



**From the War in Ukraine to an Ever-Closer Union?  
German Foreign Policy as a Case Study on the  
Integratory Force of Crises within the European Union**

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## **Abstract**

This study analyses the integratory effect of crises on EU foreign policy, utilizing Germany and the war in Ukraine of 2022 as a case study. The underlying logic stemming from the EU crisis literature is that crises are a driving force for European integration. To investigate this issue for the EU Member State Germany, quantitative tools of sentiment analysis and topic modelling are employed on a data set of parliamentary speeches and press releases. This discourse analysis is supplemented by a qualitative investigation of selected speech acts. The results show that German policymakers acknowledged the issue salience of integration in EU CFSP and voice willingness for integratory steps as a reaction to the crisis in Ukraine. Nevertheless, the analysis also uncovered a contradictory relationship between such acknowledgment and the usage of committing language by the German executive. The results of this study, therefore, highlight the historically complicated relationship between the European Union and its Member States in questions of sovereignty and accordingly point towards more general questions of how political integration in EU Member States is communicated to its citizens.

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## 1. Introduction

In the early morning of February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his troops into Ukraine for the so-called “special military operation” which turned into the ongoing war in Ukraine (Hodge et al., 2022). According to recent Reuters reports, approximately one year after the beginning of the invasion, the war caused up to 354 000 casualties (Faulconbridge, 2023), and beyond that, the crisis immediately changed the way European security is conceptualized. With a particular look at the European Union, the research at hand draws inspiration from the famous quote of one of the EU's founding fathers Jean Monnet (1976): “Europe will be forged in crises”. Following Monnet’s reasoning, the impact of the crisis posed by the war in Ukraine could inhibit potential for the development of the European Union. Accordingly, without relativizing the humanitarian suffering this war has brought, the research project at hand focuses on the way the war contributed to potential integration in the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

More specifically, it does so by analysing the change of sentiment and framing towards integration in matters of foreign policy in the biggest Member State Germany. To enable such an assessment, discursive shifts among Members of the German executive in comparison to past events in the Russian-Ukrainian relationship such as the annexation of Crimea in 2014 as well as within the first year of the ongoing war 2022 are traced.

EU foreign policy has been viewed as a historically rigid policy field as it deals with highly delicate questions of Member State sovereignty (Müller, 2016, p. 361). Riddervold et al. (2021, p. 546) therefore argue that out of all policy domains, the CFSP is least likely to further integrate and any integration due to a crisis would be a sign of a profound effect on the EU integration project as a whole. Changes in this structure caused by the war in Ukraine would accordingly be consequential for questions of Member State sovereignty and the very basic set up of the European Union. Such a paradigm shift could therefore be indicative of a new era in EU politics. While the analysis at hand is not able to fully prove the emergence of such a new era on an EU level as a whole, it can contribute to the discussion by outlining the changes on one national level which subsequently constitute the ability for EU-wide change.

Accordingly, the general research question guiding the analysis is the following:

*How did the perspectives of political elites<sup>1</sup> in Germany change on issues of political integration in EU foreign policy due to the 2022 war in Ukraine? Accordingly, did the unique character of this crisis lead to a domestic discourse aimed towards further EU security policy integration?*

In answering this question, this research contributes to the literature in three ways. First, it makes a theoretical contribution to the literature surrounding the EU and crises by offering a detailed view into the intersection point of Member States and the EU through the combination with Multi-Level Governance theory and aspects of Securitization theory. Second, it makes an empirical contribution by offering an up-to-date assessment of German foreign policy and the language surrounding it, necessitated by the drastic changes after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Finally, by mainly utilizing a quantitative discourse analysis as a tool, this study makes a Constructivist methodological contribution to a field largely dominated by qualitative studies that mainly follow Realist logics.

The external pressure and uncertainty resulting from the ongoing poly-crisis of the European Union implies a potential for political change. Due to the setup of the EU and in particular its foreign policy, such tension will unfold in the relationship between the EU and its Member States. The war in Ukraine and its implications are playing a significant role in this crisis situation and are, furthermore, adding currency to the debate. Studying its consequences on the relationship between Germany and the EU, therefore, appears of high salience. In this vein, the bulk of the literature already addressing the point of intersection between EU crises responses and Multi-Level Governance circles around previous times in which a view dominated by rigidity in EU foreign policy was widely prevailing. However, this study assumes that the invasion of 2022 fundamentally altered this dynamic in terms of the speed of decision-making or the willingness of Member States to hand over authority in matters of foreign policy. Furthermore, this approach is supported by the character of foreign policy coordination in the EU, which is heavily dependent on Member State support and consensus. Following this logic, German willingness for integration in matters of foreign policy as an influential Member State

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<sup>1</sup> When talking about political elites, this study follows the definitions put forward by Putnam (1976) or Bussel (2020) which describe political elites as “whose institutional roles afford them higher levels of influence over public policy” (Kertzer & Renshon, 2022, p. 535). Since, as outlined later, the analysis will turn towards transcripts of speech acts in the German parliament and press releases by ministries, these elites in question mainly consist of members of the executive.

is a prerequisite for a coherent EU reaction to a crisis which is why analysing its domestic discourse regarding EU foreign policy integration is so essential (Aggestam and Hyde-Price, 2020, p. 15). This study, therefore, adds to the necessity of further perspectives on the potentially novel flexibility of integration in EU foreign policy.

The theoretical framework used for this study arises from a triangular shape built from the EU crisis literature, Multi-Level Governance theory and then analytically utilizing aspects of Securitization theory. The reason for this theoretical setup is the following. As explained further below, foreign policy as a field compared to other EU policy areas is characterized by a dominance of intergovernmental decision-making. This equips Member States with a heightened influence on policy outcomes. Therefore, the EU's response to a crisis in its neighbourhood must be enabled by its Member States, which are also affected by the crisis on a national level. Accordingly, the simultaneous existence of crises on these two levels generates the context in which questions of political integration have to be discussed.

Due to this dependency relationship, the case study of Germany is situated within the theory of Multi-Level Governance since this theory allows to investigate the interconnection between the national and the EU level while, similarly to the EU crisis literature, dealing with the question of potential political integration. Finally, since the chosen method of analysis of this integratory potential of crises in the EU multi-level system is a quantitative discourse analysis of members of the executive in Germany, language becomes of central importance in the analysis at hand. This concerns questions of agenda-setting and framing. On this deeper level of analysis, therefore, the consideration of securitizing language in speech acts as an analytical tool can lead to insights on the shaping of agenda-setting and framing. This way, the salient aspects and expectations uncovered via the crisis literature and the Multi-level Governance theory can be localized in a practical context of analysis. Finally, each cornerstone of this triangular setup allows the generation of a hypothesis which is to be tested by the subsequent sentiment analysis and topic modelling. Importantly, the interconnection of the theoretical aspects leads to these hypotheses all dealing with adjacent puzzles rather than spreading the analysis in various directions.

Problematising the past research of the German foreign policy, in particular towards Russia, from a lens of EU studies is both methodologically and content-wise salient. For example, Malici (2006) applies methods of quantitative speech analyses of German policymakers to trace changes of political culture in foreign policy during the Cold War, finding the dominance of a



culture of restraint. Also looking at the Cold War, Crossley-Frolick (2017) confirms this notion of restraint by qualitatively analysing speech acts, with a closer look at what was understood as *Verantwortungspolitik*. Moreover, Cordell and Wolff (2007) also apply a constructivist approach to the German *Ostpolitik*, tracing how German governments worked towards the emergence of a domestic consensus for appeasing politics towards Russia, while also problematizing the limits set by post-cold war European integration. The contribution from Timmins (2011) is important in this context because he analyses how the bilateral “special relationship” between Germany and Russia impacted the EU policy level, leading to a “solidarity with Russia” approach. The drastically changed developments, specifically with regard to the aggression towards Ukraine now heavily draw such perspectives into question. Therefore, by showcasing not only the perspectives of German political elites towards EU foreign policy integration but also how these are mirrored in changes of sentiment towards Russia over time, this study adds a temporal dimension of these relationships to the literature. Accordingly, more recently, Daehnhardt (2018) argues how after the Ukraine crisis in 2014, in stark contrast to the security order of the cold war, Germany had to emerge as a strategic leader in the EU. Accordingly, it is interesting to trace in the study at hand, how far German considerations of taking leadership in EU foreign policy as a response to the 2022 war might have aided dynamics towards increased political integration.

Highlighting the methodological dimension of this research, Baumann (2002) wrote a central piece utilizing the constructivist approach of speech analysis, finding that integration in multilateral structures will enhance German influence in foreign policy, specifically with regard to relations with Russia. However, similar to Wolff (2013) who focused on Germany’s political rhetoric of self-perception as a promotor of Civilian Power in this regard, these analyses are qualitative in nature. In contrast, the analysis at hand being quantitative allows for better tracing of these changes in rhetoric over time. By therefore including different developments and crises, rather than focusing on singular events, it can add comparability to the picture of changes in German foreign policy. Importantly, this analysis is not only about changes in the German-Russian relationship compared to the contributions above. This unilateral view of either tracing changes in German foreign policy towards Russia or the EU’s reaction as a whole is therefore complemented by highlighting the inner dynamic between a Member State and the EU as a reaction to crises in the EU neighbourhood. The theoretical framework in combination with the usage of aspects of Securitization theory accordingly aids to uncover the discursive elements of such processes. Accordingly, utilizing the Constructivist approach of quantitative text analysis in foreign policy is arguably an underappreciated way of analysing changes in the field

which previously heavily relied on intergovernmental or Realist considerations. This way, this study can contribute to highlighting how language prepares, guides and possibly shapes policy.

The research commences as follows: First, the theoretical framework consisting of the EU crisis literature, Multi-Level Governance theory and Securitization theory is introduced. Building on these considerations, hypotheses are developed to trace the German discursive changes in response to the crisis in more detail. Afterwards, sentiment analysis, topic modelling and an explorative qualitative approach are outlined in the methodology. Additionally, this part includes further justifications for the case selection of Germany as well as remarks on quality criteria and the data sets used. Subsequently, the results of the analysis are showcased, pointing towards a complex relationship between the issue salience of EU foreign policy integration and the language that is being used to portray possible commitments. Thereafter, the hypotheses are either confirmed or rejected, and the results are discussed and contextualized by drawing on adjacent research dealing with German foreign policy and the EU crisis literature. Finally, the study concludes by answering the research question and lastly highlighting the societal and academic relevance of the research at hand.

## 2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework is built by combining the literature on the integratory force of crises for the European Union, the theory of Multi-Level Governance and aspects of Securitization theory. Building on this, hypotheses are developed to test how Germany reacted to the events in Ukraine and how this reaction could be indicative of integratory aspirations in EU foreign policy. Before that, central concepts and definitions guiding the subsequent analysis have to be outlined.

In general, the CFSP is the EU's joint foreign and security policy and should seek among many other aims to "safeguard its values, fundamental interests, security, independence and integrity" (TEU, Art. 21(2)). In pursuit of such goals, the CFSP takes a special legal role in the EU treaties. Article 2(4) TFEU sets out that the Union shall have the competence to "to define and implement a common foreign and security policy". It is, therefore, to be understood as distinct from the foreign policies of the Member States and accordingly not just of supporting or supplementing character coordinating Member State policies (Art. 24(3) TEU; Art. 26(1) TEU).

Nevertheless, it can be argued that the CFSP can also not properly be described as a shared or exclusive competence of the EU. This is due to the provisions of Articles 42(2) and (7) TEU as well as the Declarations 13 and 14 TFEU which, in summary, describe how the Member States shall not be affected in their responsibilities and powers to carry out their national foreign policy. Further, the conditions for exclusivity of Article 3(2) TEU would not be met due to the exclusion of legislative acts in the CFSP (Art. 24(1) TEU) as well as the argument that CFSP actions would not suffice to warrant the exercise of an internal competence. In conclusion, the CFSP is set out to simultaneously enhance independent EU strategic interests while accompanying the conduct of Member State foreign policies and is therefore inhibiting an exceptional character of Union competence (Cremona, 2018, p. 7).

The central decision-making body in the CFSP is the Council of the European Union. It is tasked with taking the necessary decisions to first define and then implement the CFSP. Moreover, it shall make sure that the actions taken by the European Union within the CFSP are represented by unity, coherence and efficiency (Art. 26(2) TEU). Importantly, the entering into force of the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009 led to consequential changes in the setup of the CFSP. Firstly, it included the establishment of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy as well as of the European External Action Service (EEAS).

Furthermore, it also led to the strengthening of the European Council via the granting of a permanent President with decision-making power (Marquardt, 2018, p. 22). While bodies such as the EEAS work autonomously under the supervision of the High Representative and therefore would resemble an example of supranational policy-making in EU CFSP, it could still be argued that it is rather a tool that coordinates resources and policy initiatives that are primarily based on Member State consensus (Morillas, 2019, p. 35). Müller (2016, p. 368) argues, concerning the problem of joint decision traps<sup>2</sup> and the CFSP's capacity to react to crises, that while these new bodies gained significance due to the Lisbon reforms, Member States still were effectively able to safeguard their authority in matters of foreign policy, also stemming from a general lack of support for the High Representative by the Member States. Undoubtedly, the EU foreign and security policy is a field of EU policy-making in which Member States historically enjoy a high level of sovereignty and independence. Scholars have therefore often labelled EU CFSP as a policy field dominated by intergovernmental decision-making (Wallace, 2010; Puetter, 2014). Consequently, there are a multitude of reasons why the situating of this analysis of the German political reaction in the broader field of EU CFSP is significant.

The competence of EU involvement in foreign policy is mainly focused on fields such as development cooperation (TFEU, Art. 208) or humanitarian aid (TFEU, Art. 214), whereas domains of hard power remain primarily at the discretion of Member State decisions as in the case of weapons exports (TFEU, Art. 346 (1) (b)). Additionally, decision-making in the CFSP is mostly based on unanimous decision-making in the Council of the European Union, while the option for constructive abstention exists. This, nevertheless, effectively equips the Member States with a veto-right and consequently creates a field of EU policy-making in which the institutions enjoy less influence than in other domains (TEU, Art. 31(1)). Therefore, Germany's foreign policy priorities and attitudes as a Member State regarding common EU responses possess the ability to either shape or obstruct the EU CFSP.

Likewise, German foreign policy and specifically German foreign policy towards the EU is characterized by executive dominance. The Treaty changes of Maastricht and Lisbon did equip the federal states with enhanced rights of participation in EU matters in the second German chamber the *Bundesrat*, showcasing how EU developments influence the reshuffling of inner-state competences (Jarass & Pieroth, 2011, pp. 587-588). Nevertheless, the state government

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<sup>2</sup> Joint decision traps describe a situation in which institutional constraints in EU decision making hinder the EU in enacting policy while the Member States are simultaneously lacking the ability for compelling national action (Falkner, 2011, p. 9).

enjoys primacy in all matters of foreign policy, holding the exclusive competence to enter international treaties and represent Germany in international institutions (Art. 32(1) GG; Art. 59(1) GG). Specifically the chancellor benefits from its heightened role in the German political system and therefore has the responsibility to decide on the guidelines of Germany's foreign policy (Art. 65 GG). In addition, the chancellor appoints the ministers in the cabinet of which the two most important ministries for this analysis are the foreign ministry and the ministry of defence (Art. 62(1) GG). In particular, the foreign ministry takes a predominant position due to its competence to coordinate foreign policy, which in practice involves the foreign ministry and its subcommittees independently taking aegis in questions of foreign policy and then presenting the results to the government (Hellmann et al., 2014, p. 51). The foreign and defence ministers, moreover, autonomously take part in meetings of the EU Foreign Affairs Council which is chaired by the High Representative (Devuyst, 2012, p. 331). These remarks portray the institutional setup in which Germany is represented in EU foreign policy, spearheaded by the government and the chancellor in the Council.

In conclusion, the above supports the argument underlying this study, namely, if integration in the field of CFSP as a reaction to the war in Ukraine is to be analysed, it will be dependent on the central role of Member States in the Council such as Germany and coming down particularly to the decisions made by its executive. Now the concept of integration and its interplay with Europeanization must be outlined to then subsequently bridge the gap to the integratory effects of crises and their manifestation in the Multi-Level system of the EU.

Firstly, Lindberg (1970, p. 649) offers a general definition by characterizing political integration "as a distinctive aspect of the more inclusive process (international integration, generally) whereby larger groupings emerge or are created among nations without the use of violence". Further, it "involves a group of nations coming to regularly make and implement binding public decisions by means of collective institutions and/or processes rather than by formally autonomous national means" (Lindberg, 1970, p. 650). Finally, when transferred to the context of the European Union, it could be simply said that European Integration then is "a process that includes industrial, political, legal, economic, social, and cultural aspects of integration of states under the auspices of the European Union" (Bliuc et al., 2017, p. 16). Moreover, integration is famously defined by Haas (1958, p. 16) as the process "whereby political actors in several, distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states". Core to this definition is the understanding of

the integratory process as being initialized by a persuasion, while it is left open if this is due to internal convictions or external pressures. It is therefore well suited and accordingly chosen to guide this study of potential change in sentiment towards foreign policy integration since the crisis for the EU triggered by the war in Ukraine could be what “persuaded to shift” the opinions of German political elites. Accordingly, German political elites portraying willingness to transfer authority in matters of foreign policy to the European Union would fit the above-illustrated idea of political integration.

In more detail, Europeanization describes such procedures more concretely in the context of EU politics. Radaelli (2003, p. 30) describes Europeanization as:

“Processes of (a) construction, (b) diffusion, and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ‘ways of doing things’, and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures, and public policies.”

Importantly, the establishment of such EU public policies and politics is on its own inherently formed through an integratory process which is why it can be argued that Europeanization is practically indistinguishable from the idea of political integration (Moumoutzis, 2011, p. 610). Ladrech (2014, p. 27) supports the idea of a linkage between the two concepts by specifying that the politicization of the EU in domestic politics all over Europe has put additional constraints on Member State governments. The overlap of the concepts becomes apparent during the safeguarding of support for European integration by Member State governments, while simultaneously incorporating novel EU policies as the products of Europeanization into the politicized national discourse. In his own definition, Ladrech (1994, p. 69) also highlights this reciprocal relationship by describing Europeanization as “an incremental process reorienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy-making”. This direction of adaptation processes towards the Member States is, however, of less salience in the analysis at hand since the potential integratory force of crises, as explained in the following, emphasizes the willingness of Member States to channel further authority at a European level. To sum up, the concepts of political integration in the EU and Europeanization form the fundamental framework necessary to answer the research question dealing with shifts in German desire to take such integratory steps in EU CFSP. In subsequent, it will first be

discussed how the war in Ukraine relates to the EU crisis literature before a further discussion of the integratory power of crises in the EU more generally is conducted.

## 2.1 Crises and the European Union

A substantial body of academic literature dealing with the relationship between the European Union and crises has emerged in the last decades, covering a broad variety of policy fields. For example, in the past, it has been described how the very founding of the EU was a response to the crisis of the Second World War (de Vries, 2020, p. 139), how the creation of the European Monetary System was a reaction to the decade of stagnation (Ungerer, 1997, p. 119) and how the Single European Act was a result of the recession during the early 1980s (Della Sala, 2023, p. 4). Recently, academic attention on the integrative potential of crises was directed towards the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and the EUs' and its Member States' response to it (Rhodes, 2021; Genschel & Jachtenfuchs, 2021). The analysis at hand transfers this analytical framework to the context of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in early 2022. Accordingly, it addresses a hole in the academic literature by examining the crisis impact on the EUs foreign and security policy which is of particular interest since in this specific domain it has been continuously claimed that a top-down centralized process of Europeanization is mostly absent (Aggestam and Hyde-Price, 2020, p. 15).

In general, scholars are divided on the central question if crises in the EU lead to more or less integration. For example, Zeitlin et al. (2019, p. 968) argue that the poly-crisis of the European Union enhances the pressure on national governments facing the diverse and novel domestic cleavages which in turn leads to institutional deadlock on a European level. Moreover, times of crisis might be used by national political elites to deviate from their own failures and rather direct blame towards the European institutions and accordingly diminish the public demand for European answers (de Wilde & Zürn, 2012, p. 145). In the context of the "migration crisis" for instance, it has been shown that the failure to enact solidarity between Member States on a European level led to politicization in France resulting in national policy-making instead of further political integration in the field in the EU (Castelli & Zamponi, 2020, p. 637).

Nevertheless, Vollaard (2018, p. 120) argues that such differentiated integration in response to a crisis is a multifaceted process in which both integrative and disintegrative processes can appear simultaneously. For example, Verdun (2015, p. 231) explains how the financial crisis led to both unilateral behaviour as well as institution-building on a European level. Moreover, regarding the idea of a poly-crisis experienced by the EU, Mény (2014, p. 1350) highlights the

possibility of “integration by stealth” characterized by an executive federalism that is not dependent on constant Member State approval. However, the intergovernmental nature of consensus-building in the European CFSP, which is heavily interconnected with questions of national sovereignty would make such integration by stealth unlikely to expect. Nevertheless, and albeit in the different field of financial policy, in an influential contribution, Jones et al. (2016) outline how incomplete integration in the EU in the aftermath of a crisis is still accompanied by the logic of consistently “failing forward”.

With a specific focus on the CFSP and the Ukraine crisis, the literature also paints an inconclusive picture. Referencing the events of 2014 in Crimea, MacFarlane and Menon’s (2014, p. 100) analysis showcases the uncoordinated response among EU Member States in reaction to the annexation. They specifically mention how the financial and investment ties between Germany and Russia were obstructing robust retaliation, whereas Poland and the Baltic countries were hoping for a strong European response. In this regard, according to Schmidt-Felzmann (2013, p. 193), no other EU policy field reveals internal differences as sharply as the policy of its Member States towards Russia. Howorth (2017, p. 132) reiterates this inconsistency in responses but simultaneously highlights the successful sanction coordination. Finally, Kuzio (2017, p. 113) critiques how the EU’s self-picture of a value-based community in foreign policy is suffering under the prioritization of national interests among EU Member States following the annexation of Crimea.

On the contrary, Juncos and Pomorska (2021, pp. 562-563) argue that the downing of flight MH17 in July 2014 can be seen as a critical juncture that shifted opinions in Member States such as Germany, France and the Netherlands and ultimately led to heightened consensus-building on a European level. Similarly, Sjursen and Rosén (2017, p. 25) argue that socialization processes among Member States in the aftermath of the annexation allowed for collective responses to take place, while Nitoiu and Sus (2017, p. 83) highlight the increased diplomatic coordination between the European institutions. Furthermore, an additional aspect aiding in describing the processes inherent to the European Union and the integratory force of crises is about actorness. Accordingly, actorness refers to an entity’s capacity to realize roles of itself in international affairs (Klose, 2018). Anghel and Jones (2023, p. 3) expect that the Russian war in Ukraine serves as an exogenous shock that activates the role of the EU as an international actor. However, due to its complex multi-level structure, the EU can sometimes act state-like in crisis situations while sometimes Member State governments or networks of governments take the lead. Among others, this depends on the specific tools and instruments that the EU has



at its disposal (ibid.). The most important instruments in question are sanction coordination and economic and military support for Ukraine. For both of these aspects, it is insightful to portray the relationship between Germany as a Member State and the EU, analysing in which way decisions on these three aspects were influenced by perspectives taken in Berlin. Following De Vries' (2022) advice for future research in this venue, the role of political elites, political opportunity structures and heterogeneity between and within Member States shall be considered.

In the further development of the hypotheses below, this study follows the logic of the latter scholarly camp claiming that integration in the field of CFSP as a crisis response is possible. This is due to the significance ascribed to the dimension of the war in Ukraine as well as the reactions directly following the invasion. Firstly, as outlined above, the previously close economic ties between Germany and Russia were blamed to obstruct meaningful consequences for Russia following the annexation of Crimea. An example of such ties was the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project in the Baltic Sea worth 11 billion USD. However, shortly after the Russian invasion in February 2022, Chancellor Scholz suspended any further certification for the pipeline which eventually brought the whole project to an end, which signalled Germany's willingness to act resolutely in response to the war (Marsh & Chambers, 2022). Secondly, the inconsistencies among Member States towards Russia critiqued above were also quickly set aside following the invasion. Only in the first week, EU leaders and ministers in the Council agreed on eight different sanction packages which ranged from the exclusion of Russian banks from SWIFT to financial support for military supplies, which for the first time, included the financing of lethal equipment (Council of the European Union 2022a; ibid., 2022b). This quick reaction indicates a new level of unity among EU Member States as a result of the unique circumstances of the 2022 war in Ukraine.

Importantly, it should be pointed out that the creation of informal and ad-hoc coordinated responses such as sanctions might resemble the above-described idea of Europeanization but does not automatically constitute a major integratory shift in EU CFSP. Nevertheless, utilizing the context of the German *Zeitenwende*, this thesis will observe if the unique character of the invasion of Ukraine in 2022 substantially changed the Member States' portrayal of EU CFSP cooperation which ultimately allows for political integration in the field as outlined above.

Accordingly, the general Hypothesis 1 (H1) of this analysis states:

*H1: In comparison to the aftermath of the annexation of Crimea in 2014, the invasion of Ukraine in 2022 shows a positive shift in the notions of the German government for increased European foreign policy cooperation and further EU CFSP integration.*

In order to apply this theoretical framework to the war in Ukraine, it must be further situated in the context of the EU crisis literature. Generally, following Ikenberry (2008, p. 3) a crisis in the context at hand can be defined as “an extraordinary moment when the existence and viability of the political order are called into question”. Moreover, urgency and uncertainty create a situation in which a response is needed to curb the threat to the fundamental values of a system (Boin et al., 2005, pp. 3-4). It is salient to point out that in this war no country of the European Union was attacked, and it is the livelihood of Ukrainians that is directly threatened by the aggression. Nevertheless, many scholars classify the war in Ukraine, starting with the annexation of Crimea in 2014, as an EU crisis for a multitude of reasons. Riddervold et al. (2021 p. 547) call it regard it as “existential to the EU”, while Juncos and Pomorska (2021, p. 559) highlight how past descriptions of “turbulence” between Russia and the EU developed into a full-scale crisis after the critical juncture that was the downing of flight MH17. Moreover, Howorth (2017, p. 33) refers to how the attack on the fundamental values of the EU is a defining character of this crisis. Finally, Ikani (2019, p. 20) outlines how the crisis in Ukraine has geopolitical consequences for the EU by endangering the EU’s interests of economic integration in the region. Due to these accounts mainly attesting a crisis situation due to the events following 2014 and the invasion of 2022 drastically exacerbating the circumstances it can be concluded that the case of the Russian war in Ukraine is fitting to be researched with regard to the literature on crisis in the EU. As mentioned above, the actions of the European Union in foreign policy are dependent on a complex multi-level structure, which is best encapsulated by applying the theory of *Multi-Level Governance* (MLG) to this research, as outlined in the following segment.

## **2.2 Multi-Level Governance**

In interplay with the EU crisis literature, the theory of *Multi-Level Governance* (MLG) in foreign policy as described by Smith (2004) offers the context in which the discursive change is to be observed. Put simply, MLG refers to the existence of a “hierarchically structured set of actors with varying degrees of unity/coherence, commitment to EU norms, and power resources” (Smith, 2004, p. 743). However, Smith (ibid.) emphasizes that some policy issues

will tend to remain *domaines réservés* for Member States. Since the analysis at hand deals with tracing how far these boundaries on relevant policy issues, such as weapons exports, shift in Germany, contextualizing the policy issue via MLG is insightful. This enables the study to comment on potential processes of political integration implied by the EU crisis literature.

Originally mentioned by Marks (1993) and further by Marks and Hooghe (2004), MLG allows for a deeper understanding of the entanglement of authority between the national and international level. Moreover, MLG includes subnational levels of decision making which inhibit the ability to pull previously centralized functions of states (Marks 1993, p. 392). However, due to the wholly missing legal authority of subnational institutions in questions of foreign policy as well as the added overreaching complexity, these levels cannot be included in the analysis at hand. Nevertheless, concerning the functional pressures surrounding the inclusion of regional interests in policy making, MLG has been previously linked to the literature on Europeanization (Stephenson, 2013, p. 821). Risse et al. (2001, p. 3) highlight “the emergence and development at the European level of distinct structures of governance, that is, of political, legal and social institutions associated with political problem-solving that formalize interactions among the actors and of policy networks specializing in the creation of authoritative rules”. Accordingly, since this study deals with the German case study of showcasing the integratory force of crises in the multi-level system of the EU, this crucial point of intersection is where the analysis must be situated in. The influential contribution by Smith (2004) already theoretically picked up this idea and transposed it with a specific focus on foreign policy.

Considering the special nature of the foreign policy domain, integration or Europeanization does not emerge throughout the usual “adapational pressures” due to the lack of legally binding instruments and the dominance of voluntary involvement by EU Member States (Bulmer & Radaelli, 2004, p. 7). Instead, scholars in EU foreign policy refer to a process of socialization that in turn leads to the formation of collective interests among national policymakers that then finally enables common policy creation (Tonra, 2018, p. 89). Further, policymakers enter this process of socialization due to an instrumental logic that values the privileged access to information and the increased gravity their decisions have on an international level (Tonra, 2018, p. 229). Adding to the idea of elite socialization in MLG, Smith (2004, p. 746) argues that it effectively reduces the monopoly of national governments on foreign policy by shifting the procedural logic away from the intergovernmental periodic summits to a decentralized framework for policy coordination. Thereby, EU foreign policy is viewed as an appropriate arena to take foreign policy decisions and thereby be able to enhance national foreign policy

capabilities. This is viewed to have over the years led to a shrinking of the so-called *domaines réservés* (Smith, 2004, p. 748).

Finally, Smith (2004, pp. 749-752) proposes factors that can assess the influence of MLG in foreign policy. First, the inherent characteristics of the policy issue are defined by the time frame and the degree of violence of the policy problem. The reaction of policymakers then is dependent on the time and willingness to use violence and the definition of which goal is to be attained with the policy problem. In the case of the research at hand, this appears highly relevant since the crisis character of the war in Ukraine renders the possible time frame as highly short-term as well as the degree of violence inherent to the situation as very high. For the subsequent analysis, the reports of war crimes in Bucha having been committed by the Russian army in March 2022 exemplify the external dimension of violence (Human Rights Watch, 2022). Secondly, the novelty of the policy decision is considered to influence the realization within MLG, meaning that new problems outside of the attention of already established CFSP working groups are less likely to be transformed into policy. In the case of this research many decisions such as, but not limited to, the agreement for Common Procurement of Ammunition made in March 2023 (EDA, 2023) are novel within the EU.

Importantly, Smith (2004, p. 751) includes domestic factors as another aspect to consider for the influence of MLG. Accordingly, it matters if the government ideology is pro EU/CFSP, if the unity of the government is hindered by a coalition and if the state is federally or centrally organized. Moreover, country-specific situations such as elections, scandals, or the degree to which the Member State is economically connected to the target state in the case of sanctions etc. Some of these aspects feature as the independent variables guiding the quantitative text analysis, as explained further below. As explained above, Germany has had a unique relationship with Russia in the past decades characterized by strong economic ties that led to for example gas dependencies. Linking this with the EU crisis literature, the war in Ukraine does not only constitute a political crisis for the EU but simultaneously a domestic crisis for its Member States such as with the energy crisis experienced in Germany. However, this study mainly focuses on the impact of the violence exerted within the crisis. The above considerations are finally expected to be of relevance when analysing the dynamic between the European Union and Germany in the context of this crisis.

Concluding from the above depiction of Multi-Level Governance a second hypothesis emerges:

*H2: Driven by the violence exerted in the Ukraine-Russia conflict in 2022, German executive discourse increasingly shifted in favour of common European responses.*

Finally, MLG was previously criticised for not being able to offer causal explanations and for its lack of predictive powers (Moravcsik, 1998; Keating 1997). In defence of the theory, it can be argued that while it may not retrospectively explain why a governance arrangement came to be, it can offer insights into how governance is effectively arranged in a specific domain (Stephenson, 2013, p. 818). MLG, therefore, helps to assess how the EU as a machinery is performing in a simple way (Kohler-Koch and Eising, 1999, p. xii). With regards to the analysis at hand, it is therefore not envisioned to prove the causal steps that led to decisions such as the agreement for Common Procurement of Ammunition made in March 2023 (EDA, 2023) but rather highlight how changes in discursive logics in Germany shaped the historically rigid dynamic between Member States and the EU institutions in matters of foreign policy.

### 2.3 Framing and Securitization

Analysing speech acts to study the reaction of an EU Member State to crises within the MLG framework can be insightful for many reasons. Voltolini et al. (2020, p. 610) explore this issue from an angle of politicisation and find that more than the nature of the crisis itself, the way it is framed and contested constitutes its impact on integration. Even though a war such as the one in Ukraine is already inherently situated in the political realm and not in need of initial politicisation – understood as issues “becom[ing] the subject of deliberation, decision-making and human agency where previously they were not” (Hay, 2007, p. 81) – this logic of framing a crisis to generate different political outcomes is of fundamental salience for the analysis at hand. Accordingly, by unpacking its discursive nature, one elevates the understanding of a crisis from a mere exogenous shock to an endogenous understanding of potential institutional change (Voltolini et al., 2020, p. 615).

The framing that is ingrained in this context can be defined as “[...] the process through which political actors select certain aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.” (Entman, 1993, p. 52). Therefore, it does not only alter the perception of the crisis but more so shapes the way political elites respond to it (Hay, 2016, p. 533). Moreover, Natorki (2020, p.

735) argues that crisis situations mobilize numerous actors and that the potential for change in international institutions accordingly depends on the way their authority is challenged by the constituent actors. Recognizing this aspect is relevant since the dynamic between Germany as a Member State and the European Union in reaction to the war in Ukraine is of interest for this analysis. Acknowledging the authority of the EU to act in foreign policy by the Member States is key in tracing in how far a Europeanization took place. Following Bartelson (2013, p. 110), such recognition can take the form of speech acts that should communicate either the ontological, legal or moral status of the EU to take policy initiative. Ikani (2020, p. 769), who previously studied the newly formed frames in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) after the Arab Spring and the Ukrainian crisis of 2014, found that institutional constraints fundamentally hindered these frames from changing entrenched policies. Building on this research, it appears, therefore, of high salience to research in how far the discourse due to the completely changed dimension of the war in Ukraine in 2022 in terms of violence and impacts on the EU might enable different integratory outcomes.

Accordingly, due to the above-outlined importance of the specific language used in the discourse analysis, aspects of Securitization theory are employed. In short, it is described as a “process by which speech acts position particular issues as threats and, as a consequence, provide legitimacy and reason to policies taken in response” (Sperling and Webber, 2016, p. 236). Since the work at hand deals with speech acts, Securitization theory is well suited to interpret the different topical clusters that arise from the quantitative text analysis. The underlying assumption to this is that some level of Securitization of the Russian war in Ukraine will be necessary in order for political integration to happen on an EU level. Nevertheless, the usage of this theory confronts the analysis at hand with the fundamental and underlying problem of distinguishing between behaviour and language in International Relations research. As initially claimed by one of the main proponents of Securitization theory Buzan et al. (1998, p. 26), the utterance of security itself is the act of “doing” security. However, it should be considered that security cannot be a self-referential practice outside of the material dimension of politics. To illustrate, the speech acts in question can usually be grouped into threats to an outside aggressor and promises to protect a domestic referent object (Wæver, 1989, pp. 42-43). These statements of intent have then to be followed by policies that incorporate a change of behaviour according to the securitizing speech acts. Successful Securitization, therefore, is not merely the discursive act but rather the implementation of a novel security policy into practice (Floyd, 2016, p. 685).

Therefore, next to the discourse analysis, the relevant political decisions grounded in the material realities of the war context must be consistently determined to put the speech acts into context. Building on the above, a third and final hypothesis states accordingly:

*H3: In speech acts, political elites in Germany securitized the war in Ukraine to frame the need for political integration in EU foreign and security policy.*

Key policy and landmark decisions accordingly aid to frame the rhetoric of the political elites and act as the independent variable. Thus, avoiding the pitfall of drawing overly simplified causal conclusions from the analysed speech acts. Nevertheless, observing securitizing language adds an insightful avenue to contextualize the EU and Member States' reaction to the war in Ukraine. After having derived the three hypotheses guiding the analysis, the study now turns to the depiction of the methodology and research design that are utilized to consequently find answers to the hypotheses and the underlying research question.

### 3. Methodology and Research Design

The methodology utilized to investigate the change of perspectives among the German political elite in response to the crises in Ukraine is as follows. First, using sentiment analysis on the data set containing parliamentary speeches is envisioned to answer Hypothesis 1 which deals with the changes in sentiment due to the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the war of 2022. Second, topic modelling is employed on the data set containing press releases from 2022 to 2023 to answer H2 concerning changes in attitude during the ongoing war of 2022. This is further substantiated by the explorative qualitative analysis of selected documents, which then in turn allows conclusions on H3 and the specific language being used. While this is the main structure, inferences between the different methods together with the analysis of frequencies and most common terms enable finding a comprehensive answer to the research question. After justifying the case selection of Germany, these methods and data sets will be depicted in more detail.

#### 3.1 Case Selection

To study the potential shift towards integration in the EU CFSP a small-N study of Germany as a Member State and its relationship with the European Union will be conducted. This involves an analysis of speech acts from relevant political actors in Berlin performed in the German parliament *Bundestag*. On the one hand, a small-N study allows for detailed and in-depth analysis, accompanied by the opportunity to extensively contextualise the underlying backgrounds (Halperin & Heath, 2020, p. 238). The backgrounds, attributes and consequences of a war in the EU neighbourhood are of diverse nature and can hardly be captured by a single analysis. This is due to the magnitude of different actors being involved in a complex system of different political structures and cultures. Therefore, contextualising processes and their following political reactions in the wake of the war in Ukraine is of high salience to grasp the issue more effectively. On the other hand, Halperin and Heath (2020, p. 238) add that small N studies inhibit the danger that cases confirming the hypotheses are handpicked in order to generate results. In particular, in the case of EU politics, this danger is naturally given due to the high heterogeneity of Member States which reflects in their foreign policy priorities. Accordingly, strong justification for the case selection is needed.

Examining the case of Germany appears specifically relevant in this context for several reasons. Firstly, it is expected that changes in the largest and economically most powerful Member State will have substantial consequences for the agenda setting in the EU and potentially influence



the behaviour of other Member States. Secondly, Germany has followed a particular set of policies concerning Russia in the last decades. The policy pursued by chancellors Schröder and Merkel coined *Change through trade (Wandel durch Handel)* was heavily criticized by the EU allies following the 2022 invasion since the gamble on appeasement failed and the built energy dependence towards Russia accordingly endangered energy security in Europe (Della Sala, 2023, p. 9). Analysing how perspectives on this topic changed from before to after the invasion with a specific focus on the EU dimension, enables interesting insights for questions of potential political integration. Finally, Germany was previously often considered a *Civil Power* in foreign relations, meaning that its behaviour is heavily tied to the pursuit of norms and principles. This generally includes a heightened proneness to solving conflicts via compromise, reconciliation and negotiations and the negation of the usage of force (Kirste & Maull, 1996, pp. 300-302). It could be argued that decisions such as the controversially discussed move to send war tanks to Ukraine in early 2023 draw this self-image into question (Camut, 2023). Due to the magnitude of this decision, it has since been referred to as a turning point (*Zeitenwende*) (Küstner, 2023). For the sake of the analysis at hand, however, it is of central salience to examine how such decisions were potentially influenced by simultaneously happening processes on the EU level as well as how these processes were influenced by the domestic discourse in the Member State. As mentioned above, the tool to analyse this is a quantitative text analysis of speech acts by members of the German executive. This way it can be observed how far the discursive perspectives of members of the executive in Germany changed towards favouring foreign policy integration in the EU. For the reasons outlined in this segment, analysing Germany as a case study appears suitable to trace the effects of a foreign policy crisis in the European Union. The study now turns to the methodological explanation of how that can be uncovered in more detail.

### 3.2 Data Collection

The main method to analyse the puzzle at hand is a quantitative text analysis that examines speech acts by the German executive. To approach this task and to subsequently answer the research question, the study builds on two different text corpora. The combination of parliamentary speeches and the various press releases in this analysis offers a versatile look into the communication of the German executive. Firstly, as outlined in more detail below, they target different audiences and therefore differ in the language used. While parliamentary speech acts of members of the executive might feature more emotional language addressing peers and justifying decisions made by the government in response to interposed questions, press releases

can extensively contextualize government communication. Moreover, the different corpora differ in the time frame they deal with. On the one hand, the parliamentary data set allows for the tracing of shifts over a long period of time, allowing references to past events. Nevertheless, since the Russian invasion of 2022 puts a lot of focus on the discourse following February 2022, it appears as beneficial to substantiate the analysis with text data dealing with that specific time frame in more detail. In addition, the data set including the press releases also features the first three months of 2023 although a cut-off point had to be made at the end of March 2023 to allow for the data analysis regardless of the ongoing nature of the war in Ukraine.

The first corpus used in this analysis contains speech acts in the German parliament. It is called “Open Discourse” and was developed by Richter et al. (2020). It originally includes all plenary protocols of the German Bundestag from 1949 up to December 2019. The updated data set includes the speeches up to December 2022, and therefore the relevant speeches for the duration of the first year of the war, which can be obtained via the GitHub Container Registry (Open Discourse, n.d.) and pulled as a docker container to be run locally.

As mentioned above, decision-making in foreign policy is mainly situated in the realm of the national governments. Therefore, the corpus is subset, filtering for purely the contributions of chancellors, national ministers and other members of the executive. Moreover, the time range is subset from 2010 to 2022. The reason behind choosing this subset is to check whether trends towards EU foreign policy integration can be traced back to the Russian annexation of Crimea and if similar patterns can be recognized following the recent invasion in 2022. Furthermore, independent of the developments in Russia and Ukraine, 2010 is chosen as a cut-off point due to the changes in the architecture of the EU CFSP brought about by the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 and its impacts on national sovereignty as outlined in segment 2 of this study. Possible debate in the German national arena about these changes is therefore excluded to not distort the results. Further, punctuation and German stopwords such as the equivalents of “and”, “is”, “theirs” or “a” are removed to focus the remaining corpus on valuable terms. After the initial shaping of the German parliamentary dataset, the characteristics outlined in Table 1 remained. The number of documents is to be understood as the amount of speech acts while the number of features resembles the expressions minus the stopwords.

**Table 1:** Details of processed and subset corpus of speeches in the *Bundestag*.

<b>Number of documents</b>	<b>Total number of features</b>	<b>Date of oldest speech</b>	<b>Date of most recent speech</b>
5339	63177	19.01.2010	16.12.2022

Analysing speeches held in the Bundestag is relevant for many reasons. Since European integration in a sensitive field such as foreign policy depends on broad political and public support, the parliament is the correct arena to voice such messages. As illustrated by Ilie (2010, p. 66), speech acts in parliaments are targeted to a broad array of audiences ranging from insiders such as fellow MPs to outsiders such as journalists and ordinary citizens. Accordingly, the analysed members of the executive are expected to use this venue when debating potential shifts in German foreign policy orientation. For instance, the decision by Germany to send Leopard 2 battle tanks to Ukraine led to a charged debate in the *Bundestag*, with Chancellor Scholz defending the move (Knight, 2023). Furthermore, even though the German parliament holds limited institutionalized capacities to influence foreign policy it holds an important role in the cognitive dimension of framing the salience of issues in the German political arena (Jäger et al., 2009, pp. 433-434). With a specific focus on the method at hand, Proksch et al. (2018, pp. 118 - 121) tested the dependence of a bill passing in the Bundestag on the sentiment in the surrounding debate and find that positive sentiment is positively related to a bill passing unanimously. Accordingly, positively changing sentiment scores towards European integration in matters of foreign policy will increase the changes for materialized political integration in this field.

The second data set utilized in this analysis is a subset of press releases by the German chancellery, the foreign ministry *Auswärtiges Amt* as well as the ministry of defence. The press releases were manually scraped from the official websites of the three institutions *Auswärtiges Amt* (n.d.), *Bundesministerium der Verteidigung* (n.d.) and *Bundeskanzler* (n.d.). The choice for these institutional actors is based on the explanations of segment 3 of this study, in which the competences of foreign policy coordination in Germany were outlined. In total, the process of scraping involved working through 1316 individual press releases published between the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2022 up to the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2023. Subsequently, the corpus was subset to only include press releases that dealt with the war in Ukraine or its aftermath and its influence on Germany and Europe. This decision was made due to the nature of these institutions

distinctively dealing with matters of foreign policy, whereas the parliamentary speeches generally cater to a broader variety of topics. Therefore, when, as explained in more detail below, the corpus of press releases is analysed for patterns resembling willingness for European Integration, it would be avoided that press releases dealing with, for instance, the impacts of the war in Afghanistan or EU accession negotiations in the Western Balkans blur the analysis. Nevertheless, the corpus covers a broad range of topics from justifications for weapons exports to Ukraine (Bundeskanzler, 2022a) up to the impact of the war on international law and human rights (Auswärtiges Amt, 2022).

Moreover, referring to the documents in this corpus purely as press releases is slightly misleading. While that resembles the official declaration of these documents, the contents and formats vary heavily. Accordingly, next to short press releases informing the public about a phone call between Chancellor Scholz and President Zelensky (Bundeskanzler, 2022b), they also include full transcripts of press conferences in the chancellery (Bundeskanzler, 2022c) or summaries of opinions voiced in political talk-shows (Bundeskanzler, 2022d). Those documents are of high salience for a quantitative text analysis because they offer more contextualized speech to analyse in comparison to brief and technically worded press releases. Finally, to keep the dataset as weighty as possible, joint statements of, for example, a group of international politicians following G7 meetings were also excluded since those would not purely reflect German attitudes. Accordingly, the final subset included 201 documents of varying length which amounted to a total number of terms analysed of 19610. Note that the oldest press release included in the corpus predates the invasion since the military build-up and provocation at the border already featured in press releases in the weeks leading up to the beginning of the war.

**Table 2:** Details of subset corpus of press releases.

<b>Number of documents</b>	<b>Total number of features</b>	<b>Date of oldest speech</b>	<b>Date of most recent speech</b>
201	19610	03.02.2022	28.03.2023

The analysis of press releases in political science is an often-used tool to capture the communication and framing of political decision-making. For example, Sagarzazu and Klüver (2017) analysed how competition between parties governing in coalition governments was

portrayed via press releases. In an EU context, Lehner and Rheindorf (2018) looked at Commission press releases and their usage to frame securitizing discourse in Member States. Similarly, the press releases in the corpus of this study are to be consulted to identify possible frames of securitizing language following the war in Ukraine.

Specifically press releases of governments, government agencies and ministries inhibit a unique role. Accordingly, they add to the government's responsibility for accountability by providing data for members of the opposition and the public, while simultaneously giving them an outlet to communicate information on the activities of government. This equips them with an active role in the policy process rather than just a passive channelling of information (Johnson & Haythornthwaite, 1989, p. 100). An important addressee of press releases is nevertheless the national media landscape. Froehlich and Rüdiger (2006) studied the political framing of press releases through the German media during the immigration debate of the early 2000s and found that journalists use the possibility to alter the messaging, specifically if the press releases dealt with aspects outside of the political mainstream. Therefore, the value in purely analysing press releases lies in capturing the essence of what political leaders want to convey before media framing sets in. While their format is usually directed at stakeholders with a deeper knowledge of the issues at hand, they are still generally worded in a way that ordinary citizens will also be able to follow (Rauh, 2023, p. 689). Accordingly, the press releases of the corpus at hand are well suited to trace the framing of the war in Ukraine and its potential connection to concepts of integration in EU foreign policy.

### **3.3 Data Analysis & Operationalization**

The analysis is realized in RStudio using the Quanteda package (Benoit et al., 2018). To draw conclusions on the change in attitudes regarding EU foreign policy integration, topic modelling, sentiment analysis and explorative qualitative analysis will be employed to identify clusters and to trace their changes over time. The methodological triangulation of employing both topic modelling and sentiment analysis together with the explorative qualitative approach is envisioned to have several benefits.

Mainly, such triangulation decreases the biases of the methods employed in this study since the flaws of one can be counterbalanced by the others (Thurmond, 2001, p. 254). On the one hand, structured topic modelling offers a systematic approach to identify the major thematic areas and policy domains relevant to EU integration in the corpus of press releases. This observes if a discourse surrounding tendencies for EU foreign policy integration exists in general and in how

far the *EUint* covariate, which inhibits the willingness for EU CFSP integration, influences this. On the other hand, a sentiment analysis then offers a more detailed look into the underlying attitudes towards EU foreign policy integration. Moreover, the *findThoughts* command of the *stm* package for topic modelling allows for identifying the press releases that account for the determination of the topics. Accordingly, this allows for the qualitative analysis of the selected documents that define the topics related to the EU. Such a deeper look into the data would not have been possible when only utilizing a sentiment analysis approach. To perform this third approach, the top three documents that dominate the composition of the topics are generated. Out of these, one document each is selected for more thorough analysis. These choices are based on the idea that the documents should differ in the time they were published so that differences between the shock of the invasion and the attitudes during the war can be observed. Further, even though the approach is explorative, it is sought to include differing protagonists between those documents to broaden the way and contents in which the notions towards EU CFSP integration are voiced.

This combination, moreover, is well suited to conduct analyses within the different contexts of the speech acts. While sentiment analysis is well suited to be applied to the tendentially more emotional language used in parliament, topic modelling can be used to identify the most salient topics conveyed in the more technically worded press releases. Finally, both methods are supported by the inclusion of frequency analysis such as the identification of the most relevant specific terms used via *topfeature* commands. These are salient to the analysis also for reasons of validity which will be discussed in the following. Accordingly, such frequency calculations assist in analysing the significance of *EUint* over time, independent of sentiment scores and covariate impacts.

The variations of the vector  $c() \leftarrow EUint$  are central to determining any shifts towards political integration in EU CFSP in the German discourse for both the topic modelling and the sentiment analysis. In short, *EUint* is a collection of expressions that resemble language which is in support of further EU CFSP integration. The vector was built based on the theoretical assumptions outlined above. Hence, the definitions of political integration, Europeanization and the explanations surrounding the core decision-making processes in Germany's and the EU's foreign policy were used as the foundation to narrow down the expressions. Therefore, as a starting point general terms such as the German translations of "European Foreign Policy", "European Security Policy", "Common Foreign Security Policy", "foreign policy cooperation" or "foreign policy integration" as well as their abbreviations, if existing, are determined. (see

Table A1). However, also more specific expressions such as “qualified majority voting” are included. The reasoning behind this follows again the conceptualization of EU CFSP, which is mainly decided by unanimity voting. Thus, positive sentiment towards qualified majority voting in the context of foreign policy would also indicate willingness towards a less rigid EU CFSP. Importantly, all expressions were equipped with the glob pattern “\*”. This ensures that all versions of the term regardless of the ending are scored. For example, “sanction\*” would score for “sanction”, “sanctions”, “sanctioned” etc.

Nonetheless, due to the complexity of language and different possibilities to combine expressions, it would not be sufficient to simply trace for such specific nouns, simply because it is highly unlikely that those exact terms are used by policymakers and therefore are not expected to appear often in the documents. Thus, two more lists are included. The first one features terms that hint towards integration more generally such as “integration”, “cooperation” or “unification” (see Table A2). However, utilizing the *tokens\_select* command, these terms are only scored if they appear within a window of ten in the context of the terms of list three and vice versa. This is done to prevent concepts such as “integration” to score in speeches dealing with migration policy. The terms of list three, therefore, simply determine the EU foreign policy context, namely by including expressions like “EU”, “Europe”, and German adjectives for foreign policy, defence policy and armaments policy (see Table A3). By applying the final *EUint* vector in this cross-manner it is expected to include the highest possible number of terms hinting at EU foreign policy integration. A more detailed discussion of this can be found in the segment on validity. The translation of the full vector can be found in Appendix A.

In the following, sentiment analysis and topic modelling are introduced as methods, and it is then accordingly determined how their measures relate to the dependent variable. This implies an operationalization of the research at hand. To operationalize a concept entails “[...] to put it in a form that permits some kind of measurement of variation.” (Hoover & Donovan, 2011, p. 42). This contains specifying the variables that are being observed. Put simply, the independent variables in this analysis are the crisis events in Ukraine as well as the policy changes on the EU level. Indicators would be on the one side reports of armed combat, reports of human rights violations or other accounts of escalating conflict. On the other side, further indicators would be decisions made by the EU institutions and its Member States in reaction to the war such as resolutions on sanctions against Russia or decisions surrounding military aid.

Accordingly, the dependent variables are the changes in sentiment and topics by the German members of the executive as well as the extent to which securitizing language can be detected in the qualitative approach. As explained below, these are indicated by calculated sentiment scores as well as estimated topic proportions. As already mentioned, these variables are analysed with a specific focus on integratory tendencies concerning the EU as hypothesised via the EU crisis literature and MLG theory. Therefore, it is expected that the German foreign policy discourse, in particular, towards political integration in EU foreign policy is positively correlated with the events of crisis and war in Ukraine.

Both Topic Modelling as latent Dirichlet allocation (LDA), as well as Structural Topic Modelling, are used to gain insights into the significance of European integration as a foreign policy crisis response. Via LDA, after specifying the number of topics  $K$ , words can be identified that are most frequently associated with the most prevalent topics in the text corpus. Furthermore, the probability that each document within the corpus is associated with each of the topics can be determined (Blei, 2012, pp. 78-79). Structural Topic Modelling via the *stm* package will broaden the analysis by including metadata, therefore, improving the assignment of words to latent topics in a corpus (Roberts et al., 2019, p. 2). Put simply, this allows linking the variables with different features of text within the framework of topic modelling (ibid., p. 33). For the purpose of this analysis, these clusters aid in identifying the salience of integratory ambitions voiced in the German parliament.

After removing features such as punctuation and stopwords and stemming the corpus, a document-feature matrix can be created. If  $K=0$ , the *stm* function will select the number of significant topics automatically based on the algorithm by Mimno and Lee (2014). Following the narrowing down on the topics of interest, which in this case are topics determined by expressions surrounding European Integration, the *stm* function will offer the words with the highest probability of occurring in the topic and the FREX words, meaning the words that distinguish the topic from all other topics. Furthermore, the effects of the covariates can be estimated to eventually plot both the influence of the discreet and continuous variables. The central covariate in the analysis at hand would be the above-described vector *EUint* that signals positive attitudes towards EU foreign policy integration. Accordingly, differences in the topic salience of this *EUint* vector can be compared to contextualize the importance of European Integration in foreign policy in the executive discourse. Finally, changes over time in the significance of this vector can be plotted, which will aid in answering the hypotheses underlying this analysis.



Another part of this analysis is a sentiment analysis that traces the changes in sentiment towards European Integration voiced by members of the executive in the German parliament. Sentiment analyses of parliamentary speeches have been performed in various national settings ranging from simple word frequency analyses to methods of statistical machine learning (Abercrombie and Batista-Navarro, 2020). The sentiment dictionary used in the analysis at hand was developed by Rauh (2018a) and includes 17330 positive and 19750 negative German sentiment expressions all equipped with a sentiment value between -1 and 1. To calculate the different sentiments of the Bundestag the formula developed by Proksch et al. (2019, pp. 101-103) in which sentiment is calculated as the logged ratio of positive to negative terms is employed:

$$\log \frac{pos + 0.5}{neg + 0.5}$$

The advantage of this approach lies in the fact that the analysis stays at a similar conceptually relevant level and can therefore be adapted to different types of questions. This allows for example to handily switch between portraying changes between or within parties, during different time periods, or on different issues while continuously maintaining comparability.

After applying the sentiment dictionary to the tokenized corpus, a simple *topfeatures* analysis will provide the study with the most frequently used positive and negative terms in this context. Again, analysing these specific terms can be indicative of potential securitizing language. For the sake of the research question, the sentiment analysis is targeted around terms indicating aspirations for further European Integration as included in the *EUint* vector. Depending on the *docvars* of interest, the aggregated sentiment can be calculated by utilizing the above formula to showcase changes in time, between governments or positions of the individuals. The subsequent data visualization is realized via *ggplot2* as outlined in Healy (2019).

### 3.4 Quality criteria

#### *3.4.1 External validity*

External validity refers to the extent to which the results of this study can be generalized, in this case, for other EU Member States (Frambach et al. 2013, p. 552). The N=1 setup of the study is evidently limiting it in its capacity to fully portray a widespread process of Europeanization in foreign policy. As shown in the theoretical part above, political integration is a broad field influenced by a wide array of actors, institutional players and Member States in which considerations of *Realpolitik* may take influence beyond the Constructivist setup of the study

at hand. Furthermore, the extent to which Member States view the potential for EU CFSP integration is dependent on factors such as their own military strength, political culture and industrial base surrounding the production and usage of armaments as well as, of specific relevance in for this subject, the geographic proximity to Russia. Generalizing the results from a large Member State in Western Europe to the context of a small Member State in, for example, the Baltics appears very complicated. Nevertheless, as outlined above, the German case is a highly relevant one to study in this context since the massive changes brought about by the *Zeitenwende* are the perfect encapsulation of a Member State reacting to a foreign policy crisis. The N=1 setup is further substantiated by the framework in which EU CFSP operates, whose legal structure often depends on unanimity voting and therefore puts all Member States individually in influential positions.

In an attempt to increase external validity as much as possible, the theoretical base is built on theories that are not specific to the German case. Accordingly, with any other Member State case study similar hypotheses could be developed and tested. Specifically, the interaction between Member States and the European Union in the Multi-Level Governance framework has been studied extensively and in various policy fields in the past (Bergmann & Müller, 2021; Scott, 2011; Smith, 2004). Despite the country-specific frameworks for action, the theoretical logics inherent to this analysis therefore inhibit transferability.

### *3.4.2 Internal validity*

Internal validity is the extent to which it can be credibly assumed that the changes in the independent variable led to the observed effects (Frambach et al. 2013, p. 552). Accordingly, discussing the internal validity of this research includes considerations on the extent to which cause and effect can be isolated. Given the Constructivist nature of this research that deals with discursive changes, it could be argued that linking the changes in notions stated in speech acts to integratory policy change is difficult. However, it is important to realize that this is not what this study sets out to do. The causal chain inherent to the setup of this research is that the events in Ukraine changed the attitudes of the German decision-makers towards EU CFSP integration and that this change then enables such policy on an EU-level. While this first step is core to the analysis, the latter step is not subject to investigation because it would necessitate a more comprehensive investigation of the specific EU reactions to the crisis and the detailed interplay between the institutional players within Brussels.

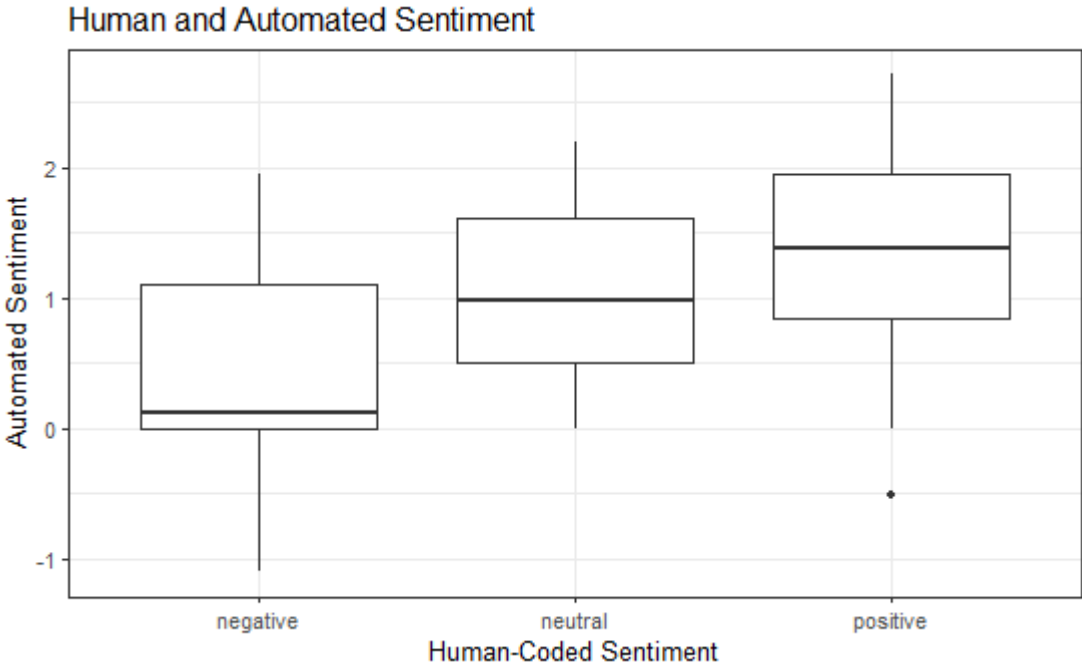
Admittedly, as outlined further below, it is not possible to capture every change in attitudes among policymakers with the tools of this study. However, by picking the two data sets outlined above, it is assumed that a sufficient range of public political statements can be examined in order to trace the most important potential discursive changes. Those are, furthermore, expected to happen due to the underlying assumption explained earlier that public support is a necessary prerequisite prior to integrative steps and therefore must be built by political elites communicating such desires. In the press release data set the isolation of the effect of the events in Ukraine is assured by only including speech acts that specifically refer to the war in Ukraine. For the data set of parliamentary speeches, such direct isolation was not possible due to most speeches simultaneously touching on more than the topic of the war when, for example, linking it to the gas shortages or the assisting of Ukrainian refugees. Nevertheless, in the observed time frame from 2010 to 2022, the events in Ukraine constitute the most significant foreign policy crises faced by the EU. Accordingly, changes of sentiment towards EU foreign policy integration can be assumed to be linked to those crises, in particular in the years that are of most interest such as during the annexation of Crimea in 2014 or the Russian invasion of 2022.

More concretely on the methods used in this study, the targeted sentiment analysis can be validated by human-coding. To do so, a random sample of sentences dealing with European Integration is drawn from the corpus and its sentiment score is coded by hand. Different personal predispositions would still apply such as the knowledge of the text being of political nature or the ability to process negation and irony correctly, but this method can nevertheless aid in uncovering systematic biases (Rauh, 2018b, p. 325). To calculate the correspondence between the two, a sample of 100 sentences was drawn from the fully subset corpus and they were subsequently all manually assigned a sentiment score corresponding to the three categories negative, neutral and positive as portrayed in Figure 1.

The boxplot in Figure 1 below depicts the results of this hand-coding in relation to the automated coding results. More important than the allocation of the scores with the median, which is depicted by the line dividing the boxes, is if the scores of the human-coding fall within the inter-quartile range and the whiskers of the automated coding. These are portrayed by the boxes and the vertical lines emerging from the boxes. This is the case for the negative and neutral scores while for the positive scores an outlier dot can be observed below the inter-quartile range. Accordingly, one can observe high consensus between human and automated coding for negative and neutral statements while human-coding more often tended to score neutrally. As a consequence, a stronger divergence can be seen with the assignment of positive

scores for the sentences, showing that the system tends to score higher than human-coding. Such a positive bias is predicted by Rauh (2018b, p. 336) when validating the German sentiment dictionary. The tendency of the code to score positively should be considered when interpreting the following results. However, as the emphasis in the study lies on tracing changes between years rather than absolute scores and a general overlap can still be observed, the differences in sentiment scores can still be confidently interpreted.

**Figure 1:** Hand-coded sentiment validation



Furthermore, a separate sentiment analysis with the same parameters but targeted towards Russia could validate the results. This way, if assumed that Russian military aggression would worsen the German sentiment towards Russia, it can be checked if simultaneous changes in sentiment towards European Integration appear. Accordingly, it can be shown that external events do significantly impact the sentiment of German governments. The sentiment analysis run on Russia in segment 4.1 yields these expected results and therefore significantly adds to the internal validity of using the sentiment analysis approach on the data set at hand.

The largest point of contention when assessing the internal validity of the study at hand arises from the term list describing the willingness for EU CFSP integration *EUint*. This is due to the complexity and context-dependence of language. Regardless of how the term lists in the *EUint* vector are structured, they will not be able to identify every notion towards EU foreign policy integration by the German executive. Furthermore, simply expanding the lists with more terms

will lead to a blurring of the results and therefore cloud the relationship between independent and dependent variables because unrelated terms will be scored more often. The vector, therefore, has to be as large as possible while maintaining specificity to the issue at hand. As described in more detail in segment 3.3, this was accomplished by combining the concepts surrounding EU foreign with terms more suitable for everyday use centring around integration, cooperation etc. which are however only scored in the linguistic proximity of terms specifying the foreign policy context (see Appendix A). By following this strategy, it is expected that the study covers a broad range of possible linguistic combinations hinting at EU CFSP integration and accordingly contributes to increased internal validity.

Adding to this, it has to be addressed that there are more venues covering public political discourse in Germany and that the study, therefore, does not cover all possible aspects of communication. Most notably, as analysed by Fernandez et al. (2023) in a similar context of the war in Ukraine, news outlets featuring opinion polls offer insightful data on public opinion. Nevertheless, since the focus of this study is on the discursive changes among decision-makers in the German executive, such data was disregarded for the analysis but will be consulted in the discussion of results for further contextualization. Finally, observing both the various forms of expression within the press releases as well as the statements made in the German parliament delivers the vast majority of statements made by the German executive and is therefore well suited for the analysis at hand.

Furthermore, one way to validate topic models consists of creating topic-specific word lists that include terms generally associated with a subset of the generated topics (Ying et al., 2022, p. 573). Similarly to a topic dealing with the European debt crisis that should include word stems such as “bank”, “currenc”, and “greec”, a topic dealing with European Integration in foreign policy should include stems such as “sovereign”, “partner” or “capability”. This validation is performed in combination with the explorative qualitative approach. Via the *findThoughts* command of the *stm* package, it is possible to identify the specific documents that are deemed to characterize the topics. Since the topics of interest for this analysis are the one’s within the data set of press releases that refer to the European Union, it would be, according to the above logic, necessary for them to include terms specific to European Union foreign policy. Moreover, qualitatively analysing the language used on the topic prevalence of foreign policy integration or sentiments voiced in that direction helps in classifying and interpreting the results of the quantitative text analysis. It can be seen that the analysed speeches and press releases had designated paragraphs directed towards the EU and they all referred to the needed changed

future perspectives of EU CFSP due to the Russian war of aggression (Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, 2023); Bundeskanzler 2022f; Bundeskanzler 2022g; Bundeskanzler 2022h). Therefore, the topics containing references to the European Union were correctly identified by the topic modelling and appropriate to be checked for the significance of the *EUint* vector, adding validity to the generated results. Finally, as a basic component of this study, broadening the data basis by including two differing data sets contributes to increased internal validity. Accordingly, it can be validated that events in Ukraine as independent variables have similar effects on the language used in both data sets.

### 3.4.3 Reliability

Reliability can be described as the extent to which the results of this study could be replicated and stay consistent in the course of this process (Frambach et al. 2013, p. 552). The setup of this analysis ensures high reliability. The OpenDiscourse parliamentary speech data set is publicly available at the dedicated GitHub registry (Open Discourse, n.d.) and can be subset to generate the exact same data basis. Applying the formula by Proksch et al. (2019, pp. 101-103) will then also produce the same sentiment scores. Similarly, running the topic modelling on the second data set containing the press releases would return identical results. This is, furthermore, ensured by having set a seed that accompanied the sampling during the coding process and will therefore provide the same significances again.

Sources of variance would, nevertheless, arise in the explorative qualitative approach which deals with the more detailed analysis of selected press releases. Even though these specific press releases are not selected arbitrarily via the *findThoughts* function, the sample size  $k$  can be adjusted which will change the number of documents that are deemed influential for the topics. Accordingly, increasing that number and therefore analysing more press releases in detail could accordingly lead to differing results. However, this approach is not used to give definitive answers to the main research question but rather to contextualize the numerical results given by the quantitative text analysis. Therefore, a slight blurring of these qualitative results by a different sample size of documents analysed does not fundamentally divert the expressive power of the approach.

## 4. Results

This segment outlines the results of the quantitative discourse analysis. First, the results of the different sentiment analyses are illustrated, followed by the results of the topic modelling. The topic modelling is further tied to the explorative qualitative approach. This is due to the topic modelling enabling the identification of the most dominant documents which then are qualitatively investigated. The topic modelling is therefore divided into two parts. The first one is more descriptive and leads into the explorative qualitative approach whereas the second one is of analytical nature dealing with the regression results and topic prevalence over time. Afterward, this segment is then followed by a discussion of the answers to the hypotheses and contextualization of the gathered results.

### 4.1 Sentiment Analysis

First, to test H1, which deals with the changes in sentiment between the annexation of Crimea and the war in 2022, the sentiment scores for the data set containing the parliamentary speeches from 2010 to 2022 are calculated using the formula of Proksch et al. (2019, pp. 101-103) as outlined in segment 3.3. Sentiment scores of  $x > 0$  indicate a positive sentiment towards the vector *EUint* and accordingly signal an affirmative stance towards topics resembling integration in EU CFSP while sentiment scores of  $x < 0$  indicate a negative sentiment and therefore disapproval of such themes. Importantly, Rauh (2018b, p. 336), who built and validated the used German sentiment dictionary, notes that since generally positive sentiment appears to be more easily recognizable and that sentiment scores generally exhibit a bias towards zero, thus interpretation should mainly entail deriving relative rather than absolute inferences from the sentiments scores. This is why the interpretation of the following results primarily highlights the differences between the years rather than the absolute values to trace for changes.

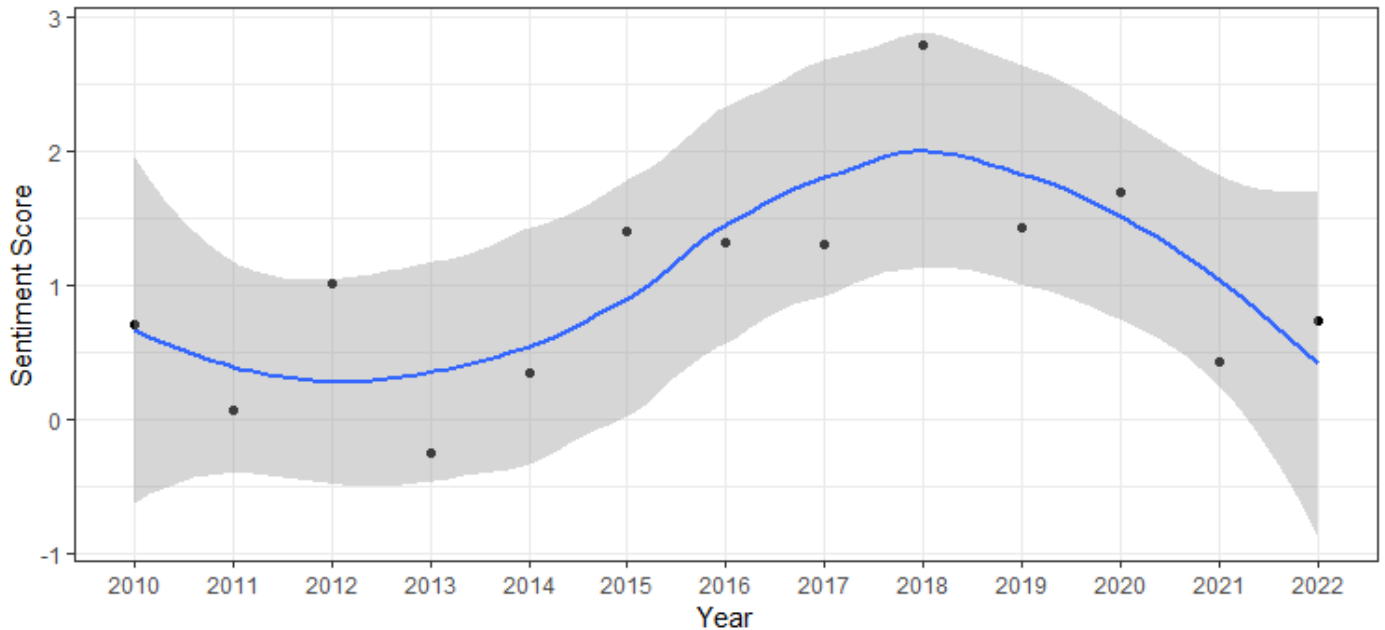
As seen in Table 3, there is a generally positive sentiment towards notions of EU CFSP integration among the members of the German executive. Only in 2013, a negative sentiment score of -0.251 is displayed. Conversely, the peak of sentiment can be observed in 2018 with 2.793.

**Table 3:** Sentiment scores *EUint* (2010-2022)

Doc_id	Year	Sentiment <i>EUint</i>	Doc_id	Year	Sentiment <i>EUint</i>
1	2010	0.70470800	8	2017	1.29928298
2	2011	0.07145896	9	2018	2.79320801
3	2012	1.00866405	10	2019	1.43508453
4	2013	-0.25131443	11	2020	1.69459572
5	2014	0.35139789	12	2021	0.43531807
6	2015	1.40534256	13	2022	0.73206260
7	2016	1.31567679			

The distribution of these scores along the timeframe is shown in Figure 2 below. The y-axis indicates the aggregated sentiment score and the x-axis the years. The dots within the graph resemble the captured sentiment scores. Again, the smoothed graph showcases this generally positive sentiment towards EU CFSP integration. After an initial decline from 2010 to around 2013 the graph steadily increases until its peak in 2018 before it decreases again towards 2022.

**Figure 2:** Aggregated Sentiment towards EU CFSP integration (ParlSpeech, 2010-2022)



In the context of the EU crisis literature which postulates the events in Ukraine as the independent variable, the smoothed graph does not paint a distinct picture. Accordingly, the smoothed sentiments around 2014, the year of the annexation of Crimea, and the invasion of

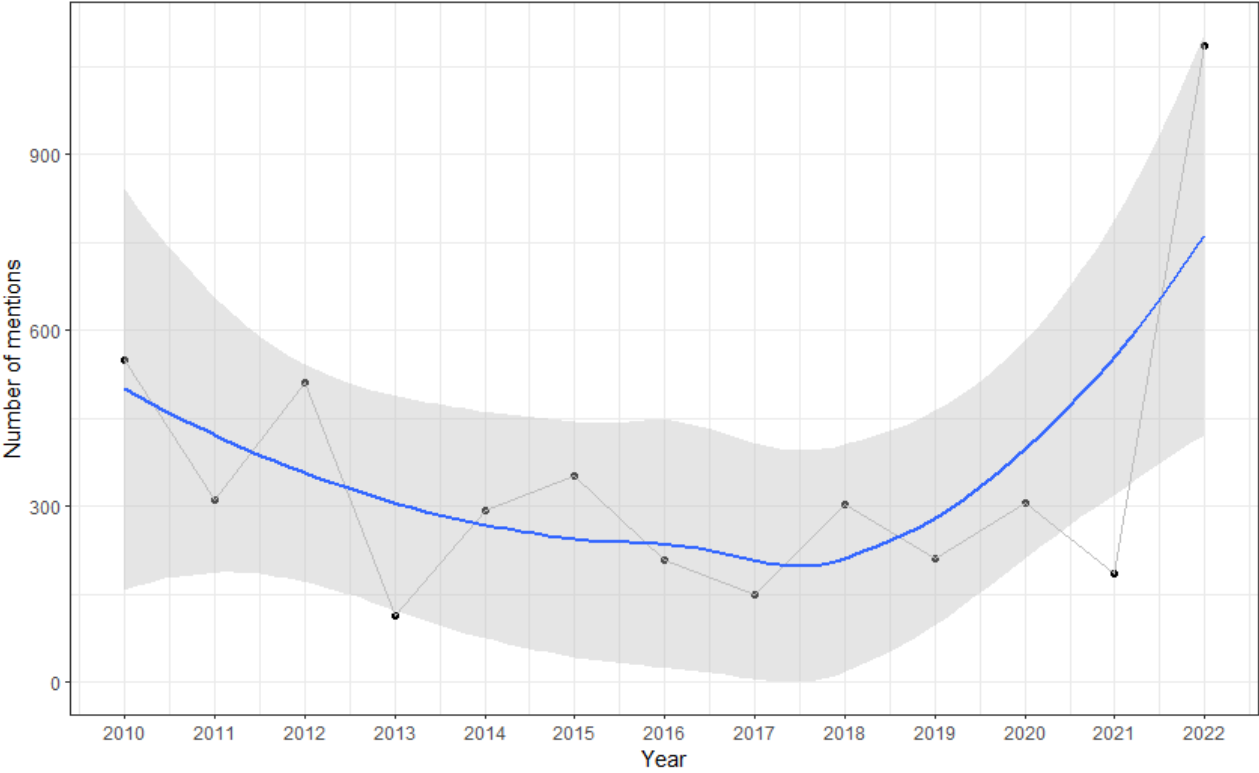


2022 appear similarly slightly above 0 and positive. Nevertheless, that might be misleading because the aggregated sentiment score in 2022 of 0.732 is double the score of 2014 with 0.351 which would indicate a shift due to the war of 2022 as expected in H1. However, the dispute about the peninsula is not limited to the year of the annexation in 2014 but must be rather understood as a dynamic conflict which, in the form of the so-called Russo-Ukrainian war, seamlessly transposed into the war of 2022, even though the dimensions changed drastically (Welfens, 2022, p. 5). Therefore, when viewing 2014 as a starting point, the sentiments towards further EU CFSP would have been consistently rising until 2018 before starting to drop off in 2021 and 2022. The movement of the graph is, moreover, heavily influenced by the peak in 2018. However, different explanations fail to capture this magnitude. It could be argued that the rising tension in the Azov Sea and Kerch Strait during the fall of 2018 (Rettman, 2018) influenced the sentiment, however, this would not compare to the crises of 2014 and 2022. Even if not situated directly within EU CFSP, the Brexit negotiations might have impacted this peak. Since the terminology is adjacent due to the membership issue similarly dealing with questions of autonomy and sovereignty it could be that the negotiations of the withdrawal agreement in 2018 impacted the sentiment (Larik, 2020, p. 446). Again, however, this should then also have been reflected in 2020 as the year of the definitive Brexit. Accordingly, the primary sentiment analysis does not yield the expected results. While the fact that the sentiment score of EU CFSP integration in 2022 is higher than in 2014 would fit the expected reaction caused by the war in Ukraine, this finding does not hold enough value when compared to the other peaks within the timeframe.

Nevertheless, a clearer picture of this somewhat muddled issue arises when plotting for the frequencies of *EUint* within the parliamentary speech data set as in Figure 3 below. The graph shows the change in the number of mentions of terms from the *EUint* vector along the x-axis portraying the time from 2010 to 2022. While for the main duration, it is a constant up and down movement with the slump in 2013 with 114, the graph skyrockets in 2022 to 1086 mentions. Importantly, this rise in mentions is approximately congruent to the number of speeches held in the years from 2010 to 2022. Table B1 (see Appendix B) shows that there is little fluctuation in the number of speeches in the most important period from the annexation of Crimea in 2014 to the war in 2022. Interestingly, with 312 speeches in 2022, the year 2022 includes fewer speeches than 2020 or 2019 and severely less than 2014 which had 471 speeches. Accordingly, this makes the shift in 2022 even more consequential for the salience of discourse surrounding EU foreign policy integration.

Hence, it can be argued that the salience of the issue strongly corresponds to the events of 2022 while there is no noticeable change during the time of the annexation of Crimea. Interestingly, the dip in frequencies is parallel to the lowest sentiment detected in 2013. This would indicate that the salience of a topic goes hand in hand with a worse sentiment. However, this assumption does not hold true for the peak in sentiment in 2018 and the medium-high frequencies depicted in Figure 3. In conclusion, a major shift in issue salience of considerations towards EU CFSP integration from the past decade to 2022 is apparent, therefore, adding support for H1. However, this is not accompanied by a similar shift in sentiment. The possible underlying reasons for that will be discussed in segment 4.3.

**Figure 3:** Frequency of *EUint* (ParlSpeech, 2010-2022)



The effects of the war in 2022 can also be seen when analysing the general sentiment towards the European Union. When checking *topfeatures*, i.e., the most frequently scored positive and negative terms, it can be seen that between 2010 and 2022 the most positive terms centre around concepts of development, investment and responsibility (see Table C1). The most frequent negative terms were associated with crisis, debt or refugees (see Table C2). However, this picture changes when only observing the *topfeatures* for 2022 in isolation. Then, security, solidarity and support climb up in the list of most frequent positive terms (see Table C3), while the negative terms are dominated by war, challenge and attack (see Table C4). This *topfeatures*

analysis further indicates that the sentiments were also driven by the scoring of complex concepts that fit the war context and not just simple expressions of general feelings.

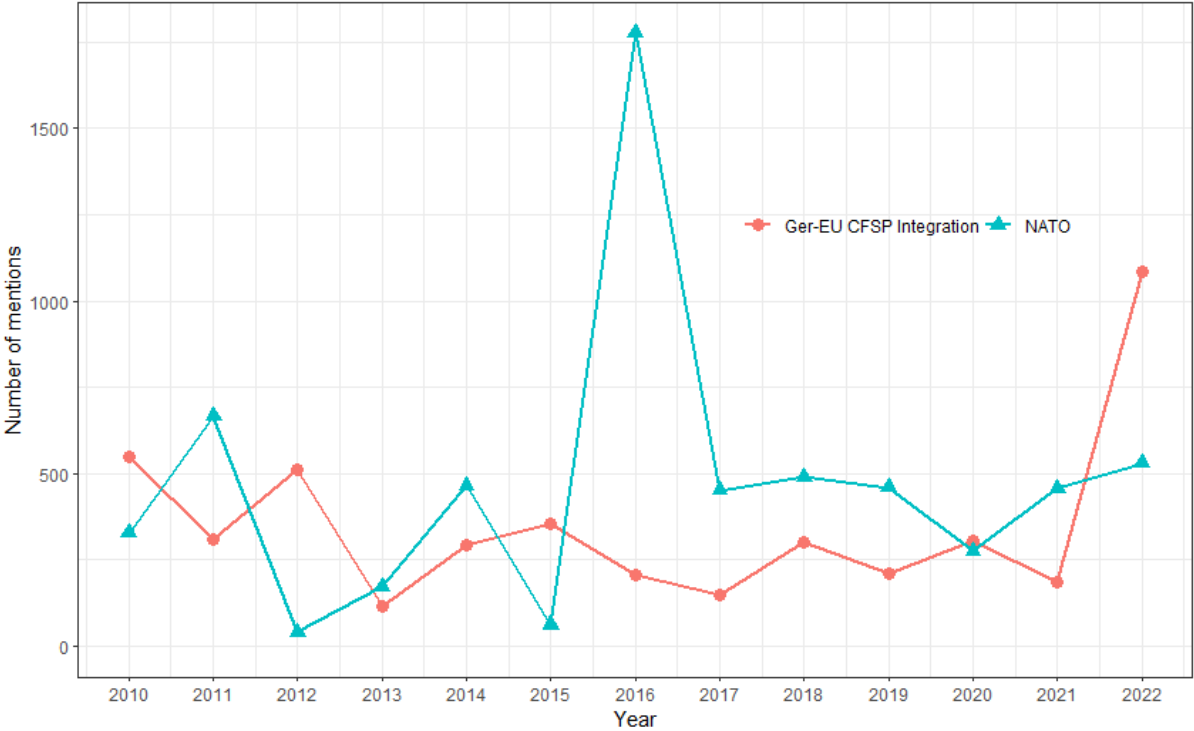
Moreover, to check the relevance of this discussion more thoroughly, a proxy with a similar analysis for checking for the relevance of discourse surrounding NATO is made. The  $c() \leftarrow Ger\_NATO$  consists of a variation of terms resembling the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation such as military alliance or Atlantic Pact. Comparing this with the significance of EU CFSP integration shall aid in assessing the relevance of the discourse surrounding the issue of this study more extensively. Importantly it is expected that the NATO vector would score easier and more frequently since the mentioning of NATO already implies the context of defence and security policy whereas just looking for the EU as an organization itself is not possible in a similar way since it involves a broad variety of policy areas e.g., agriculture and health that would completely distort the analysis. As NATO, therefore, is representing the most important competing international organization in matters of security next to the EU for Member States like Germany, comparing the salience of it to an integrative discourse in Germany serves as insightful benchmarking.

Still, even though it is expected that the simple NATO vector would score way more frequently the following distribution arises. Figure 4 below depicts both frequencies and displays for the majority of the time the expected dominance of the NATO vector with a very high peak in 2016 of 1776 mentions. This might be explained by the 2016 NATO summit in Warsaw which included the decision to deploy four combat battalions in Poland and the Baltic States (Belkin, 2016, p. 3). This decision was subject to intensive debate in Germany as it involved the sending of Leopard 2 tanks to Lithuania (Knight, 2016) as well as the enhanced usage of German territory as a transit area for troop deployment towards the East (Deutscher Bundestag, 2016). It is, moreover, very likely that the election of Donald Trump as the President of the United States and the uncertainties regarding the trans-Atlantic defence pact arising from his public statements heavily contributed to the salience of themes surrounding NATO in the German political discourse (McCurry, 2016).

In contrast to that and similarly to the frequencies of *EUint*, the annexation of Crimea does not significantly impact the salience of NATO in the discourse. In the years following 2016, NATO continues to score higher than the *EUint* vector, but the year 2022 distinctively disrupts this dynamic with the vector resembling positive attitudes towards EU CFSP integration scoring approximately double the amount compared to NATO. It is remarkable, that apparently the

Russian invasion of 2022 severely impacted the issue salience of EU CFSP integration in the German parliament and barely influenced the quantitative discourse surrounding NATO. A more detailed debate of this finding is located in the discussion following the portrayal of the results.

**Figure 4:** Frequency of *EUint* compared to *NATO* (ParlSpeech, 2010-2022)

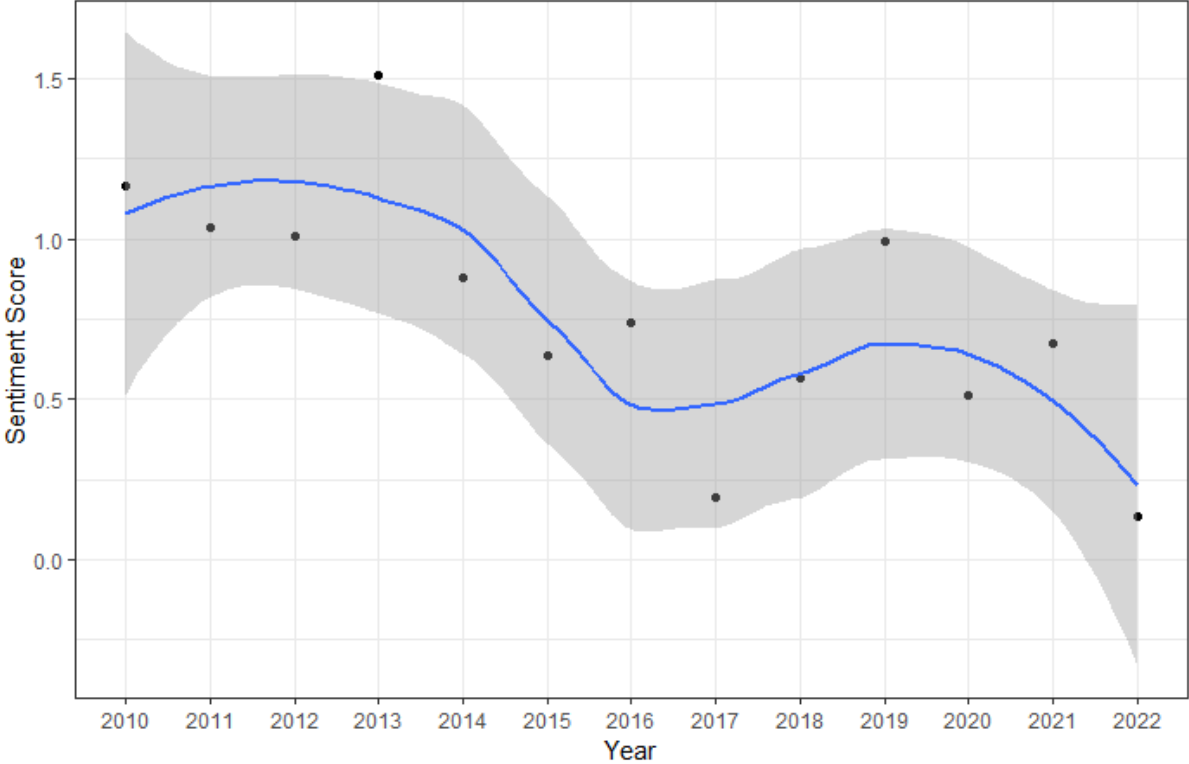


As a last sentiment analysis, the sentiment towards Russia from 2010 to 2022 was plotted. This serves the purpose of checking for overlapping changes with the previous results as well as validating the method used. Thus, waging a war of aggression against a neighbouring country must negatively impact the sentiment of the German parliament. If not, the method would be flawed to be used in this context. Figure 5 below depicts the movement of the smoothed graph of sentiment scores along the timeline. The vector  $c() \leftarrow Ger\_Rus$  contains terms that can be used to describe Russia on the international scene such as “Russian Federation” or “Putin”. Note that the range of the y-axis differs from the y-axis in Figure 2. This is a conscious decision based on the fact that the comparison of absolute values of sentiment scores between different subjects of analysis is nonsensical. As pointed out by Rauh (2018b, p. 336), the interpretation of sentiment scores should be mainly limited to relative differences within the same unit of analysis. By changing the level of analysis from the *EUint* vector to the terms relating to Russia *Ger\_Rus*, completely different scores arise but not because the factual sentiment is necessarily better or worse but because two different concepts are highlighted. One refers to a complex collection of terms hinting at EU foreign policy integration and the other one describes a

country. As pointed out earlier, the most insightful interpretation of these sentiment scores arises when portraying the changes along the timeline. Those are best visualized by keeping the range of the y-axis in proportion to the results of the specific analysis and not forcing numerical comparability with a different level of analysis. Nevertheless, interpreting rising, stagnating or falling trends between different vectors is still enabled just not based on the absolute values of the sentiment scores.

The graph of Figure 5 below indicates what is expected from the foreign policy exerted by Russia in the last decade. Accordingly, the sentiment starts to decrease with the annexation of Crimea, slowly recovers afterward and then plummets with the beginning of the war in 2022 to the lowest score in total of 0.132.

**Figure 5:** Sentiment towards Russia (ParlSpeech, 2010-2022)



The most interesting takeaway in this regard is that this curve to some extent mirrors inversely the graph depicting the issue salience of notions of EU CFSP integration but not the graph depicting its sentiment. On the one hand, the crisis induced by the war of 2022 affects the sentiment of the German parliament as shown in the case of Russia but on the other hand, it fails to significantly impact the sentiment towards EU CFSP integration even though the issue salience rose significantly in 2022. Segment 4.3. will address the possible causes for this. In conclusion, the different sentiment analyses highlighted a generally positive sentiment voiced

by the German executive towards EU foreign policy integration even though that did not appear to be influenced by the events in Ukraine as expected. Nevertheless, a shift in the issue salience of EU CFSP integration is detected, which gains in significance when compared to the frequency of mentions of NATO.

## 4.2 Topic Modelling

### *4.2.1 Descriptive Topic Modelling and explorative qualitative approach*

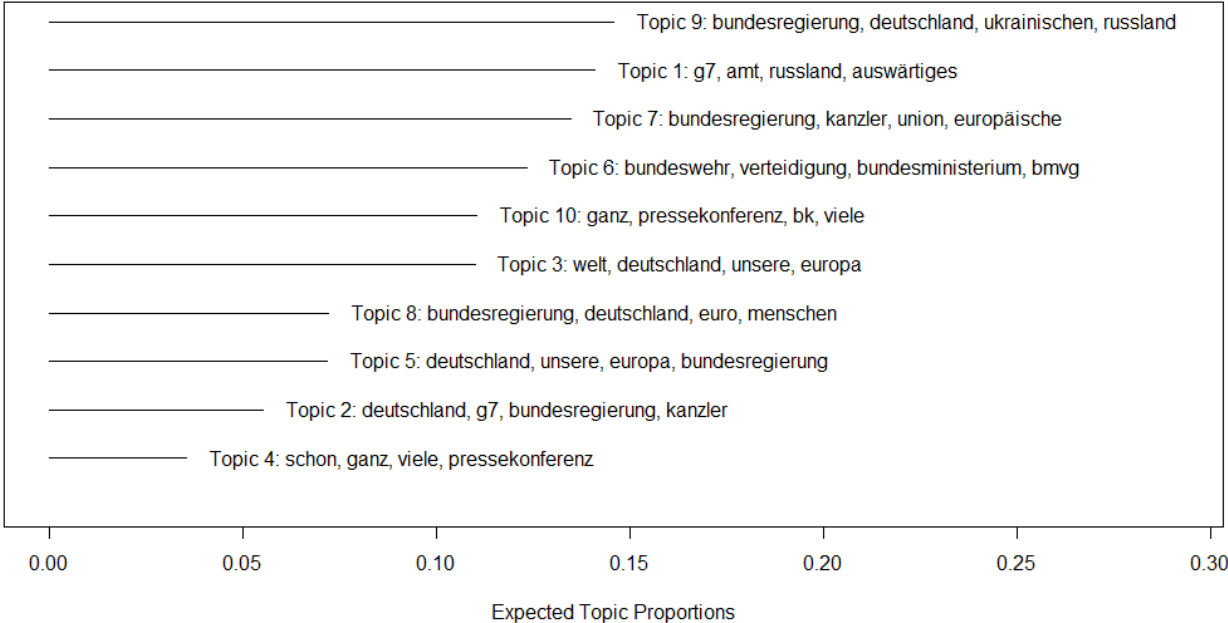
To trace in more detail how the topic of EU foreign policy integration is observable in the year of the invasion 2022, topic modelling is employed with the data set containing the various forms of press releases issued by the German executive from February 2022 to March 2023. This enables answering the second and third hypotheses of this study. The former dealing with the changes of the integratory tendencies in response to the violence of the 2022 war and the latter with the investigation of the specific potentially securitizing language that is accompanying these changes.

In general, finding any relevance of the European Union among the press releases in the form of significant topics serves as a first indicator for a discourse surrounding political integration. From that point on, selected documents are analysed qualitatively to investigate in which contexts the EU discourse happened and in how far notions towards EU CFSP integration are voiced. After that, these same topics can be analytically studied via the regression model of the *estimateEffect* function to see how far the integratory discourse inherent to the *EUint* vector is significant. More importantly, the changes over time would then allow drawing conclusions on Hypothesis 2, investigating if the severity of the events in Ukraine changes the significance of discourse surrounding further EU foreign policy integration.

As a first step, with the method of initialization being set to latent Dirichlet allocation and a set seed to draw reproducible samples, the ten topics with the highest expected topic proportions in the data set are generated (see Figure 6). Each topic is represented by a set of words that are most strongly associated with it and the expected topic proportions indicate the relative prevalence of each topic within the corpus. Topics 3, 5 and 7 have been identified to be linked to the European Union and therefore warrant further investigation since their terms with the highest probability of occurring in the text refer to the European Union in contrast to the other topics (see Figure 6). Furthermore, checking for the FREX-terms, which constitute words that distinguish the topics from all other topics, reveals issues of importance for the analysis such

as “European Council” for topic 3, “*Zeitenwende*” for topic 5 and references to countries in the European neighbourhood in topic 7 (see Appendix D, Table D1). Normally when applying topic modelling, these topics of interest would now be labelled to check for differences between them. However, in this analysis, their examination is conducted in a specific environment since the data set has already been subset to the context of the war in Ukraine. Therefore, when checking for the effect of the *EUint* as a covariate in this targeted topic modelling, it is of interest if the covariate exerts influence within the topics that deal with the European Union and not necessarily how that differs between those topics.

**Figure 6:** Top topics (press release data set)



By applying the command *findThoughts*, the *stm* package allows to identify the specific documents that are of central importance in defining these topics. In the following, a closer inspection of selected documents in an explorative qualitative approach is utilized to gain a deeper understanding of the language used by the German executive within the original context. It seeks to detect notions of EU foreign policy integration and how those are framed. As outlined in the theoretical framework, it will additionally seek to identify notions of Securitization framed in a way to enable EU CFSP integration. Doing so, the following part delivers results for H3, which deals with the specific expressions used by the German executive. After initially identifying the top three documents that dominate the composition of the topics, one each was selected for further analysis while considering diversity in the protagonist and the timing of the

speech acts. The differing points in time shall allow explorative inferences of changes of notions for example between the beginning of the war and moments one year into the war.

Firstly, as a speech both held in the German parliament and communicated via press releases, therefore existent in both data sets, Olaf Scholz' *Zeitenwende* appears as most prevalent to be analysed and is unsurprisingly identified by *findThoughts* as one of the most representative documents of topic 5. It was held as a government declaration on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February of 2022 and therefore in immediate proximity to the Russian invasion of Ukraine (Bundeskanzler, 2022f). Firstly, he states that Putin's actions necessitate a new era in international politics by abandoning the 50-year-old status quo security structure. He further highlights how this conflict threatens the security of Europe as a whole and not just of Ukraine<sup>3</sup> (ibid.). In other passionate language, he justifies the unprecedented military spending by claiming that Germany is willing to do "whatever it takes"<sup>4</sup> (ibid.) to secure peace in Europe. With more direct reference to EU projects, he emphasizes that the next generation of jets and tanks should be built with European partners in Europe and that this is of "upmost priority"<sup>5</sup> (ibid.). This tackles a broader issue of common procurement which was in the course of the war picked up by the European Commission in July 2022 as a proposal for the European defence industry reinforcement through common procurement act (EDIRPA). This short-term instrument is envisioned to incentivise EU Member States to procure defence products jointly in the pursuit of addressing critical capability gaps (European Commission, 2022). If these steps are viewed in a causal manner, Scholz hereby directly signalled openness for deeper EU CFSP integration, even though the common procurement of weapons does not necessarily require the shifting of legal sovereignty. Finally, Scholz summarizes his paragraph on the EU by highlighting that Europe is the framework for action in this crisis and not Member States' solo efforts. In this context, he verbatim states that the crisis is not just a challenge but inhibits the chance for a strengthening of Europe sustainably and long term<sup>6</sup> (ibid.). It remains unclear, however, if he continuously

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<sup>3</sup> German original: "Tatsächlich aber will er gerade den Kontinent mit Waffengewalt in altbekannte Einflussphären teilen. Das hat Folgen für die Sicherheit in Europa." (Bundeskanzler, 2022f).

<sup>4</sup> German original: "Was für die Sicherung des Friedens in Europa gebraucht wird, das wird getan." (ibid.).

<sup>5</sup> German original: "Darum ist es mir zum Beispiel so wichtig, dass wir die nächste Generation von Kampfflugzeugen und Panzern gemeinsam mit europäischen Partnern und insbesondere Frankreich hier in Europa bauen. Diese Projekte haben oberste Priorität für uns." (ibid.).

<sup>6</sup> German original: "Die Zeitenwende trifft nicht nur unser Land; sie trifft ganz Europa. Und auch darin stecken Herausforderung und Chance zugleich. Die Herausforderung besteht darin, die Souveränität der Europäischen Union nachhaltig und dauerhaft zu stärken. [...] Europa ist unser Handlungsrahmen. Nur wenn wir das begreifen, werden wir vor den Herausforderungen unserer Zeit bestehen." (Bundeskanzler, 2022f).



refers to “Europe” instead of the “European Union” to soften the political commitment inherent to such statements or if it is to include Ukraine linguistically in the European family. With regards to Securitization, this speech follows Wæver (1989, pp. 42-43) by making promises to protect to domestic referent objects. Interestingly, the speech does not follow the theoretical expectations of making threats to the outside aggressor. In summary, the speech utilizes the frame of an existential threat to Europe to simultaneously highlight that Germany’s security is also in danger. This was both used to justify the historically increased armament spending in Germany as well as increased cooperation within the EU.

Also deemed influential by the *findThoughts* function are the press releases concerning the Munich Security Conference 2023 such as the speech by defence minister Pistorius on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February. It is noteworthy that this is about one year after the invasion of 2022. In a specific paragraph denoted to the European Union he argues that the *Zeitenwende* shall also be “a driving force for our Common European Security and Defence Policy” (Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, 2023). More specifically he claims that common strength must be reached via “more integrated defence efforts” (ibid.). This usage of the direct terminology of integration appears as novel across other speech acts and was not identified in the quantitative analysis even though it resembles a clear example of a positive attitude towards EU CFSP integration. Furthermore, he references more cooperation in common procurement projects and finally goes on to state that “this includes a policy for arms exports that facilitates cooperation in this field” (ibid.). Again, surprisingly Pistorius goes on to directly touch the highly sensitive topic of weapons exports by suggesting reform in the field, which as outlined in segment 3., is directly concerned with questions of national sovereignty. Finally, justifying the German investments he builds the argumentative bridge to Europe saying, “To us, national defence equals collective defence!” (ibid.). If this is interpreted with his prior remarks, then it fits the idea of Securitization as in the definition by Sperling and Webber (2016, p. 236), “process by which speech acts position particular issues as threats and, as a consequence, provide legitimacy and reason to policies taken in response”. Framing the unavoidable preservation of national security as something that requires collective defence, it could be argued that this implies a closer and potentially more integrated EU CFSP.

Further deemed influential by the *findThoughts* function is a press conference between Olaf Scholz and the Finnish Prime Minister at the time Sanna Marin on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2022 that references preparations for the upcoming Council summit. Scholz claims that the EU has to

become more resilient and sovereign<sup>7</sup> in response to the Russian war of aggression (Bundeskanzler, 2022g). This is however followed up by emphasizing better coordination with the USA and NATO. Also, the newly adopted EU Strategic Compass is told to serve the purpose of giving the CFSP a clear direction and a new boost<sup>8</sup> while he does not mention specific integratory steps to achieve that (ibid.). Finally, a press conference with Roberta Metsola and Olaf Scholz on the 22 of March 2022 was identified (Bundeskanzler, 2022h). Interestingly he again highlights the necessity for a more resilient and sovereign EU, claiming the war in Ukraine also leads to a *Zeitenwende* of the EU but follows this up with the example of needed EU independence in questions of energy supply rather than mentions of CFSP cooperation. With respect to the question of Securitization, Scholz funds these demands based on the duty to better protect the citizens of Europe.<sup>9</sup> (ibid.).

In conclusion, even though these speeches only portray a small excerpt, they regardless uncovered interestingly direct references and positive sentiments regarding the possibilities of EU CFSP integration. They all have a strong need to justify why Germany now invests so heavily in weapons production in common which is due to the country's historical perception as a civil power (Kirste & Maull, 1996, pp. 300-302). However, it is interesting from the perspective of building the data set that the novel agreement for Common Procurement of Ammunition made in March 2023 (EDA, 2023) is not picked up in any press releases by the three institutions observed. This creates some tension with regards to the voicing of willingness for EU foreign policy integration on the one hand, and the neglect of taking a stance on such issues towards the domestic audience when they materialize on a European level. After this explorative qualitative approach, the study will continue to showcase the quantitative method of estimating the effect of the *EUint* vector in the prevalence of documents in the press release data set.

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<sup>7</sup> German original: „Der russische Angriffskrieg in der Ukraine markiere eine Zeitenwende – auch für die Europäische Union, die resilienter und souveräner werden müsse.“ (Bundeskanzler, 2022g)

<sup>8</sup> German original: „Er soll der Gemeinsamen Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik der EU eine klare Richtung und neuen Schub geben.“ (Bundeskanzler, 2022g).

<sup>9</sup> German original: Darüber hinaus geht es darum, die EU souveräner und resilienter gestalten, um die Bürgerinnen und Bürger Europas besser zu schützen. Denn der Krieg in der Ukraine bedeute eine Zeitenwende auch für die Europäische Union. Daher müsse die EU in Energiefragen schneller unabhängig werden.“ (Bundeskanzler, 2022h).

### 4.2.2 Analytical Estimation of Effect

The analytical results of the topic modelling are presented in the following. By including the *EUint* vector as document-level meta data it is possible to set it as the prevalence in the formula of the structural topic modelling and generate regression results. Doing so, it can be observed how far terms connected to EU foreign policy integration are significantly influencing the proportion of the topic in the whole corpus. This is done in pursuit of answering Hypothesis 2, which asserts that in the course of 2022 to 2023, the violence of the conflict led to increasingly positive attitudes towards EU CFSP integration among the German executive. The significance of the *EUint* vector in the topics of the corpus that have been linked to the European Union would deliver support for this argument. After assessing the general prevalence of the *EUint* vector within the topics, the significant results are plotted along the time axis from February 2022 to March 2023.

The *estimateEffect* function accordingly delivered the regression results that are showcased in Tables 4, 5 and 6 below. The time variable is divided into ten units since the algorithm can only deliver results for variables in a factorial format as opposed to the numerical one. Regardless, it is still possible to gauge the differences between months when noting that s(date)1 resembles the first 1.4 months of the data set etc. Accordingly, the time frames have been split as can be seen in the tables below. Note, as explained above, all three of these topics are topics with the European Union as a subject in a subset of press releases about the war in Ukraine.

**Table 4:** estimateEffect regression results topic 3 (press release data set)

Coefficients	Estimate	Std. Error	Pr(> t )
(Intercept)	0.056079	0.200895	0.780
EUint	-0.002726	0.002301	0.238
02-03/2022	-0.097905	0.334743	0.770
03-04/2022	0.150082	0.219923	0.496
04-05/2022	-0.085340	0.266078	0.749
05-07/2022	0.257623	0.229940	0.264
07-08/2022	0.032992	0.251006	0.896
08-10/2022	-0.021077	0.232307	0.928
10-11/2022	0.125013	0.248992	0.616
11-01/2022-23	0.182702	0.281496	0.517
01-02/2023	0.055608	0.280712	0.843
02-03/2023	-0.032958	0.267141	0.902

**Table 5:** estimateEffect regression results topic 5 (press release data set)

Coefficients	Estimate	Std. Error	Pr(> t )
(Intercept)	-0.197441	0.154676	0.2034
EUint	0.002253	0.001752	0.2000
02-03/2022	0.552509	0.267642	0.0403 *
03-04/2022	0.229254	0.175837	0.1939
04-05/2022	0.214009	0.203957	0.2954
05-07/2022	0.179319	0.173164	0.3017
07-08/2022	0.273921	0.196583	0.1651
08-10/2022	0.245507	0.188320	0.1939
10-11/2022	0.246518	0.188641	0.1929
11-01/2022-23	0.201383	0.229221	0.3808
01-02/2023	0.391502	0.227653	0.0871
02-03/2023	0.219017	0.215883	0.3116

**Table 6:** estimateEffect regression results topic 7 (press release data set)

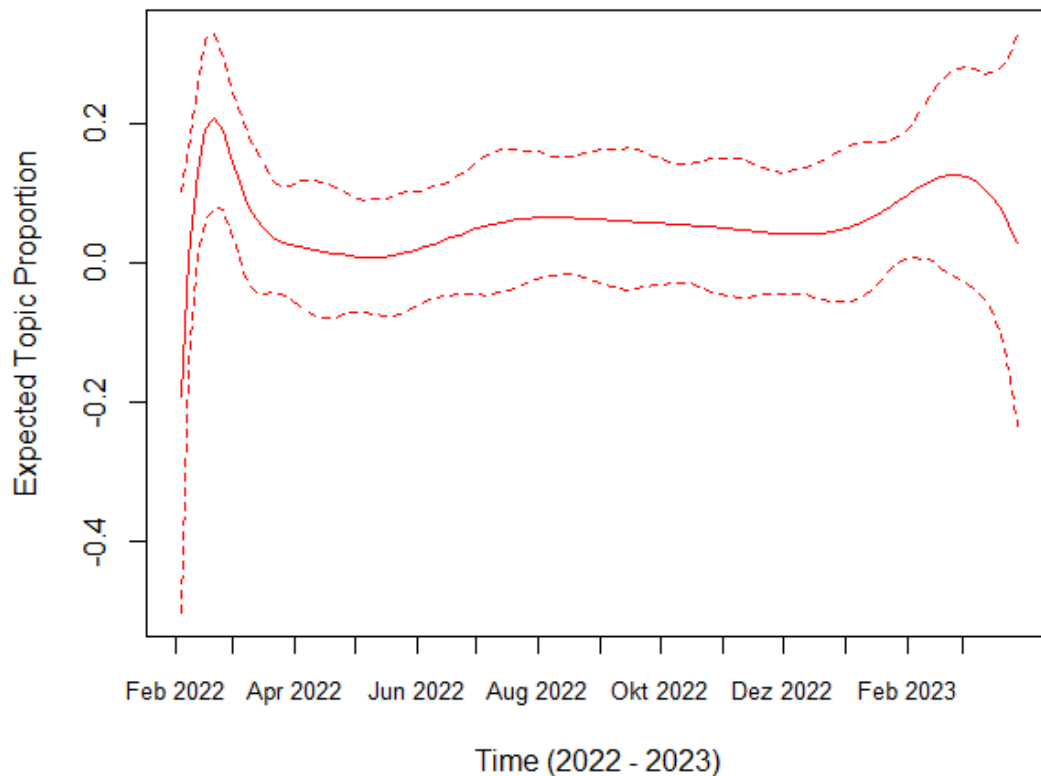
Coefficients	Estimate	Std. Error	Pr(> t )
(Intercept)	0.334204	0.240535	0.166
EUint	-0.002384	0.002473	0.336
02-03/2022	-0.328345	0.377210	0.385
03-04/2022	-0.185527	0.270808	0.494
04-05/2022	-0.073207	0.301739	0.809
05-07/2022	-0.101781	0.272432	0.709
07-08/2022	-0.215446	0.301468	0.476
08-10/2022	-0.296872	0.272176	0.277
10-11/2022	-0.061451	0.288703	0.832
11-01/2022-23	-0.306369	0.322471	0.343
01-02/2023	-0.303895	0.310174	0.328
02-03/2023	-0.283985	0.303707	0.351

Therefore, the differences between the topics are not as important as the prevalence of *EUint* in general, which is why they are not specifically labelled. The estimated coefficient for the *EUint* covariate in topic 3 is -0.002726 with a standard error of 0.002301. The t-value is -1.184, and the p-value is 0.238. The p-value above the significance level of 0.05 indicates that there is not enough evidence to conclude that the *EUint* covariate has a significant effect on the prevalence of topic 3. In other words, the presence or absence of terms related to EU foreign policy integration *EUint* does not appear to significantly influence the prevalence of topic 3. Furthermore, the coefficients from February 2022 to March 2023 have p-values above the significance level of 0.05, indicating that the temporal effects at those time points are not statistically significant. This suggests that there is no significant temporal trend or pattern in the prevalence of topic 3 over time. Albeit with different numerical results, the same holds true for the prevalence of *EUint* in topic 7. Only topic 5 paints a slightly different picture. Again, the p-value is above the significance level of 0.05 which indicates on a baseline *EUint* does not have a significant effect on the prevalence of topic 5. However, the estimated coefficient of *EUint* in  $s(\text{date})_1$  resembling February-March 2022 of 0.553 is supported by a p-value of 0.040 which is below the significance level of 0.05, signalling that the prevalence of topic 5 at the first time point is significantly different from zero. This suggests that there is a temporal trend or pattern in the prevalence of topic 5 at the initial time point.

This temporal pattern is depicted in Figure 7 below which shows the regression results of the estimated effect of the *EUint* vector on the topic proportions. This is plotted on the x-axis along the months ranging from February 2022 to March 2023. The topic proportions of topic 5 spike at the beginning of the time frame in February and March, then continue in a very stable manner

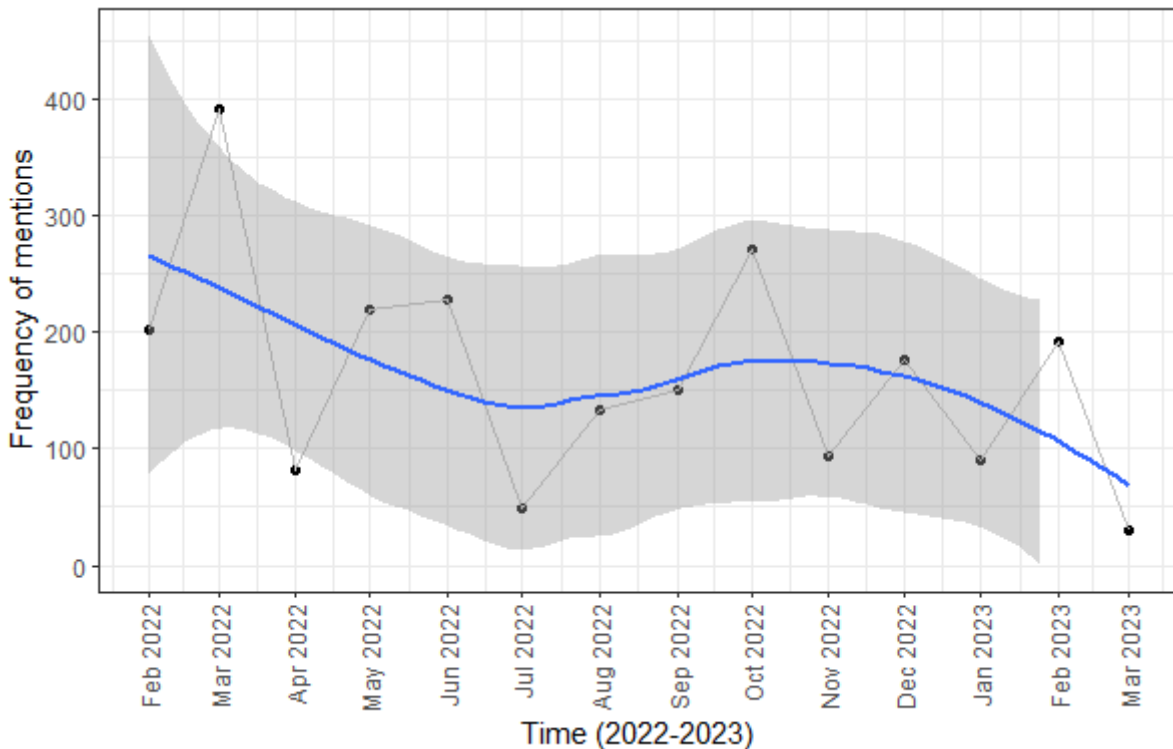
and dip towards the end of the observed timeframe. As described above, the timeframe February-March 2022 is expected to portray a significant effect on the prevalence of topic 5. In other words, terms of the vector  $EU_{int}$  significantly influence the prevalence of topic 5 in the first 1.4 months of the observation period.

**Figure 7:** Expected topic proportions topic 5 (press release data set, 2022-2023)



From the theoretical framework and specifically the literature on Multi-Level Governance, it was expected that the violence exerted in the course of the war positively influenced notions pointing towards further EU foreign policy integration among the German executive. This expectation is captured in H2. The first instance of the violence wielded is simply the beginning of the war in February which would be resembled in the spike seen in the graph. Furthermore, the most striking example of such violence are the alleged war crimes committed in Bucha in March 2022 (OHCHR, 2022). Next to extensive reports in German media (Tagesschau, 2022; Hochstätter, 2022; T-online, 2022), the issue was also directly addressed by the foreign ministry (Auswärtiges Amt, 2022) and the Chancellery (Bundeskanzler, 2022e). For topic 5, this expectation would be confirmed as it can be seen that the proportions are still above average during March 2022 albeit on a declining slope.

**Figure 8:** Frequency of *EUint* (press release data set, 2022-2023)



To further investigate this finding and to identify the changes within 2022 to 2023 implied by Hypothesis 2, similar to the sentiment analysis of the parliamentary speech acts, the issue salience of the *EUint* vector in the press release data set is plotted in Figure 8 above. The figure depicts the frequency of the usage of terms of the *EUint* vector on the y-axis and their distribution along the timeframe from February 2022 to March 2023 on the x-axis. The climax can be found in March 2022 with 391 mentions and the lowest frequency is detected in March 2023 with only 31 mentions. In general, the smoothed graph shows a downward movement from the beginning of the invasion in February 2022 with a small recovery due to a spike in October 2022 followed by further flattening towards the end of the timeframe. These findings fit the above considerations of the impact of the events in Ukraine in early 2022 on the prevalence of *EUint* in topic 5. The peak in March 2022 further supports the notion that the violence exerted in Bucha and the domestic discussion of it increased the salience of discourse surrounding EU foreign policy integration. Drawing a straight causal connection between singular events and the change in discourse should, however, be done with caution. The peak early in the year 2022 can also be simply tied to the ongoing disturbance caused by the beginning of the war. Nevertheless, this would show that the response to the crisis-induced shock among German members of the executive stemming from the invasion of February 2022 was a heightened emphasis on European solutions and a shifting of the discourse outside of the

national arena. The subsequent slow decline in times in which the situation became relatively under control and fears of Kyiv being rapidly captured decreased would match this string of argumentation.

These findings are further supported by a keyword-in-context *kwic* analysis, which was applied to identify the most commonly used terms surrounding the *EUint* vector in a window of five. Note that these results are cleared of stopwords and punctuation (see Appendix E, Table E1). Unsurprisingly, “Ukraine” in combination with “support” features the highest in the list. “Germany” and “sanctions” appear, however, on a comparable frequency. The frequent mentioning of sanctions, as a tool that is primarily coordinated by the European Union and not the Member States (Art. 215 TFEU) hints towards the emphasis of the European-level response to the crisis. Interestingly, the United Nations are mentioned more often than specific references to the European Union were made. The high frequency of mentions of “Russia”, “war” and “security” additionally validate the usage of the *EUint* vector by proving that it was correctly scored within the corpus in the context of the war of 2022. Nevertheless, without the exact context of these *topfeatures*, it is difficult to correctly assess their significance. In general, table D1 however paints a picture of multilateral cooperation by repeatedly featuring various terms dealing with international collaboration and solidarity. Albeit a weaker argument, these findings, therefore, do not add to the confirmation of H2 since specific references to violence and war crimes are subordinated to more general expressions of support and solidarity. Further, the mere high frequency of the usage of “security” is not viewed as significant enough to be linked to the securitization inherent to H3.

Finally, the results of the analysis are discussed in the following. This is conducted by first answering the hypothesis and then accordingly considering the underlying explanations that could be driving the way discourse surrounding EU foreign policy integration in Germany is conducted as a response to the crisis in Ukraine.

### 4.3 Discussion

When answering the hypotheses only the most important results are highlighted. Starting with H1, the hypothesis built from the assumptions of the EU crisis literature can only be partially confirmed. The sentiment analysis from 2010 to 2022 that is supposed to portray the shift in sentiment from the Crimea annexation in 2014 to the invasion of 2022 does not offer a decisive result. While the sentiment towards *EUint* is higher in 2022 than in 2014, which would indicate the expected shift in willingness, these changes are not significant enough when compared to

the other observed peaks of the sentiment graph during the timeframe. Nevertheless, the skyrocketing of the issue salience in 2022 does indicate a discursive shift in favour of the heightened importance of European solutions in foreign policy. These somewhat contradictory results are repeated when answering H2 and H3. With a specific focus on the year of the ongoing war 2022 H2 set out that the exacerbating violence within the conflict added to a favouring of EU responses in foreign policy within the German executive discourse. The topic modelling of the press releases first identified the relevance of the European Union in dealing with the war in Ukraine in three topics. However, when running the structural topic modelling on these topics the prevalence of the *EUint* vector is only significant within the beginning of the timeframe for topic 5. This result matches the theoretical expectations from Multi-Level Governance of H2 but is overshadowed by the missing statistical significance in topics 3 and 7 as well as within the other timeframes. In contrast, the heightened issue salience depicted in Figure 8, the keyword analysis as well as the qualitative analysis of selected press releases point towards an influence of the violence inherent to the conflict as a driver for a discourse oriented towards EU CFSP integration. As illuminated in the analysis, perceptions of violence were expected to be highest at the beginning of the invasion as well as shortly after due to alleged war crimes in Bucha. Accordingly, the answer to H2 is that for the beginning of the war in 2022 those considerations are confirmed due to the shock value of the events in Ukraine, but those statements are not necessarily transferrable to the remaining duration of the war. Tied to this is the observation of securitizing language that guides H3. The selected press releases within this study contain notions of Securitization as outlined in the previous segment but interestingly willingness for EU CFSP integration was articulated without the necessity to be framed by a securitizing discourse. This answer to H3 implies the possibility for a normalized discourse in Germany surrounding foreign policy integration that matches the increased issue salience of *EUint* in the parliamentary speeches and the press releases but stands in contrast to the blurred change of sentiment and the weak prevalence within the topic modelling.

These results can be encapsulated in the following puzzle whose answering shall guide the discussion: Why does it appear as such that the German political elites are hesitant to use committing language in relation to EU CFSP integration that can be picked up by sentiment analyses and topic modelling even though frequency analysis and explorative qualitative insights hint at a heightened awareness of the issues salience among the decision-makers?

With regards to the integrative statements detected in the selected press releases, it can be that a bias applies that blurs the significance of *EUint* in the topic modelling. In other words, even



though the selected press releases were identified by the *findThoughts* function, they are, due to their length, topic specificity and format, outliers among a vast majority of press releases that do not deal with questions of EU foreign policy integration when problematizing the war in Ukraine. Therefore, the prevalence of *EUint* that is qualitatively identified by observing the selected press releases gets drowned out by the overwhelming mass of press releases that do not feature this issue. Accordingly, taken together with the spikes of issue salience albeit missing sentiment changes, this allows the interpretation that notions of integration in EU foreign policy do occasionally enter the domestic discourse but are not relevant enough to constitute a continuous part of the discussion.

This necessitates a more general look at the salience of EU policy making in the German domestic political arena. In general, Auel and Raunio (2014, p. 22) calculated that discussions surrounding the EU only constitute four percent of the yearly debates in the German parliament. However, Rauh (2015, p. 133) finds that overall, the degree to which EU discourse is represented in the German parliament is consistently increasing. Authority transfers were furthermore identified as the main drivers of this upwards trend. These findings fit the idea of the importance of outlining the issues of European integration in the national arena which is inherent to this study. With a view to the media landscape, Trenz (2004, p. 297) finds that in comparison to French and Italian media outlets, German media tends to focus on the economic dimensions of European affairs rather than questions of identity. However, due to the linkage between foreign policy and questions of sovereignty, such discussions of common European identities would be beneficial in paving the way for EU CFSP integration.

A similar picture arises when portraying the vote-seeking behaviour leading up to national elections in Germany. Observing electoral agendas, Guinaudeau and Persico (2013, p. 155) find that, while no party can avoid the EU as an issue, more distinct EU policy does not constitute a structural part of electoral agendas in Germany. Even though the study at hand does not specifically deal with the impact of national or European elections as independent variables, this adds to the argument of the discourse surrounding EU foreign policy integration taking a subordinated role in the German political landscape. However, as this study investigated, these settings might be subject to quick change in crisis situations. Nicolai et al. (2022, p. 17) claim that affective narratives are used in German discourse to rationalize policies that resonate in the domestic context. More concretely, they state that the German national narrative surrounding moral imperatives of the EU and the provisions of neutrality was quickly reused in reaction to the crisis to justify weapons exports to Ukraine. Such creation of national narratives can further

serve as a way to frame EU policy as well as the need for them. Fittingly, Eising et al. (2015, p. 530) observe that in the aftermath of crises, the frames surrounding the affected policy areas experience enhanced contestation. In particular the framing of European integration is relevant in this context, as the nature of such policies inhibits increased electoral uncertainties for the mainstream parties (Green-Pedersen, 2012, p. 120). Therefore, there is a possibility that the language surrounding EU CFSP integration in the aftermath of the war in Ukraine was coopted by domestic frames that referenced the issues surrounding EU CFSP integration without however concretely referencing the expected EU terminology. As a consequence, it becomes increasingly more complicated to detect language hinting at willingness for EU foreign policy integration with the quantitative methods used in this study. Linking these considerations to the results of this study, possible unexpected national frames as well as the subordinated role of EU issues in the German media and public discourse might have contributed to the above-described blurring of results.

Moreover, contextualizing the results of this study with similar analyses is complicated due to the recency of the events in Ukraine. Nevertheless, Costa and Barbé (2023) pick up Germany's framing as a reluctant giant by the international press (The Economist, 2022) in the first months of the war in Ukraine. In contrast to such framing, Costa and Barbé (2023, p. 441) argue that the decisions made in the *Zeitenwende* made a major contribution to the newly found actorness of the European Union in response to the war in Ukraine. However, the article merely mentions these German decisions in the multitude of reactions among Member States and the EU institutions themselves without dealing with the specific integratory dynamic between Germany and the EU. In contrast, Fernandez et al. (2023), very similarly to the study at hand quantitatively analysed data from news sources and opinion polls in all of Europe to gain insights into public opinion on the EU's CFSP in each Member State. By calculating Eurobarometer data, they find increased CFSP favourability in Germany following the Russian invasion in 2022, while, for contextualization, Finland or Poland experienced nearly triple these percentage increases (Fernandez et al., 2023, p. 476). This generally positive change fits the results of this study and interestingly features the thematization of the field of tension between NATO and EU CFDP. Accordingly, the authors claim that Sweden and Finland, who as a reaction to the Russian invasion of 2022 applied for NATO membership, did not view these NATO applications as substitutes to EU CFSP and even favoured the European dimension compared to the emphasize of the NATO dimension (ibid., p. 477). In a similar manner, the study at hand found that the issue salience of EU CFSP integration unexpectedly trumped the one of NATO following the invasion in 2022. These results, therefore, contrast with prior

assumptions of less EU salience in foreign policy, which highlight the EU's reliance on the USA within NATO in crisis situations (Howorth, 2017, p. 457) or NATO's advantages in effectively enacting peacekeeping in comparison to the EU (Kaynar and Gökhan, 2017, p. 121). Nevertheless, Biscop (2018, p. 88) postulates that after the escalation of conflict following the annexation of Crimea in 2014, a change was set in motion that included the EU steadily developing to become the new main framework for action in security and defence policy over NATO. The same crisis-induced change in 2014 cannot be observed among the German executive by the study at hand but holds true for the issue salience of EU CFSP following the invasion of 2022. This is in line with the theoretical assumptions of both the EU crisis literature and Multi-Level Governance that led to the premise that the severity, novelty and violence exerted in the war would lead to a paradigm shift.

This situating of the results offers important contextualization but does not definitively answer the question from the beginning of this segment, why, with risen issue salience of EU CFSP, no clear sentiment change and topic prevalence were detected. From a methodological perspective, the chosen approach is backed by the conduction of similar analyses in this domain in the past. Backfried and Shalunts (2016) trace sentiment changes in crisis situations during the "refugee crisis" in Germany, Gavras et al. (2022) trace changes in EU Member State sentiments on EU security policy via strategy papers and Molnár et al. (2021) observe the sentiment frames utilized on social media by EU institutions involved in EU external missions. Moreover, structural topic modelling of speeches in the European parliament performed by Greene and Cross (2017) unveiled a correlation between changes and external crises as shocks. Similarly, Blumenau and Lauderdale (2018) estimated topic models to analyse agenda-setting during crises in the EU and its' relationship with voting behaviour.

The question if these approaches are suitable to identify paradigm shifts as in the study at hand is multifaceted. On the one hand, the inherent systematicity of structural topic modelling allows for the checking of recurrences of nuances and subtleties at a large scale and over time (Jacobs & Tschötschel, 2019, p. 478). On the other hand, although *stm* is an automated process there is still a lot of interpretation happening during the estimation process of topic prevalence (Aranda et al., 2021, p. 201). For example, the decision on which topics are deemed most salient for the analysis is based on prior assumptions of what is understood as relevant for EU policymaking and this will in turn mutually influence how the *EUint* vector indicates topic prevalence. Furthermore, Georgiadou et al. (2020, p. 6) argue that sentiment analyses are well suited to trace paradigm shifts of citizens' sentiments voiced in social media and how, using the Brexit

negotiations as a case study, they can accompany and further influence international negotiations.

However, the results of this study imply that it is more complicated to similarly interpret the sentiment changes of policymakers. This is due to the complexity of the decision-making progress. While parliamentary speech and the various forms of communication summarized in the press releases resemble the vast majority of public communication exerted by the German executive, those do not necessarily resemble all venues of decision-making in which sentiment changes are of importance. This is perfectly exemplified by the absence of any communication on the novel EU decision on Common Procurement of Ammunition in March 2023. The occurrence of integratory steps without generating or communicating public support implies that other venues, such as the negotiations in Council meetings, are being used to pave the way for integration in EU CFSP without the necessity of public support in the Member States. Computing sentiment changes in such meetings would then not be possible with methodological setups such as the one in this study. Such a procedure can be described by a reinterpretation of the idea of “integration by stealth” as outlined by Majone (2005, p. 54) as a process “to pursue objectives of political integration and self-aggrandizement while pretending to solve specific policy problems”. Mény (2014, p. 1341) locates this idea as a typical reaction of the EU to crises, highlighting the problems such policymaking brings for questions of democratic accountability and legitimacy. Such considerations appear highly salient for the results of the study at hand in the face of missing communication about the specific integratory steps taken while also simultaneously signalling towards the recognition of increased issue salience of EU CFSP integration. Importantly, these issues appear inherent to the field of tension between Member States and the EU as described by the theory of Multi-Level Governance. Accordingly, when computing the change of sentiment towards Russia with the same time frame and data grounds, a very clear picture of negatively reacting to the war aggressions arose. Therefore, it appears as if the complexity of the foreign policy cooperation between Member States and the EU contributes to the challenges of methodologically assessing notions for foreign policy integration.

Explanations for this puzzle can again be found in the institutional setup of EU CFSP. Sjurksen (2011, p. 1072) argues that regardless of foreign and security policy being coined as the “ultimate bastion of state sovereignty” (ibid., p. 1071) and its therefore intergovernmental framework in EU CFSP, it still has to abide by the democratic rules and principles surrounding secrecy and public accountability. By highlighting the far-reaching consequences for the

European continent as well as Germany in particular by the war in Ukraine, this study accordingly challenges the often-repeated idea that citizens “know little about foreign affairs” (Hurwitz & Peffley, 1987, p. 1114) and that it, therefore, would reasonably resemble a policy field in which decisions can be made with less public scrutiny. Finally, it can therefore be postulated that the blurred results of the sentiment analysis and topic modelling might not only be explained by the methodological challenges inherent to the research but also amplified by the challenges posed by the institutional structure of EU CFSP itself. Together with the discussion surrounding the general salience of EU topics in the German national discourse and the methodological limits of the tools used in this analysis, this explains why German policymakers could be attributed with an increased understanding of the heightened importance of EU CFSP integration as a reaction to the war in Ukraine while the sentiments hinting towards further integration get clouded within the analysis.

## 5. Conclusion

To sum up this study, the research question is conclusively answered before highlighting the implications of the results for the research field as well as society. Accordingly, this study sought to answer how the 2022 war in Ukraine changed the perspectives of political elites in Germany on issues of political integration in EU foreign policy and if the unique character of this crisis enabled a discourse aimed towards further EU security policy integration. Firstly, the war in Ukraine had an undeniable impact on the political discourse in Germany. Moreover, the European Union featured as the central framework for action and response to the crisis from the very beginning. In this vein, references to common responses and solidarity on the continent trumped unilateral national responses.

Yet, the research question more specifically refers to the way the perspectives changed. It can be noted that political elites in Germany clearly acknowledged the necessity for the heightened salience of EU foreign policy integration as a crisis response in various speech acts. Furthermore, partly answering the first section of the research question, the way the crisis of 2022 impacted the discourse surrounding EU foreign policy integration evidently led to a momentum of discursive change in Germany in comparison to prior foreign policy crises. This is not to say that prior crises were not problematized in the German political sphere but that the discourse surrounding the 2022 war in Ukraine quantitatively uniquely contrasts with prior crises in the manner in which the EU CFSP dimension is discussed. This holds true for the issue salience of EU foreign policy integration but is nevertheless not fully reflected in the aggregated changes of sentiment scores from 2010 onwards and within the prevalence of EU CFSP integration within the topics surrounding executive communication from 2022 to 2023. The prior discussion above uncovered differing explanations for this reluctance ranging from the complexity surrounding national sovereignty in the field of tension between Member States and the European Union up to methodological challenges within the setup of this study. Thus, in comparison to the quantitative results, the qualitative analysis of selected speeches painted a clearer picture of willingness for CFSP integration among German leaders. Taken together with the heightened issue salience, which due to the surprising results of the comparison with the simultaneous importance of NATO appears all the more significant, the second part of the research question can be confirmed.

However, the nuance that was expected from the sentiment analysis and topic modelling is missing which necessitates further questions into methodological setups for comparable studies.

How is European integration in general communicated by executive actors within the Member States and how can this communication be best captured in social science research? Since the data of this study already covered most of the public statements made by the German executive, it could be advisable to analyse non-numerical data in the form of in-depth interviews with policymakers. In comparison to the analysis of the statements made by public figures, it would be more insightful in this context to interview the German sub-negotiators in Brussels on their experiences in guiding and shaping the integratory processes on the EU level. Nevertheless, by switching perspectives to speech acts by the supranational EU institutions concerned with foreign policy such as the Commission or the High Representative, quantitative methods similar to those utilized in this study can be valuable in uncovering how the EU frames the necessity for CFSP integration and the extent in which Member States are pressured to comply. In this context, the inclusion of BERT models could offer additional insights since the bidirectionality inherent to the language training model allows a deeper understanding of ambiguous language by establishing context (Devlin et al., 2019). Finally, adopting the same research approach as in this study but with the case of a Baltic country would offer very valuable comparisons to the extent to which EU CFSP integration gained salience in Germany. This is due to the underlying assumption that the border and historical security concerns of Baltic states with Russia would lead to an amplified willingness for stronger and more coordinated EU CFSP.

Lastly, the study confirmed the new role of Germany in foreign policy as anticipated by the *Zeitenwende* and that those decisions fundamentally altered the previous special relationship with Russia. Paradoxically, the Russian war did not divide Europe as potentially envisioned but rather led to increased cooperation and solidarity that, if enshrined as integratory policy, prompted an ever-closer Union in response. In this regard, this study delivered evidence that in the biggest Member State Germany groundwork for such processes has been laid in response to an eminent foreign policy crisis. Accordingly, the study contributed to the EU crisis literature by affirming the argument that Member States' reactions to crises give rise to the possibility of increased political integration. This is linked to the discussion surrounding the portrayal of foreign policy as a *domaines réservés* in questions of Europeanization which is at the heart of Multi-Level Governance theory in foreign policy research. Accordingly, the research at hand showed novel flexibility in this field triggered by the war in Ukraine. However, the research project also showcased the limitations of a Constructivist approach that mainly centres around changes in rhetoric and language. While framing and Securitization as tools used by the German executive could be partly uncovered, questions regarding the material motives and pressures underlying the positive attitudes towards EU CFSP integration remain. Adding in Realist

perspectives that contextualize the security dimension for Germany more concretely via risk assessments could aid in revealing further causes for a shift in discourse.

Via the utilization of the EU crisis framework, this research project points towards more fundamental questions of European Integration and the way it is communicated. The war in Ukraine will not be the last crisis faced by the European Union and issues such as the external security threats arising from the climate crisis will once again highlight the question of further integration in the EU. However, if the communication surrounding such steps fails to preemptively pave the way for citizens to be included in the process, concerns for the legitimacy of such integration emerge. Moreover, can political integration in the European Union consist of a consciously and openly communicated process or is it bound to remain a mainly unpremeditated response to crises characterized by impromptu decision-making as during the Covid-19 pandemic? If so, this could prove unsustainable in a future, in which even swift responses might come too late.



## 6. References

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## I. Appendix

Note: The original tables are all in German. To enable enhanced understanding for a broader audience they are supplied as an English version first. However, due to the peculiarities inherent to languages (capitalization, cases etc.), the tables are not completely identical and the setting of the glob pattern “\*”, which scores all possible endings of the same word stem, is not done in the English version. The lists therefore appear shorter than they effectively were in the RStudio analysis. The English version therefore holds little value for actual analysis and should primarily aid in visualizing the logics and the data which the study is based on.

### Appendix A

#### Terms to identify CFSP integration language

**Table A1:** Specific terms EU CFSP

foreign policy integration	European Security Strategy	EU Battlegroups*
qualified majority voting	European foreign policy	Battlegroups*
Common Foreign and Security Policy	EU arms policy	CSDP
CFSP	EU foreign policy	Permanent Structured Cooperation
foreign policy cooperation	EU defence policy	European defense
Common Security and Defence Policy	European defence policy	sanction
ESDP	European arms policy	

**Table A1.1:** Specific terms EU CFSP (GER)

Außenpol* Integrat*	Europäische Sicherheitsstrategie*	Gemeinsame* Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolit*
Qualifizierte* Mehrheitsentscheid*	Europäisch* Außenpolitik*	Sanktion*
Gemeinsame* Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik*	EU-Rüstungspol*	sanktion*
GASP*	EU Rüstungspol*	europ* Sicherheitspol*
außenpolitisch* Kooperation*	EU-Verteidigungspol*	europ* Rüstungspol*
Gemeinsam* Sicherheits* - und Verteidigungspolitik	EU Verteidigungspol*	EU-Battlegroups*
ESVP*	EU-Außenpolit*	Battlegroups*
GSVP*	EU Außenpolit*	EU Aussenpolit*
Ständige Strukturierte Zusammenarbeit*	EU-Aussenpolit*	europ* Verteidig*

**Table A2:** Cooperation terms

cooperation	unify	harmonize
cooperate	coordinate	unification
integration	inclusion	support
integrate	include	join
collaboration	incorporation	subsidy
collaborate	incorporate	subsidize



deepening	merging	solidarity
deepen	merge	solidarize
reconciliation	unite	cross-border
reconcile	union	unified
coordination	align	promotion
harmonization	promote	foster
unbureaucratic		

**Table A2.1:** Cooperation terms (GER)

Kooperation*	vereint*	harmon*
kooperi*	koordinier*	Vereinheit*
Integration*	Einbind*	Unterstütz*
integrier*	einbind*	unterstütz*
Zusammenarbeit*	Einglied*	Subvention*
zusammenarbeit*	einglied*	subvent*
Vertief*	Zusammenfüg*	Solidarit*
vertief*	zusammenfüg*	solida*
Abstimmung*	zusammenführ*	grenzüberschr*
abstimm*	Zusammenführ*	vereint*
Koordinier*	Angleich*	förder*
Harmonisier*	Förder*	unbürokrat*

**Table A3:** CFSP specifying cooperation terms

foreign policy	security policy	defence policy
arms policy	European	EU
European Union	European Community	

**Table A3.1:** CFSP specifying cooperation terms (GER)

aussenpol*	sicherheitspol*	verteidigungspol*
rüstungspol*	europ*	EU*
Europäisch* Union*	Europäisch* Gemeinschaft*	Europ*

## Appendix B

### Number of speeches in German parliament relative to the year (2010-2022)

**Table B1:** Number of speeches in the German parliament (2010-2022)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of speeches</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of speeches</b>
2010	540	2017	270
2011	657	2018	296
2012	556	2019	377
2013	347	2020	329
2014	471	2021	216
2015	520	2022	312
2016	448		

## Appendix C

### *Topfeatures towards EU 2010-2022 and 2022*

**Table C1:** Top 50 positive words 2010-2022

for this	359	invest	90
joint	191	federation	87
yes	169	thanks	84
important	152	good	84
advice	140	achieve	84
good	139	security	82
development	138	better	81
responsibility	129	cooperation	81
law	124	growth	79
accurate	123	even	79
clear	122	common	77
belief	115	support	76
right	112	support	76
love	112	stability	75
new	111	ready	75
goal	111	step	74
clear	107	partners	70
possible	104	partner	66
investments	102	stronger	66
new	99	fast	65
create	99	competitiveness	63
contribution	96	especially	61
common	95	planned	61
large	92	success	61
great	91	important	58

**Table C1.1:** Top 50 positive words 2010-2022 (GER)

dafür	359	investieren	90
gemeinsam	191	bund	87
ja	169	dank	84
wichtig	152	gute	84
rat	140	erreichen	84
gut	139	sicherheit	82
entwicklung	138	besser	81
verantwortung	129	zusammenarbeit	81
recht	124	wachstum	79
genau	123	eben	79
deutlich	122	gemeinsamen	77
glaube	115	unterstützen	76
richtig	112	unterstützung	76
liebe	112	stabilität	75
neue	111	bereit	75
ziel	111	schritt	74
klar	107	partnern	70
möglich	104	partner	66
investitionen	102	stärker	66
neuen	99	schnell	65
schaffen	99	wettbewerbsfähigkeit	63
beitrag	96	besonders	61
gemeinsame	95	vorgesehen	61
große	92	erfolg	61
großen	91	wichtige	58

**Table C2:** Top 50 negative words 2010-2022

must	476	unfortunately	27
crisis	106	set	26
end	98	war	26
alone	90	no	26
task	69	employ	25
necessary	63	little	24
less	62	nobody	23
care	59	supervision	23
almost	58	doubt	23
refugees	53	serious	23
challenges	48	tight	23
problem	46	conditions	22

never	44	struggle	22
please	42	narrower	21
problems	39	difficulties	20
scarce	38	short	20
past	35	reduce	19
debts	34	efforts	19
despite	33	affected	19
finally	31	pressure	18
impact	30	liability	18
challenge	30	hardly	18
urgent	29	completed	17
deficit	27	claim	17
social	27	wrong	17

**Table C2.1:** Top 50 negative words 2010-2022 (GER)

müssen	476	leider	27
krise	106	gesetzt	26
ende	98	krieg	26
allein	90	nein	26
aufgabe	69	beschäftigen	25
notwendig	63	wenig	24
weniger	62	niemand	23
sorgen	59	aufsicht	23
fast	58	zweifel	23
flüchtlinge	53	ernst	23
herausforderungen	48	eng	23
problem	46	bedingungen	22
nie	44	kampf	22
bitte	42	enger	21
probleme	39	schwierigkeiten	20
knapp	38	kurz	20
vergangenheit	35	reduzieren	19
schulden	34	anstrengungen	19
trotz	33	betroffen	19
endlich	31	druck	18
auswirkungen	30	haftung	18
herausforderung	30	kaum	18
dringend	29	abgeschlossen	17
defizit	27	behaupten	17
soziale	27	falsch	17

**Table C3:** Top 50 positive words 2022

for it	44	receive	9
common	27	even	9
security	26	relieve	9
yes	23	freedom	8
clear	18	closed	8
possible	17	thanks	8
love	15	great	8
strengthen	15	investments	8
important	14	new	8
invest	14	benefit	8
support	14	successful	7
accurate	14	special	7
good	13	good	7
support	13	increased	7
law	13	achieved	7
citizen	12	thanks	7
council	12	better	7
solidarity	10	important	7
help	10	decided	7
great	9	goal	7
peace	9	friends	6
right	9	responsibility	6
fast	9	biggest	6
partners	9	glad	6
new	9	relieved	6

**Table C3.1:** Top 50 positive words 2022 (GER)

dafür	44	erhalten	9
gemeinsam	27	eben	9
sicherheit	26	entlasten	9
ja	23	freiheit	8
deutlich	18	geschlossen	8
möglich	17	dank	8

liebe	15	große	8
stärken	15	investitionen	8
wichtig	14	neuen	8
investieren	14	nutzen	8
unterstützen	14	gelungen	7
genau	14	besonders	7
gut	13	gute	7
unterstützung	13	erhöht	7
recht	13	erreicht	7
bürger	12	danke	7
rat	12	besser	7
solidarität	10	wichtigen	7
helfen	10	entschieden	7
großen	9	ziel	7
frieden	9	freunden	6
richtig	9	verantwortung	6
schnell	9	größte	6
partnern	9	froh	6
neue	9	entlastet	6

**Table C4: Top 50 negative words 2022**

must	40	debt	3
war	17	never	3
less	11	conflict	2
never	9	aggression	2
alone	9	nobody	2
close	8	violence	2
worry	8	effects	2
finally	7	destabilization	2
almost	7	dramatic	2
end	7	short	2
challenges	6	burden	2
task	6	inflict	2
attack	5	burdens	2
social	5	temporary	2
scarce	4	recession	2
war	4	alleged	2
lowering	4	attacks	2



crisis	4	planned	2
crises	4	necessary	2
serious	4	set	2
worries	4	fight	2
challenge	3	affected	2
worried	3	urgent	2
inflation	3	duty	2
hard	3	pressure	2

**Table C4.1:** Top 50 negative words 2022 (GER)

müssen	40	schulden	3
krieg	17	niemals	3
weniger	11	konflikt	2
nie	9	aggression	2
allein	9	niemand	2
eng	8	gewalt	2
sorgen	8	auswirkungen	2
endlich	7	destabilisierung	2
fast	7	dramatisch	2
ende	7	kurz	2
herausforderungen	6	belasten	2
aufgabe	6	aufbringen	2
angriff	5	belastungen	2
soziale	5	befristet	2
knapp	4	rezession	2
krieges	4	vermeintlich	2
senken	4	angriffe	2
krise	4	geplant	2
Krisen	4	notwendig	2
ernst	4	gesetzt	2
sorgt	4	kämpfen	2
herausforderung	3	betroffen	2
gesorgt	3	dringend	2
inflation	3	pflicht	2
hart	3	druck	2

## Appendix D

### LDA-Topic Modelling Results

**Table D1:** Highest Prob, FREX, Lift and Score for topics of interest

<i>Topic 3 Top Words</i>	
<i>Highest Prob</i>	world, germany, our, europe, ours', speech, china
<i>FREX</i>	lührmann, state minister, anna, travel, china, european council, on the occasion of
<i>Lift</i>	anna, lührmann, state minister, duty, european council, moscow, threat
<i>Score</i>	state minster, lührmann, anna, duty, travels, european council, departure
<i>Topic 5 Top Words</i>	
<i>Highest Prob</i>	germany, our, europe, federal government, russia, nato
<i>FREX</i>	munich, security conference, atlantic, organization, treaty, north, zeitenwende
<i>Lift</i>	break, irresponsible, munich, friends, iegen, security conference, anke
<i>Score</i>	break, munich, security conference, north, atlantic, organization
<i>Topic 7 Top Words</i>	
<i>Highest Prob</i>	federal government, chancellor, union, european, e u, said
<i>FREX</i>	kosovo, prime minister, prime minister (f), latvia, c hancellery, greece, western
<i>Lift</i>	kaja, kallas, rebuilding, western balkan, kosovo, serbia, ng
<i>Score</i>	rebuilding, prime minister, chancellor, kosovo, chancellery, western balkan

**Table D1.1:** Highest Prob, FREX, Lift and Score for topics of interest (GER)

<i>Topic 3 Top Words</i>	
<i>Highest Prob</i>	welt, deutschland, unsere, europa, unserer, rede, c hina
<i>FREX</i>	lührmann, staatsministerin, anna, reist, china, europarats, anlässlich
<i>Lift</i>	anna, lührmann, staatsministerin, verpflichtung, europarats, moskaus, drohung
<i>Score</i>	staatsministerin, lührmann, anna, verpflichtung, reist, europarats, abreise
<i>Topic 5 Top Words</i>	
<i>Highest Prob</i>	deutschland, unsere, europa, bundesregierung, russland, nato
<i>FREX</i>	münchener, sicherheitskonferenz, atlantic, organization, treaty, north, zeitenwende
<i>Lift</i>	bricht, unverantwortlich, münchener, freundinnen, iegen, sicherheitskonferenz, anke
<i>Score</i>	bricht, münchener, sicherheitskonferenz, north, atlantic, organization
<i>Topic 7 Top Words</i>	
<i>Highest Prob</i>	bundesregierung, kanzler, union, europäische, eu, s agte
<i>FREX</i>	kosovo, ministerpräsidenten, ministerpräsidentin, l itauen, kanzleramt, griechenland, westlichen
<i>Lift</i>	kaja, kallas, wiederaufbaus, westbalkan, kosovo, serbien, ng
<i>Score</i>	wiederaufbaus, ministerpräsidentin, kanzler, kosovo, kanzleramt, westbalkan

## Appendix E

### *Kwic* analysis of *EUint* in press release data set

**Table E1:** Top 50 keywords in context surrounding *EUint*

ukraine	427	whole	44
support	290	collaboration	44
thus	249	eu	42
support	183	russian	41
germany	151	continuously	41
collaboration	131	joined	40
sanctions	129	weapons	39
our	112	partners	39
solidarity	92	as well as	39
nations	88	must	38
united	85	goes	38
federal government	85	further	38
russia	82	solidary	38
europe	60	war	37
european	58	about this	36
union	57	international	35
supports	56		35
international	55	ukrainian	34
together	49	thus	34
chancellor	49	security	33
g7	48	vote	33
states	46	cooperation	33
european	46	today	32
important	44	states	32
tight	44		

**Table E1.1:** Top 50 keywords in context surrounding *EUint* (GER)

ukraine	427	ganz	44
unterstützung	290	zusammenarbeiten	44
dass	249	eu	42
unterstützt	183	russischen	41
deutschland	151	weiterhin	41
zusammenarbeit	131	dabei	40
sanktionen	129	waffen	39
unsere	112	partner	39
solidarität	92	sowie	39
nationen	88	muss	38
vereinte	85	geht	38
bundesregierung	85	weiter	38
russland	82	solidarisch	38
Europa	60	krieg	37
europäisch	58	darüber	36
union	57	international	35
unterstützt	56		35
international	55	ukrainischen	34
zusammen	49	deshalb	34
kanzler	49	sicherheit	33
g7	48	abstimmung	33
staaten	46	kooperation	33
europäischer	46	heute	32
wichtig	44	staaten	32
eng	44		

