

**The Construction of the EU as a Strategic Entrepreneur:  
The Internal-External-Internal Nexus**

Chatzopoulou, Sevasti; Ansell, Christopher

*Published in:*  
Journal of European Integration

*DOI:*  
[10.1080/07036337.2022.2101646](https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2022.2101646)

*Publication date:*  
2022

*Document Version*  
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

*Citation for published version (APA):*  
Chatzopoulou, S., & Ansell, C. (2022). The Construction of the EU as a Strategic Entrepreneur: The Internal-External-Internal Nexus. *Journal of European Integration, online first.*  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2022.2101646>

**General rights**

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain.
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal.

**Take down policy**

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact [rucforsk@kb.dk](mailto:rucforsk@kb.dk) providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



## The construction of the EU as a strategic entrepreneur:the internal-external-internal nexus

Sevasti Chatzopoulou & Christopher K. Ansell

To cite this article: Sevasti Chatzopoulou & Christopher K. Ansell (2022): The construction of the EU as a strategic entrepreneur:the internal-external-internal nexus, Journal of European Integration, DOI: [10.1080/07036337.2022.2101646](https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2022.2101646)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2022.2101646>



Published online: 27 Jul 2022.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 23



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



# The construction of the EU as a strategic entrepreneur: the internal-external-internal nexus

Sevasti Chatzopoulou<sup>a</sup> and Christopher K. Ansell<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Social Sciences and Business, Roskilde University, Roskilde, Denmark; <sup>b</sup>Department of Political Science, University of California Berkeley, CA, USA

## ABSTRACT

The paper investigates how the EU operates as a strategic entrepreneur in different contexts and what enables the EU to do so. We develop a synthetic and dynamic approach linking the EU's internal characteristics with its internal and external strategies and actions, which we envision as an internal-external-internal cycle that advances European integration. First, we discuss the EU's distinctive internal governance characteristics. Second, we demonstrate how these characteristics condition and support the EU as a strategic entrepreneur in external affairs. Third, we investigate how external perceptions and legitimacy can feedback to reinforce the EU's (re) construction of its own internal strategies. External legitimacy pushes the EU to ascertain appropriate and accepted behaviour and strengthen institutional and policy integration, expanding the EU's competences over more policy areas.

## KEYWORDS

EU; actorness; strategic entrepreneur; INEXIN cycle

## Introduction

International relations scholars have extensively studied EU 'actorness' in external affairs, describing the EU as a civilian or military power (Bull 1982; Duchêne, 1973; Stavridis 2008), a normative power (Manners 2002), a trade power (Meunier and Nicolaïdis 2006), a global leader (Kelemen 2010, 335), a manager of globalization (Meunier 2007; Jacoby and Meunier 2010), and a market power (Damro 2012). Scholars focused on the EU's internal politics and policy have described how the EU can act as policy entrepreneur (Wendon 1998; Menz 2013; Palmer 2015; Pircher 2020; Zeilinger 2021) and a crisis manager (Boin, Busuioc, and Groenleer 2013) and how European public administration can act with relative autonomy under certain conditions (Bauer et al. 2017; Jankauskas and Eckhard 2019). In this article, we aim to provide a conceptual framework demonstrating how the EU's internal and external roles as a strategic actor are linked. For brevity, we refer to this framework as the *internal-external-internal nexus* (INEXIN).

Most of the research on EU actorness – particularly the concept of the EU as a 'strategic actor' (Toje 2008; Bendiek and Kramer 2010; Cottey 2020) – has focused on the EU's behavior in comparison with other external actors (e.g. USA) and on the EU's role in the international system, specifically in foreign and defense policy. These are important

contributions, but the focus of our analysis differs. Instead of concentrating on the EU's 'high politics' of foreign and defense policy, where EU member-states maintain diverse interests and strong competencies, we examine areas where the EU has developed strong competencies vis-à-vis member-states – notably in the areas of social, environmental and economic regulation. Although our framework may also have relevance to the domain of high politics, it is in these areas of social, environmental and economic regulation that the EU's outward- and inward-facing strategic roles are most visibly and inextricably connected. Rather than adding another characterization of EU actorhood to an already crowded field, we build on studies that examine the link between the EU's internal characteristics and politics and its *external* engagement (Jacoby and Meunier 2010; Damro 2012; Bretherton and Vogler 2013; Schunz and Damro 2020). Our analysis stresses the *dynamic interconnection* between internal and external strategy, calling attention to how they constrain and enable one another and how this may matter for European integration.

Given these scope conditions, we argue that the EU, supported by its governance characteristics, takes advantage of and uses feedbacks in the INEXIN nexus in a strategic and entrepreneurial fashion, both with its own member-states and vis-a-vis external actors. In doing so, the EU enhances its external actorhood and strengthens institutional and policy integration. Enlisting both normative and pragmatic principles that became explicit in the 2016 European Union Global Strategy (EUGS), the EU promotes its interests through its internal and external actions and practices. To the extent that these actions enhance the EU's external legitimacy, the EU can then use this legitimacy strategically to further integration. Being strategic incorporates many dimensions, including economic and societal mobilisation, international alliances, technological innovation, diplomatic manoeuvres, media influence and other activities (Bendiek and Kramer 2010). Additionally, 'to close the gap between what policymakers wish to do and what they can do', strategic actors identify threats and risks and adopt instruments and strategies to address these threats effectively (Vennesson 2010, 61).

While the strategic concept has primarily been used to describe nation-states, this article follows Vennesson (2010) and applies the strategic concept broadly to the EU as a polity. As such, the EU identifies risks and objectives (ends), uses resources and methods (ways), adopts policy instruments (means) to meet these objectives, adjusting 'ends so that realistic ways can be found to meet them by available means' (Freedman, 2013: xi, as cited in Cottey 2020, 278). However, the EU polity cannot copy or even emulate strategies developed by other states (e.g. USA) and needs to develop and pursue its own strategy in its own fashion (Howorth 2010). In doing so, the EU expands its competences in policy areas with strong external dimensions where the Community method<sup>1</sup> is prominent, shifting the dynamics of European integration (e.g. trade, environment, health and regulatory standards) (Jabko 2006; Rhinard 2010). These areas do not require unanimity and the EU has relevant authority, competences and expertise capacity to introduce legislation. Acting as a strategic entrepreneur, the EU develops tactics and strategies to externalize these policies and standards beyond its borders. Being an 'entrepreneur' signifies the way an actor takes advantage of opportunities to catalyse change both internally and externally and to enhance its own role by crafting policy images and venues (Laffan 1997; Wendon 1998; Krause 2003; Maltby 2013). The EU has embraced a pragmatic approach in external affairs that responds to the EU's external failures and aims

to secure the internal prosperity of its members and the European project and goes beyond externalization of norms and values (Nathalie 2016; Tocci 2017, 71, 2018; Juncos 2017).

The next section describes the state of the art on the EU's role as a strategic actor, which primarily emphasizes the external dimensions of actorness. The following section conceptualizes the loop structure through which internal and external dimensions interact and feedback continuously, leading to the framing and reframing of EU strategies. Each one of the three steps in this internal-external-internal nexus is then analyzed separately. The EU's activities and the dynamic interconnection of these three steps is illustrated with examples from the EU's sustainable development strategy.

### **Neglecting the relationship between external and internal strategy**

International relations and foreign affairs scholars have extensively examined the nature of EU actorness, focusing on the EU's defense and military capabilities and its role as a civilian power (Duchêne 1972; Bull 1982; Hill 1990; Larsen 2002; Novotná 2017). Manners (2002) introduced the concept of *Normative Power Europe* (NPE), which emphasized the EU's normative role in world politics and extended the scope of the EU as a civilian power. NPE analyses the evolution of the EU's hybrid polity and identity in world politics through the lens of persuasion, argumentation and legitimation. NPE has been criticized on several grounds. For example, in her work on the EU's role in Middle East conflicts, Pace (2009) provides evidence about the EU's failure to spread particular norms through its external relations, consequently disempowering the construction of the EU as a global actor. The focus on externalizing norms, values and ideas has been viewed as too narrow to capture the EU's strategic role.

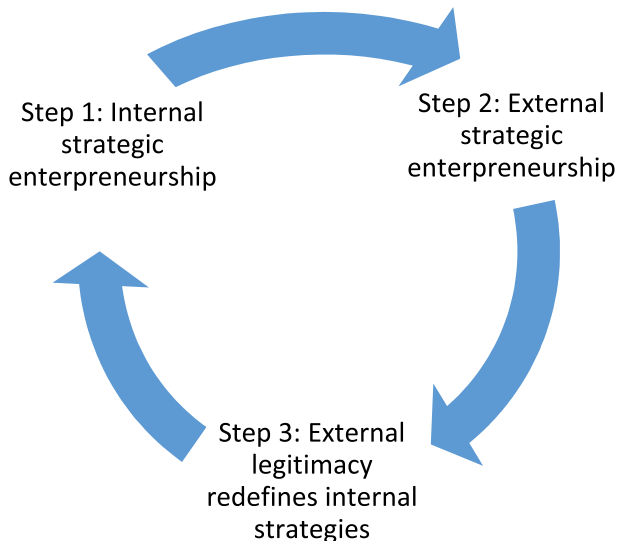
Other scholars have investigated the EU's activities and strategies in managing economic affairs and the externalization of regulatory standards within a globalized world (Meunier and Nicolaidis 2006; Jacoby and Meunier 2010; van Schaik and Schunz 2012; Delreux 2014). These studies focus on specific areas where the EU presents a more unified and coherent role by spreading policy ideas, European Commission standards and practices through socialization, persuasion and learning as well as through coercion and conditionality. Emphasizing the economic aspects of EU actorness, Damro (2012) introduced the concept of *Market Power Europe* (MPE), which links the EU's identity and institutional characteristics to its large regulated market. He identifies three mutually reinforcing characteristics of the EU, namely material existence (market size), institutional features (regulatory capacity, expertise and coherence and sanctioning authority), and interest contestation. He demonstrates how these characteristics connect external EU actorness to the internal market, enabling the EU to externalise its regulatory standards intentionally or unintentionally.

Bretherton and Vogler (2006) introduced a more general framework for analysing EU's actorness and its effectiveness that delimits three key dimensions: presence, opportunity and capability. *Presence* denotes 'the international reputation of the EU and associated third-party expectations of EU action'; *opportunity* denotes 'the external environment or context that enables or constrains EU action'; and *capability* denotes 'the internal factors affecting [*but not determining*] the EU's ability to capitalise on presence and respond to opportunity' (Bretherton and Vogler 2013, 376).

While these accounts greatly nuance our understanding of EU actorness, they remain focused on its external dimensions. However, a focus on the EU's administrative resources and capacity not only enables us to appreciate better the EU's external representation (Peters, 1999; 2010), but also helps us to illuminate the relationship between external and internal strategies. A growing body of literature on international public administration (IPA) helps us understand how the EU's internal governance features provide the EU with authority to address transnational policy problems (Bauer et al. 2017). The EU develops an internal capability and autonomy that allow it to create and promote ideas, knowledge and strategies, advance practices that strengthen its ability to capitalize on emerging opportunities and address arising problems—from natural disasters to epidemics, environmental problems, and humanitarian interventions. This capability enables the EU to interact and negotiate with its counterparts, be present in the international environment, act as diplomat, build networks and facilitate partnerships. By combining insights about capability and opportunity, we can better see how the EU evolves into a strategic entrepreneur. We argue that an appreciation of the dynamic interaction between internal and external dimensions of strategic action expands our understanding of EU actorness, as outlined in the next section.

### The internal-external-internal nexus – a dynamic loop

To understand how the EU constructs and reconstructs itself as a strategic entrepreneur, we need to break away from linear and static categorizations and move to a more dynamic understanding of EU actorness. To do this, we conceptualize EU strategic entrepreneurship as a continuous, circular and self-reinforcing feedback loop. We refer to this as the internal-external-internal nexus (INEXIN) (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. The Internal-External-Internal Nexus (INEXIN).**

This INEXIN approach helps us understand four critical issues: (1) how the EU is constituted as a strategic entrepreneur in the first place; (2) how the EU operates as a strategic entrepreneur; (3) how the different dimensions of its role change over time and in different contexts; and (4) how the EU evolves as a strategic entrepreneur over time, through learning and external legitimation, strengthening integration. The INEXIN approach captures what drives and enables the EU to seek new or reframe existing ideas that enable it to develop its own strategies and introduce institutional and policy innovations. These strategies concern EU preference formation, objectives, standards and relations with other actors. Since EU competences vary across policy areas, the EU's strategies are not 'one size fits all', but differ across policy areas, depending on its mandate, resources and objectives. While the EU may appear disunited internally at certain points as the member-states and the EU institutions have to collaborate and negotiate to reach an agreement on a policy issue, the EU appears more unitary externally, especially where it represents the member-states in international negotiations.

There is not necessarily a specific starting/ending point in this dynamic loop. Nor do we mean to imply that the three steps follow each other in a distinct sequential order. Interactions will rarely be as tidy as those represented in [Figure 1](#) and the interactions between external and internal will often overlap. However, the looping structure is analytically useful for stressing that there are important feedbacks between internal and external strategies over time. With these caveats in mind, we conceptualize the **first step** in the loop (drawing on IPA) as beginning where internal governance features enable the EU to evolve and act as a strategic entrepreneur internally. The EU develops these features over time through the transfer of competences from the member-states to the EU, thus expanding its activities (Braun 2009; Trondal 2016). These competences provide the EU with the autonomy to develop strategic policy ideas, targets and practices (Bauer and Ege 2016). Consequently, the EU introduces integrative policy instruments (Maltby 2013; Domorenok, Graziano, and Polverari 2021; Rietig and Dupont 2021) and evolves into an institutional and policy innovator in existing areas (e.g. regulatory policies) or expands into new areas (e.g. humanitarian aid), furthering European integration.

A **second** step in the loop analyses the link between the EU's internal governance dynamics and its external strategic role. Specifically, how do EU institutional characteristics enable it to strategically seek to create the conditions and respond to emerging opportunities? These opportunities define the external context and enable or constrain EU actions externally (Groen and Niemann 2013). The EU's external actions in the regulatory domain have been widely recognized (Kelemen 2010, 341; Vogel 2012). It has a strong incentive and capacity to act as a strategic entrepreneur and to 'export', 'externalise' (Damro 2012; Bradford 2015) or globalise (Vogel 2012: 12) its policy standards and practices to its partners. When unable to do so, the EU tries to indirectly persuade other actors to follow its standards by 'uploading' them to international organisations (Smith 2010: 937). Therefore, the EU uses traditional diplomacy, negotiations and instruments as part of bilateral or multilateral agreements. The EU also utilizes less traditional instruments such as organizing and participating in informal networks. In these contexts, the EU tries to act as a unitary international actor, promotes its strategies and interests, exchanges information and builds strategic alliances and partnerships. This happens through mechanisms of deliberation, socialisation, persuasion, and results in learning processes, knowledge sharing and collaboration and coalition-building.

Finally, a **third** step in the loop links the EU's external role with its internal strategies. Specifically, it focuses on how and under what conditions the EU uses the external presence and legitimacy of its strategic actions (acceptance or contestation) to justify, reconfigure and redesign its strategies internally. Acting as a strategic entrepreneur, the EU brings this 'external legitimacy' or 'symbolic credit' back home to empower its role, introducing new strategies and 'downloading' ideas learned externally with the aim of furthering integration. External recognition of the EU is issue- and context-specific and is contingent on the preferences of external actors. External resistance can negatively affect the EU's integration ambitions and call forth new strategies.

As this overview suggests, the INEXIN loop illuminates how the EU continuously designs and redesigns strategies, enriched by and responding to both its internal and external conditions and environment. The following section discusses each of the three interconnected internal-external-internal dimensions. To illustrate each of these dimensions and to sketch out how they might be connected in a single case, we briefly describe how each point is manifest in the EU's evolving sustainability strategy. The EU's first formal sustainability strategy was issued in 2001 (European Commission 2001; 2020) and sustainability has remained at the center of the EU's internal and external agendas ever since. As EU Commission Vice President Frans Timmermans once stated: *'Sustainability is a European brand, and sustainable development is at the heart of the European Commission's agenda'*.<sup>2</sup>

### **The EU as an *internal* strategic entrepreneur**

Since the Treaty of Rome, treaties and secondary and case law have enhanced the EU's competences and resources in several areas—from agriculture and food, environment and health to, more recently, monetary policy, conflict management and foreign policy (Delreux 2014). As a result, the EU (i) has developed a distinctive supranational governance capacity; (ii) stands at arms-length from day-to-day politics; (iii) acts as an institutional and policy innovator; and (iv) is trusted to be a problem-solver. We examine in turn each of these four interconnected aspects that contribute to the construction of the EU as a strategic entrepreneur internally.

### **The EU's distinctive supranational governance capacity**

The EU's unique multilevel governance structure encompasses supranational, national and local levels, as well as public and private actors. At the heart of EU governance is the European Commission (EC), consisting of the Directorates General (DGs), who despite their differences, develop synergies and collaborations (Maltby 2013). In most areas, the EC shares competences with the member-states and collaborates closely with other EU institutions (e.g. European Parliament (EP), the Council). An extensive number of agencies (around forty today) and various expert committees and working groups support the EC's tasks and together constitute the EU's extended administrative space (Peters, 2010; Trondal et al. 2010).

In 2009, the Lisbon Treaty introduced the permanent President, the double-hatted High Representative and Vice President of the European Commission (HRVP) and the European External Action Service (EEAS), which provide the EU with greater institutional



capacity and authority for acting on external affairs. In collaboration with other EU institutions, the EEAS aims to provide a coherent EU role in the world, a 'comprehensive approach to conflicts and crises' and a 'joined-up external action' that includes new Commission-led initiatives in fields such as energy, trade and humanitarian aid (EEAS 2016, 49). These institutional innovations strengthen the EU's strategic direction and internal and external coordination and create diplomatic services related to economic, cultural and foreign policy<sup>3</sup> (Vennesson 2010; Novotná 2017).

EU governance varies across policy domains and is characterised by a 'flexible negotiating posture and political authority' (Renard 2011, 32). To adapt to emerging events and enhance coherence, EU institutions set internal priorities (e.g. Juncker's Commission 10 priorities<sup>4</sup>). Variations in governance reflect the member-states' diverse interests and their willingness to transfer competences to the EU. For instance, the EC has full competences to represent the member-states in trade negotiations and competition policy but not in foreign policy.

With respect to the sustainability strategy, the Commission has played a key agenda-setting role, with DG-Environment playing perhaps the most central support role in guiding sustainability policy. DG-Environment is itself organized into six directorates, including one for Circular Economy and Green Growth and one on Global Sustainability Policy. European agencies also contribute critical capacity on sustainability issues, with the European Environment Agency playing a notable role in providing relevant information and policy support. The establishment of the EEAS in 2009 has also expanded the EU's ability to operate and negotiate in international fora. While the EEAS initially struggled to mount the expertise necessary to represent environmental issues internationally, it gradually built capacity and has been particularly active in climate diplomacy (Torney and Mai'a 2018; Biedenkopf and Petri 2021).

### ***The EU is arms-length from day-to-day politics***

The EU does not face the same expectations and/or political costs as national governments due to its distance from the day-to-day problems and politics, providing it with significant maneuvering room in the development of its strategic decisions. As part of the EU's hybrid supranational bureaucracy, transnational civil servants ensure administrative continuity and policy coherence (Trondal et al. 2010). Increased competences and resources provide the EU bureaucracy with greater authority and autonomy to expand its policy scope (Ege 2017). This is particularly apparent in policies where member-states are either unwilling, due to high politicization at the domestic level, or unable to act at the domestic level and thus transfer responsibility and accountability to EU institutions (Jacoby and Meunier 2010). In the meantime, EU civil servants remain abreast of international problems, contribute insightful expertise and technocratic knowledge on governance in multicultural, multilevel environments, reconcile differences and conflicts and promote the EU's public diplomacy without facing the same intensity of everyday political pressure.

A good example of this dynamic was the Commission's ability to advance its Green Deal (GD) strategy, which formalized the target of achieving climate neutrality by 2050.<sup>5</sup> Due to its distance from the day-to-day domestic politics, the EC had the room to manoeuvre to develop the GD strategy to address climate change and respond to the

UN 2015 goals. The GD provided member-states' governments, who face diverse constituency demands and resource constraints, with the opportunity to pull home necessary tools and mechanisms to address climate change and to avoid internal contestation and politicisation despite significant domestic turbulence. Launched in December 2019, the GD advanced even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, which had raised fundamental concerns about an economic slow-down and led several member-states to criticize EU climate policy. Dupont, Oberthür, and Von Homeyer (2020) observe that the Commission's successful policy entrepreneurship carefully responded to this contestation, while also selectively building on transnational political support for climate governance. The Commission advanced the Green Deal by successfully framing it as an 'exit strategy' for the pandemic (Bongardt and Torres 2022).

### ***The EU as an institutional and policy innovator***

In the effort to justify and legitimize its role to the European peoples, the EU develops problem-solving policy strategies that combine both material (economic/market) and normative (societal values) characteristics. These policies concentrate on areas that are complex, ambiguous, uncertain, or conflictual and require technocratic expertise and knowledge (e.g. pharmaceutical, environmental, etc.), eschewing sensitive areas such as traditional foreign policy (Wettestad 2005; Edler and James 2015).

In order to exercise policy entrepreneurship, EU institutions collaborate with the member-states and other stakeholders. In this process, the EC acts as a 'think tank' and 'policy entrepreneur', develops 'innovative ideas' and strategically selects policy agendas and instruments to move the European integration project forward (Laffan 1997; Wendon 1998; Krause 2003; Braun 2009; Kaunert 2009; Maltby 2013). The EC also acts as a policy broker (Edler and James 2015), reconciling internal disagreements and conflicts and strategically framing problems as opportunities arise (Kaunert 2010; Palmer 2015).

An example of the EU's role as an institutional and policy innovator is its 2014 Circular Economy (CE) strategy, which has become a cornerstone of its sustainability agenda. This strategy initially built on the expertise and competences of DG Environment (Fitch-Roy, Benson, and Monciardini 2020). In 2015, the Juncker Commission widened its consultations<sup>6</sup> and engaged the competences of multiple DGs to produce a revised circular economy plan (CEP). The new plan reflected Juncker's priority for economic growth and jobs creation, but it introduced comprehensive policy instruments that ranged from legislation (e.g. directives and regulations) to indicators to financial instruments.<sup>7</sup> While environmental policy scholars debate how radical the CE concept is in practice, reframing waste as an economic resource was a bold strategic move signaling that the EU remained 'a global leader in environmental policymaking' (Friant, Vermeulen, and Salomone 2021, 350).

### ***Internal expectations of the EU's role as a problem-solver***

Even when opportunities emerge, the EU does not always act proactively to expand its competences to new areas. Just as EU competences, capacities and resources differ across policy areas, so do internal expectations about EU strategies. Sometimes, the member-states demand that the EU take action, especially when problems with a transnational

character emerge. Such problems include pandemics, climate disasters, immigration, financial crises and civil wars. Such circumstances create new opportunities for the EU to expand its competences into new areas (e.g. BSE food crisis). The EU does not always have the mandate or the authority, and it often lacks the capacity (e.g. resources and expertise) to address such problems. Attempting to become a pragmatic problem-solver and fulfill the member-states expectations, the EU develops new organizational structures and introduces new instruments, which often expand its competences and further integration.

The EU's CE strategy, for example, provided solutions to the depletion of scarce natural resources through productive and innovative resource use while ensuring economic growth and environmental care (Farmer 2020). The Commission sought to frame CE as a win-win strategy for both the environment and the economy and to build a coalition around this strategy (Völker, Kovacic, and Strand 2020; Leipold 2021). Furthermore, the CE strategy responded to expectations for solutions to transnational economic and environmental problems in the EU, which the EC saw as 'an opportunity for creating value from trash, for change, growth and innovation as we are at the beginning of the 4th industrial revolution' (Timmermans, 2018; stakeholder conference).

### **The EU as an external strategic entrepreneur**

Emerging 'opportunity structures in the external policy context' (Bretherton and Vogler 2006, 5) become *drivers for the EU to act as a strategic entrepreneur*, demonstrating that the boundaries between the EU's internal and external dimensions have become increasingly blurred. The EU develops policy instruments that incorporate external dimensions and connects its internal challenges to the international environment. Then, the EU promotes these policy instruments and practices, confirming its presence in the international environment (Manners 2009; Groen and Niemann 2013; Novotná 2017). A number of important implications flow from this situation: (i) the EU member-states' concerns become drivers of external strategic entrepreneurship; (ii) the EU is supported by its internal capabilities; (iii) the EU acts as a global regulator; and (iv) the EU responds to external actors' expectations for the EU actions. We examine each of these implications in turn.

#### ***EU member-states' concerns as drivers of external strategic entrepreneurship***

When acute transboundary problems emerge, the member-states expect the EU to act and develop integrated policy strategies to address problems (Boin, Busuioc, and Groenleer 2013). Due to their transnational nature, policy solutions usually incorporate external dimensions, such as health and environmental standards. These solutions often require significant expertise, information and financial resources that the EU does not have. This can lead to prolonged negotiations and bargaining among the member-states (e.g. BSE and COVID-19). In this process, the EU, supported by its organizational architecture, acts strategically and tries to reconcile the diverse interests among the member-states' positions, which become drivers for new EU policy strategies (Newman and Posner 2016, 146; Béland and Cox 2016).

The EU has developed extensive internal environmental standards and rules on resource use, which it promotes at the international level. Representing its own and the member-states interests in competitiveness and environmental care, for example, the EU tried to upload rules to the international level during the 2015 Paris Climate Change Conference. The EU pushed to include substantial mitigation commitments from all participating parties and asked them to upgrade their mitigation ambitions (Oberthür and Dupont 20211).

### ***Internal capability reinforces external actions***

The EU's governance architecture offers a certain degree of authority to EU institutions to develop their own preferences ('autonomy of will') and turn these preferences into action ('autonomy of action') (Ege 2017; Trondal 2016, 1105). Authority allows the EU to represent and negotiate on behalf of the member-states in various policy areas and often to speak with single voice (WTO) or at least with a single mouth in international fora (WHO) (van Schaik and Schunz 2012). Over time, the EU has developed a 'manoeuvring' capacity to act and operate in diverse transnational fora, and to build transnational networks with other international organisations. The EU strives to reach consensus about pragmatic solutions to transnational problems (Wendon 1998) and to integrate and pool administrative resources (Trondal 2016, 1105). Acting as a strategic negotiator, an international diplomat and an orchestrator of policy entrepreneurship, the EU aims to influence global governance and create awareness about its policies, ideas and practices.

For example, the EU has used its CE strategy to build capacity and collaborations with like-minded international partners. It also developed a form of green diplomacy through which it promoted its activities in international fora, such as the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Annual Meeting and the UN negotiations on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Furthermore, the EU signed declarations,<sup>8</sup> formed collaborations (e.g. infrastructure development, regulatory enforcement, and funding mechanisms<sup>9</sup>), and included CE aspects in bilateral trade agreements<sup>10</sup> with external actors.

### ***The EU as a global regulator***

The EU has evolved into the world's largest regulatory power in various sectors (Jacoby and Meunier 2010). The EU's governance structures and capacities enable it to effectively use its regulatory influence and to strategically leverage 'soft policy with a hard edge' (Goldthau and Sitter 2015, 941). Hence, the EU introduces standards, and strategically exploits a 'first mover' advantage beyond its borders. The EU seeks to persuade others of the value of its actions and creates bandwagon effects through alliance-building (Kaurert 2009, 2010). By framing the content and the principles of these standards and rules and actively uploading them at the international level, the EU can exercise considerable influence in many areas and become an international 'rule maker' (Jacoby and Meunier 2010). These rules address both normative and positive aspects without requiring direct public financial support, as do distributive policies. The member-states or other external actors readily accept and adopt such rules that respond to transnational challenges and do not depend on the EU budget.

Externalisation of the EU's regulatory standards is contingent on the distinctiveness of its preferences, which can be passive or active, making the success of externalization difficult to generalise (Young 2014). When the EU fails to externalize its standards, it often chooses to upload them to other international institutions (Jacoby and Meunier 2010, 307), as for example in uploading the precautionary principle to the WTO or its environmental standards to the Paris Climate Summit.

### ***External expectations for the EU's external role***

The EU's international contributions and collaborations are recognised independently of its member-states (Gehring, Obertür, and Mühleck 2013). External actors view the EU as a model to learn from, either by avoiding its mistakes or as an example of how innovation can occur through regional integration (Warleigh – Lack and Rosamond 2010). Moreover, the EU's external presence has raised expectations about its ability to provide effective solutions (e.g. interventions in international conflicts). The EU enjoys recognition even when the presence of EU institution is not externally effective but is acknowledged by international actors and institutions (van Schaik and Schunz 2012; Groen and Niemann 2013, 311). To demonstrate its ability to act in the international system Groen and Niemann (2013, 309), the EU develops strategic synergies and networks (e.g. the Global Health Forum<sup>11</sup>) and establishes new institutions (e.g. EEAS).

However, lack of coordination, cohesiveness and internal division between the EU and member-states can jeopardize the effectiveness of EU strategies (Renard 2011; Conceição-Heldtda and Meunier 2014). Sometimes the EU fails to speak with one voice and deliver what it promises (Barroso 2010). Nevertheless, 'lack of cohesiveness is not a necessary condition for effectiveness' (Delreux 2014, 1117). Delreux (2014, 1020) explains this variation in terms of the 'compellingness of the external environment', which refers to a 'negotiation setting with quasi-global participation' and the member-states' willingness to have their agendas represented by a supranational authority. The EU's effective representation is contingent on the level of EU bargaining power (high-level bargaining power creates competition with the member-states), but also peer pressure among the member-states (when they do not want to be blamed for the failure of the agreement) (Delreux 2014). For example, although not much happened during the Copenhagen Summit 2015, the EU acted as a "mediator" (leader-cum-mediator) during the Paris Summit (Schunz 2021), indicating a difference in the EU's external effectiveness across time.

### ***The external-internal nexus: reframing internal strategies***

The third step in the loop illuminates the connection between what the EU does externally with what it can do internally, which has three important implications: (i) international activities become the basis for internal changes; (ii) the EU either pulls back home externally-developed legitimacy and fosters greater transfer of competences from the member-states to EU institutions or it reconsiders and redesigns its internal strategies and policies; and (iii) the EU acknowledges global developments and develops internally 'aggregative policies' that strengthen the EU integration.

### ***International activities as a basis for internal changes***

The EU's external presence can create value for the member-states, balance normative and economic objectives and perform ideological alignment (Rhinard 2010). By participating in international fora, the EU gets inspired, gathers information about international problems and interests and identifies new norms. The EU also learns how others perceive its activities and strategies, whether they accept and legitimize or contest and challenge them and thus the EU ascertains appropriate and accepted behaviours. Moreover, the EU discovers new challenges and realities that demand strategic responses in a rapidly changing world and identifies new partners who face similar challenges or are interested in finding common solutions to emerging problems.

The EU's leading role in many multilateral environmental agreements (Delreux 2014; Schaik and Schunz 2012) have created the conditions for the EU to act as a strategic entrepreneur internally, to become an agent of policy change, and to expand and redesign its internal environmental strategies in response to climate change. For example, the EU capitalizes on its external *presence*, its *reputation* for global leadership, and the *learning and knowledge* it accumulates from external action to redesign and expand its internal policy strategies and competences. As stated in the EEAS (2016, 18) 'the external cannot be separated from the internal. In fact, internal policies often deal only with the consequences of external dynamics'. For example, the EU treated the UN SDGs as an opportunity to foster coherence between the internal and external dimensions of its policies on sustainable development so as to enhance *internal* growth prosperity, jobs and a safe environment (EUGS, 14–15). The EU's new (EEAS 2016) CE Action plan, which constitutes one of the main building blocks of the EUGD, specifically refers to the global level and the SDGs, confirming the dynamic interconnection among the external and internal dimensions of sustainability policy. Such an endeavor requires financial resources and increased policy integration and coordination (EEAS 2016, 49–50; Oberthür and Dupont 2021:1103).

### ***Pulling external legitimacy back home***

EU policy ideas and practices are tested in the external environment. External acknowledgement of EU initiatives and actions to develop problem-solving solutions to emerging transnational problems – in areas like climate disaster, health or economic crisis – strengthens the EU's credibility and creates a type of 'external legitimacy' and encourages external collaborations and partnerships (Goldthau and Sitter 2015). Moreover, this external legitimacy offers a new opportunity for the EU to act strategically, connect external actions to internal decisions, redefine its policies internally and further integration. When EU actions receive international recognition, EU citizens and member-state governments are more prone to accept related policy initiatives internally. Consequently, external legitimation of EU actions anchors internal strategies, especially in times of crises when EU cohesiveness is shaken and national interests are more prominent.

The EU's global leadership on sustainability is widely recognized (Bretherton and Vogler 2006, 2013; Schunz 2021) despite concerns about policy coherence and effectiveness (Delreux 2014; Schunz and Damro 2020) and challenges like the financial crisis (Adelle, Biedenkopf, and Torney 2018).

### ***Integrative versus aggregative EU policy strategies***

The degree and type of externalisation of EU strategies is contingent on various factors, namely the EU's ability to 'aggregate preferences and agree on common positions/policies' (Groen and Niemann 2013, 310), the capacity to coordinate its own and domestic institutions' resources (Boin, Busuioac, and Groenleer 2013), or the competence to formally represent the EU in international fora (Groen and Niemann 2013; van Schaik and Schunz 2012; Young 2014). In the effort to balance the member-states' diverse internal and external interests and preferences, the EU considers global developments and increasingly develops internally 'aggregative policies' (Skogstad, 2003: 322). Instead of promoting policies deliberately defined as the common good, aggregative policies focus on effectiveness by addressing 'policy problems in a way that secures internal common objectives but is also consistent with external (liberal) standards of appropriate policy outcomes' (Skogstad, 2003: 322). Thus, the EU tries to bridge the member-states' heterogeneous preferences and reach a common position, which allow it to formulate aggregative policies. These policies usually respond to external developments and introduce cross-cutting policy standards that consider internal problems with external dimensions, such as environment, health and energy. Such policies are more easily accepted both by the broader society and by political elites as the political costs are lower. Moreover, they can be dealt with better by transnational governance, encouraging coordination among EU institutions, national authorities and international organisations.

The EU's Green Deal, for example, represents an aggregative policy strategy that includes many priorities and objectives, such as putting the well-being and health of citizens and environmental care at the centre of economic policy. Moreover, it connects the Commission's CE strategy to its Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies.<sup>12</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Our synthesised approach to the EU as a strategic entrepreneur demonstrates the EU's role in the three INEXIN steps and illuminates how the EU closes the gap between policy wishes and actions. In the *first step*, we have shown how the EU's internal governance features enable it to become an institutional and policy innovator, developing competences in existing and new areas, acting as a strategic entrepreneur internally and furthering European integration. In the *second step*, we have demonstrated how the EU develops its external affairs and strategically strengthens its role both internally and externally in response to emerging political and structural opportunities and challenges. Finally, in the *third step*, we have shown how the EU redefines its internal strategies by utilizing its 'external legitimacy' or 'symbolic credit' back home, 'downloading' new ideas learned externally, and furthering integration. We use EU sustainability strategy – in particular, the Green Deal and Circular Economy strategies – to illustrate these three steps and to suggest the dynamic interactions among internal and external EU strategy over time, as each one conditions and scaffolds the other.

Our approach suggests a new research agenda on EU actorness beyond traditional foreign policy and points to the importance of paying greater attention to how the dynamic interconnections between internal and external strategy shapes the integration process. Future research could investigate how the INEXIN framework can be applied in other EU policy areas.



## Notes

1. [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO\\_02\\_102](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_02_102)
2. At the Circular economy stakeholder meeting in 2017 in Brussels.
3. [https://europe.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/314/2016/11/Brief\\_EU\\_Arab\\_Spring\\_2012.pdf](https://europe.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/314/2016/11/Brief_EU_Arab_Spring_2012.pdf)
4. [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/index\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/index_en)
5. [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_19\\_6691](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_19_6691); [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:b828d165-1c22-11ea-8c1f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC\\_1&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:b828d165-1c22-11ea-8c1f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC_1&format=PDF)
6. Ellen Mac Arthur Foundation. (2013). Towards the circular economy – Economic and business rationale for an accelerated transition, EREP – Manifesto and policy recommendations, European Commission, 31 March 2014. [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/index_en.htm)
7. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2016/573899/EPRS\\_BRI%282016%29573899\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2016/573899/EPRS_BRI%282016%29573899_EN.pdf)
8. [https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/32829/EUIndia\\_Joint\\_Declaration\\_on\\_Resource\\_Efficiency\\_and\\_Circular\\_Economy;guideline-wbt\\_incien\\_final.pdf.pdf](https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/32829/EUIndia_Joint_Declaration_on_Resource_Efficiency_and_Circular_Economy;guideline-wbt_incien_final.pdf.pdf) (euagenda.eu)
9. Study on Circular Economy developments in the GCC region and opportunities for collaboration with the European Union – CEPS
10. <https://ecdpm.org/wp-content/uploads/Integration-Climate-Change-Circular-Economy-Foreign-Policies-Discussion-Paper-274-June-2020-ECDPM.pdf>
11. [https://ec.europa.eu/health/international\\_cooperation/global\\_health/events\\_2014\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/health/international_cooperation/global_health/events_2014_en)
12. [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:b828d165-1c22-11ea-8c1f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC\\_1&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:b828d165-1c22-11ea-8c1f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC_1&format=PDF)

## Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers and the GERG research group at Roskilde University and especially Laura Horn and Michelle Pace for their constructive comments in earlier drafts of the article.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## References

- Adelle, C., K. Biedenkopf, and D. Torney, eds. 2018. *European Union External Environmental Policy: Rules, Regulation and Governance beyond Borders*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature.
- Barroso, J. M. D. (2010) State of the Union 2010, Speech, Strasbourg, 7 September, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-10-411\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-10-411_en.htm).
- Bauer, W. M., and J. Ege. 2016. "Bureaucratic Autonomy of International Organizations' Secretariats." *JEPPI* 23 (7): 1019–1037.
- Bauer, M.W., S. Eckhard, J. Ege, and C. Knill. 2017. "A Public Administration Perspective on International Organizations." In *International Bureaucracy: Challenges and Lessons for Public Administration Research*, edited by Bauer M.W, C. Knill, and S. Eckhard, 1–12. London/New York: Palgrave MacMilland.
- Béland, D., and R.H. Cox. 2016. "Ideas as Coalition Magnets: Coalition Building, Policy Entrepreneurs, and Power Relations." *JEPPI* 23 (3): 428–445.



- Bendiek, A., and H. Kramer. 2010. "The EU as a 'Strategic' International Actor: Substantial and Analytical Ambiguities." *European Foreign Affairs Review* 15 (4): 453–474. doi:10.54648/EERR2010034.
- Biedenkopf, K., and F. Petri. 2021. "The European External Action Service and EU Climate Diplomacy: Coordinator and Supporter in Brussels and Beyond." *European Foreign Affairs Review* 26 (1): 71–86. doi:10.54648/EERR2021007.
- Boin, A., M. Busuioc, and M. Groenleer. 2013. "Building European Union Capacity to Manage Transboundary Crises: Network or lead-agency Model?" *Regulation & Governance* 8 (4): 418–436. doi:10.1111/rego.12035.
- Bongardt, A., and F. Torres. 2022. "The European Green Deal: More than an Exit Strategy to the Pandemic Crisis, a Building Block of a Sustainable European Economic Model." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 60 (1): 170–185.
- Bradford, A. 2015. "Exporting Standards: The Externalization of the EU's Regulatory Power via Markets." *International Review of Law and Economics* 42: 158–173. doi:10.1016/j.irl.2014.09.004.
- Braun, M. 2009. "The Evolution of Emissions Trading in the European Union—The Role of Policy Networks, Knowledge and Policy Entrepreneurs." *Accounting, Organizations and Society* 34 (3–4): 469–487. doi:10.1016/j.aos.2008.06.002.
- Bretherton, C., and J. Vogler. 2006. *The European Union as a Global Actor*. London: Routledge.
- Bretherton, C., and J. Vogler. 2013. "A Global Actor past Its Peak?" *International Relations* 27 (3): 375–390. doi:10.1177/0047117813497299.
- Bull, H. 1982. "Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?" *JCMS* 1-2: 149–170.
- Conceição-Heldtda, E., and S. Meunier. 2014. "Speaking with a Single Voice: Internal Cohesiveness and External Effectiveness of the EU in Global Governance." *JEPP* 21 (7): 961–979.
- Cottey, A. 2020. "A Strategic Europe." *JCMS* 58 (2): 276–291.
- Damro, C. 2012. "Market Power Europe." *JEPP* 19 (5): 682–699.
- Delreux, T. 2014. "EU Actorness, Cohesiveness and Effectiveness in Environmental Affairs." *JEPP* 21 (7): 1017–1032.
- Domorenok, E., P. Graziano, and L. Polverari. 2021. "Policy Integration, Policy Design and Administrative Capacities. Evidence from EU cohesion policy." *Policy and Society*, 40(1): 58–78 doi:10.1080/14494035.2021.1930697.
- Duchêne, F. 1972. "Europe's Role in World Peace." In *Europe Tomorrow: Sixteen Europeans Look Ahead*, edited by R. Mayne. London: Fontana/Collins and Chatham House: PEP, 32–47.
- Duchêne, F. 1973. "The European Community and the Uncertainties of Interdependence." In *A Nation Writ Large? Foreign-Policy Problems Before the European Community*, edited by M. Kohnstamm and W. Hager, 1–21. London: Macmillan.
- Dupont, C., S. Oberthür, and I. Von Homeyer. 2020. "The Covid-19 Crisis: A Critical Juncture for EU Climate Policy Development?" *Journal of European Integration* 42 (8): 1095–1110. doi:10.1080/07036337.2020.1853117.
- Edler, J., and A. D. James. 2015. "Understanding the Emergence of New Science and Technology Policies: Policy Entrepreneurship, Agenda Setting and the Development of the European Framework Programme." *Research Policy* 44 (6): 1252–1265. doi:10.1016/j.respol.2014.12.008.
- EEAS (2016) Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy, [http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top\\_stories/pdf/eugs\\_review\\_web.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf), accessed April 2018.
- Ege, J. 2017. "Comparing the Autonomy of International Public Administrations: An ideal-type Approach." *Public Administration* 95 (3): 555–570. doi:10.1111/padm.12326.
- European Commission. 2001. Communication from the Commission A Sustainable Europe for A Better World: A European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development, (Commission's proposal to the Gothenburg European Council), Brussels, 15.5.2001, COM(2001)264 final
- European Commission, 2020. Circular Economy Action Plan: For a Cleaner and More Competitive Europe, [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/pdf/circular-economy/new\\_circular\\_economy\\_action\\_plan.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/pdf/circular-economy/new_circular_economy_action_plan.pdf), accessed June

- Farmer, A. 2020. "Developing the Circular Economy in the European Union." In *Circular Economy: Global Perspective*, edited by S. K. In. Ghosh, 389–412. Singapore: Springer.
- Fitch-Roy, O., D. Benson, and D. Monciardini. 2020. "Going around in Circles? Conceptual Recycling, Patching and Policy Layering in the EU Circular Economy Package." *Environmental Politics* 29 (6): 983–1003. doi:10.1080/09644016.2019.1673996.
- Freedman, L. 2013. *Strategy: A History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Friant, M. C., W.J. Vermeulen, and R. Salomone. 2021. "Analysing European Union Circular Economy Policies: Words versus Actions." *Sustainable Production and Consumption* 27: 337–353. doi:10.1016/j.spc.2020.11.001.
- Gehring, T., S. Obertür, and M. Mühleck. 2013. "European Union Actorness in International Institutions: Why the EU Is Recognized as an Actor in Some International Institutions, but Not in Others." *JCMS* 51 (5): 849–865.
- Goldthau, A., and N. Sitter. 2015. "Soft Power with a Hard Edge: EU Policy Tools and Energy Security." *Review of International Political Economy* 22 (5): 941–965. doi:10.1080/09692290.2015.1008547.
- Groen, L., and A. Niemann. 2013. "The European Union at the Copenhagen Climate Negotiations: A Case of Contested EU Actorness and Effectiveness." *International Relations* 27 (3): 308–324. doi:10.1177/0047117813497302.
- Hill, C. 1990. "European Foreign Policy: Power Bloc, Civilian Model — or Flop?." In *The Evolution of an International Actor. Western Europe's New Assertiveness*, edited by R. Rummel, 31–55. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Howorth, J. 2010. "The EU as a Global Actor: Grand Strategy for a Global Grand Bargain?" *JCMS* 48 (3): 455–474.
- Jabko, N. 2006. *Playing the Market: A Political Strategy for Uniting Europe, 1985–2005*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
- Jacoby, W., and S. Meunier. 2010. "Europe and the Management of Globalization." *JEPP* 17 (3): 299–317.
- Jankauskas, V., and S. Eckhard. 2019. "International Bureaucracies as Strategic Actors: How the Better Regulation Reform Strengthens the European Commission." *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 60 (4): 681–699. doi:10.1007/s11615-019-00189-3.
- Juncos, E. Ana. 2017. "Resilience as the New EU Foreign Policy Paradigm: A Pragmatist Turn?" *European Security* 26 (1): 1–18. doi:10.1080/09662839.2016.1247809.
- Kaunert, C. 2009. "Liberty versus Security? EU Asylum Policy and the European Commission." *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 5 (2): 148–170. doi:10.30950/jcer.v5i2.172.
- Kaunert, C. 2010. "The Area of Freedom, Security and Justice in the Lisbon Treaty: Commission Policy Entrepreneurship?" *European Security* 19 (2): 169–189. doi:10.1080/09662839.2010.531705.
- Kelemen, R. D. 2010. "Globalizing European Union Environmental Policy." *JEPP* 17 (3): 335–349.
- Krause, A. 2003. "European's Union's Africa Policy: The Commission as Policy Entrepreneur in the CFSP." *The European Foreign Affairs Review* 8 (2): 221. doi:10.54648/EERR2003014.
- Laffan, B. 1997. "From Policy Entrepreneur to Policy Manager: The Challenge Facing the European Commission." *JEPP* 4 (3): 422–438.
- Larsen, H. 2002. "The EU: A Global Military Actor?." *Cooperation and Conflict* 37: 283–302.
- Leipold, S. "Transforming Ecological Modernization 'From Within' or Perpetuating It? The Circular Economy as EU Environmental Policy Narrative." *Environmental Politics*. 2021. 1–23.
- Maltby, T. 2013. "European Union Energy Policy Integration: A Case of European Commission Policy Entrepreneurship and Increasing Supranationalism." *Energy Policy* 55: 435–444. doi:10.1016/j.enpol.2012.12.031.
- Manners, I. 2002. "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?" *JCMS* 40 (2): 235–258.
- Manners, I. 2009. "Global Europa: Mythology of the European Union in World Politics." *JCMS* 48 (1): 67–87.
- Menz, G. 2013. "The European Commission as a Policy Entrepreneur in European Migration Policy Making." *Regions and Cohesion* 3 (3): 86–102. doi:10.3167/reco.2013.030305.
- Meunier, S., and K. Nicolaidis. 2006. "The European Union as a Conflicted Trade Power." *JEPP* 13 (6): 906–925.

- Meunier, S. 2007. "Managing Globalization? The EU in International Trade Negotiations." *JCMS* 45 (4): 905–926.
- Nathalie, Tocci. 2016. "The Making of the EU Global Strategy." *Contemporary Security Policy* 37 (3): 461–472. doi:10.1080/13523260.2016.1232559.
- Newman, A. L., and E. Posner. 2016. "Transnational Feedbacks, Soft Law, and Preferences in Global Financial Regulation." *Review of International Political Economy* 23 (1): 123–152. doi:10.1080/09692290.2015.1104375.
- Novotná, T. 2017. "The EU as a Global Actor: United We Stand, Divided We Fall." *JCMS* 55: 177–191.
- Oberthür, S., and C. Dupont. 2021. "The European Union's International Climate Leadership: Towards a Grand Climate Strategy?" *Journal of European Public Policy* 28 (7): 1095–1114 doi:10.1080/13501763.2021.1918218.
- Pace, M. 2009. "Paradoxes and Contradictions in EU Democracy Promotion in the Mediterranean: The Limits of EU Normative Power." *Democratization* 16 (1): 39–58. doi:10.1080/13510340802575809.
- Palmer, J. R. 2015. "How Do Policy Entrepreneurs Influence Policy Change? Framing and Boundary Work in EU Transport Biofuels Policy." *Environmental Politics* 24 (2): 270–287. doi:10.1080/09644016.2015.976465.
- Peters, G. 1999. *Institutional Theory in Political Science: The New Institutionalism*. New York: Continuum.
- Peters, G. 2010. *The Politics of Bureaucracy*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Pircher, B. 2020. "The Council of the EU in Times of Economic Crisis: A Policy Entrepreneur for the Internal Market." *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 16 (1): 65–81. doi:10.30950/jcer.v16i1.1086.
- Renard, T. (2011) *The Treachery of Strategies: A Call for True EU Strategic Partnerships*, Egmont Paper 45, <http://aei.pitt.edu/32321/1/ep45.pdf>.
- Rhinard, M. 2010. *Framing Europe: The Policy Shaping Strategies of the European Commission*. Dordrecht: Republic of Letters Publishing BV.
- Rietig, K., and C. Dupont. 2021. "Presidential Leadership Styles and Institutional Capacity for Climate Policy Integration in the European Commission." *Policy and Society*, 40 (1):. 19–36. doi:10.1080/14494035.2021.1936913.
- Schaik, L.van, and S. Schunz. 2012. "Explaining EU Activism and Impact in Global Climate Politics: Is the Union a Norm- or interest-driven Actor?" *JCMS* 50 (1): 169–186.
- Schunz, S., and C. Damro. 2020. "Expanding Actorness to Explain EU External Engagement in Originally Internal Policy Areas." *JEPP* 27 (1): 122–140.
- Schunz, S. 2021. "Analyzing the Effectiveness of European External Action." In *The External Action of the European Union*, edited by Gstöhl S and S. Schunz, 134–147. London: Red Globe Press.
- Skogstad, G. (2003). Legitimacy And/or Policy Effectiveness?: Network Governance and GMO Regulation in the European Union. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 10(3), 321–338. 10.1080/1350176032000085333
- Smith, M.P. 2010. "Single Market, Global Competition: Regulating the European Economy in a Global Economy." *Jepp* 17 (7): 936–953.
- Stavridis, S. 2008. "'Militarising' the EU: The Concept of Civilian Power Europe Revisited." *The International Spectator, Italian Journal of International Affairs* 36 (4): 43–50.
- Tocci, N. 2017. "'.' In *Framing the EU Global Strategy: A Stronger Europe in a Fragile World*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics.
- Tocci, N. (2018) Towards a European Security and Defence Union: Was 2017 a Watershed? *JCMS*, 56. Annual Review, 131–141
- Toje, A. 2008. "The European Union as a Small Power, or Conceptualizing Europe's Strategic Actorness." *European Integration* 30 (2): 199–215. doi:10.1080/07036330802005425.
- Torney, D., and M.C.D. Cross. 2018. "Environmental and Climate Diplomacy: Building Coalitions through Persuasion." In *European Union External Environmental Policy: Rules, Regulation and Governance Beyond Borders*, edited by Adelle C., K. Biedenkopf and D. Torney. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Trondal, J., M. Marcussen, T. Larsson, and F. Veggeland. 2010. *Unpacking International Organizations*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Trondal, J. 2016. "Advances to the Study of International Public Administration." *JEPP* 23 (7): 1097–1108.
- Vennesson, P. 2010. "Competing Visions for the European Union Grand Strategy." *European Foreign Affairs Review* 15 (1): 57–75. doi:[10.54648/EERR2010004](https://doi.org/10.54648/EERR2010004).
- Vogel, D. 2012. *The Politics of Precaution: Regulating Health, Safety, and Environmental Risks in Europe and the United States*. Princeton University Press.
- Völker, T., Z. Kovacic, and R. Strand. 2020. "Indicator Development as a Site of Collective Imagination? The Case of European Commission Policies on the Circular Economy." *Culture and Organization* 26 (2): 103–120. doi:[10.1080/14759551.2019.1699092](https://doi.org/10.1080/14759551.2019.1699092).
- Warleigh –Lack, A., and B. Rosamond. 2010. "Across the EU Studies–New Regionalism Frontier: Invitation to a Dialogue." *JCMS* 48 (4): 993–1013.
- Wendon, B. 1998. "The Commission as image-venue Entrepreneur in EU Social Policy." *JEPP* 5 (2): 339–353.
- Wettestad, J. 2005. "The Making of the 2003 EU Emissions Trading Directive: An ultra-quick Process Due to Entrepreneurial Proficiency?" *Global Environmental Politics* 5 (1): 1–23. doi:[10.1162/1526380053243477](https://doi.org/10.1162/1526380053243477).
- Young, A. R. 2014. "Europe as a Global Regulator? The Limits of EU Influence in International Food Safety Standards." *JEPP* 21 (6): 904–922.
- Zeilinger, B. 2021. "The European Commission as a Policy Entrepreneur under the European Semester." *Politics and Governance* 9 (3): 63–73. doi:[10.17645/pag.v9i3.4102](https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v9i3.4102).