the EUTF should do and what goals it can achieve – not only between different EU institutions but also within.

2.3. EUTF Analysis: Council of the European Union

The Council of the European Union resembles greatly the discourse of the Commission.¹⁷⁸ In its preparatory notes on the upcoming Valletta Summit, the Council articulates the same normative values. It refers repeatedly to human rights, sustainable development, peace, anti-discrimination, social solidarity and dialogue.¹⁷⁹ There are, however, significantly more utility-based measures that the Council explicitly pushes

¹⁷⁴ Ibidem, 7.

¹⁷⁵ R. Faure, M. Gavás and A. Knoll, *Challenges to a Comprehensive EU Migration and Asylum Policy* (London 2015) 17.

¹⁷⁶ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 7.

¹⁷⁷ Ibidem, 7.

¹⁷⁸ In this thesis research, the European Council and the Council of the European Union are combined. Whereas the first consists of the Heads of Member States, the latter is the assembly of national ministers structured by theme. Thus, even though they are not exactly the same entity, they both represent the national interests of separate European governments. The Council functions as the intergovernmental organ within the Union. It is a site of intense negotiation and compromise building between separate Member States, focused on key subjects that are considered closely linked to national sovereignty, such as institutional reform, the EU budget and foreign, security and defence policy (J. Lewis, ‘The Council of the European Union’, in: Cini, M., and N. Borragán (ed.), *European Union Politics* (Oxford 2010) 141-145).

¹⁷⁹ Council of the European Union, ‘Presidency Note: Valletta Summit on Migration, 11-12 November 2015’ (October 16, 2015). European Union, ‘Valletta Summit, 11-12 November 2015. Political Declaration’ (November 12, 2015).

for. This makes the Council's overall justification for the EUTF distinctly more based on strategic interests than on normative principles.

Quick results and readmission

The Council is an intergovernmental institution and the way in which heads of state and national ministers wish to respond to 'the unprecedented migratory and refugee crisis that the EU is facing' differs per country.¹⁸⁰ Some Member States tend to be more normative than others.¹⁸¹ Nevertheless, the preparatory Council note on the upcoming Valletta Summit in November 2015 states that: 'Many believe that a number of [EUTF] actions should be short-term, quick impact projects, to be implemented immediately.'¹⁸² As mentioned earlier, the urge to have quick results in the realm of an emergency trust fund does not easily correspond with the fact that migration flows are structural and long-term phenomena. Moreover, normative principles such as sustainable development, good governance and rule of law are widely viewed as goals only achievable by the means of long-term development assistance.¹⁸³ Therefore, the 'quick wins', as the Council refers to itself, seem to be based more on strategic interests.¹⁸⁴ The Council also argues for a profound change in the nature of the funded development programmes of the EUTF: '(...) development policy tools should reinforce local capacity-building, including for border control, asylum, counter-smuggling and reintegration.'¹⁸⁵ In the working draft, the Council calls for the mainstreaming of migration in general development policy. The strategic interest of migration should be integrated in development and poverty reduction strategies and programmes. Development programmes should also support African countries in strengthening their own national migration policies.¹⁸⁶

Besides the Council's call for quick results and a migration focus in development policy, the Council predominantly justifies the EUTF as a tool to enforce return and readmission. Prior to the Valletta Summit, the Council decided that 'a strengthened cooperation on an effective return policy' should be one of the three goals to achieve in Malta.¹⁸⁷ The return and readmission of rejected African immigrants is therefore the foremost priority of the Council: 'All tools shall be mobilised to increase cooperation on return and readmission, thus giving readmission a central place in all dialogues with countries of origin of irregular migrants.'¹⁸⁸ Consequently, the Council has put extensive pressure on the Commission to ensure that the EUTF will generate rapid progress in the areas of border management, return and readmissions.¹⁸⁹ The Council demanded that the EC will ensure that 'ongoing negotiations on readmission agreements are

¹⁸⁰ Council of the European Union, 'Draft Council Conclusions on Migration', 2.

¹⁸¹ 'Some parties insist on the fact that the Summit's deliverables will have to be fair, balanced and comprehensive, in the sense that actions in one domain must not overshadow those in other domains'(Council of the European Union, 'Presidency Note: Valletta Summit on Migration, 11-12 November 2015', 1).

¹⁸² Council of the European Union, 'Presidency Note: Valletta Summit on Migration, 11-12 November 2015', 1.

¹⁸³ Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom?*, 2-3.

¹⁸⁴ Council of the European Union, 'Presidency Note: Valletta Summit on Migration, 11-12 November 2015', 3.

¹⁸⁵ European Council, 'European Council meeting (25 and 26 June) – Conclusions', 3.

¹⁸⁶ Council of the European Union, 'Presidency Note: Valletta Summit on Migration, 11-12 November 2015', 6.

¹⁸⁷ European Council, 'European Council meeting (25 and 26 June) – Conclusions', 5.

¹⁸⁸ Council of the European Union, 'Draft Council conclusions on migration', 4.

¹⁸⁹ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 5.

accelerated and concluded as soon as possible.¹⁹⁰ This strategy would ultimately enhance the effort to ‘reduce pull-factors’.¹⁹¹ Development policy, as a means for push-factors reduction, is less present. On the other hand, it should be underscored that stepping up measures for return and readmission is in itself not necessarily contrary to normative principles. Sending immigrants back who do not have a legal foundation to stay is supported by the UNHCR; [it] is essential to maintain a credible asylum system and it demonstrates that misuse of the system cannot function as a “back door” alternative to regular migration.¹⁹² So, whereas the call for the advancement of return and readmission is an obvious utility-based goal of the EUTF, it does not have to contradict NPE.

Conditionality

What does contradict normative values is the way in which the Council wants to achieve its objective. The Council repeatedly argues for a ‘more-for-more’ principle: ‘EU assistance and policies will be used to create incentives for implementing existing readmission agreements and concluding new ones.’¹⁹³ In other words, African countries that are more cooperative on the EU’s demands for border control and the return of their rejected nationals are likely to receive more development resources from the EUTF.¹⁹⁴ Within the NPE framework, positive conditionality is considered a normative tool as countries would be rewarded if they make normative reforms, such as advancements in democracy and the strengthening of good governance.¹⁹⁵ However, the proposed and adopted EUTF aid conditionality of the Council does not fit in this approach. EDF resources are used to stimulate African states into adopting a policy that fits the EU’s own interests, rather than supporting the ultimate development goal of poverty eradication.¹⁹⁶ In the end, the justification of the Council results in aid allocation based on the needs of the donor rather than the recipient. The controversy around the coercive more-for-more principle has also been noticed by the Council itself:

‘Although the use of the “more-for-more” principle corresponds to what the European Council and the Justice and Home Affairs Council and Foreign Affairs ministers have agreed at recent meetings, it is, in its current formulation, a highly contentious aspect for most African countries.’¹⁹⁷

Subsequently, the Council puts in the same document the following questions:

¹⁹⁰ European Council, ‘European Council meeting (25 and 26 June) – Conclusions’, 3.

¹⁹¹ Council of the European Union, ‘Presidency Note: Valletta Summit on Migration, 11-12 November 2015’, 2.

¹⁹² UNHCR, *The 10-Point Plan* (Geneva 2009) 229.

¹⁹³ European Council, ‘European Council meeting (25 and 26 June) – Conclusions’, 3.

¹⁹⁴ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 5.

¹⁹⁵ E. Collett, ‘EU Cooperation With Third Countries: Rethinking Concepts and Investments’, *Forced Migration Review* 51 (2016) 1, 41.

¹⁹⁶ Concord, *Partnership or Conditionality?*, 23.

¹⁹⁷ Council of the European Union, ‘Presidency Note: Valletta Summit on Migration, 11-12 November 2015’, 2.

‘How explicitly should conditionality appear in the text? What alternative formulations could we explore to accommodate African concerns while sticking to our objectives and retaining for instance non-voluntary return as an option?’¹⁹⁸

Thus, the justification for the EUTF’s policy of return and readmission is in itself not contrary to NPE. As UNHCR official Vincent Cochetel argues: ‘the fact that rejected asylum seekers are barely returned to their country of origin, encourages many to take the risk of crossing the ocean.’¹⁹⁹ The problem lies in the fact that utility-based donor interests influence development aid allocation. Moreover, the effectiveness of this policy is at best questionable, since the countries’ national revenues of remittance by diaspora nationals in Europe often greatly surpasses the relatively small amount that the EU offers with the EUTF.²⁰⁰

Internal division

Finally, it is important to take into account that the perceived goal of the EUTF and the way this is justified differs not only between Member States, but also between Member States’ ministries. According to the research of Castillejo, Member States’ positions on the EUTF tend to be more concerned about security and conditionality when they are driven by the prime minister’s office, the foreign affairs ministry and the ministry of interior. The viewpoints of development ministries, which are usually more concerned about the diversion of development aid for EU security interests, are then often disregarded. Hence, there exists a difference in priority, and equally important, a difference in understanding of migration and its relation to development, which ultimately results in different expectations about what the EUTF can achieve.²⁰¹ Castillejo states in her work that ‘one EU official pointed out [that] development ministries tend to know that supporting change in these African countries is complicated and takes a long time, whereas some actors from foreign and interior ministries appear to believe that, through the EUTF, it will be possible to quickly transform the root causes of irregular migration.’²⁰² Following this reasoning and based on the Council documents that call for fast interventions with quick results, it is legitimate to conclude that the Council’s justification for the EUTF is mainly driven by ministries of interior and foreign affairs, rather than the development ministries, even though it is largely financed by the EDF.

In conclusion, the Council shares for a great part the discourse and normative values of the European Commission. However, in the Council documents utility-based concerns are significantly more present than in EC papers. It calls for quick wins and wants strategic interests of migration to be more integrated in development policy and funding allocation. Furthermore, the way in which the Council wants to enforce return and readmission by African states is not in line with the NPE concept of positive

¹⁹⁸ *Ibidem*, 2.

¹⁹⁹ Translated from Dutch: P. Stockmans, ‘Migratiekoord EU-Afrika: De Afrikanen hebben zich laten rollen door de EU’ (September 1, 2017), <https://www.mo.be/analyse/partnerschap-met-afrika-om-migratie-te-perken-de-afrikanen-hebben-zich-laten-rollen-door-de> (consulted: April 14, 2018).

²⁰⁰ For instance, Senegal would get EUR 20 million to stem irregular migration, but receives annually EUR 1,6 billion by remittances of its Senegalese nationals in Europe (*Ibidem*).

²⁰¹ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 6-7.

²⁰² *Ibidem*, 7.

conditionality. Lastly, it is crucial to pay attention to the diversity in viewpoints between and within Member States. In the end, the overall justification of the Council for the EUTF is conducted by the ministries of interior and foreign affairs.

2.4. EUTF Analysis: European Parliament

The role of the European Parliament (EP) in the EUTF establishment and policy is significantly smaller than that of the Commission and the Council.²⁰³ Since trust funds are outside the EU budget, the EP does not have oversight of it.²⁰⁴ However, the Parliament does have its influence and has made some notable remarks on the fund's establishment and policy.²⁰⁵ On the one hand, the EP has showed its support for the EUTF: '(...) the EUTF is a great opportunity for the EU, enabling it to reinforce its cooperation and political dialogue with its African partners, in particular concerning the effective implementation of return and readmission agreements and to build up on common strategies for the management of migration flows.'²⁰⁶ The Parliament also recognises the importance of the EUTF with regards to the need for a tool that makes it possible to respond in a rapid, flexible and effective way to the challenges of the migration crisis in Africa and Europe.²⁰⁷ Hence, the EP shares the concerns and justifications of the Commission and the Council. On the other hand, the Parliament has been critical about the transparency and the implications of the fund for development and humanitarian aid. Concerning the transparency of the EUTF, the EP wants to be represented on the Strategic Board and criticises the use of funding instruments outside the EU budget, which undermine budget unity.²⁰⁸ Moreover, the Parliament calls for better communication and visibility of results, and demands a systematic monitoring of resource allocation of the fund. With regards to the remarks on the nature of the funded programmes, the Parliament calls into question the Official Development Aid (ODA) and EDF eligibility of the EUTF programmes and the role of local government authorities and civil society. Since this reasoning relates strongly to the NPE debate, it will be discussed more in depth.

²⁰³ The European Parliament is the only directly elected European institution, with significant legislative and budgetary powers. It monitors EU expenditure and has the power to reject the EU budget outright. The EP can also dismiss the Commission and veto Commission nomination (R. Scully, 'The European Parliament', in: Cini, M., and N. Borragán (ed.), *European Union Politics* (Oxford 2010) 164-165).

²⁰⁴ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 11.

²⁰⁵ The European Parliament is not a unanimous entity, but consists of a multitude of political parties with different views on development cooperation and migration. Whilst acknowledging the diversity of the institution, the EP's position in this research is solely based on the Parliament's resolution on the EUTF's implications for development and humanitarian aid, which was adopted by 511 votes to 129, with 69 abstentions (European Parliament, '2015/2341 (INI) 13/09/2016 Text Adopted by Parliament, Single Reading' 1).

²⁰⁶ European Parliament, 'European Parliament resolution of 13 September 2016 on the EU Trust Fund for Africa: the implications for development and humanitarian aid (2015/2341(INI))', 8.

²⁰⁷ European Parliament, 'Follow Up to the European Parliament Resolution on the EU Trust Fund for Africa: the implications for development and humanitarian aid, adopted by the Commission on 21 December 2016', 1.

²⁰⁸ According to the adopted European Parliament resolution of 13 September 2016 on the EUTF: '(...) setting up this trust fund is de facto tantamount to revising the ceilings for the current Multiannual Financial Framework by increasing Member States contributions' (European Parliament, 'European Parliament resolution of 13 September 2016 on the EU Trust Fund for Africa: the implications for development and humanitarian aid (2015/2341(INI))', 4).

Normative concerns about EDF funds

Following the proposed EUTF by the Commission, the European Parliament raised critical questions about the implications for development and humanitarian aid. On September 13, 2016, the EP adopted a resolution on this issue. The resolution, and prior Parliamentary documents leading to it, clearly show normative concerns about the nature of the EUTF programmes.

Firstly, the resolution displays the Parliament's commitment to the normative principle of sustainable development. The EP expresses its critique on the fact that the EUTF gets its resources mainly from the EDF, whilst Member States are unwilling to contribute individually.²⁰⁹ Since the largest share of the funding for EUTF programmes comes from the EDF, the Parliament demands that these programmes are used for development objectives only.²¹⁰ The resolution states that the EP:

'Strongly underlines that funds from EDF and ODA sources must be devoted to the economic, human and social development of the host country, with particular focus on the development challenges identified by the Trust Fund decision; (...) [the EP] condemns any use of EDF and ODA funds for migration management and control or any other actions without development objectives.'²¹¹

In the summarizing adopted text it is stated that:

'[The] Parliament warned against the serious risk of misuse of EU development aid, in particular in conflict-affected countries where security, migration and development issues are closely interconnected. It emphasised strongly that the ultimate purpose of EU development policy must be the reduction and eradication of poverty.'²¹²

Besides the Parliament's concerns about the use of ODA and EDF funds for migration purposes, the EP also criticises an overly large focus on macro-economic development, and emphasises the need for grassroots projects aimed at improving quality, equity and universal accessibility of basic services. Thus, in contrast to the view of the Council, the EP shows a prevalence of normative concerns about the meaning of the EUTF for EU development policy. The Parliament expressed its criticism most fiercely in the draft resolution, condemning 'the extraordinary lack of clarity in its [EUTF's (ed.)] objectives, the lack of solidarity and consensus among Member States, and the clear desire to achieve security goals by means of an

²⁰⁹ European Parliament, 'European Parliament resolution of 13 September 2016 on the EU Trust Fund for Africa: the implications for development and humanitarian aid (2015/2341(INI))', 4.

²¹⁰ *Ibidem* 5; As captured in Article 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: 'Union development cooperation policy shall have as its primary objective the reduction and, in the long term, the eradication of poverty' (TFEU, Article 208, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12008E208:EN:HTML> (consulted: April 4, 2018).

²¹¹ *Ibidem*, 5.

²¹² European Parliament, '2015/2341 (INI) 13/09/2016 Text Adopted by Parliament, Single Reading', 1.

instrument theoretically conceived to pursue development ends.²¹³ However, this sentence was removed in the final version of the resolution.

Secondly, the EP's position is less Eurocentric and shows more commitment to social solidarity. The resolution underscores the possible consequences of the EUTF for development aid allocation to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) which are not covered by the fund. According to the Parliament, the EUTF runs the risk of diverting aid away from the poorest countries to cover the costs of the current crises.²¹⁴ The resolution also sheds light on the fact that development aid for these LDCs is continuously decreasing, reaching its lowest point in ten years, which the Parliament 'deeply regrets'.²¹⁵ Besides its concerns about the implication for African countries that are not directly connected to the European migrant route and thus the geographical focus of the EUTF, the EP demands a larger focus on the needs of the recipient countries, rather than the needs of the Union.²¹⁶ Therefore, the Parliament called for more local ownership and the involvement of local authorities, civil society and international organisations in the planning, implementation and evaluation phases of the EUTF.²¹⁷ According to the EP, continuous dialogue with national authorities and local communities is essential as they are more aware of the societal deficiencies. They should therefore also be effectively participating in Operational Committees' discussions. Hence, the normative principle of social solidarity and the inclusion of civil society is more prevalent in the position of the EP, compared to the viewpoint of the Commission and the Council which pursue a smaller representation of African partners in the planning and implementation of the EUTF programmes, as they are only assigned to the role as observer.

Lastly, the Parliamentary documents mention also other normative values distinctly more often than the Commission and the Council. Whereas the Commission documents refer mainly to the more strategic goal of regional stability, the EP 'points out that trust funds must contribute to achieving the long-term objectives of ensuring peace and strengthening governance in recipient countries'.²¹⁸ Moreover, the resolution emphasises the importance of dialogue, also within the framework of the UN, and the promotion of rule of law.²¹⁹ Furthermore, the Parliament extensively comments on the issue of human rights and anti-discrimination. In the adopted resolution, it is stated that:

'[The EP] expresses grave concern at the impact which the EUTF may have on human rights, if containing migratory flows involves cooperating with countries which commit systematic and/or serious violations of

²¹³ European Parliament, 'Committee on Development: Draft Report on the EU Trust Fund for Africa: the implications for development and humanitarian aid (2015/2341(INI))', 7.

²¹⁴ European Parliament, 'European Parliament resolution of 13 September 2016 on the EU Trust Fund for Africa: the implications for development and humanitarian aid (2015/2341(INI))', 5.

²¹⁵ *Ibidem*, 5.

²¹⁶ *Ibidem*, 6-7.

²¹⁷ *Ibidem*, 5.

²¹⁸ *Ibidem*, 7.

²¹⁹ *Ibidem*, 8; The EP discourse is generally more UN focused. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are repeatedly mentioned in the documents, whereas the Commission does not refer to the SDGs at all in its Annual Reports.

fundamental rights; [the EP] asks the Commission to make sure that the Fund serves its purposes, directly helping those in need and not financing governments responsible for human rights violations.²²⁰

The Parliament sheds also considerable light on the issue of gender equality, expressing its concerns about the rights of women and girls, and their risk of becoming victim of sexual violence or exploitation.²²¹ Furthermore, the rights of LGBTI people are explicitly mentioned, whereas the Commission does not make any remarks on the position of this group.²²²

In short, normative concerns about the EUTF are prevalent in EP documents. It is clear that the Parliament is predominantly root causes-focused. Whereas the Commission and the Council emphasise the need for migration management and view the migration crisis more as a security problem, the Parliament tends to perceive the EUTF, in the light of its EDF funding, as a tool to tackle a development problem by addressing its roots:

[the EP] considers that development aid should not be used to stem the flows of migrants and asylum seekers, and that the projects covered by the EUTF should not serve as a pretext for preventing departure or tightening borders between countries while ignoring the factors that drive people from their homes.²²³

2.5. Conclusion

After analysing the documents on the establishment and policy of the EUTF by the Commission, Council and Parliament, there can be drawn clear conclusions. All three institutions make to a greater or lesser extent references to the normative principles, as articulated by Manners. They share also largely the same concerns about the implications of irregular migration for Europe. There are, however, significant differences in the justification of the EUTF by the Commission, Council and Parliament. The Council, driven by ministries of interior and foreign affairs, is distinctly more utility-based in its justification for the fund, seeing it mainly as a tool to enforce African cooperation on return and readmission via the more-for-more principle. It also puts greater emphasis on short-term actions and the integration of migration objectives in development programmes and strategies. The Parliament, on the other hand, underscores the normative principles of sustainable development and social solidarity. It expresses its concerns about the use of ODA resources for security and migration measures, and the implications for LDCs that are not covered by the EUTF. Moreover, the EP calls more explicitly for the protection of the human rights and the position of minority and disadvantaged groups. The stance of the Commission could be considered to be in between the positions of the Council and the Parliament. Although the EC justifies the EUTF largely in terms of normative values, it does contain a clear Eurocentric threat perception of irregular migration. Furthermore,

²²⁰European Parliament, 'European Parliament resolution of 13 September 2016 on the EU Trust Fund for Africa: the implications for development and humanitarian aid (2015/2341(INI))', 9.

²²¹ *Ibidem*, 7-9.

²²² *Ibidem*, 7.

²²³ *Ibidem*, 9.

as part of the aim to create a coherent and holistic external policy, the Commission's justification for the establishment and policy of the fund is based on a securitised view on migration. Lastly, it should be emphasised that there is also division within the Commission, Council and individual Member States on how the fund is justified and what it should ultimately achieve.²²⁴

²²⁴ Collett, 'EU Cooperation With Third Countries', 40-41.

3. Actions: an analysis of EUTF programme implementation

3.1. Introduction

I believe migration is exactly [an] area [in which we are all on the same side] because we are talking here about saving lives of African men, women and children. It is not an issue for Europeans only. It is a top priority for our African brothers and sisters. (...) In fighting smugglers and traffickers, in offering economic opportunities, in protecting human rights and good governance, in opening regular channels, in managing migration together we have a common agenda. High Representative Federica Mogherini in her speech on a renewed Africa-EU partnership in September 2017.²²⁵

Whereas the previous chapter focused on the normative principles articulated in the documents of the three EU institutions, this chapter will explore the second part of Manners' theory: actions. It examines how the asserted normative justifications in EU discourse relate to the programmes installed by the EUTF. After all, words can differ significantly from actual actions on the ground. Hence, it is crucial to make a comparative study on what is said and what is done. According to NPE, the actions of the EU in world politics should, just like its principles, be shaped by normative values, such as sustainable development, good governance and human rights.²²⁶

This analysis integrates the overall trends and implications of EUTF practices in the Sahel and Lake Chad region with the case studies of Niger and Nigeria. The research on the overall trends and implications is built on data from the 2016 and 2017 Annual Reports of the European Commission. In addition, it is supported by secondary academic research and NGO reports. The case studies of Niger and Nigeria, on the other hand, are based on an examination of the national and regional programmes installed in the countries. The action documents of these programmes, twenty in Niger and eleven in Nigeria, provide detailed information on the executed actions of the EUTF in the countries concerned. Niger and Nigeria have been selected as case studies due to the reciprocal distinction in the nature of the financed programmes, their importance for the EU on the issue of irregular migration and the number and diversity of the programmes installed. The programmes of the EUTF differ, to wit, significantly depending on the role of the African partner country in the migration system. Broadly defined, the African states that the EUTF targets can be divided into two types: transit countries and countries of origin. In transit countries, principally Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali and Mauritania, the EU is faced with fundamentally different challenges regarding the issue of migration than countries of origin.²²⁷ Nationals from transit countries are not likely to migrate themselves to Europe, but benefit economically from the irregular migration system. Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire,

²²⁵ European External Action Service, 'Speech by High Representative / Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the panel "Towards a renewed Africa-EU partnership" of the S&D Group Africa Week 2017' (September 27, 2017), https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/33156/speech-high-representative-vice-president-federica-mogherini-panel-towards-renewed-africa-eu_en (consulted: June 6, 2018).

²²⁶ Manners, 'The Normative Ethics of the European Union', 47.

²²⁷ European Commission, 'EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: Regions and countries', https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region_en (consulted: May 9, 2018).

Guinea, Ghana, Senegal and the Gambia are the largest migrant-sending countries.²²⁸ To cover both groups, Niger and Nigeria have been selected for an in-depth analysis of the funded programmes. Niger is the main transit country in the West and Central African migration route towards Europe.²²⁹ Subsequently, it is the foremost partner country for the EU regarding the issue of irregular migration.²³⁰ Nigeria, on the other hand, is the largest migrant-sending country of the Sahel and Lake Chad region.²³¹ An analysis of Niger and Nigeria provides insight in the extent of normative values in EU actions on the ground in the two groups they represent in a broader sense. Finally, the number of EUTF programmes in Niger and Nigeria is high enough to draw overall conclusions from. Moreover, whereas some target countries are one-sided in the themes of the programmes, Niger and Nigeria are sufficiently balanced regarding the themes of the programmes, and follow fairly the theme division of the overall Sahel and Lake Chad window.

To start with, this chapter will briefly shed light on the situation in the case study countries. Subsequently, the Annual Reports and the programme action documents of Niger and Nigeria will be analysed. The first part of the analysis will shed light on the normative values that resonate in the programmes of the EUTF. The second part focuses on the utility-based actions of the fund.

3.2. Country profiles: Niger and Nigeria

As stated earlier, Niger and Nigeria are two crucial countries for the EU regarding West-African migration to Europe. According to IOM research, sixty percent of all African migrants in Libya has travelled through Niger.²³² Niger has always been a traditional migration country, with large flows of immigration, emigration and transit through time.²³³ For many people in the city of Agadez, the main hub in the West-African route to Europe, the economy around these migration flows is the only source of income.²³⁴ Following the gradual closing of routes through Northern Mali and Mauritania, the position of Agadez and Niger in general has only been strengthened, with around 2000 migrants arriving per week in 2016.²³⁵ As a result of its crucial geographical position, Niger is a principal partner for the EU in fighting irregular migration and human trafficking. Overall, the Nigerien government has been notably willing to cooperate with Europe on the issue. In the eyes of the EU, the cooperation with Niger is ‘emblematic’ of what can be achieved with a

²²⁸ A. Parshotam, ‘Valletta 2015 to Abidjan 2017: Recent Trends in AU-EU Migration Relations’, *South African Institute of International Affairs* (2017) 2; Some countries, such as Mali are considered to be both a country of transit and of origin (European Commission, ‘EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: Mali’, <https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region/sahel-lake-chad/mali> (consulted: May 9, 2018)).

²²⁹ EUTF, ‘Création d’une Equipe Conjointe d’Investigation (ECI) pour la lutte contre les réseaux criminels liés à l’immigration irrégulière, la traite des êtres humains et le trafic des migrants’, 4.

²³⁰ European Commission, ‘EUTF Africa 2017 Annual Report’, 31.

²³¹ At the time of writing: May 9, 2018 (UNHCR, ‘Operational Portal Refugee Situations: Mediterranean Situation’ (May 9, 2018), <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean> (consulted: May 9, 2018)).

²³² EUTF, ‘Renforcement de la gestion durable des conséquences des flux migratoires’, 2.

²³³ EUTF, ‘Projet d’appui aux filières agricoles dans les régions de Tahoua et Agadez’, 3.

²³⁴ EUTF, ‘Création d’une Equipe Conjointe d’Investigation (ECI) pour la lutte contre les réseaux criminels liés à l’immigration irrégulière, la traite des êtres humains et le trafic des migrants’, 3 ; Agadez is the principal city in the African irregular migration route towards Europe, as it is the last large city before the Sahara desert that has to be crossed to reach the Mediterranean.

²³⁵ EUTF, ‘Appuyer la formation et l’insertion professionnelle des jeunes filles et garçons des régions d’Agadez et Zinder en vue de contribuer au développement socioéconomique de ses deux régions’, 3 ; EUTF, ‘Renforcement de la gestion durable des conséquences des flux migratoires’, 2.

transit country.²³⁶ With vast EU-Nigerien dialogue on the background, Niger created in 2013 'la Commission nationale de coordination de lutte contre la traite des êtres humains'. In 2015, the country presented the 'Programme de développement durable pour la prévention et la lutte contre la migration irrégulière' at the Valletta Summit, with which it tried to show its commitment to European partners.²³⁷ Niger also criminalised human smuggling in 2015, increased national police funding and strengthened cooperation with the other Sahel G5 countries on irregular migration, including the establishment of a joint patrol force in border areas.²³⁸ The importance of Niger to the EU is also illustrated by the multiple visits of EU leaders, such as Angela Merkel who visited the country in 2016, being the first German Chancellor to do so.

As the largest economy of Africa, Nigeria is a diverse country with on the one hand areas of economic development and wealth, and on the other hand parts that are confronted with conflict and natural disasters.²³⁹ The southern part of Nigeria is performing significantly better than the north-eastern part. Since 2009, the latter is facing security challenges with violent attacks of Boko Haram. These attacks have disrupted the region as a whole, affecting over 14 million people.²⁴⁰ The conflict is both the cause and the consequence of environmental degradation, with severe food insecurity and a lack of basic services. Despite recent territorial gains of the Nigerian Armed Forces, still an estimated 1,8 million people are internally displaced.²⁴¹ Besides this forced displacement, the wealthier southern region, too, is a source of irregular migration. It is estimated that one out of three migrants from Nigeria migrates to Europe.²⁴² In 2016, 20.6 percent of the migrants arriving in Italy originated from Nigeria.²⁴³ This makes it the largest migrant-sending country of Sub-Saharan Africa to the EU.²⁴⁴

3.3. Value-based concerns in EUTF actions

The first part of this analysis will shed light on the extent of normative values in EUTF programmes. It is argued that despite a substantial amount of migration management focused programmes, development and humanitarian aid prevails in the actions of the EUTF in the Sahel and Lake Chad region. Moreover, the analysis shows that many actions in Niger and Nigeria indeed pay attention to the normative values articulated by the European Commission, especially when it comes to anti-discrimination and human rights.

²³⁶ European Commission, 'Fourth Progress Report on the Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration', 3.

²³⁷ EUTF, 'Contrat relatif à la Reconstruction de l'Etat au Niger en complément du SBC II en préparation / Appui à la Justice, Sécurité et à la Gestion des Frontières au Niger', 4.

²³⁸ Ibidem, 5; European Council on Foreign Relations, 'Migration Through the Mediterranean: Mapping the EU Response', http://www.ecfr.eu/specials/mapping_migration (consulted: July 10, 2018).

²³⁹ EUTF, 'Appui à la Lutte contre la Traite des Personnes dans les pays du Golfe de Guinée', 2.

²⁴⁰ EUTF, 'Strengthening Psychosocial Support, Mental Health, Reintegration and Protection Services for children in Borno, including children associated with Boko Haram', 2.

²⁴¹ Ibidem, 2.

²⁴² Ibidem, 2.

²⁴³ EUTF, 'Appui à la Lutte contre la Traite des Personnes dans les pays du Golfe de Guinée', 2-3.

²⁴⁴ EUTF, 'Strengthening Migration Governance in Nigeria and Sustainable Reintegration of Returning Migrants', 2.

Strategic objectives of EUTF Sahel and Lake Chad programmes in 2017

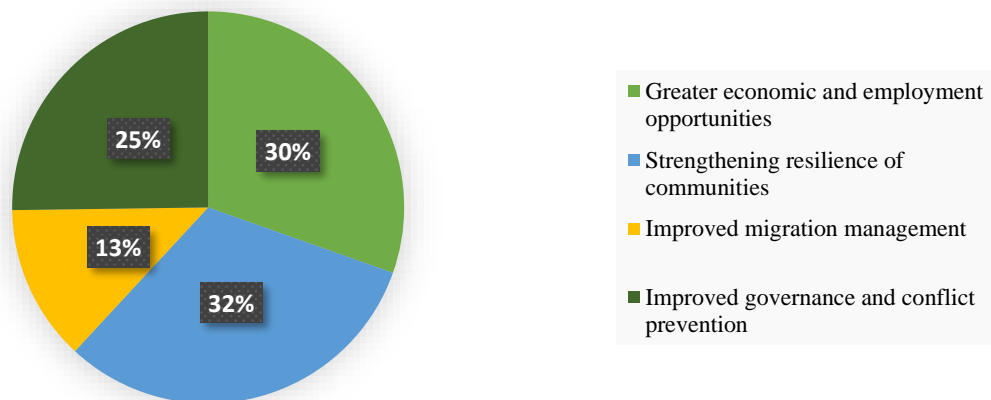


Figure 3: Strategic objectives of EUTF Sahel and Lake Chad programmes in 2017 (source: European Commission, 2018).

Prevalence of development and humanitarian programmes

The EUTF programmes are divided into four themes: (1) greater economic and employment opportunities, (2) strengthening resilience of communities, (3) improved migration management and (4) improved governance and conflict prevention. Although a considerable share of the EUTF finances utility-based migration management programmes (13%) and mixed-based governance and conflict prevention programmes (25%), the majority (62%) of the resources still goes to development-related programmes (figure 3). Greater economic and employment opportunities programmes are in practice medium- and long-term development initiatives, although still significantly shorter than traditional development aid programmes, whereas resilience strengthening programmes are essentially humanitarian aid actions to provide basic services, such as water, nutrition, healthcare and social protection.²⁴⁵ Naturally, these themes relate strongly to normative notions of sustainable development and social solidarity. It should also be emphasised that clear utility-based EUTF measures, such as the support of national police forces in African border areas to combat irregular migration, are not financed with the EDF resources.²⁴⁶ Even though these actions might not be in line with NPE, as some third country governments do not have good track records regarding democracy and human rights, it does not entail the conversion of development aid into realist security measures. Also in the case studies of Niger and Nigeria, development and humanitarian assistance programmes, shaped by ideas of social solidarity and sustainable development, form the majority. In Niger, eleven of the twenty national and regional programmes have a clear development or humanitarian nature. These programmes are mainly focused on fostering agricultural development, creating jobs for the youth, strengthen their position in society and enhancing the protection of migrants and other vulnerable groups.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵ European Commission, 'EUTF Africa 2017 Annual Report', 36.

²⁴⁶ For instance, the programmes 'Création d'une Conjointe d'Investigation (ECI) pour la lutte contre les réseaux criminels liés à l'immigration irrégulière, la traite des êtres humains et le trafic des migrants' and 'Appui à la Justice, Sécurité et à la Gestion des Frontières au Niger' are not financed with EDF resources.

²⁴⁷ An example is the resilience strengthening programme in Niger, which aims to 'améliorer les conditions de vie, la résilience des populations vulnérables et la cohésion sociale (...)' by 'améliorer l'accès des ménages et groupes

In Nigeria, six out of eleven have a development or humanitarian nature. These programmes predominantly aim to strengthen resilience in the conflict affected North East, by fostering psychosocial support for children, investing in small-scale family farming and providing basic services (box 1). It should be underscored that the division in themes is not always clear-cut. Not all migration management or security programmes are necessarily opposed to NPE. For instance, the regional programme of Erasmus+ in West Africa is covered by the migration management theme.²⁴⁸ However, this EUR 10 million initiative facilitates the exchange of African students and academic staff to Europe and is therefore not a tool to restrict irregular migration.²⁴⁹ The same goes for the programme ‘Enhancing state and community level conflict management capability in North Eastern Nigeria’, which belongs to the theme of improved governance and conflict prevention. Whereas some of the programmes that are covered by this theme are clearly focused on border control and fighting irregular migration networks, this programme intends to enhance community level reconciliation and to support the involvement of women in peace-building.²⁵⁰ The difficulties in theme allocation to programmes is discussed more in detail in the second part this chapter. But besides this grey area, it is manifest that development and humanitarian assistance programmes form the majority in the overall Sahel and Lake Chad window, as well as the case studies of Niger and Nigeria.²⁵¹

BOX 1: An example of a EUTF programme in Nigeria

EUTF programme title: EU Support to Response, Recovery and Resilience in Borno State

Theme: Strengthening resilience

Budget: EUR 20 000 000

Implementing partner: British Council

This programme seeks to strengthen community resilience, by investing in food and nutrition security in the conflict-affected North Eastern region of Nigeria. The programme aims to sustainably support rural food production by developing environmental friendly small-scale and family farming. Special attention is pointed at improving the position of women and youth, by stimulating economic opportunities in agriculture for these groups. Another objective is to improve access to basic social services, such as healthcare, water and hygiene facilities.

vulnérables aux infrastructures et services de base (eau/assainissement, santé/nutrition et éducation)’ and ‘renforcer le développement local à travers la création d’opportunités économique et le développement des capacités économiques locales’ (EUTF, ‘Projet intégré d’appui à la résilience des populations vulnérables réfugiées, déplacées, retournées et hôtes de la région de Diffa, Niger’, 8).

²⁴⁸ Erasmus+ is the EU’s programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. It is known mostly for its financial support for student exchanges within the EU and with EU partner countries (European Commission, ‘What is Erasmus+?’, http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/about_en (consulted: July 10, 2018).

²⁴⁹ EUTF, ‘Erasmus+ in West Africa’, 1.

²⁵⁰ EUTF, ‘Enhancing state and community level conflict management capability in North Eastern Nigeria’, 2; The same goes for the regional migration management programme ‘Appui à la protection des migrants les plus vulnérables en Afrique de l’Ouest’, which supports the protection of migrants by providing basic services and enhancing governance regarding the protection of vulnerable migrants. (EUTF, ‘Appui à la protection des migrants les plus vulnérables en Afrique de l’Ouest’, 5).

²⁵¹ NGO figures, too, demonstrate the dominance of development and humanitarian programmes, despite their more nuanced division (Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom?*, 19); Box 1 source: EUTF, ‘EU Support to Response, Recovery and Resilience in Borno State’, <https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/node/348> (consulted: July 13, 2018).

Normative values in EUTF programmes

The actions as formulated in the programme action documents contain explicit notions of the normative values expressed by the European Commission and the European Parliament. As argued before, many programme actions are focused on social solidarity and sustainable development. Next to these, two NPE values stand out. Firstly, the normative principle of anti-discrimination is continuously captured in the documents. The vast majority of development and humanitarian programmes in Niger and Nigeria pays special attention to the role of women and aim to enhance gender equality.²⁵² For instance, in the EUTF programme in Niger to support education and vocational trainings in order to contribute to economic development, it is stated that ‘l’intervention fera un effort particulier dans la promotion de l’égalité hommes/femmes et l’autonomisation des femmes’.²⁵³ Likewise, in Nigeria the EUTF finances a programme specially dedicated to the invest in the safety and integrity of Nigerian girls. The programme invests in trainings for adolescent girls to address gender roles and improve their literacy. Moreover, it supports behavioural change campaigns targeted at male community leaders and boys to influence social norms and practices around gender equality, in order to create a ‘supportive environment for adolescent girls to thrive’.²⁵⁴ These type of programmes fit well into NPE theory and are tools to promote normative values externally.²⁵⁵ Also in the overall EUTF, gender sensitivity is the rule rather than the exception.²⁵⁶ Secondly, as some programmes are focused on security strengthening and migration management, these do often express the need to respect human rights in the supported actions. For instance, in the document on the creation of an ‘Equipe Conjointe d’Investigation’, which supports Nigerien police forces in combatting criminal networks linked to irregular migration, one of the programme goals is to ‘développer le renforcement de la protection des Droits de l’Homme et notamment au cours du déroulement de l’enquête de police dans le cadre de la procédure pénale’.²⁵⁷ By taking into account the fairness of judicial trials, the EU underscores the NPE concept of ‘living by example’. The same applies to the EUTF regional programme to support the security governance of the Sahel G5. Whilst being a undoubtedly utility-based initiative, it does state in the primary objective that governance should be reinforced ‘tout en respectant les meilleures pratiques internationales et les standards internationaux des droits de l’homme’.²⁵⁸ In short, EUTF actions generally take into account the principles of anti-discrimination and human rights.

²⁵² Thirteen out of the total of seventeen development or humanitarian programmes in Niger and Nigeria are gender sensitive.

²⁵³ EUTF, ‘Appuyer la formation et l’insertion professionnelle des jeunes filles et garçons des régions d’Agadez et Zinder en vue de contribuer au développement socioéconomique de ses deux régions’, 7.

²⁵⁴ EUTF, ‘Investing in the Safety and Integrity of Nigerian Girls (I-SING)’, 7.

²⁵⁵ Also security related programmes pay attention to the situation of women. For instance, one programme in Nigeria supports the establishment of gender violence desks and pays grants to women’s associations (EUTF, ‘Enhancing state and community level conflict management capability in North Eastern Nigeria’, 8).

²⁵⁶ Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom?*, 20.

²⁵⁷ EUTF, ‘Création d’une Equipe Conjointe d’Investigation (ECI) pour la lutte contre les réseaux criminels liés à l’immigration irrégulière, la traite des êtres humains et le trafic des migrants’, 10.

²⁵⁸ EUTF, ‘Appui à la coopération régionale des pays du G5 Sahel et au Collège Sahélien de Sécurité’, 6.

3.4. Utility-based concerns in EUTF actions

This second part of the analysis sheds light on the strategic interests of the EU that are manifested in the actions of the EUTF. It is argued that a significant amount of programmes is shaped by utility-based concerns and that the assigning of themes to programmes is at times arbitrary, which distorts the image of the EUTF. Moreover, the way in which countries and target populations are selected, reveals clear European strategic interests, also with a lack of internal EU solidarity. Lastly, the articulated ‘do-least-harm’ principle does not fit well into the programmes in Niger, as they tend to disregard the effects on the stability of the country.

Migration management programmes

Although the largest share of the EUTF goes to development and humanitarian related programmes, still a significant amount is spent on utility-based migration management programmes. In the case Niger and Nigeria, nine national and regional programmes of this type are installed, accounting for EUR 144.5 million out of the total funding of EUR 360 million.²⁵⁹ Out of these nine, six aim to enhance migration governance by assisting, both on a policy and practical level, Sahel governments in ‘la lutte contre les réseaux criminels liés à l’immigration irrégulière, de traite des êtres humains et de trafic des migrants’.²⁶⁰ In practice, this means that EUTF actions support the creation and implementation of national and regional migration policies²⁶¹, strengthen police information systems and data on migration flows²⁶², and provide operational support to security forces with civil mandates in border areas.²⁶³ Although not all programmes are funded with EDF resources, it demonstrates the securitised policy of the EUTF that the European Council pushed for. These migration management actions are not directly pointed at stopping irregular migrants themselves, but at the criminal networks of migrant smugglers and human traffickers. On the one hand, though according to UNICEF not all migrants smugglers are malicious or criminal, it is true that these networks are causing great risks of exploitation, kidnapping and death.²⁶⁴ Therefore, the EUTF actions contribute to the protection of

²⁵⁹ The migration management programmes ‘La voix des jeunes du Sahel’, ‘Appui à la protection des migrants les plus vulnérables en Afrique de l’Ouest’ and ‘Erasmus+ in West Africa’ are excluded because of their development nature, to foster youth participation in society and to provide exchange opportunities for African students. Funds for regional programmes are also allocated to other countries than Niger and Nigeria alone. Therefore, the total amount for Niger and Nigeria is lower than MEUR 144,5. However, it is not possible to track down the resource allocation of regional programmes to specific countries.

²⁶⁰ EUTF, ‘Création d’une Equipe Conjointe d’Investigation (ECI) pour la lutte contre les réseaux criminels liés à l’immigration irrégulière, la traite des êtres humains et le trafic des migrants’, 7.

²⁶¹ It entails, amongst others, the implementation of migration related legislation, the simplification of procedures and the reinforcement of transnational cooperation. This category concerns the programmes ‘Appui à la coopération régionale des pays du G5 Sahel et au Collège Sahélien de Sécurité’ and ‘GAR-SI SAHEL (Groupes d’Action Rapides – Surveillance et Intervention au Sahel)’ (both regional). Total funding : MEUR 48,6.

²⁶² Programme concerned: ‘Support to the strengthening of police information systems in the broader West Africa region (WAPIS)’ (regional) . Total funding: MEUR 5.

²⁶³ Programmes concerned: ‘Appui à la Lutte contre la Traite des Personnes dans les pays du Golfe de Guinée’ (regional), ‘Contrat relatif à la Reconstruction de l’Etat au Niger en complément du SBC II en préparation / Appui à la Justice, Sécurité et à la Gestion des Frontières au Niger’ (national) and ‘Création d’une Equipe Conjointe d’Investigation (ECI) pour la lutte contre les réseaux criminels liés à l’immigration irrégulière, la traite des êtres humains et le trafic des migrants’ (national).

²⁶⁴ UNICEF, *In Search of Opportunities: Voices of children on the move in West and Central Africa* (Dakar 2017) 13.

migrants and prevent deaths in the desert or at sea, which is often mentioned as the goal of the programmes. In other words, it could be vindicated as normative. On the other hand, this coincides with the EU's aim to lower the numbers of arriving African migrants coming ashore, as these professional networks are for many the only way to reach Europe. Hence, the dangers for vulnerable migrants cannot be denied and their protection is crucial, but these programmes are also undoubtedly shaped by European strategic interests. Furthermore, according to researchers Alpes and Sorensen, this European focus on criminal networks is based on the misconception that the root causes of exploitative migration rest with human smugglers and traffickers. They state that 'migration brokers may exploit migrants, but they do not create migrant vulnerability in the first place.'²⁶⁵ The other three migration management focused programmes are pointed at voluntary returns and reintegration support, which are strategic goals of the Council.²⁶⁶ It includes transforming readmission governance, providing operational assistance for stranded migrants to return safely to their country of origin, and fostering economic services in migrant-sending countries for successful reintegration (box 2).²⁶⁷ Though the availability of these services is helpful for those willing to return, IOM research concludes that overall return and reintegration policy interventions do not significantly influence a migrant's decision to return. The decision to return is mainly based on the ability to work and obtain a legal status in the destination country, as well as on family conditions.²⁶⁸ Moreover, return to the country of origin

BOX 2: An example of a EUTF programme in Niger

EUTF programme title: Renforcement de la gestion et de la gouvernance des migrations et le retour durable au Niger (SURENI)

Theme: Improved migration management

Budget: EUR 15 000 000

Implementing partner: International Organisation for Migration

The objective of this programme is to reinforce migration governance in Niger and to ensure the sustainable return of irregular migrants. In total, 30.000 stranded migrants receive protection, via the construction of migration centres where migrants are registered and have access to basic services, such as food, healthcare and psychosocial support. In addition, 12.000 migrants are assisted in voluntary return to their countries of origin. This assistance consists of support in obtaining necessary travel papers and the provision of food and sleeping accommodation en route. Voluntary return happens generally by bus; for vulnerable migrants, return by plane is possible. Lastly, 40.000 migrants are reached with awareness raising campaigns on the risks of irregular migration. This is carried out by community mobilisers who provide information and advice, in particular at bus stations. There, they are offered the option of voluntary return.

²⁶⁵ M. Alpes and N. Sorensen, 'Migration risks campaigns are based on wrong assumptions', *Danish Institute for International Studies* (2015) 1.

²⁶⁶ Programmes concerned: 'Renforcement de la gestion et de la gouvernance des migrations et le retour durable au Niger (SURENI)', 'Migrant Resource and Response Mechanism (MRRM) Phase II' and 'Strengthening Migration Governance in Nigeria and Sustainable Reintegration of Returning Migrants' (all national).

²⁶⁷ Source Box 2: EUTF, 'Renforcement de la gestion et de la gouvernance des migrations et le retour durable au Niger (SURENI)', <https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/node/84> (consulted: July 13, 2018).

²⁶⁸ K. Koser and K. Kuschminder, *Comparative Research on the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Migrants* (Geneva 2015) 9.

is often perceived as a personal failure. It would be the result of the laziness or the bad behaviour of the migrant him- or herself.²⁶⁹ Next to these reactive actions, the programmes also enhance preventive measures, such as information points in migratory areas and awareness raising campaigns on the dangers of irregular migration and the legal alternatives to it. But with only few regular migration channels and a target population that is actually aware of the dangers but feels already disadvantaged in the country of origin anyway, these information campaigns demonstrate little success in restraining migration.²⁷⁰ In fact, migrants themselves are aware of the self-centred concerns of the EU. Therefore, information on the dangers of irregular migration is often distrusted as it is perceived solely as an aim to prevent migration: ‘Why trust negative and discouraging information from people who are visibly much better off than themselves?’²⁷¹

Arbitrary theme division

As stated earlier, the allocation of themes to programmes is proven to be sometimes problematic. The main difficulty relates to the theme of improved governance and conflict prevention. After all, the distinction between security, governance and migration is vague. They are all interconnected, which makes it difficult to attribute a programme to the rightful theme. According to research of Oxfam, programmes have been arbitrarily attributed to themes. Sometimes, EUTF programmes that address more than one theme or priority have been subsequently ascribed to the most normative one.²⁷² In the end, this would lead to an overrepresentation of improved governance and conflict prevention, whilst the amount of migration management programmes is underestimated.²⁷³ According to Oxfam, migration management related programmes would account for 25% of the total actions in the Sahel and Lake Chad region.²⁷⁴ This percentage, which is almost double as high as the European Commission articulates in its Annual Report, results from the conversion of improved governance and conflict prevention programmes into migration management ones. Also in the case studies of Niger and Nigeria, the theme allocation could be called into question. For instance, the programme that supports the strengthening of police information systems is assigned to theme of improved governance and conflict prevention. Whilst articulating the aim of fighting terrorism and organised crime, the document repeatedly connects this to migrant smuggling and trafficking of human beings.²⁷⁵ It is clear that the objective of fostering the management of police data in the West African region is strongly related to combatting irregular migration, rather than the promotion of conflict prevention and the addressing of human rights abuses, as stated in the description of the theme.²⁷⁶ The same goes for the programme ‘Appui à la Justice, Sécurité et à la Gestion des Frontières au Niger’ which is

²⁶⁹ Alpes and Sorensen, ‘Migration risks campaigns are based on wrong assumptions’, 3.

²⁷⁰ *Ibidem*, 1-2.

²⁷¹ *Ibidem*, 3.

²⁷² Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom?*, 13; Critics also argue that the EC sometimes first identifies a migration management activity and then retroactively seeks a development rationale for it (Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 15).

²⁷³ *Ibidem*, 13.

²⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, 19.

²⁷⁵ EUTF, ‘Support to the strengthening of police information systems in the broader West Africa region (WAPIS)’, 1-2.

²⁷⁶ *Ibidem*, 1.

also awarded to the theme of improved governance and conflict prevention, rather than migration management. As one of its intended results is that ‘le dispositif de gestion des frontières et la coopération opérationnelle transfrontalière interservices sont renforcés’, this programme has, besides its aim for security improvement, a clear migration management objective.²⁷⁷²⁷⁸ Hence, in the securitised EUTF policy the aim to strengthen security coincides with the utility-based concern of stopping irregular migration to Europe. These improved governance and conflict prevention programmes do not always fit well into NPE norms such as good governance, which is more focused on supporting democratic reforms and reinforcing rule of law for the sake of the country itself. Nonetheless, the arbitrary theme division does not affect the amount of development and humanitarian programmes, as the percentage of development programmes of Oxfam corresponds with the figures of the EC.²⁷⁹ Again, this underscores that the arbitrary theme division affects principally the theme of improved governance and conflict prevention. In other words, it does not occur that migration management related programmes are unjustly assigned to the themes of greater economic opportunities or strengthening resilience of communities. Hence, in the end the majority of the EUTF funds still goes to traditional development and humanitarian aid.

Utility-based targeting and EU internal self-interest

Next to the significant amount of migration management programmes, which aim both to protect vulnerable migrants and to encourage their return, an analysis of the funding distribution in the region reveals utility-based targeting and self-interests among EU Member States. Countries are selected on the basis of their role in the African irregular migration route towards Europe, rather than the identified needs of the African states themselves. For instance, Ghana, Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire were added to the EUTF in a later stadium because of their ‘challenges relating to irregular migration.’²⁸⁰ At the same time, countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone and Benin are excluded from EUTF funding, even though they are amongst the poorest nations in the world.²⁸¹ Major migrant-sending states are actually amongst the most stable countries or with relatively well performing economies, which corresponds with the theory that people with sufficient schooling and financial support are more likely to migrate towards Europe, rather than the poorest.²⁸² The allocation of programmes to countries reveals the contradiction in EU policy. For instance, Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire are amongst the countries with the highest emigration rates in Sub-Saharan Africa. Following these objective data, the irregular migration from Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire to Europe should be addressed.

²⁷⁷ EUTF, ‘Contrat relatif à la Reconstruction de l’Etat au Niger en complément du SBC II en préparation / Appui à la Justice, Sécurité et à la Gestion des Frontières au Niger’, 15.

²⁷⁸ The same goes for the conflict prevention GAR-SI SAHEL programme, which aims to ‘renforcer le contrôle des frontières clés’ (EUTF, ‘GAR-SI SAHEL (Groupes d’Action Rapides – Surveillance et Intervention au Sahel)’, 2).

²⁷⁹ Oxfam, *An Emergency for Whom?*, 19.

²⁸⁰ European Commission, ‘EUTF Africa 2016 Annual Report’, 7.

²⁸¹ UNDP, ‘Human Development Index 2017’, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI> (consulted: May 10, 2018); It should be emphasised that the EUTF exists next to traditional EU development assistance. This means that Liberia, Sierra Leone and Benin do receive funding for development and humanitarian assistance programme, but not in the framework of the EUTF.

²⁸² UNICEF, *In Search of Opportunities*, 3; Ghana, Ivory Coast and Senegal are relatively stable countries with high growth potential, compared to countries like Chad and Mali. Nigeria is less stable but still the largest economy of Africa with considerable economic growth rates, especially in the South.

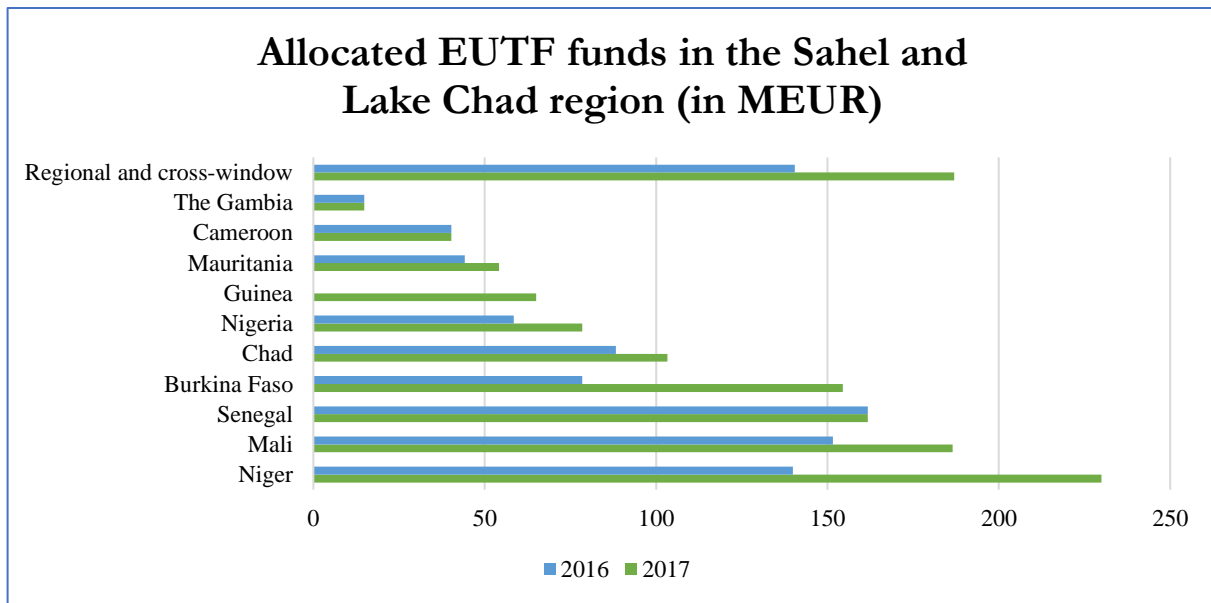


Figure 4: Allocated EUTF funds in the Sahel and Lake Chad region (source: European Commission, 2017 and 2018).

However, these countries perform in terms of economy and political stability relatively well. There is, therefore, no need for implementing resilience strengthening programmes or fostering the business environment. As a result, the EUTF does not have any national programme installed in these major migrant-sending countries. In other words, the high emigration rates in important countries of origin remain largely unaddressed. The same goes for the case study of Nigeria. The majority of the programmes is focused on humanitarian and development assistance in the poor and instable North Eastern region of Nigeria. At the same time, the EUTF has only one national programme that aims to retain irregular migration to Europe and foster sustainable return of Nigerian migrants. This programme is pointed at the wealthier southern cities of Lagos and Edo, which are the principal migrant-sending areas.²⁸³ Also in this case, the programme does not seek to promote economic opportunities or to strengthen resilience, as the southern region of Nigeria performs relatively well. Instead, the programme just aims to discourage irregular migration by providing information on the risks involved and to support the reintegration of returning migrants. In short, the Commission has evidently difficulties with responding to high emigration rates in migrant-sending countries.

Consequently, the EUTF targets predominantly hub countries on the African irregular migration route. Figure 4 demonstrates that transit countries Niger, Mali, Chad and Burkina Faso receive far more EUTF resources than countries of origin. For instance, Niger receives twice as much EUTF funding as Nigeria, even though Nigeria's population is nine times larger. Taking into account that programmes in countries of origin are more development focused, as they would aim to take away the root causes of migration by promoting economic growth and resilience, and transit countries are more targeted with migration management measures such as advanced border management, it is clear that the EUTF is more concerned about utility-based migration retainment in the hub countries. The figure demonstrates too that

²⁸³ EUTF, 'Strengthening Migration Governance in Nigeria and Sustainable Reintegration of Returning Migrants', 1.

the importance of transit countries for the Commission has only increased over 2017, as Niger and Burkina Faso have seen their allocated funds rising. In the case of Niger, EUR 137 million is spent on programmes that support economic opportunities, of which all are targeted at the regions of Agadez, Tahoua and Zinder; the main migration hubs in the country. With these programmes, the Commission hopes to substitute the lucrative irregular migration economy by providing alternative jobs.

Not only is the geographical focus of the programmes utility-based, but also the targeted groups of the programmes reveal EU strategic concerns. Protection and resilience initiatives are pointed at persons related to the migration system: refugees, migrants and potential migrants. Almost all programmes have, besides a gender-sensitive approach, a focus on youth, as they are most likely to leave their country for a better future elsewhere. Although refugees, stranded migrants and youth are indeed vulnerable groups, this approach disregards the need of people that are not directly connected to irregular migration. In addition, the Commission's efforts for legal mobility and migration opportunities are, also in 2017, still meagre.²⁸⁴ The EUR 10 million Erasmus+ programme for 2.200 West African students and academic staff is still very modest compared to the EUR 2.27 billion European Erasmus+ budget for 725.000 mobilities in 2016 alone.²⁸⁵ This calls into question the claimed equality in partnership, as African leaders have repeatedly underscored the value that they attach to this issue.²⁸⁶ Power inequality between the EU and third countries is demonstrated too by the little amount of African implementing partners. Only 5 percent of the EUTF programmes are implemented by partner countries, even though African governments have reportedly proposed programmes to the Commission.²⁸⁷ Also within the EU, national utility-based interests of individual Member States remain present. Member States mainly finance and implement EUTF programmes in the countries that are relevant for their own strategic objectives. According to Geert Laporte, deputy director of the European Centre for Development Policy Management, Member States continue to prefer giving their development funding bilaterally with countries of their interest, despite the Commission's aim for a joint strategy.²⁸⁸ For instance, France was in 2016 with EUR 211 million worth of programmes by far the largest implementing Member State in the Sahel and Lake Chad region, which implies a confirmation of the France's strategic ties with its ex-colonies.²⁸⁹²⁹⁰ Likewise, as the main countries of arrival, Spain and Italy have substantially more interests in combatting the irregular migration influx in transit countries. Therefore,

²⁸⁴ According to the EC, it accounted for 6% of the total in 2016. Oxfam calculated 3%. In 2017, legal mobility was reinforced with the allocation of MEUR 10 to the West African Erasmus+ programme (European Commission, 'EUTF Africa 2017 Annual Report', 80).

²⁸⁵ European Commission, 'Erasmus+ Annual Report 2016', 5.

²⁸⁶ Parshotam, 'Valletta 2015 to Abidjan 2017', 3.

²⁸⁷ European Commission, 'EUTF Africa 2017 Annual Report', 19; Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 14.

²⁸⁸ Translated from Dutch: Stockmans, 'Migratiekoord EU-Afrika', <https://www.mo.be/analyse/partnerschap-met-afrika-om-migratie-te-perken-de-afrikanen-hebben-zich-laten-rollen-door-de> (consulted: May 11, 2018).

²⁸⁹ Whilst being the largest implementing partner, France made in 2016 an individual contribution of only EUR 3 million, which is the minimal amount required for a vote in the decision-making process (P. Stockmans, 'Migratiekoord EU-Afrika: De Afrikanen hebben zich laten rollen door de EU' (September 1, 2017), <https://www.mo.be/analyse/partnerschap-met-afrika-om-migratie-te-perken-de-afrikanen-hebben-zich-laten-rollen-door-de> (consulted: May 11, 2018)).

²⁹⁰ Concord, *Partnership or Conditionality?*, 22.

its large contributions are mainly focused on migration management and return related programmes in Niger and Libya, rather than resilience projects in countries of origin.²⁹¹

Resulting from the utility-based EUTF actions on the ground, the fund faced extensive criticism, mainly from development NGOs. The recently published 2017 Annual Report makes it possible to examine this critique in the light of new data on EUTF practices. Consequently, two critical remarks are refuted to some extent. Firstly, critics expected a rise in migration management related programmes in 2017.²⁹² However, this has not occurred. On the contrary, the share of migration management and improved governance programmes actually decreased with 8% over 2017, in favour of resilience strengthening and economic opportunities programmes.²⁹³ Secondly, the degree of African involvement in the decision-making and implementation process remains a matter of discussion. By all means, African ownership is significantly more constrained in the EUTF framework than in traditional EU development assistance. However, the fact that the EC is not legally required to consult its African partners, does not mean that this does not happen in practice.²⁹⁴ Research on EUTF actions shows that the degree of a shared vision and African involvement in programmes in the Sahel and Lake Chad region is relatively high, especially in the operational phase.²⁹⁵ Furthermore, the number of African implementing partners has modestly increased over 2017.²⁹⁶ It should also be underscored that the African Union, on its turn, fails to establish a common African position on migration in relation with the EU, due to competing regional and national interests.²⁹⁷

Disregard of conflict sensitivity

Lastly, there will be shed light on the conflict sensitivity of the EUTF programmes and the ‘doing-least-harm’ principle of the NPE theory. According to the latter, the EU should take into account the consequences of its actions in third countries. Looking more closely at the case study of Niger, however, this conflict sensitive approach seems to be disregarded.

It is estimated that before the strict anti-human smuggling policy of the Nigerien government, more than half of all households in Agadez profited from the irregular migration flow.²⁹⁸ As irregular migration is such an important source of income for many people in the Agadez region, the EUTF pursues a twofold strategy. On the one hand, it seeks to end migrant smuggling and human trafficking. This is done through legislative reform by the Nigerien government and the reinforcement of police and other civilian security forces. On the other hand, the EUTF aims to create alternative economic opportunities so that people in

²⁹¹ European Commission, ‘EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: Niger’, <https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region/sahel-lake-chad/niger> (consulted: May 11, 2018).

²⁹² Barana, ‘The EU Trust Fund for Africa and the Perils of a Securitized Migration Policy’, 3.

²⁹³ European Commission, ‘EUTF Africa 2016 Annual Report’, 13; European Commission, ‘EUTF Africa 2017 Annual Report’, 15.

²⁹⁴ According to the European Commission, ‘partner countries and relevant regional organisations contribute very actively to the decision-making process through their participation in meetings of the Board and of the Operational Committees and in policy discussions leading to the approval of programmes’ (European Commission, ‘EUTF Africa 2017 Annual Report’, 21).

²⁹⁵ Castillejo, *The European Union Trust Fund for Africa*, 13.

²⁹⁶ European Commission, ‘EUTF Africa 2017 Annual Report’, 19.

²⁹⁷ Parshotam, ‘Valletta 2015 to Abidjan 2017’, 3.

²⁹⁸ Clingendael Institute, *Migration and Markets in Agadez: Economic alternatives to the migration industry* (The Hague 2017) 4.

this region no longer depend on the ‘smuggling industry’. Although this rationale can be considered ‘being reasonable’, on the ground it is facing serious challenges. EUTF programme action documents report that the strict anti-irregular migration policy of the Nigerien government, resulting from EU pressure under the Partnership Framework on Migration²⁹⁹, runs the risk of causing instability in the country and the region as a whole, as ‘les mesures répressive engagées par le gouvernement nigérien entraînent également une certaine frustration des jeunes de cette région, qui pensent que ces mesures ont été prises à leur encontre.’³⁰⁰ Since the implementation of the anti-human smuggling law in 2016, convicted smugglers can receive prison sentences up to ten years.³⁰¹ In the meanwhile, it takes time for the EUTF programmes to deliver alternative economic opportunities. According to international relations research institute Clingendael, the EU support for the restrictive Nigerien policy has ‘robbed large parts of the population of an important source of income’ and ‘exacerbated feelings of marginalisation, tensions between groups and mistrust vis-à-vis state authorities.’³⁰² Although the actions of the EUTF in Niger aim to create job opportunities in alternative sectors, it is stated in one EUTF programme action document that because jobs connected to irregular migration are relatively well-paid, ‘les propositions d’activités rémunératrices à un niveau comparables seront sans doute difficiles à trouver.’³⁰³ In other words, the development programmes of the EUTF seem to be insufficient to address the destabilising effects of the EU’s migration policy in Niger.

The ‘doing-least-harm’ principle is also negatively affected by European misconceptions about the irregular migration economy and inconsistency between policies of EU Member States. The EU perceives the smuggling industry as mainly limited to criminal networks, but in fact the economic system around irregular migration is closely interwoven with state authorities and national armed forces.³⁰⁴ Clingendael research shows that ‘political elites (...) use the financial resources earned through the facilitation of irregular migration to buy political favours or influence.’³⁰⁵ In addition to the dependency of political leaders on economic networks that are deeply intertwined with the smuggling industry, the Nigerien army is earning a significant amount of money by charging passing migrants along the foremost smuggling routes.³⁰⁶ In a country with several coups d’état in the past, depriving the armed forces of this source of income could

²⁹⁹ The Partnership on Migration was launched in 2016 and aims to enforce third country cooperation and management on the issue of migration, as well as to establish a more coherent approach of EU actions. A substantial part of its actions is funded by the EUTF (Clingendael Institute, *Turning the tide: the politics of irregular migration in the Sabel and Libya* (The Hague 2017) 12).

³⁰⁰ EUTF, Plan d’Actions à Impact Economique Rapide à Agadez (PAIERA)’, 4-5.

³⁰¹ I. Diallo, ‘La stratégie de l’UE freine le flux migratoire au Niger, mais à quel prix?’ (February 2, 2017), <https://www.irinnews.org/special-report/2017/02/02/eu-strategy-stems-migrant-flow-niger-what-cost> (consulted: June 1, 2018).

³⁰² Clingendael Institute, *Migration and Markets in Agadez*, 3.

³⁰³ EUTF, ‘Création d’une Equipe Conjointe d’Investigation (ECI) pour la lutte contre les réseaux criminels liés à l’immigration irrégulière, la traite des êtres humains et le trafic des migrants’, 3-4 ; A vehicle driver that transports migrants would make between EUR 3000 and EUR 4000 a month (EUTF, ‘Création d’une Equipe Conjointe d’Investigation (ECI) pour la lutte contre les réseaux criminels liés à l’immigration irrégulière, la traite des êtres humains et le trafic des migrants’, 3).

³⁰⁴ Clingendael Institute, *Turning the tide*, 2-3.

³⁰⁵ Ibidem, 2-3.

³⁰⁶ L. Raineri, ‘Human smuggling across Niger’, 80.

have major destabilising effects.³⁰⁷ Democratic elected officials are still relatively weak compared to the security forces that profit from the perpetuation of irregular migration.³⁰⁸ This demonstrates, too, the seemingly incompatibility of the European goals in Niger. On the one hand, the EU wants to combat irregular migration to Europe, most fiercely supported by arrival countries Italy and Spain. On the other hand, the EU wants to secure regional stability and fight terrorism, in which Niger, as a relatively stable country compared to its neighbours, is a crucial and reliable partner. This objective is mainly supported by France.³⁰⁹ As stated by International Relations and Security Studies researcher Luca Raineri: ‘(...) the preservation of national and regional stability is very much linked to the perpetuation of the regime, which, in turn, is linked to the perpetuation of trafficking, too. The two objectives can hardly stand together.’³¹⁰ In short, with the security and migration management programmes that lack a conflict sensitive approach, the development programmes that seem to be insufficient to cover the local disadvantages of dismantling the smuggling industry, and EU policy misconceptions and internal policy inconsistency, the EUTF actions largely disregard the NPE doing-least-harm principle in the case of Niger.

3.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, the EUTF actions have been analysed in the light of the principles of Manners’ theory. It can be concluded that, despite a sometimes arbitrary theme allocation, programmes in the Sahel and Lake Chad region are predominantly development-focused. The development and humanitarian aid programmes are shaped by normative values articulated by the Commission and the Parliament, such as social solidarity and sustainable development. In addition, the bulk of the EUTF programmes takes into account the principles of anti-discrimination and respect for human rights. Moreover, the share of development programmes has only increased over 2017 and it cannot be concluded that African partner states are plainly ignored in the formation and implementation process. However, whilst development programmes are normative in their nature, the geographical focus and target groups reveal the EU’s utility-based concerns; only countries and people related to the irregular migration route benefit from interventions. In terms of funding allocation, transit countries are assigned the most, which underscores the EUTF’s focus on restraining irregular migration in hub regions. In addition, self-interests of EU Member State remain present in the EUTF. Programmes are funded and implemented according to national interests which appear to be conflicting, as the case study of Niger demonstrates. Concerning migration management and security programmes, which are often not funded by EDF resources, the EU aims to prevent exploitation and death of migrants by combatting criminal smuggling networks. This can be vindicated as normative based. However, it also undoubtedly coincides with the EU’s aim to keep African migrants from coming to Europe.

³⁰⁷ L. Raineri and N. Howard, ‘Human smuggling: the pride of Niger’s economy’ (August 30, 2017), <https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/neil-howard-luca-raineri/human-smuggling-pride-of-nigers-economy> (consulted: June 2, 2018).

³⁰⁸ Raineri, ‘Human smuggling across Niger’, 80.

³⁰⁹ Raineri, ‘Human smuggling: the pride of Niger’s economy’ (August 30, 2017), <https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/neil-howard-luca-raineri/human-smuggling-pride-of-nigers-economy> (consulted: June 2, 2018).

³¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

Additionally, EUTF programmes support return and reintegration and the enhancement of inter-African cooperation on migration which reflects the strategic goals of the Council. These obviously utility-based programmes are in sharp contrast with the very modest amount of EUTF programmes dedicated to regular migration. Yet, not all migration management programmes are coercive in their actions. Lastly, in the case study of Niger it is clear that a conflict sensitive approach is lacking. The anti-smuggling policies of the Nigerien government have disrupted the local economy, which on its turn puts the national stability at risk, whilst EUTF development programmes cannot rapidly enough provide alternative sources of income to turn the tide.

Conclusion: is the EU being reasonable?

'We will honour this [Nobel peace] prize and we will preserve what has been achieved. It is in the common interest of our citizens. And it will allow Europe to contribute in shaping that 'better organised world' in line with the values of freedom, democracy, human rights and rule of law that we cherish and believe in. (...) The last 60 years have shown that Europe can unite in peace. Over the next 60 years, Europe must lead the global quest for peace.' European Commission President José Manuel Barroso after the EU received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012.³¹¹

This master thesis assessed the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa on value- and utility-based concerns and justifications, both on EU policy-making level and on the ground in the Sahel and Lake Chad region. The analysis has been structured around the following research question: *How does the European Union justify the establishment and policy of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa in terms of value- and utility-based concerns, and how does this relate to its actions in the Sahel and Lake Chad region?* The EUTF has been established to combat a perceived threat to Europe: African irregular migration. Hence, there is no doubt about the utility-based intention of the fund. This research concludes, however, that whilst being an utility-based instrument, the justification for the establishment and policy of the EUTF and the actions carried out in the Sahel and Lake Chad region contain a considerable amount of normative elements.

The first part of the analysis focused on the justification of the EUTF in documents from the three EU institutions. The European Commission justifies the EUTF establishment and policy both in terms of utility- and value-based concerns, although the value-based concerns dominate the discourse. The self-centred concerns of the Commission are visible in its Eurocentric threat perception of irregular migration. Whilst emphasising the common interest for Europe and Africa, the fund is evidently justified as a measure to tackle a problem for Europe. This is largely the result of the securitisation of migration and the Commission's aim to create a more coherent EU external policy. The latter means that the EUTF needs to operate in a security-focused framework, together with for instance CSDP missions. In EC documents, irregular migration is often linked to transnational crime and terrorism. But despite these clear utility-based justifications, normative values are explicitly articulated throughout the communication of the Commission. The three norms that emerge most strongly in the documents are sustainable development, social solidarity and good governance. The severe situation in the Sahel and Lake Chad region that drives people from their homes forms the basis of all EC documents. Concerns about economic distress, a lack of access to basic services and inequality between societal groups dominate. The Commission appeals to the norm of social solidarity in its remarks on the risk of death for vulnerable migrants, aiming with this fund to save lives at sea and in the desert. In its documents, the EC shows also strong commitment to good governance as a way to prevent conflicts, address human rights abuses and enforce rule of law. In their view, support of good governance in African states is indispensable to achieve peaceful and inclusive societies. This would,

³¹¹ The Guardian, 'EU receives Nobel peace prize' (December 10, 2012), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/dec/10/eu-receives-nobel-peace-prize> (consulted: March 24, 2018).

in the end, be the sustainable solution to irregular migration; reducing push factors. In reaching these goals, the Commission continuously expresses the value it attaches to dialogue and multilateralism.

The Council of the European Union, driven by ministries of interior and foreign affairs, is distinctly more utility-based in its justification. It sees the EUTF to a large extent as a pull factors reducing instrument. The self-centred concerns of the Council are visible in its aim to use the EUTF as leverage for African cooperation on return and readmission. The Council welcomes the incorporation of utility-based migration purposes in development aid, as is the case in the EUTF. It also calls for aid conditionality, in which African states that are more cooperative on the EU's demands for enhanced border control and return of rejected nationals receive more EUTF funding. Concerning normative values, the Council appeals to the same NPE norms as the Commission. However, normative notions are remarkably less present in Council documents.

The European Parliament, on the contrary, is distinctly more value-based in its remarks on the policy of the EUTF, compared to the Commission and the Council. Besides its support for the three articulated norms in the Commission's discourse, sustainable development, social solidarity and good governance, it explicitly draws attention to human rights and anti-discrimination. The Parliament expresses its concerns about the use of EDF resources for utility-based purposes and the exclusion of LDCs. Equally important, it calls into question the cooperation with African governments that are responsible for human rights violations. Moreover, it underscores the need to protect disadvantaged and minority groups, such as women and LGBTI people. In contrast to the Council, the Parliament sees irregular migration mainly as a development problem that needs to be addressed by reducing push factors, with respect for normative values.

The second part of the analysis focused on the EUTF actions carried out in the Sahel and Lake Chad region, and how these relate to NPE values and the discourse in EU documents. The EU's utility-based concerns are visible in the nature of some of its programmes. A substantial share of the fund is assigned to programmes with utility-based purposes, such as programmes to support effective return of migrants, to enhance the implementation of new migration policies by African states, and to strengthen security forces with a civil mandates. Furthermore, the allocation of EUTF programmes is based on self-centred concerns. Only countries and populations with links to irregular migration towards Europe are targeted with the fund's programmes. Additionally, in the case of Niger the EUTF's programmes are insufficient to outweigh the disadvantageous effects of the EU's strict migration policies in the Partnership Framework. In doing so, the EU disregards its doing-least-harm principle. Nonetheless, the presence of normative concerns in EUTF programmes is still considerable. The fund's actions in the Sahel and Lake Chad region, and more specifically in Niger and Nigeria, appeal in particular to sustainable development, social solidarity, anti-discrimination and human rights. The majority of EUTF resources is assigned to programmes with a development or humanitarian nature, despite a sometimes arbitrary theme division. It should also be underscored that more realist security-focused programmes are not funded with EDF sources. The majority of the EUTF programmes aims to provide alternative jobs for youth or to support access to basic services. Moreover, not all migration management programmes are necessarily coercive, although their intention is utility-based. Furthermore, the vast majority of the programmes installed draw

attention to the disadvantaged position of women and aim to enhance gender equality. Additionally, realist security-focused programmes do make explicit remarks on the need to respect human rights and fair judicial trials for criminal migration networks.

In short, for an instrument with a utility-based objective, the actions of the EUTF still demonstrate a considerable extent of normative value-based concerns. The normative justifications in Commission documents correspond with the majority of the EUTF programmes. Although a significant number of security-focused actions of the fund is definitely less normative than the Commission discourse on the establishment of the fund suggests, it cannot be concluded that there exists an objectionably large gap between rhetoric and action. Both are clearly utility-based in their intentions, but still include a considerable amount of normative elements. Of course, further research should examine the long term impact of EUTF actions, as eventual outcomes can differ from its initial intentions. With these conclusions, this research joins Scheipers and Sicurelli in their argument that the EU, and especially the Commission, uses the concept of normative power to define its identity.³¹² This master thesis also confirms the outcomes in earlier academic works on the securitisation of EU development policy, that would be a result of the EU's aim to create coherence in its external policy instruments. Furthermore, the individual analysis of the three EU institutions has proven to be valuable, as there exist large differences between the Commission, the Council and the Parliament. The difference in viewpoints and reasoning between and within the institutions supports Sicurelli in her argument that the EU's diversity makes it difficult to draw unequivocal conclusions on the nature of its power.

But the question remains whether the EU, by establishing the EUTF, can (still) be considered an effective normative power. If so, it would have to act predominantly, though not exclusively, according to Manners' nine norms.³¹³ On the one hand, the EUTF is used as a coercive instrument to enforce African cooperation on migration issues. Changes in third states' policies are achieved through aid conditionality, rather than NPE's power of attraction. Development programmes are installed with the reasoning that, besides the partner country involved, ultimately the EU itself benefits from them. Moreover, European misconceptions about the irregular migration economy have harming effects on third countries, which cannot be compensated by its development programmes. On the other hand, in his article on NPE and the security challenge, Manners calls upon the EU to combat the root causes of security risks. It could be argued that this is essentially what the EUTF has been established for. Aiming to stop irregular migration to Europe by addressing underlying development and security issues in Africa does appeal to norms of solidarity, sustainable development and even peace. Especially in the light of the more coercive Migration Partnerships between the EU and African states, the EUTF could be considered a normative instrument that supplements an overall utility-based EU approach on migration. Moreover, exerting power in normative way is not the equivalent of altruism, free of any self-interest. Norms and interests are not mutually

³¹² Scheipers, S., and D. Sicurelli, 'Empowering Africa: Normative Power in EU-Africa Relations', *Journal of European Public Policy* 15 (2008) 4, 607-623.

³¹³ Schaik and Schunz, 'Explaining EU Activism and Impact in Global Climate Politics', 172.

exclusive.³¹⁴ This means that EU policy can be affected by self-centred interests, whilst retaining its overall normative guidance. In the case of the EUTF, the EU can both aim to foster normative values of sustainable development and good governance, as well as supporting its own strategic objective of stemming irregular migration flows. It is clear that the EU has made a consideration between normative values and utility-based interests. The diversity in viewpoints and institutions has resulted in a somewhat mixed instrument: an EDF financed utility-based fund with considerable normative elements. This corresponds with conclusions in academic works of Sicurelli and Bountagkidis, Fragkos and Frangos. By taking both value- and utility-based concerns into account, the EUTF could indeed be viewed as 'being reasonable'. Especially as NGO critics of the fund, on their turn, provide little alternatives that would satisfy the European public or show effective results on the short term.

Reconsidering Normative Power Europe, the largest deficiency of Manners' theory lies in its inability to explain the clash between norms that come together in the establishment of the EUTF. Ultimately, the core reason to create the EUTF is that the European electorate demands a reduction of irregular migrants to Europe. This explains the more utility-based stance of the Council, as Member States ministries of interior need to take into account the wish of their voters for stricter migration policies. Hence, it is the normative value of democracy that makes EU policy drift towards utility-based measures that seem incompatible with NPE theory. This raises questions on where normative power ultimately comes from. The EUTF shows that foreign policy is not solely based on the values that are captured in its institutional set-up and historical treaties. The current normalisation of the externalisation of European borders results from a democratic process within the EU. In other words, the establishment of the EUTF shows that normative values are not naturally embedded in the DNA of the European Union. Rather, norms can be contradictory and are contested in the political arena of Member States. The academic discussion should focus on this crucial deficit in NPE theory. To look into newly proposed alternative concepts, such as Wolfgang Wagner's Liberal Power Europe, can provide valuable insights.³¹⁵ Additionally, the debate on NPE and development cooperation should be centred around the question whether a European security-based development instrument can still be in harmony with the theoretical framework of NPE. Manners himself sees the incorporation of security-based objectives as a threat to Europe's progressive distinctiveness.³¹⁶ Yet, in the light of an increasingly strict European stance on migration, the question is whether it is possible to combine normative considerations with self-centred purposes in EU development policy, while persevering a normative nature. And to put the discussion more broadly, is it realistic or even desirable for the EU to base its development policy solely on normative values? What the analysis of the EUTF shows is that the often presumed dichotomy between norms- and interests-based external policy is not always clear-cut.

The executed analysis of EU justifications for the establishment and policy of the EUTF and its actions on the ground can never provide the full image as it is based solely on written documents.

³¹⁴ Ibidem, 178.

³¹⁵ W. Wagner, 'Liberal Power Europe', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 55 (2017) 6, 1398-1414.

³¹⁶ Manners, 'European Union 'Normative Power' and the Security Challenge', 412.

Commission and Council documents do not provide insight in the discussions prior to the ultimate writing. They do not show the interaction between EU officials and Member States behind close doors. This limits the ability to obtain full insight in the considerations between norms and interests. The same goes for the EUTF programme action documents. The description of what is intended to be done does not fully cover how actions are carried out in practice. Further research should focus on these aspects. Additionally, the long-term impact of the EUTF programmes should be examined. Concerning the research on the argued distinctive nature of the EU in world politics, it would be enriching to make a comparative study on how other high income countries, such as the United States and Australia, deal with irregular migration. Weighing the EU's response to irregular migration against the policies of other world powers dealing with the same phenomenon would make a valuable contribution.

This master thesis did not only examine the values versus interests debate in EU development policy, but it also shed light on the complexity of irregular migration and political dynamics. Irregular migration is a subject that divides continents, EU institutions, Member States and societies. However, to end with a quote in a UNICEF document on West-African migration towards Europe: 'the desire to be safe with our families, to see our children grow up healthy, strong and educated, and to afford the next generation more opportunities than we have, are universal aspirations that bind us together as human beings.'³¹⁷

³¹⁷ UNICEF, *In Search of Opportunities*, 2.

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