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# The Europeanization of National Foreign Policy

## The Domestic Impact of European Union Membership on the (Post)-Neutral Countries Ireland and Austria

Vorgelegt von

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# List of Acronyms

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| CFSP | Common Foreign and Security Policy |
| COREPER | Committee of Permanent Representatives |
| COREU | Correspondance Européenne telex network |
| CSCE | Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe |
| EC | European Community |
| EFTA | European Free Trade Association |
| EMU | European Monetary Union |
| EP | European Parliament |
| EPC | European Political Cooperation |
| ERRF | European Rapid Reaction Force |
| ESDI | European Security and Defense Identity |
| ESDP | European Security and Defense Policy |
| EU | European Union |
| FPÖ | Freiheitliche Partei Österreich (Austrian Freedom Party) |
| ISAF | International Security Assistance Force |
| KFOR | Kosovo Force |
| MEP | Member of European Parliament |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| NATO PfP | NATO Partnership for Peace |
| ÖVP | Österreichische Volkspartei (Austrian People's Party) |
| PoCo | Political Committee |
| QMV | Qualified majority voting |
| SEA | Single European Act |
| SFOR | Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| SPÖ | Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreich (Austrian Social Democratic Party) |
| TEU | Treaty on European Union (Maastricht Treaty) |
| ToA | Treaty of Amsterdam |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNGA | United Nations General Assembly |
| UNSC | United Nations Security Council |
| WEU | Western European Union |

# I.     Introduction

*"What will our European partners say – what is the opinion in Europe?"[1]*

Discussions about the very substance and idea behind European integration often result in the question of whether the European Union will ever speak with one voice in world affairs, claiming a single *European interest* instead of 25 diverse and often contradictory national interests.[2] Frequent appeals to a common *European identity* in public speeches or major treaty negotiations give the impression that it might only take a few more years before a European foreign minister will represent the Union's interests in the world, preferably through a common European seat in the UN Security Council. But do these promises not sound increasingly hollow and dishonest in the ears of European citizens in view of the almost spectacular failures of European foreign policy? Major crises in Europe's own backyard, be it in Bosnia or Kosovo, could only be solved with the massive support of the United States. More recently the American-led war in Iraq divided the European continent into supporters and strict opponents of the military intervention – in early 2003 Europe seemed to be further away than ever from speaking with a single voice in world affairs.

But does this rather pessimistic view maybe lead to a serious underestimation of the progress and development of European foreign policy cooperation? Could it be the case that major setbacks for a truly common foreign policy such as the division over the war in Iraq overshadow the more gradual and subtle steps that have been taken towards a common foreign policy? There can be no doubt that all major foreign policy decisions are still made by the heads of state and government themselves while the supranational institutions of the European Union have little if any influence. In contrast to "truly European" policy areas such as agriculture or trade policy, cooperation in foreign policy is characterized by a strictly intergovernmental setting. Given the importance that most governments and people attach to their national sovereignty and independence, this situation is not likely to change anytime soon. Instead of focusing on a *European interest* articulated at the supranational level, it seems, therefore, more useful to examine the impact of European cooperation on national foreign policies over time.

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[1] Question of a senior European diplomat, quoted in Ben Tonra (2001: 261).
[2] This thesis stresses a distinction between the terms "European Community" (EC) and "European Union" (EU) since EPC structures were separate from those of the EC for many years. "EU" refers only to the three-pillar structure created by the Treaty on European Union, including the EC, the CFSP, and the third pillar Justice and Home Affairs (JHA).

While this "Europeanization" can clearly be observed in other policy areas, it is the absence of any legal obligation or compliance-mechanism in the area of foreign policy that makes such an influence questionable. But how do we then explain the shift in foreign policy positions of EU member states in order to seek consensus with each other. Why do particularly the smaller countries in the European Union increasingly look for a common European position instead of pursuing their own national interest? It is arguable that the most significant changes in foreign policy took place among the neutral countries in Europe: participation in "EU Battle Groups" to fulfill the "Petersberg Tasks", the approval of a "Solidarity Clause" in the EU treaties, the granting of transit and over flight rights for military missions without a UN mandate increasingly call into question their status of neutrality.

Foreign policy experts often jump to the conclusion that these transformations can be explained entirely by the end of the Cold War. However, this thesis will argue that such a conclusion amounts to a simplification of the underlying causes. A closer look reveals that significant changes in the foreign policy of the neutral states took place while the Iron Curtain still divided the continent into two power blocs. In addition, the pace and intensity with which neutrality is given up or weakened, varies considerably among the different countries. This thesis departs from the assumption that a range of external and domestic factors were influential during the process, but that the "main trigger" of change was membership in the European Union. The changes in national foreign policies shall be examined by looking at the specific mechanisms of influence that apply in an intergovernmental policy field. A comparative case study on the impact of the European level on the foreign policies of the (post)-neutral countries Ireland and Austria will be conducted in order to provide deeper insights into this field of research.

The results of the comparative analysis generally confirm the assumption that EU membership played a crucial role – however, they also indicate some qualifications. Most importantly, the case study reveals that the "pressure" of the European level on national foreign policies is processed differently according to domestic arrangements in the respective countries. The pace and intensity of the changing status of neutrality seem to depend on factors such as public opinion, decision-making structures, party politics or national foreign policy traditions. In addition, the analysis of neutrality in Ireland and Austria indicates a "growing gap" between official foreign policy positions and strategies on the one hand, and concrete foreign policy action on the other. Ireland frequently insists on its status of neutrality

during major treaty negotiations while it pays less attention in its actual foreign policy. In Austria this "gap between words and deeds" can be observed the other way round, and the analysis will show that domestic factors are largely responsible for this unexpected finding.

To position the assumptions of this paper within the wider field of research, Part II introduces the concept of Europeanization, showing that comparatively few analyses have focused on foreign policy and that in particular the focus on small and neutral states might be a valuable addition to the field. In Part III, the theoretical model and research design of this paper are outlined in greater detail by clarifying the causal chain of underlying mechanisms, and the operationalisation of the key concepts. The overview of Ireland and Austria in Part IV has mainly preparatory function in the sense that it provides necessary information and facts, in particular regarding the two countries' status of neutrality, for the following analysis. The comparative case study in Part V examines the Irish and Austrian foreign policies on a number of different occasions. With regard to the theoretical assumptions, their status of neutrality is analyzed by looking at official foreign policy goals on the one side and actual foreign policy means during international crises on the other. Afterwards, the discussion of results takes into account the potential impact of alternative explanations and compares them to the assumptions of the main hypothesis. The concluding remarks summarize the findings, consider potential deficits of the study and make suggestions for further research.

# II.    Previous Research

*"The realist imagery of solid nation-states pursuing coherent national interests […] was always a simplification of international relations."[3]* - Christopher Hill

The following part positions this paper within the wider context of research in the field by discussing the relevant approaches and findings. The first section deals with the assumed causal link between foreign policy at the European and national level by introducing the concept of "Europeanization". The specific assumptions and mechanisms concerning foreign policy in this field of research are then presented in a second step. It will be shown that relatively little research has been conducted on the Europeanization of national foreign policy and that in particular the neutral countries have not frequently been subject to comprehensive analysis in this theoretical field. Therefore, the systematic analysis of European impact on neutrality as a peculiar foreign policy position of small states can serve as a valuable addition to the Europeanization research.

## 1. Europeanization

Research on European foreign policy cooperation has long been dominated by practitioners and research institutes close to European politics, conducting mainly descriptive studies (Wagner 2002: 20). European foreign policy cooperation only became an interesting field of research for many of the state-centric International Relations scholars after its development from lose political cooperation to the more elaborated CFSP structure in the early 1990s (Wagner and Hellmann 2003: 580). This increased institutionalization and professionalism of foreign policy cooperation also changed the focus of research in the field when a growing number of scholars began to examine the impact of the European level on the foreign policies of the member states, looking at the reversed causal chain of traditional European integration approaches.

This "Europeanization", very generally defined, is "the process of influence deriving from European decisions and impacting member states' policies and political and administrative structures" (Héritier 2001: 3). It is only since the mid-1990s that Europeanization became its own field of research, no longer being subsumed under the broad umbrella of European integration research. Most approaches within this field focus on the more integrated policy

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[3] Christopher Hill (1996a: 10)

areas in the first pillar of the European Union. The "traditional" concepts of Europeanization were mostly concerned with developments at the supranational level, thus focusing on the explanatory variable. More recent approaches on the other hand tend to look at the dependent variable of Europeanization, the affected policy areas and structures on the national level (Knill 2001: 10). Three major dimensions of domestic change can be distinguished (Börzel and Risse 2000). Firstly, more and more *policy* areas are affected by the European level. This is particularly true in areas such as environment and agriculture, where more than 80 percent of existing policies are made at the European level. Secondly, the European level is more and more likely to have consequences for domestic processes of societal interest formation, aggregation, and representation – it affects the *politics* of EU member states. Thirdly, scholars focus on the impact of Europeanization on domestic institutions. They analyze the effect on national *polity*, meaning domestic systems of interest intermediation, national bureaucracies, administrative structures, macro-economic institutions and others (Börzel and Risse: 2000).

A theoretical debate emerged on the question of whether European Union impact leads to *convergence* among the member states. Looking at policies as well as administrative structures some scholars conclude that convergence can be observed while others emphasize the very different impact the same factor might have on other countries (Knill 2001: 12). A possible explanation for the varying results in different countries might be the *capacity for reform* in each country. Héritier (2001) looks at formal and informal veto-positions to describe this capacity.

In determining the exact mechanisms of impact on nation states, another debate has emerged around the so called *goodness of fit* argument. The idea is that all European policy areas fit (or do not fit) to a certain degree with their counterparts on the national level. The wider the gap between the European and national approach (and hence the smaller the "fit") the more pressure of adaptation will be exercised in the respective policy area. While some scholars (Risse, Cowles and Caporaso 2001) consider such adaptation pressure as the necessary condition for domestic change, others (Knill 2001) raise their doubts about such a strict structural mechanism and favor a more actor-centered approach.

If it is administrative change that is observed on the dependent variable, there are institution-based as well as agency-based approaches for the analysis (Knill 2001: 21). Institution-based approaches focus on the institutional setting as independent explanatory factor while agency-based approaches are less determining. They emphasize individuals as

the cornerstone of the mechanism and see institutions as intervening entities rather than independent variables between the actors and the outcomes. While the pure institutional view is often criticized as too deterministic and conservative, the main weakness of the agency-based approach can be seen in its empirical complexity, considering resources, preferences and strategies of all relevant actors. In their combined model, Mayntz and Scharpf (1995: 43) propose a solution to avoid the dilemma between the institutional determinism on the one hand and a general explanatory openness (as in the individualistic approach) on the other. Looking at different *levels of abstraction,* they specify the conditions under which an institutional approach is sufficient or needs to be complemented by an agency-based mechanism.

In his analysis of the Europeanization of national administrations, Knill (2001: 213) identifies three basic patterns of impact: "European policies might be very demanding and prescribe a concrete institutional model for domestic compliance; they might be confined to changing domestic opportunity structures; or, in their 'weakest' form, have no institutional impact at all, while being primarily directed at changing domestic beliefs and expectations."[4] The first two patterns both apply in policy fields of positive (institutional compliance) or negative (changing opportunity structures) integration and cannot, therefore, be used in the area of foreign policy. However, the third mechanism (Europeanization of domestic beliefs and expectations) applies only to policy areas that are "vague and more or less symbolic, given the underlying conflicts of interests between the member states" (Knill 2001: 222). This weak pattern of mere policy-framing and communication seems to be most appropriate in the field of foreign policy and shall be presented in greater detail in the following.

## 2. European Impact on Foreign Policy

As will be shown in this section, the intergovernmental character of the European foreign policy cooperation makes it difficult to apply the mechanisms and ideas of "traditional" theories of Europeanization.

In particular the institutional approaches around the *goodness of fit* argument require a supranational setting that cannot be found in European foreign policy cooperation. Indeed, the whole pillar structure of the EU treaties – separating the "Community pillar" from the special regime that governs the CFSP and parts of Justice and Home Affairs – shows an arrangement

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[4] On the different mechanisms of Europeanization see also Knill and Lehmkuhl (1999).

in which member states have sought to minimize the role of supranational institutions and preserve national autonomy (Tonra and Christiansen 2004: 1). However, scholars examining the European impact on national foreign policy often found – surprisingly from a "traditional" perspective – that member states changed their attitudes and preferences in certain situations, "despite the absence of any real compliance or enforcement mechanisms besides peer pressure" (Smith 1998: 306). Michael Smith comes to the assumption that EPC and its successor, the CFSP, appear to be "less than supranational but more than intergovernmental". This goes in line with what Philippe de Schoutheete – an early analyst and practitioner – said about European foreign policy. According to him, EPC is "a process that would first create a community of information, leading to a community of views and ultimately a community of action."[5]

But what are the assumed *mechanisms* of European impact on national foreign policy? According to most researchers, they are considered to be much more subtle than the mechanisms in "traditional" approaches of Europeanization, and must take into account some special characteristics of European foreign policy. These mechanisms mainly stem from the theoretical framework of *constructivist* and *neo-functional* approaches and shall be briefly presented in the following.

## 2.1. Constructivist assumptions

While positivist approaches such as *neo-realism* or *neo-liberalism* treat state preferences exogenously (not being affected by cooperation), academics are increasingly considering the ways in which membership in an international organization can itself change states' interests. They develop *constructivist* approaches considering identities and interests to be endogenous to interaction (Smith, K. 2004: 16).[6] As Wagner and Hellmann (2003: 571) point out, *constructivism* became the most important challenger to rationalist approaches in recent years and brought most new impulses into the field. Constructivists criticize the *logic of consequentialism* behind rationalist approaches, meaning the creation of new opportunities or constraints according to the institutional *goodness of fit* between European and national level. They rather emphasize the *logic of appropriateness* (March and Olsen 1989), according to which actors try to fulfill certain normative expectations.

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[5] Quoted in Ben Tonra (2001: 14)
[6] It is important to note that constructivism is not itself a substantive theory of International Relations, it should rather be seen as an abstract philosophy of science that has a number of consequences for theorizing international relations. For a good overview of constructivist assumptions see in particular Wendt (1994).

Constructivists pay close attention to the growing interaction among national foreign policy actors within EPC/CFSP, observing the emergence of a strong transgovernmental network of national diplomats sharing "professional expertise and professional pride" (Hill/Wallace 1996: 11) At the level of individual relationships, "the Political Directors [were] on first-name terms" and among the European Correspondents "the *esprit de corps* of the group [was] even stronger […] and many of them [became] personal friends" (Nuttall 1992: 16, 23). The intensity of cooperation and contacts was such that gradually diplomats from foreign ministries of other member states came to see each other as "no longer 'foreign' but as colleagues" (Hill and Wallace 1996: 12).

In the Constructivist view, this can be seen as a long term process of *socialization* among national foreign policy actors. Through the "unusually dense process of cooperation" (Øhrgaard 2004: 28), they have become far more familiar with each other's thinking, they have learned to value EU foreign policy as beneficiary for their own targets, and they have learned to consider the EU as an acceptable arena in which to take foreign policy decisions. Constructivists argue that the *socialization* gradually leads to a convergence of foreign policy actors' interests and identities.

## 2.2. Neo-functionalist assumptions

Neo-functionalism developed in the context of European integration in the 1950s and 1960s and posits that integration proceeds gradually, via *spillover.*[7] It is assumed that sector integration, for instance that of the coal and steel sector, will get its own impetus toward and extension, or *spillover*, to the entire economy.

Due to its focus on what became later known as the first pillar of supranational policymaking, neo-functionalism for a long time appeared to be of little use in explaining intergovernmental policy fields such as foreign policy. These domains of "high politics" were considered to be the area of realist or intergovernmental approaches (Wagner and Hellmann 2003: 583). However, the *spillover* effect is useful in identifying incentives of cooperation that are not considered by rationalist theories. The Europeanization of interests and identities in the process of European integration had been expected by neo-functionalists already in the

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[7] See in particular Haas (1958) who describes the overall idea of neo-functionalism as "[…] the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a newer and larger center, whose institutions posses or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing nation states" (Haas 1958:94).

1960s and 1970s. Neo-functionalists assume that identities and interests could change in the process of interaction within the Community (Smith, K. 2004: 17).

The *spillover* mechanism is closely linked to the concept of *path dependency* according to which "large consequences may result from relatively small or contingent events; particular courses of action, once introduced, can be almost impossible to reverse" (Pierson 2000: 2).[8] Applied to the Europeanization of foreign policy, both mechanisms can be seen as useful explanations for the transformation of changed interest and preferences on the individual level into changes of national foreign policies.

## 2.3. Neutrality as a peculiar foreign policy position

Finding the *indicators* of foreign policy change often proves a difficult task for scholars in the field of Europeanization. To illustrate the extent to which national positions have converged since the creation of EPC in 1970, some researchers analyzed the voting behavior of the member states in the UN General Assembly (Smith 2004b, Luif 2003b). Although the UN General Assembly cannot pass legally binding texts, the voting pattern seems to be a good basis for analyzing long-term tendencies of convergence between the foreign policies of EU member states. In addition to this voting data, other scholars have analyzed the national foreign policies on specific issue areas, providing considerable evidence that EC/EU states have come to moderate their views. An often cited example is the anti-apartheid campaign in South Africa, in which France, Germany and in particular the United Kingdom were gradually convinced, despite initial reservations, to impose stronger pressure and sanctions against the South African government (Smith 2004a, Tonra 2001).

However, little research has been conducted to assess the European impact on countries that share an "extreme" position in their foreign policy and can be seen as "outliers" compared to the EC/EU mainstream. A prominent group of such "outliers" are the European neutral countries whose foreign policies often considerably differ from the EU average. The analysis of neutrality was for a long tome the domain of international law and history, while the "political" aspects were often neglected (Fischer 2004: 34). The literature in the domains of international and constitutional law is particularly helpful in understanding why full participation within the CFSP is more and more seen as being incompatible with the status of

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[8] For an overview of "path dependency"-effects, see especially Paul Pierson (2000).

neutrality.[9] While it is obvious that membership in a military alliance such as NATO or an organization with a mutual defense clause such as WEU is not compatible with the status of neutrality, the rather vague structure between a free market agreement and a political union, as well as the dynamic and ongoing development of the EU make the assessment considerably more difficult. However, especially the more recent developments towards a European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) mean a challenge to the neutral countries. In particular robust commitments such as the European Rapid Reaction Force or the EU "Battle Groups" increasingly call into question the maintenance of neutrality as the next part will outline in greater detail.

Their "outlier" position in terms of foreign policy positions makes the neutral countries a particularly interesting case study in the field of Europeanization. In addition, as the next section will show, the assumptions and mechanism of *small state studies* might lead to further insights.

## 2.4. Europeanization and small state studies

As Koßdorff (2000: 42) explains, neutrality is a strategy that has been applied almost entirely by *small states* in the 20th century with varying degrees of success. This makes it possible to apply the theoretical framework of *small state studies* to the research on neutral states' foreign policies. As Koßdorff (2000: 14) points out, the analysis of small states has not received enough attention within political science for a long time. This is due to be changed not only because the number of small states worldwide has increased significantly (Koßdorff 2000: 14) but also because the political strategies of small states seem to differ considerably from those of their larger counterparts.[10]

One typical *small state strategy* is the support for further *European integration,* meaning a preference for institutionalization and supranational structures. As Michael Smith (1998: 318) points out, the small states were always keen on having a strictly rule-based European foreign policy. A constant danger they are faced with is a European foreign policy being run by a *directoire* of large member states. Instead of "balancing" against the large states, most small states tried to turn EPC/CFSP into a more rule-based regime with greater involvement of supranational actors such as the Commission. "As in the EC small states in EPC attempted to

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[9] For discussions of the legal aspects see in particular Hummer (1996 and 2003) and Pieper (1996), on the political implications of EU membership for neutral countries especially Gehler (2005) and Luif (2003).
[10] On small state strategies in particular Hanf and Soetendorp (1998) and Tonra (2001).

overcome their dependency by constructing a system based on law, not power" (Smith 1998: 318). Therefore, small states usually see the European foreign policy cooperation as an opportunity rather than a constraint (Manners and Whitman 2000: 10). Major advantages are the increased access to information and resources as well as to international actors through a common foreign policy. As Tonra (1997: 183) points out "minor states usually lack significant intelligence or espionage capabilities and, as a general rule, have smaller diplomatic staffs from which to gather and analyze data." For those states access to new sources of information through EPC/CFSP has been a "significant boost to foreign policy formulation […]" (Tonra 1997: 183). While for the large states, EPC/CFSP is only one part of their foreign policy spectrum, it has become the central forum for the delineation of foreign policy interests in the small states (Tonra 1997: 189). Small states are the major beneficiaries of *politics of scale*, increasing their influence on the foreign policy process significantly (Wagner and Hellmann 2003: 581).[11] The political gains of increased integration for small states make them also be more susceptible to the process of Europeanization. As Øhrgaard (2004: 33) puts it, "the substantial policy impact of CFSP has undoubtedly been stronger in the small member states […]."

Claiming a status of *neutrality* is a second small state foreign policy strategy, an attempt to avoid the drawbacks of alliances, institutions, and security systems by "opting out" of the security equation (Gärtner and Sens 1996: 194). The strategy of neutrality is typically applied by small states in order to keep their independence and national sovereignty, and to raise their international profile and reputation. The assumption of this paper is that the strategies of *integration* and *neutrality* can no longer be pursued in parallel because the two foreign policy goals increasingly contradict each other.

## 3. Conclusion

The overview of previous studies and findings indicates that comparatively little research has been conducted on the impact of European foreign policy cooperation on the national foreign policies of EU member states. The status of neutrality as a peculiar position in foreign policy has not been subject to sufficient comprehensive analysis in the field of

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[11] The "politics of scale" are an important mechanism in Neo-functionalist approaches. Haas (1958: 13) considers the benefits of the "politics of scale" as most important motivation for the member states to transfer sovereignty to a supranational level. For instance, in trade policy, the loss of sovereignty with respect to foreign trade was compensated by the bargaining power that the member states acquired as a unified actor in international trade negotiations.

Europeanization, and the next part will introduce the theoretical model and design to conduct such a study. The assumed mechanisms derive from the previous research on Europeanization (socialization, spillover and path dependency) and from the research on small state studies (incentives for and benefits of integration) and it will be shown that a theoretical framework, based on their combination, can serve as a valuable model to explain foreign policy convergence.

# III.   Theoretical Framework

Having positioned this paper within the wider context of research in the field, the following part introduces the theoretical framework of the study. The first section presents the chain of arguments by outlining the assumptions and mechanism that shall explain the causal relation between EU membership and the convergence of national foreign policies. They provide the basis for the main hypothesis that is presented in a second step, also considering potential alternative explanations. Thirdly, the main variables and definitions of the paper are clarified before the research design in Section 4 justifies the application of a comparative case study, the selection of cases, and the methods of the analysis.

## 1. Assumptions and Mechanisms

The theoretical model behind the main hypothesis consists of a number of assumptions and mechanisms that are outlined in this section. A necessary condition for the hypothesis to be valid is the increasing intensity of intergovernmental cooperation and consultation. It is shown, therefore, that political cooperation within the EC/EU considerably extended over time, covering more and more policy areas. Due to specific benefits from this cooperation, the foreign policy actors from small states are expected to be particularly active within EPC/CFSP. The resulting convergence of interests and preferences on the individual level is assumed to translate into a convergence of national foreign policies. It is argued that the intensity and pace of this convergence are especially high when a small state holds the EU Presidency. In the case of the EU neutrals, this process happens increasingly at the expense of their status of neutrality.

### 1.1. The context of increased cooperation

*"The political union is nothing new […], but a process, that has begun a long time ago and will certainly never be finished."*[12] - Lord Ralf Dahrendorf

The assumption is that EC/EU membership leads to increased intergovernmental cooperation and consultation among national foreign policy actors within the framework of EPC/CFSP. The following overview briefly outlines the main mechanisms of cooperation and especially the widening scope of cooperation over time.

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[12] Former member of the European Commission, Lord Ralf Dahrendorf (1971: 120)

### 1.1.1. Foreign policy coordination under EPC

Regarding its origins, formal organizational structure, and goals, the European Political Cooperation (EPC) cannot really be considered as institution or even as specific EC policy domain (Smith 1998: 307). EPC was established by the 1970 Luxembourg Report as a compromise between supranational and intergovernmental structures after all EC member-state governments recognized that radically different national foreign policy positions could harm the EC, its policies, and relations between its members and to the outside world.

EPC was not formally linked to the EC, had no permanent budget or staff for many years, no resources of its own, no meeting place, no chief official, and no specific areas of competence. It had no compliance standards, legal obligations, or enforcement mechanisms and simply established a context in which consultation and coordination in foreign and security policy could occur. The administrative infrastructure of EPC was centered in the foreign ministries of its member-states, and did not include other ministries involved in EC affairs. Within EPC, all states were equal with no system of voting or weighted votes as in the EC Council of Ministers. Governments of EC member states took turns leading the system and the one holding the six-month rotating EC Presidency also set the agenda for EPC discussions, represented EPC abroad, and served as the meeting place for such discussions.

### 1.1.2. Foreign and security policy under the CFSP

The same concerns that deliberately kept EPC separate from the Community were still at play in the case of the CFSP. It was created under the Maastricht treaty as a separate "second" pillar of the EU system. Rather than a decisive break with the past, the CFSP represented a natural, logical progression of EPC, adding only a few truly innovative goals and procedures to that mechanism (Smith 2004b: 176). The whole pillar structure created by the TEU can be seen as a proof that member states still sought to minimize the role of supranational institutions and preserve national autonomy (Tonra and Christiansen 2004: 1). But despite the disappointment of those who wanted a more "communitarized" foreign policy, the TEU clearly established the CFSP as a formally institutionalized European policy sector. While the EPC reports were legally non-binding "soft law", the Maastricht Treaty codified the practice so that the CFSP process is far more legalized, formal and bureaucratized than EPC ever was (Smith, K. 2004: 9).

A substantial change took place in terms of policy substance discussed. More and more issues in the field of security were discussed and suitable for joint actions – a policy area that was banned for much of the history of EPC (Smith 2004b: 201). Although the first incursion of the EU into security policy came with the SEA which opened discussions on the "political and economic" aspects of security to EPC (SEA Title III, Article 30), it was the Maastricht treaty that removed these artificial distinctions and allowed the EU to deal with *all* issues related to security (Title V) (Sjursen 1998: 99). In defense policy the most important decision taken in Amsterdam was the takeover of the WEU "Petersberg tasks" as general foreign policy objectives of the EU.[13] The ToA also affirmed that the WEU was an "integral part of the development of the Union" (Article 17) but did not manage to fully incorporate the defense structures in to the EU.

### 1.1.3. Security and defense cooperation under ESDP

*"Europe talked while Bosnia burned."*[14] - Sir Leon Brittan

But also the Amsterdam Treaty did not prepare the EU for the serious challenges even in its own backyard, as the Kosovo crisis clearly showed that could only be solved by substantial assistance from the United States.[15] Most politicians and commentators considered the outcome of the ToA as "disappointing" and "modest" (Cameron 1998: 68). In particular the EU's failure to manage the Kosovo crisis encouraged the British-French summit at St. Malo in late 1998, where both sides agreed to pursue greater defense cooperation (Smith 2004b: 233). This summit led to more intense discussions about a real European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) at the European Councils in Cologne (June 1999), Helsinki (December 1999), and Santa Maria da Feira (June 2000), which involved a European military force, the integration of the WEU into the EU, and EU armaments cooperation.

The Nice summit in December 2000 further discussed these proposals for ESDP.[16] However, a number of political crises such as the Commission's resignation in 1999 or the imposition of diplomatic sanctions against Austria in early 2000 made it difficult for Nice to arrive at any substantive decisions. But beyond formal treaty rules, there was indeed

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[13] In the 1992 Western European Union Council of Ministers Petersberg Declaration, *Petersberg tasks* are defined as those military operations employed for humanitarian and rescue tasks; peacekeeping tasks; and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking (Keohane 2001: 4).

[14] Former Vice-President and member of the European Commission, quoted in De Schoutheete (1997: 42).

[15] See Part V, Section 3 for an analysis of the European reaction to the Kosovo crisis.

[16] Like Maastricht before, also the enactment of the Nice Treaty was significantly delayed due to a necessary second referendum in Ireland. The treaty came into force on 1 February 2003 (Hummer 2003: 325).

substantial progress even in the field of defense cooperation: For instance, the EU defense ministers met for the first time in 1998 (under Austrian Presidency) to discuss moves towards the ESDP. At the Helsinki European Council shortly afterwards, a "Military Committee" of EU chiefs of staff was created, with its own "Military Staff" of 136 officials (Smith 2004b: 237).[17]

Instead of an incorporation of WEU into the European Union, parallel capacities were established to allow own "EU-led" missions. An important decision taken at the Helsinki Council was the so called "headline goal", demanding from member states to build up a "European Rapid Reaction Force" (RRF) consisting of 15 brigades (50,000-60,000 troops), deployable within 60 days in order to fulfill the Petersberg tasks. Also, in late 2004, EU defense ministers have agreed to create 13 EU "Battle Groups" by 2007 to be deployed to the World's hotspots. The 1,000-1,500 strong forces are expected to be able to be rapidly deployable within 10-15 days after a unanimous decision by the EU member states. The Battle Groups should not be confused with the RRF, they are instead meant for more rapid and shorter deployment in international crises, preparing the ground for a larger and more traditional force to replace them in due time.

According to Nicole Gnesotto (2004: 12) external factors such as international terrorism and a new strategic approach in American foreign policy had a significant influence on the more rapid development of ESDP in recent years. The draft Constitutional Treaty for the EU even includes a "Solidarity Clause".[18] This clause has been adopted in advance by the European Council under Irish Presidency after the Madrid bombings in March 2004, guaranteeing solidarity in the event of a terrorist attack against one of the member states. Also, in light of the Iraq crisis, in 2003 the EU for the first time produced a *European Security Strategy,* defining the Union's strategic goals in the world.

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[17] Professor Antola of Turku University, Finland, commented, during a Symposium in Brussels in July 2000, on the irony involved in the fact that the first time Europe became serious about adopting a "muscular" military force, that force should be associated with the name of Helsinki, the capital of a country which has always striven to offer alternative approaches to peacekeeping (Howorth 2004: 45).

[18] Article I-43 of the draft Constitution states that in the event of a terrorist attack or natural or man-made disaster in a EU member state, the "Union shall mobilize all the instruments at its disposal, including the military resources made available by the member states, […]" (Ortega 2004: 4).

### 1.1.4. Conclusion

*"It may be wrong to even call what the EU has achieved thus a 'common' foreign policy. At the same time […], in its external relations policy generally, Europe has never been more united than it is today"*[19] - Fraser Cameron

This brief overview must, however, not lead to the wrong conclusion that European foreign policy was established along only a few international conferences and treaty negotiations. The striking fact in this policy area has rather been the steady increase in the breadth and depth of cooperation between the member states on a daily basis. As Douglas Hurd (1994: 422) puts it, treaty changes such as SEA or Maastricht "only served to confirm what was happening already – an ever closer degree of convergence between member states' national policies and a parallel desire therefore to join forces." This growing intensity and scope of European foreign policy cooperation is more and more reaching into the areas of security and defense. The current status of CFSP/ESDP can be seen as a "hybrid" between military and non-military capacities of conflict resolution (Hummer 2003: 303), but even with its new Solidarity Clause, the EU falls short of a system of *mutual defense* (meaning an Article V equivalent such as NATO or WEU). However, the increasing "militarization" of the second pillar means a particular challenge to the neutral member states and their status of neutrality is more and more seen as a "stumbling bloc" towards further cooperation. But despite the problems for their countries' neutrality, the assumption of this paper is that foreign policy actors are likely to push for further integration. The following sections will explain the mechanisms in greater detail.

## 1.2. Small state strategies

As outlined before, *small states* can be expected to follow different strategies in foreign policy cooperation than their larger counterparts. The assumption of specific *small state strategies* derives from a *rationalist* theoretical background. It assumes that foreign policy actors in small EU member states benefit above average from the increased cooperation, for example through improved access to information, resources and high level actors. This section outlines the mechanism in greater depth and justifies the assumption that foreign policy actors in small states have a particular interest in pushing for further European integration.

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[19] Fraser Cameron (1998: 76)

### 1.2.1. Special benefits from cooperation

Firstly, foreign policy actors in small states are expected to gain *access to new information and resources*. Already in 1973, the highly innovative and effective *correspondance Européenne* (COREU) telex network was established that enabled EC members to share their points of view within a matter of hours. Both quantity and quality of telexes significantly increased over time: according to Michael Smith (2004b: 191), the number of COREU telexes rapidly grew from 7,548 in 1990 to 12,699 in 1994 and 20,721 in 1995.[20] More and more information concerned sensitive areas such as security and defense and over 80 percent of information is provided by the larger EU members.

Second, foreign policy cooperation gives small states *access to high level actors* and can significantly increase their role on the international level. This assumption is closely linked to the role of the *EU Presidency* that is held by each member state in turn for a period of six months. The EU Presidency gives politicians from small states a historically unparalleled access to key international decision makers, inside as well as outside the European Union: "if we weren't in the Community an Irish minister wouldn't get within an ass' roar of regular meetings with a German foreign minister – never mind the chancellor."[21] The EU Presidency can also be expected to increase the foreign policy actors' international reputation and influence because each country holding the Presidency officially represents the CFSP at international fora, including the UN Security Council (Keohane 2001: 33).[22] Foreign policy cooperation and the Presidency help to shift the political role of small states from formerly *system affected states* to *system affecting states* (Koßdorff 2000: 63).

Foreign policy actors in small states also benefit from the increased cooperation by *better career opportunities*. Tonra (2001: 260) describes this as a "cultural change" caused by Europeanization. While the foreign policy makers in small states were for a long time "relatively minor stars in the global firmament", EPC/CFSP provides "new horizons for diplomats, officials and ministers". As one former official puts it, his diplomatic colleagues

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[20] Figures from CFSP *Forum*, No.1 (Bonn: Institut für Europäische Politik, 1994: 1 and 1995: 8) and Cameron (1998: 65)

[21] An Irish foreign policy practitioner, quoted in Tonra (2001: 259)

[22] The Maastricht Treaty states that "Member States which are also members of the UN Security Council will concert and keep the other Member States fully informed. Member States which are permanent members of the Security Council will, in the execution of their functions, ensure the defense of the positions and the interests of the Union, without prejudice to their responsibilities under the provisions of the UN Charter" (TEU, Article 19).

are now "playing in the senior leagues."[23] The fear of loosing this influence and being isolated leads to a strong "aspiration to consensus" (Tonra 1997: 191) among small state foreign policy makers.

### 1.2.2. Cooperation at the expense of neutrality

A second "typical" small state strategy is a policy of *neutrality*. In particular during the Cold War, neutrality has been an instrument to avoid "bandwagoning": if major powers cannot include states in their sphere of influence they accept a status of neutrality to prevent that state from becoming part of the sphere of influence of another big power. In order to emphasize the own independence and sovereignty and to avoid conflicts, small states may follow a strategy of either *passive* or *active neutrality*. While passive neutrality means to stay out of international politics with the hope to be also left in peace by the outside world, the active version means to become involved in international politics but without taking part in any alliance. Such states typically emphasize multilateral conflict resolution by non-military means and often serve as "bridge-builder" or mediator in conflicts, or as host to international organizations and conferences (Koßdorff 2000: 61). The impartiality and multilateral approach often gives those neutral states a high normative *reputation* among the international community. Good examples of active neutrality are Sweden or Austria in the 1970s under the leadership of Prime Minister Olof Palme and Federal Chancellor Bruno Kreisky.

However, this thesis argues that neutrality becomes less and less relevant as a small state strategy, due to a changed international security environment after the end of the Cold War and in particular the increasingly close European cooperation on matters concerning security and defense. While the two strategies of *neutrality* and *integration* could both be pursued in parallel for a long time, the assumption is that they gradually conflict each other, forcing the neutral EU member states to make a decision between the two. Given the clear advantages the CFSP offers to small states and the decreasing importance of neutrality after the end of the Cold War, it is assumed that the respective states will in the long run focus on the strategy of integration at the expense of their status of neutrality.

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[23] Quoted in Ben Tonra (2001: 260)

## 1.3. Socialization of foreign policy actors

The previous sections outlined the emergence of increasingly close foreign policy cooperation among EC/EU members and the incentives for foreign policy actors in small states to actively contribute to it. The next step of this paper's argument is the explanation of how such cooperation among national foreign policy actors may lead to a *convergence* of their preferences and interests. Research on European foreign policy cooperation frequently shows a result that seems at first glance paradoxical from a *rationalist* perspective: despite the absence of legal obligations, compliance mechanisms or clear benefits of participation (as in the previous section on small states), the system of cooperation gradually expands and influences state interests and preferences. In order to explain this, the mechanism of *socialization* is derived from a *constructivist* perspective. It concerns the role of identity, culture and communication at the individual level. This section explains the mechanism of socialization by clarifying the necessary conditions that need to be met. It will be shown that particularly the existence of a *club atmosphere,* characterized by mutual trust and a set of unwritten laws and rules, as well as the institution of the EU Presidency contribute to the socialization of foreign policy actors in small states.

### 1.3.1. An exclusive gentlemen's club[24]

Despite the strictly intergovernmental decision-making process in European foreign policy cooperation, on a practical day-to-day basis, it soon became clear that delegation and communication also below the top level of the European Council were required. Below the level of foreign ministers, coordination was achieved through regular contacts between high level diplomats, for example in the *Political Committee* (PoCo) composed of senior officials from each foreign ministry. The PoCo was also permitted to set up *working groups* composed of experts from foreign or other ministries, and organized along both functional and geographical lines. Below the PoCo, a system of European Correspondents was set up to manage EPC on a daily basis in the absence of a secretariat. As Michael Smith (1998: 313f) points out, hundreds of meetings of such groups took place each year and facilitated the emergence of an "unusually casual group atmosphere" and an "esprit de corps".[25]

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[24] Michael Smith (1998: 307) describes EPC as an "exclusive gentlemen's club, run by diplomats for diplomats."
[25] Important institutional changes were introduced by the Maastricht Treaty that enhanced the transgovernmental network by centralizing the links between governments in Brussels: the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) was established to prepare all Council meetings and ensure consistency between its

Although the EPC system was based on weak and rather informal institutions it produced some surprising outcomes. As Michael Smith (1998: 308) explains, governments did not monopolize the EPC system as formerly assumed. "To an extent surprising even to those who designed it, EPC outcomes became far less based on ad hoc political discussions than on the socialization of lower-level officials in national capitals and, later, the involvement of EC actors in Brussels" (Smith 1998: 309). Despite the strict requirement of unanimity the achieved compromises do seldom reflect the *lowest common denominator* of national beliefs, but rather a median position among the member states (Nuttall 1992: 314). It is the assumption of this paper that these surprising outcomes can be explained by the *socialization* of the participating actors. Especially the absence of clear institutional regulation and compliance mechanisms contributes to this mechanism because it allowed the emergence of a peculiar set of unwritten laws that is the basis for mutual trust, encouraging a problem-solving, rather than a bargaining style of decision-making.

## 1.3.2. Conditions for socialization

The most fundamental among these unwritten rules involves regular *communication and consultation* on foreign policy issues (Smith 2000: 615). From the beginning of EPC, member states adopted a general rule to consult with each other so that policies of their partners would not catch them by surprise. Tonra (2001) calls this phenomenon the "coordination reflex" among foreign policy makers of different EU member states. A useful tool to communicate with European partners is the COREU telex system as described in the previous section on small states strategies. It is certainly conceivable that a common pool of information leads foreign policy actors in different countries also to common views on international issues. The telex network is, therefore, assumed to have a socializing character and to support the convergence among national foreign policy actors. The second norm within the CFSP is strict *confidentiality*, meaning that states cannot use shared information to embarrass or blame other states (Smith 2000: 616). This secrecy undoubtedly encourages confidence among EU states since they do not have to fear public politicization of certain unwelcome issues.[26] Third, despite limited provisions for Qualified Majority Voting in the Maastricht Treaty, CFSP

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preparation of EC matters and the PoCo's preparation of CFSP matters. To support the COREPER each government established "CFSP Counselors" and relevant EC and EPC working groups were merged. Also the Commission reorganized and expanded its external relations directorate to accommodate the CFSP (M. Smith 1998: 330).

[26] This rule apparently violates some more fundamental rules in the European Union such as the democratic legitimacy and transparence, but it seems difficult to see how political cooperation could have proceeded without it (Smith 2000: 616).

discussions are almost all the time conducted by *consensus*. In general, this makes CFSP discussions less threatening because states know they can always terminate them. In particular smaller states appreciate the fact that the larger EU states cannot impose their will on them. Closely linked to these principles is the "most important unspoken rule in the CFSP" (Smith 2000: 616), namely the notion of *domaines réservés*, or subjects considered off-limits, due to objections of one or more EU states. These subjects may include domestic problems such as separatism (ETA in Spain), bilateral problems between EU states (such as Northern Ireland), certain military crises affecting one or more partners (in particular the former colonial powers), but also foreign policy traditions such as neutrality. While these *domaines réservés* remained for a long time outside the scope of political discussion, the unwritten norms and rules, as well as growing ambitions within the CFSP led to a gradual expansion of its agenda even to previously taboo subjects.

### 1.3.3. Socialization during the Presidency

While the described set of unwritten laws and rules can be expected to be valid at all times, this paper assumes that small states are particularly "Europeanized" when holding the Presidency of the EU. The idea is that the Presidency facilitates the socialization of foreign policy actors because a country holding the Presidency has to go beyond its own national interest, looking at issues through a broader, potentially pan-European lens, and often serving as a moderator between other member states.[27] A second reason for increased European impact during the Presidency can be explained by the fact that small member states maintain only limited diplomatic services and are not necessarily represented in all parts of the world (Regelsberger 1997: 72). As a consequence, a permanent secretariat and the "troika" system were mainly established to assist small states in reducing the presidential burdens. The troika practice basically means to share the work of the Presidency between the previous, the current and following holders of the office. EC states quietly adopted the practice of seconding a few junior officials to the next Presidency state as a support team to assist with the transition. This practice of lending diplomats was then formalized in the London Report in 1981. This support from supranational institutions and other EU member states is likely to further contribute to the socialization of small state foreign policy actors.

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[27] David Phinnemore (interview conducted in May 2005)

## 1.4. Convergence of foreign policies

The final step of argumentation in the theoretical model concerns the transformation of the convergence of preferences and interests on the individual level into a convergence of national foreign policies and, therefore, the weakening of extreme "outlier-positions" in foreign policy such as neutrality. This development is facilitated by the effects of *spillover* and *path dependency*.

The concept of policy convergence has received considerable attention within EU studies in recent years and is usually defined as an increase in similarity between the national policies of several states over time. "Policy convergence thus constitutes the result of a process; it implies a movement from diverse positions towards some common point" (Holzinger and Knill 2005: 2). As Radaelli (2000: 6) notes, policy convergence can be a consequence of Europeanization, and it is the aim of this thesis to clarify the extent to which the observed convergence might be a consequence of the impact of the CFSP on the national foreign policies of EU member states. However, convergence cannot be measured "as such" but needs to be specified.

### 1.4.1. The example of neutrality

The convergence of national foreign policies among small EU member states will be observed as a gradual decline of extreme "outlier positions" or, more specifically, as a weakening of the neutrality status. It is not easy to argue whether a status of neutrality and membership in the European Union are compatible or whether they are mutually exclusive. While it is obvious that membership in a military alliance such as NATO or an organization with a mutual defense clause such as WEU is not compatible with the status of neutrality, the rather vague structure between a free market agreement and a political union, as well as the dynamic and ongoing development of the EU make the assessment considerably more difficult. If one applies a strictly legal definition of neutrality, then EU membership almost certainly means a breach of this status, not only since the establishment of the CFSP. In a strict legal sense even the free movement of goods between member-states and especially the common trade policy (both in the first pillar) might threaten neutrality (Pieper 1996: 328). The analysis will show that this question mainly depends on the interpretation of neutrality that varies considerably between different countries. However, even in its weakest form, neutrality pays close attention to national sovereignty and independence, especially when it

comes to issues related to security and defense – the extension of European foreign policy cooperation to precisely these areas, as described in the first section, can, therefore, be seen as a major challenge to all neutral EU members.

### 1.4.2. Spillover and path dependency

Foreign policy convergence is facilitated by the *spillover* effect, derived from the Neo-functionalist school of thought. It is helpful in explaining the increase in scope and power of certain policy areas, for example the gradual extension of European foreign policy cooperation to issue areas such as security and defense as outlined in the first section. Spillover is also a useful tool to explain the transfer of interests and preferences of actors into national foreign policies. The assumption is that the observed socialization among foreign policy actors will lead to a "limited but gradual *spillover,* in both level and scope" (Øhrgaard 2004: 41). This mechanism of change is close to Joseph Nye's (1990) concept of "soft power" where changes occur by the attraction of ideas and the ability to set the political agenda, rather than by coercive "command power" (Wagner 2001: 44).

The processes of socialization and spillover describe gradual changes in foreign policy, taking place in the "day-to-day" business of EPC/CFSP. However, as John Peterson (1998: 15) notes, the European system of foreign policy cooperation is comprised of both constitutive and evolutionary processes, meaning the difference of "history-making" decisions to the "normal day-to-day" policy-making. These processes, both the gradual as well as the more erratic development of foreign policy, are characterized by *path dependency* effects. According to John Peterson (1998: 15), "precedents set today may be seized upon to alter the way the CFSP works tomorrow." Path dependency effects describe "the way individual policy decisions coalesced and stabilized so that they conditioned future choices" (M. Smith 1998: 310). The assumption is that small states gradually limit their own room to maneuver in foreign policy. Once they agreed on a certain area or issue to be subject to foreign policy cooperation they cannot go behind their own commitment anymore.

## 1.5. The passage of time

A crucial factor for all the assumed mechanisms and effects is the passage of *time*. Only over a longer period of time, foreign policy convergence can be expected to take place that might transform a purely intergovernmental, informal, and non-coercive system into a truly *common* foreign policy cooperation, in which actors increasingly behave "as if the rules were

binding" (Smith 1998: 318). The empirical analysis of this thesis will, therefore, look at both types of processes, the "day-to-day business" as well as the "history-making" big treaty negotiations over a longer period of time, to get a comprehensive picture of the foreign policies of the observed countries.

## 2. Hypotheses

The assumptions and mechanisms presented in the previous section build the theoretical model for the causal relationship between EU membership and the convergence of national foreign policies. The causal chain can be briefly summarized as follows:[28]

1. *Contextual argument:* EU membership leads to increased intergovernmental cooperation and consultation among national foreign policy actors within the framework of European Policy Cooperation (EPC) and its successor, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Due to the potential benefits of cooperation such as the "politics of scale", foreign policy actors in *small states* have particularly strong incentives to push for further integration.

2. *Individual argument:* The increased cooperation and consultation influences national foreign policy actors through the mechanism of *socialization* and leads to a *convergence* of their preferences and interests.

3. *Aggregation argument:* The convergence of preferences and interests translates into a convergence of national foreign policies and leads to a weakening of extreme "outlier-positions". This process is facilitated by the effects of *spillover* and *path dependency*. In the case of the EU neutrals, foreign policy convergence happens increasingly at the expense of their status of neutrality.

### 2.1 The structural hypothesis

These assumptions lead to the following structural hypothesis:

> *Small states' membership in the European Union contributes to the convergence of their foreign policies in the long term.*

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[28] For an overview see Scheme 1 in the Annex

The duration of EU membership can be seen as the independent variable that intends to explain foreign policy convergence (observed as a weakening of the neutrality status). The theoretical assumption is that the longer a neutral country is member of the European Union the weaker its status of neutrality becomes. Section 2 will outline the operationalisation of the variables and will provide definitions for key concepts of this paper.

To avoid what King, Keohane and Verba (2001: 119) call the problem of "more inferences than observations" this thesis restricts the analysis to one independent variable. As the authors point out (2001: 120) an indeterminate research design can be circumvented by adding a "set of observations measured at a different level of analysis". Hence, there will be a number of control variables identified that might serve as an alternative explanation to the structural hypothesis.

## 2.2. Alternative explanations

The idea of falsifiability that is most closely identified with Popper (1968) suggests that the potential falsification of a theory is "the key to social science".[29] Applying this logic, a number of alternative explanations and control variables are considered that might be able to contradict or falsify the main hypothesis. The consideration and control of these variables is essential for the *internal validity* of the analysis. The assumptions of the main hypothesis are tested by looking at the impact of EC/EU membership on neutral countries. It will be shown that a major challenge for the approach of Europeanization as a whole but in particular in the context of neutrality is the isolation of the EU-effect as the major trigger for domestic adaptation as stated by the main hypothesis. As Fanés (2002) points out, the explanatory power of Europeanization has to be measured comparatively by testing it against other parallel processes such as globalization or domestic conditions. The following, therefore, outlines the most important control variables that might be able to explain changes in the status of neutrality, derived from previous research in the field. These assumptions will be considered in greater detail in the empirical part of this paper.[30]

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[29] Quoted in King, Keohane and Verba (2001: 100)
[30] For an overview see Scheme 2 in the Annex

### 2.2.1. External factors

> *External factors such as the end of the Cold War lead to a weakening of the neutrality status of European Union member states.*

The expectation would be that membership in the European Union does not have a decisive impact on the foreign policies of the observed countries. An eventual weakening of the status of neutrality can be mainly explained by other external factors such as the end of the Cold War, regardless of the date of accession to the EU.

By most scholars, two factors among these external influences are considered to be of crucial importance, the *end of the Cold War* and the process of *globalization*. The end of bipolarity questioned the foundations of prior foreign and defense policies of many nation states throughout Europe, neutral or not, militarily strong or not. It made the formerly dominant emphasis on self defense less important and gave European states more room to maneuver in external relations. In particular scholars from a Neo-realist school of thought would assume that the end of the Cold War takes away the incentive for foreign policy cooperation and lets EU states revert to the unilateral pursuit of their national interests.[31] Others, such as the liberal institutionalists would argue that the geopolitical changes present significant challenges but also opportunities for the system of foreign policy cooperation (Allen 1996: 291).[32] Neutral countries are considered to be especially affected by the geopolitical changes because their strategy to "opt out" of the international balance of power

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[31] Neo-realists emphasize the limits to cooperation and claim that sovereign states act within an anarchical international environment. They stress only two factors that may encourage cooperation: "a common enemy and/or hegemony, neither of which seem particularly relevant in post-Cold War Europe" (Smith, K. 2004: 13) However, other Neo-realist scholars come to the contrary conclusion, assuming the emergence of a new European superpower after the end of the Cold War, balancing other international actors, in particular the United States (Waltz 1993: 69).

[32] While neo-realists view international politics as a *zero-sum game* that offers only relative gains to the actors, the interest-based neo-liberal model "looks at EU foreign policy through the lens of absolute gains" (Tonra 2004: 7) Neo-liberalism assumes that a common foreign policy is possible as long as the member states have shared interests and consider collective action to be more effective than separate national action. A very influential approach within this field is Moravcsik's (1998) *liberal intergovernmentalism* that combines a theory of domestic preference formation with an analysis of intergovernmental negotiation.

by choosing a status of neutrality between the two blocks became obsolete.[33] According to Gehler (2005: 206), the neutral states were increasingly confronted with a "pressure of legitimacy" when not only the EU, but also NATO or the United Nations did not consider neutrality as "morally superior" any longer. The second external factor, globalization, stands for an increase in interdependence and a multiplication of exchanges in all sectors of life. It calls into question the concept of neutrality, a security posture traditionally understood as an instrument of national independence and state sovereignty. The empirical part of this paper will control for the impact of the change in international order after the fall of the Berlin Wall on the neutral countries – however, due to the limited scope of this study and the complex measurement and operationalisation, the influences of globalization cannot be considered.

### 2.2.2. Domestic factors

> *Specific domestic arrangements within the neutral EU member states lead to a weakening of their neutrality status.*

The idea is that external pressures such as Europeanization or the end of the Cold War are processed differently in certain countries according to their domestic setting. The assumption is that factors such as party politics, public opinion or specific foreign policy traditions can either have a supportive or a negative effect on the countries' status of neutrality.

*Domestic factors* are regarded by most scholars as a leading source of convergence or non-convergence in foreign policy. The idea is that EU member states are subject to the same pressure from the external environment, but this pressure is not translated in the same way due to different domestic conditions. There is a huge variation across the EU in terms of historical experiences, power resources, key relationships, cultural norms, institutional mechanisms, and government types (Smith, M. 2004a: 751). Although there has been a general harmonization of certain domestic political factors in line with EU/CFSP participation, a great diversity among EU states remains – even between states that share a number of similar "labels" such as counting as a small state or being neutral. Fischer (2004:

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[33] Keohane (2001: 3) even goes as far as calling neutrality policies "relics of the Cold War" because chances of a major global or European military conflict are "extremely remote" and the whole "meaning of security and defense" has changed since the end of the Cold War.

23) explains that national identity is based on a consensus between the elite and the wider population, and that effective foreign policy needs the approval of both. But as will be shown in the empirical part, the elites in the neutral countries are much more willing to give up or to weaken their status of neutrality than the general population. Hence, the "balance of power" between the foreign policy elite and public opinion might play a role. Also the position of political parties seems to be of importance. In some neutral countries the political class itself is strongly divided on questions regarding neutrality while in others they are more unified.

## 3. Operationalisation of Key Concepts

### 3.1. Independent variable

The duration of European Union membership is the *independent variable* of the structural hypothesis. The number of years of EU membership measures the variable that is seen as the causal factor behind the main hypothesis, namely the participation within the framework of EPC and later the CFSP. Due to the dynamic nature of European integration this independent variable cannot be seen as stable over time, but being in constant change. As outlined in the first section, foreign policy cooperation between EU member states extended considerably since its establishment in 1970 and European foreign policy does not only cover the economic and political aspects anymore but even reaches into the field of defense and security. Hence, the effect of the independent variable is likely to have an increasing impact on more and more domestic policy fields over time. Most scholars focus on the intergovernmental level and nature of EPC/CFSP activities – however, it is debatable whether this is the only form of European foreign policy. While the independent variable in this thesis paper shall be limited to EPC/CFSP, other scholars have argued that also more integrated EU policies in the first pillar (e.g. external trade policies) might count as foreign policy activities. They observe a potential interconnectedness of the first and second pillar, an "interpillarization" (Lüddecke 2004: 10).

### 3.2. Dependent variable

The convergence of national foreign policies can be seen as the *dependent variable* of the main hypothesis. Definitions of foreign policy vary from the very narrow *relations between states* through the broader *governmental activity* to the very broad notion of *external relations*. Therefore, in order to compare different national foreign policies it is important to

adopt a narrow enough definition so that the analysis remains manageable (Manners and Whitman 2000: 2).

### 3.2.1. Foreign Policy Analysis

The *Foreign Policy Analysis* (FPA) can be helpful in comparing the national foreign policies of different countries. According to Peterson (1998: 14), "FPA may be viewed as part of a movement in the study of international relations which rejects the search for general "macro-theories" in favor of contextual, "middle-range" theories. It is part of both the micro level of international relations and the macro level of domestic politics and pays particular attention to the relationship between decision-making process and policy outcome. According to Tonra (2001: 49), three interacting variables emerge as being crucial when comparing and contrasting national foreign policies within FPA: "[…] the foreign policy goals and means of a state, the external and internal influences which impinge upon that foreign policy, and the processes by which that policy is formulated." Following this typology of national foreign policies, the goals, means and processes of foreign policy will be subject to the main analysis in Part V while the external and internal influences will be considered as control variables. The dependent variable will be measured by looking at countries with extreme "outlier positions", namely the neutral EU members.

### 3.2.2. Looking at the neutral states

According to the theoretical model, the European impact on foreign policy convergence will be tested by looking at neutral states. The assumption is that the convergence of foreign policies can hereby be observed as a weakening of their status of neutrality. Given the framework and approach of this thesis it has to be noted that the status of neutrality will be dealt with in a rather "informal" way that pays closer attention to actions or interests rather than exact legal analyses. This paper will not focus too closely on the *legal meaning* of neutrality, but rather consider its "general diplomatic or political connotation" (Salmon 1989: 17).[34]

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[34]As Salmon (1989: 9) points out, it was "after 1648, with the embryonic emergence and recognition of both sovereign states and international law, that neutrality as a legal concept was born." Legal analyses often focus on different *types* of neutrality. They distinguish between *common* and *permanent* neutrality (common neutrality means that a state declares itself as neutral in a specific conflict or war while a state is permanently neutral when it declares in peace time not to take part in any conflict or war) between an *active* and a *passive* type (active neutrality describes a foreign policy of participation and involvement, while passive neutrality means to completely keep out of international politics) and between a status of either *de jure* or *de facto*

The status of neutrality will be measured in the analysis as two sets of factors: first, the official *foreign policy goals* of a country as announced in government declarations or documents and as observed in the country's position and strategy in international negotiations. Second, the *foreign policy means* of a country will be examined, pointing to concrete foreign policy decisions and action during international crises. This split of the dependent variable in two layers of analysis is based on the indicators as suggested by the presented framework of Foreign Policy Analysis. The two layer approach is also useful in considering the theoretical differentiation between the constructivist perspective on the one hand and rationalist assumptions on the other. While the rationalist approaches tend to look at concrete policy action, constructivists also take into account the meaning of language and declarations (Larsen 2004: 62). Foreign policy can be seen as "the result of a complex interplay of stimuli from the external environment and domestic-level cognitive, institutional and political variables" (Checkel 1993: 297). Such a broad analysis of the dependent variable, therefore, seems appropriate.

## 3.3. Definition of small states

As outlined before, the validity of the theoretical model is restricted to small states because they are considered to pursue specific small state strategies and to have a different cost-benefit ratio regarding European integration than their larger counterparts. But what are the criteria that make an EU member state count as small? As Koßdorff (2000: 29) explains, there is considerable heterogeneity and incoherence about the definition of small states.[35] A pragmatic solution to the problem of unclear definition was found in 1981 at the conference on small states in Laxenburg, Austria. The participants agreed on a common definition that will also be used in this thesis and defines a small state as a state with a population of less than fifteen but more than one million.[36] Tonra (2001: 46) emphasizes that it is the state's relative power over its external environment that is at issue (and not their relative size) and

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neutrality (according to the question of whether the status is written down in the legal body or even in the constitution of a country). The minimum definition of neutrality that reduces its meaning to the "core" is the *military neutrality* or *non-alignment* (Koßdorff 2000: 87).

[35]The confusion is well shown by the following quote (Goldhamer 1990: 237, quoted in Koßdorff 2000: 29):
"The term 'smaller country' seems to be reserved for large countries with small populations, small countries with large populations, small countries with small populations, and sometimes countries of any size that mostly mind their own business in world affairs."

[36] States with less than a million inhabitants are described as *smallest states* or *micro states.*

therefore "the term 'small state' is not terribly helpful."[37] Instead Tonra uses the terminology of "minor" states, applying besides quantitative measures also some qualitative criteria such as national character or morale (Tonra 2001: 47). This thesis will use both terms in an interchangeable manner.

## 4. Research Design

Due to the limited choice of countries that meet the conditions and requirements of the main hypothesis, the design of a *comparative case study* will be applied to test the theoretical assumptions. According to De Vaus (2001: 220), case study designs are not restricted to a certain unit of analysis like *individuals* or *countries*. He points out that case studies should provide an understanding of a unit as a whole and, if appropriate, *time periods* might well be such a unit of analysis. De Vaus also points out that "case study designs are particularly useful when we do not wish or are unable to screen out the influence of *external* variables but when we wish to examine their effect on the phenomenon we are investigating" (2001: 232). The phenomena investigated in this thesis are characterized by a small number of cases with a large number of variables for which the case study design is particularly useful.

If the results of the comparative case study fit with the theoretical assumptions this would mean support for the validity of the main hypothesis. However, case studies can be no basis for a final decision and further analysis would always be necessary in order to improve the *external validity* of the analysis. Another methodological problem in this framework is caused by the so called *Endogeneity*. The values of the explanatory variable are sometimes a consequence, rather than a cause, of the dependent variable (King/Keohane/Verba 1994: 185). According to René Lüddecke (2004: 7) it is "particularly difficult to identify clearly the cause for the effects, given the processes of mutual adaptation are heavily intertwined". Although national foreign policy has been clearly affected by EU membership, the specific nature of the EU's foreign policy competences and procedures have themselves been affected by the input from the national level of the member states. The problem of *Endogeneity* is almost inherent in the field of Europeanization – as shown in the part on previous research, Europeanization can be seen as a "reverse process" to European integration, switching the dependent and independent variables. But despite these difficulties for the proper analysis of causality in this

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[37] Also the term "weak states" that has been suggested by others is not particularly helpful because "weak" is usually a label for states whose internal political, social and/or economic bases fail to sustain effective sovereignty (Tonra 2001: 47).

field of research in general, the qualitative case study design seems a good way to cope with *Endogeneity* because it allows examining the assumed causal links and mechanisms in depth.

## 4.1. Case selection

This section will show that only a limited number of cases meet the requirements to test the theoretical assumptions of the main hypothesis. The universe of cases can be seen as the totality of countries that have (or had) a status of neutrality and became members of the European Union at some point. While most EU member states after the 2004 enlargement count as small states (defined as countries with a population between one and fifteen million), only four of those countries consider themselves as being neutral: Austria, Finland, Ireland, and Sweden.[38] In order to ensure variance on the independent variable the cases need to differ according to the duration of their EU membership. In addition, it seems to be desirable to analyze the countries at similar points in history – this is mainly to avoid additional problems and uncertainties connected to the changes in the international environment over time. These requirements significantly limit the number of potential cases because out of these four officially neutral EU member states three entered the European Union at the same time in 1995. A comparison between countries at similar points of time is therefore most suitable between the one neutral "outlier", Ireland that joined the EC 22 years ahead of the others in 1973 and, given the limited scope of this study, one of the three other neutrals. In order to avoid the methodological problems of such a "small-n" study, the case selection will follow the approach of *most similar systems* (Przeworski and Teune 1970: 32).

An important requirement of this approach is the guarantee of as much *internal validity* of the analysis as possible. According to De Vaus (2001: 233), internal validity relies on "screening out the influence of variables other than the key causal variables. […] Threats to internal validity stem from the danger that factors other than our key variable are producing any changes we observe." To ensure as much internal validity as possible the cases in this study will be selected in a way that allows a high coherence among the control variables and, if not possible, at least a systematic control of alternative explanations. Following this argument, the control of the status of neutrality in both countries prior to EU membership seems to be of critical importance. As will be shown in greater detail in Part IV of this study,

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[38] Also Malta is considered to be neutral. However, with a population of roughly 370,000 the country does not qualify as a small state. In addition, Malta joined the EU only in 2004 and it seems therefore too early to examine the EU impact on the foreign policy of this country.

Ireland and Austria share some important similarities with respect to the roots of their neutrality. Most importantly, neutrality is a comparatively new concept in both countries that can only superficially be compared to the strong roots and traditions of neutrality in, say Sweden, Finland or Switzerland.

Following these requirements and considerations, Austria and Ireland seem to be the two most appropriate cases to test the assumptions of this paper. If the structural hypothesis is valid, one would expect that Ireland gave up (or significantly weakened) its status of neutrality much earlier than Austria did, due to Ireland's longer membership in the European Union. In order to test this assumption, the comparative case study will closely look at key foreign policy decisions of the two countries during major international conflicts. Following the two-layer definition of the dependent variable, the analysis will also consider the positions and strategies of Ireland and Austria, for instance during international negotiations or when holding the Presidency of the EU.

## 4.2. Methods of analysis

This thesis will be based upon qualitative data analysis of relevant literature and documents as well as on several interviews that were conducted in spring 2005 with foreign policy experts both from the academic as well as the practical field of EU politics (see Annex). As Manners and Whitman (2000: 249) point out, analyzing the socialization of political actors can be "notoriously difficult", particularly when using traditional (or "rational-actor") methodologies. This is why the study will apply more critical methodologies (based on interview and discourse approaches) in order to examine the validity of the main hypothesis. Most research will be based on literature and there will also be a few governments documents and treaties analyzed to find out about governmental positions, following the logic of *comparative treaty analysis* (Helmke 2000: 17). The interviews will be supplementary to this material in order to find out about positions, values, expectations, and assessments that cannot be found in the literature.

Students of EPC/CFSP are also faced with a specific constraint of this policy area: foreign policy is still highly secret in that deliberations are not open to outsiders and minutes of EPC/CFSP meetings are not available to the public (Smith 2004b: 13). One of the main theoretical assumptions of this thesis concerns the *club atmosphere* in which foreign policy decisions are made by a small elite with a strong corporate identity – however and

paradoxically, if these assumptions were true, it would be particularly difficult to prove because structure and sensitivity of the concerned issues put clear limits on the way research can be conducted.

## 5. Conclusion

A comparative case study will be conducted to systematically analyze the foreign policies of the (post)-neutral countries Ireland and Austria in order to filter out European influence from other potential factors. The theoretical model comprises a combination of rationalist and constructivist assumptions and mechanisms that stem mainly from the research on small states and on the Europeanization of foreign policy. Before these assumptions of the main hypothesis will be subject to empirical analysis, the following part provides some necessary facts and information concerning the two countries under observation.

# IV. Neutrality in Ireland and Austria

This part has mainly a preparatory function for the following comparative analysis. It intends to briefly present the two countries that will be examined to test the main hypothesis of this paper. First, a country profile for Ireland and Austria presents relevant information and facts for the analysis. In a second step, the origins of neutrality in both countries are outlined in order to justify the case selection of the previous part. According to the *most similar systems* approach, the observed countries must show variance on the independent variable (duration of EU membership), while such differences in intervening and control variables need to be kept at a minimum. The origin of neutrality and its status prior to EU accession are considered to be an important control variable and the reasoning behind the case selection will be further explained by showing that Ireland and Austria share important similarities regarding their roots of neutrality. The third section then outlines the developments that led to the Irish accession to the European Communities in 1973 and to the Austrian membership of the European Union in 1995. Particular attention is paid to the role of neutrality and the question whether this policy was considered to be compatible with membership in the EC/EU.

## 1. Ireland

### 1.1. Country profile

Ireland has a population of 4.1 million (as of 2000) and has one of the lowest population densities in Europe.[39] The main legislature is the Dail (lower house) and the head of government is the Taoiseach (prime minister). Left and right wing ideology has never played a significant role in Irish politics where a general election is held at least once every five years. In every election over the past 70 years, two broadly centrist parties – Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael – have won the lion's share of the popular vote.[40] Other relevant political parties are Labour, the Progressive Democrats, the Green Party and Sinn Fein.[41] Table 1 shows the relative strength of the major political parties during the last few parliamentary elections.

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[39] It is a remarkable fact that Ireland had a population of roughly 3 million in the mid 20th century – this made it probably the only country that had fewer inhabitants than 100 years before. The loss of population was mainly due to emigration to the United States after a severe famine in 1841 (Koßdorff 2000: 167).
[40] *Fianna Fáil* is Gaelic for "Soldiers of Destiny", *Fine Gael* stands for "Tribe of the Gaels" (Keohane 2001: 19)
[41] Source: The Economist - country briefing Ireland: www.economist.com, accessed in July 2005.

Table 1: *Parliamentary Forces in Ireland 1989-2002 in percent of votes[42]*

|  | **1989** | **1992** | **1997** | **2002** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fianna Fáil | 44.1 | 39.1 | 39.3 | 41.5 |
| Fine Gael | 29.3 | 27.3 | 30.5 | 22.5 |
| Labour Party | 9.5 | 19.3 | 10.4 | 10.8 |
| Progressive Democrats | 5.5 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.0 |
| Others | 11.6 | 9.6 | 15.2 | 21.2 |

According to Koßdorff (2000: 99), the Irish political parties were always very different from those in other European states and it is difficult to apply the usual categories of Christian Democrats, Conservatives, Socialists or Liberals to the Irish system.[43]

Given its geographic location in the European periphery and its status of neutrality, "Ireland enjoys a very benign external security environment."[44] The Irish military budgets, as well as its capacities are very limited, especially compared to the other neutral European countries (see Table 2). The number of troops as a percentage of the population is only 0.8 percent in Ireland (as of 1995, compared to 2.2 percent in Austria or even 9.0 percent in Sweden). Primary purpose of the Irish military forces is the support of the civil institutions in Northern Ireland as well as the supply of Irish contingents for UN peacekeeping missions (Koßdorff 2000: 97). Participation in such operations is a significant part of Irish foreign policy and in 1997 it was calculated that 65 percent of the present Irish Defense Forces had served abroad at some time or another (Keohane 2001: 27).

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[42] Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit: www.economist.com, accessed in July 2005.
[43] This was particularly obvious after EC accession in 1973 when the Irish parties had to join the European "party families" in the European Parliament.
[44] According to the Irish government 2000 White Paper on Defense, quoted in Keohane (2001: 9).

Table 2: *Military budget of the European neutrals in percent of GNP*[45]

|            | 1979 | 1985 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 |
|------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| **Austria**    | 1.2  | 1.2  | 1.0  | 0.9  | 1.0  |
| Finland    | 1.5  | 2.8  | 2.0  | 2.0  | 2.0  |
| Sweden     | 3.1  | 3.3  | 2.8  | 2.7  | 2.9  |
| Switzerland| 1.8  | 2.1  | 1.7  | 1.7  | 1.9  |
| **Ireland**    | 1.6  | 1.8  | 1.2  | 1.2  | 1.2  |

## 1.2. Origins of Irish neutrality

*"Ireland pursues and independent course in foreign policy, but it is not neutral between liberty and tyranny and never will be."*[46] - John F. Kennedy

Given Ireland's remote geographic location, its relative low profile on the international stage, and its strong dependence on Great Britain, the country was once described as "an island beyond an island".[47] Calvocoressi (1994: 151) explains that "Ireland's external policies were for centuries conditioned by its unhappy relationship with England – a relationship marked by pronounced economic dependence as well as pronounced hostility."

According to Koßdorff (2000: 73), the origins of Irish neutrality can be found in the struggle for national independence from the United Kingdom in the early 20th century. In September 1914, the *Irish Neutrality League* was founded that wanted to keep Ireland out of Great Britain's wars, promoting the slogan "neither King nor Kaiser" (Koßdorff 2000: 73). After a bitter struggle, an Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed in 1921, giving independence to 26 counties of Ireland, while the other six remained within the UK. The establishment of the Irish Free State was followed by a civil war, which ended in 1923.[48] During the political time of crisis in the Europe of the 1930s, Ireland declared neutrality as the goal of its national

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[45] Source: Koßdorff (2000: 97)
[46] Quoted in Keohane (2001: 13)
[47] The term "une île derrière une île" goes back to Jean Blanchard (1958: 11), quoted in Salmon (1989: 1).
[48] Source: The Economist - country briefing Ireland: www.economist.com, accessed in July 2005.

policy in 1936. The country remained neutral during the Second World War although British Foreign Minister Chamberlain offered the unification of the island if Irish troops supported the UK.[49] In 1949, the Republic of Ireland was declared and the country left the Commonwealth of Nations. After the foundation of NATO in the same year, Ireland rejected membership because "as long as Partition lasts, any military alliance or commitment involving joint military action with the state responsible for Partition must be quite out of the question […]."[50] The core concept of Irish neutrality became "do not join NATO". As Mitchell MEP puts it, "NATO has always been a dirty word in Ireland."[51]

In legal terms, neutrality in Ireland is only very vaguely defined. It does not have any basis in the constitution or in common law – Ireland can be considered as *de facto* neutral, not *de jure* (Koßdorff 2000: 81). Its military neutrality is only a policy; it is not a constitutional requirement for the state as in the case of Austria (Keohane 2001: 16). However, Brian Crowley MEP emphasizes that although the "Bunreacht na hEireann", the Irish Constitution of 1937, does not specifically mention the word "neutrality", it still entails some very clear wording:[52] Articles 29 (1) and (2) are directly taken from the Charter of the League of Nations and affirm (1) Ireland's "[…] devotion to the ideal of peace and friendly cooperation amongst nations […]" as well as its (2) "[…] adherence to the principle of the pacific settlement of international disputes […]."

For the first years after the Second World War, Ireland pursued a rather isolationist form of neutrality, keeping strictly out of all Cold War issues. However, when Ireland joined the United Nations in 1955 (together with a group of other countries, among them neutral Austria), the country became internationally more active (Koßdorff 2000: 77). In the 1960s with the accession to the EC under discussion, Irish politicians emphasized that the country had never been *ideologically neutral* but rather pursues a *military neutrality,* allowing a clear preference for the Western industrialized world (as compared to the Soviet bloc). As Koßdorff (2000: 78) points out, Irish politicians basically followed two concepts of neutrality at the same time: in official statements meant for the outside world, the concept of *military*

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[49] Despite its official status of neutrality, Ireland in reality pursued "benevolent neutrality" towards the Allied forces. For example, the country shared military and intelligence information with the Americans and the British (Koßdorff 2000: 75).
[50] Dail Debates: 114, 323-26, 23.2. 1949, quoted in Koßdorff (2000: 76).
[51] Interview conducted in May 2005
[52] Interview conducted in May, 2005

*neutrality* (or non-alignment) was applied while internally, for the Irish people, a more comprehensive form of *fundamental* (or permanent) *neutrality* was used.

The popularity of neutrality in the public opinion is an interesting phenomenon. According to Kyle O'Sullivan, a foreign policy practitioner from the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the EU, the origins of Irish neutrality in the conflict with the UK always made it a "negative issue"[53]. Neutrality was a strategy to get or to maintain independence, to distance oneself from the dominant neighbor or even to prevent civil war. However, neutrality over time acquired a "positive spin" it became very popular among the Irish people who became attracted by the "plus sides" of the concept.

## 1.3. Ireland's accession to the EC in 1973

According to Soetendorp (1999: 45), Ireland had almost no other choice than to follow the United Kingdom, at that time its major export market and trade partner, when the British left the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1973 to join the EC. But although it was heavily influenced by the UK in this decision, Ireland saw membership also as an opportunity to "win greater autonomy from Great Britain by adding a multilateral dimension to the bilateral relationship and achieving a more balanced interdependence" (Laffan 1983: 91). While other countries feared potential constraints of their national policies through EC membership, Ireland was in the paradoxical situation where "the more integrated Ireland was [in Europe], the more independent it also became [from Britain]" (Simon Coveney MEP).[54]

### 1.3.1. Economic incentives

Another decisive factor for membership application was the poor condition of the Irish economy. As Soetendorp (1999: 45) puts it, "none of these countries [Denmark, Ireland, Sweden, Finland and Austria] has joined the EC or EU out of a deep belief in European integration, but simply because of the economic advantages that the common market offered its members." In the view of Irish decision-makers, the economic benefits of membership far outweighed the loss of autonomy in the conduct of the country's foreign relations. As the years following Irish accession showed, the country became one of the largest beneficiaries of the economic and social cohesion policy of the EC/EU. According to Keatinge (1996: 208), of the three new member states which joined the EC in 1973, Ireland enjoyed the clearest gain

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[53] Interview conducted in April, 2005
[54] Interview conducted in May 2005

from its overall terms of membership. After decades of dependence on a British market characterized by low price levels, accession to the Common Agricultural Policy was the most obvious single advantage. While in 1959/1960 roughly 74 percent of Irish exports went to Great Britain, this number lowered to 58 percent by 1973 and to around 30 percent in the 1990s. At the same time, Irish exports to the EC member states increased from 5.9 percent to 19.1 percent (Koßdorff 2000: 108). Huge economic benefits and annual growth rates of 8-10 percent led to the description of Ireland as the "Celtic Tiger". In this situation, withdrawal from the Community because of a loss of sovereignty was soon conceived by Irish politicians as "economic suicide" (Soetendorp 1999: 48).

### 1.3.2. Membership and neutrality

In contrast to this "smooth" accession process, participation in European Political Cooperation, which was only established three years before, was much more of a challenge for Ireland. The country had to travel from the outer margins of international life to involvement in a diplomatic network with pretensions to a central role in world affairs. As Keatinge (1996: 208) explains, Irish foreign policy consisted of two main pillars prior to EC accession: first, the bilateral relationship with the UK, and second the United Nations. Ireland joined the Nine as the only member state which had neither signed the North Atlantic Treaty nor established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. Ireland started form a "state of innocence" (Keatinge 1996: 208). This ill-preparedness for international affairs could be further seen in the fact that the foreign ministry was not even involved in the 1961 decision to apply for membership, "a decision that was taken by a core group of finance officials and the prime minister" (Laffan and Tannam 1998: 70). During the 1960s, the foreign ministry was a peripheral ministry responsible for the United Nations, a situation that changed significantly after Irish membership in the EC.

Despite the economic and also political advantages of Irish EC membership, the main concern during accession and for successive Irish governments afterwards has been the question of how to combine full membership with Ireland's neutrality. According to Tonra (2001: 152), "EPC was clearly considered a 'cost' of integration rather than a benefit […]. Only its submersion in economic welfare gains appears to have made it palatable to its respective domestic audiences." However, the Irish government successfully avoided a larger political debate about neutrality prior to accession by making a distinction between *political* and *military* neutrality (Soetendorp 1999: 47). As long as a common defense policy was

unthinkable, Irish politicians could credibly claim that the core of Irish military neutrality was not affected by EC membership. While other European states considered the EC goal of "an ever closer union" to be incompatible with neutrality, the Irish government took another view, which put Irish neutrality in a rather different league (Tonra 2001: 108). As Salmon (1989: 6) points out, the Irish have continuously seen themselves as a model for these doubters, demonstrating that there is a distinction between NATO and the European Community, and that membership of the EC need not involve a military commitment. However, the Taoiseach Sean Lemass made a statement in July 1962 that was stronger than most of his successors would have liked: "[we] are prepared to go into this integrated Europe without any reservations as to how far this will take us in the field of foreign policy and defense."[55] Rather than a real commitment to a military alliance, this statement shows that supporters of EC membership tried to play down differences in Irish foreign policy positions vis-à-vis other member states. As Koßdorff (2000: 78) explains, in the years prior to EC accession, there was a tendency in Ireland not to use the word "neutrality" as often as before. The importance of neutrality was intentionally played down by the government and other pro-accession lobbyists. The final decision about Irish EC membership was made by the Irish people in a referendum on May 10, 1972. The two major parties, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, supported membership and the result of the vote was a huge majority of 83 percent in favor.

## 2. Austria

### 2.1. Country profile

The Republic of Austria has a population of 8.2 million (as of 2004) and a federal structure with nine states. The federal president is the head of state and is elected by universal suffrage. The Austrian government is headed by the federal chancellor. The national parliament has two houses, the *Bundesrat* (upper house) and the *Nationalrat* (lower house), which has 183 members elected by a process of proportional representation at least every four years. Main political parties are the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ), the Greens, the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ), and the Freedom Party (FPÖ).[56] Table 3 provides an overview of the relative strength of these political forces in the last few parliamentary elections. In particular the last elections in 2002 indicate a significant

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[55] Quoted in Ben Tonra (2001: 109)
[56] The Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ ) is a new party formed in April 2005 following split within the Freedom Party. Source: The Economist - country briefing Austria: www.economist.com, accessed in July 2005.

change in the political landscape with the People's Party as a clear winner, mostly at the expense of its coalition partner, the Freedom Party. The shift in party politics will be further outlined in Part V of this paper.

Table 3: *Parliamentary Forces in Austria 1989-2002 in percent of votes*[57]

|  | **1990** | **1994** | **1995**[58] | **1999** | **2002** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| People's Party (ÖVP) | 32.1 | 27.7 | 28.3 | 26.9 | **42.3** |
| Social Democrats (SPÖ) | 42.8 | 34.9 | 38.1 | 33.2 | **36.51** |
| Freedom Party (FPÖ) | 16.6 | 22.5 | 22.0 | 26.9 | **10.01** |
| Greens | 4.8 | 7.3 | 4.8 | 7.4 | **9.47** |
| Others | 3.7 | 7.6 | 6.8 | 5.6 | **1.71** |

Austria's security environment is certainly less benign than the Irish, given the country's proximity to the unstable Balkans. However, as Gustenau (1999: 14) points out, as in the case of Ireland, Austria's military options are severely reduced, due to its limited military capabilities (see Table 2 above). The Austrian army consists of some 35,000 troops, including 17,000 conscripts, and the air force of almost 7,000, including more than 2,200 conscripts (de Wijk 2003: 16). Austria's long tradition of participation in UN peacekeeping operations and the country's force structure with its strong civil component, have not led to the creation of mainly professional units that would be especially suitable for combat operations abroad as they became likely within the Petersberg framework.

## 2.2. Origins of Austrian neutrality

According to Gehler (2005: 106), Austrian neutrality was the result of a failed foreign policy and the emerging Cold War. It was not deeply rooted historically as in Switzerland. Austria had no such tradition, to the contrary as the "keystone of a large, if heterogeneous,

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[57] Source: Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior (http://www.bmi.gv.at/wahlen/nrw_history.asp), accessed in August 2005.
[58] Under consideration of repeated elections in October 1996

empire it participated in all the principal wars of modern Europe and claimed neutral rights in none" (Calvocoressi 1994: 147). After the Second World War, Austria regained its independence during negotiations in Moscow in 1955 on the condition that it would immediately espouse permanent neutrality of the Swiss type, join no military alliance and permit no foreign military bases on its soil. This was a political deal with the declaration of "perpetual neutrality" as the price paid for the retreat of the Red Army.

Contrary to common perception, Austrian neutrality is not based on the State Treaty of 1955. Its legal basis is an Austrian Constitutional Act on Neutrality passed by Parliament on 26 October 1955.[59] It became subject to international law only through acknowledgement of this Act by other states. After the declaration, Soviet and Western forces left the country. Neutrality led to an end of the occupation, gave Austria independence and probably spared the country from partition as was the case in Germany.

Originally conceived as an instrument of national independence, Austrian neutrality was soon instrumentalized as a way for the country to compensate for its small size and its minor influence in the international arena. It was in the 1970s that Austrian neutrality gained strong international reputation as an "active neutrality" in the conflicts between the East and the West, the North and the South, and in the Middle East (Gehler 2005: 116). Under the popular Socialist Chancellor Bruno Kreisky, Austrian neutrality was not understood only in military terms but in a "comprehensive" way, it became the "national ideology". Austria was an active mediator in international politics and became host to many international organizations such as OPEC. Vienna was now the third official seat of the United Nations (e.g. IAEO, UNIDO) and hosted significant summits and conferences (Chrushchev-Kennedy, Breshnev-Ford, SALT, CSCE). According to Jankowitsch and Porias (1994:51), Austrian statesmen had declared that "neutrality policy" was simply another word for a resolute policy of peace and international stability. This shows how international law might adapt to changes or new patterns of behavior of nations: today, the fact that membership in the United Nations is compatible with permanent neutrality is undisputed, but when Austria joined the UN in 1955, this was by no means the case. According to Luif (2003a: 284), active neutrality's zenith was reached under Chancellor Bruno Kreisky while the renewed Cold War in the 1980s made an active participation of a small country like Austria in international relations much more difficult. As

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[59] The State Treaty of May 15, 1955 between the United States, Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union and Austria does not explicitly mention neutrality. But the Constitutional Act that was passed on the day after the last foreign soldier had left Austria states the country's "perpetual neutrality" in Article 1. Until March 1957, this law was acknowledged by 61 other states (Pieper 1997: 233).

a consequence, Austria's external interests re-oriented themselves towards Europe and soon membership in the EC/EU was at the center of Austria's foreign policy goals (see Section 2.3).

The "active neutrality" was very popular among the Austrian people and according to Gehler (2005: 116) neutrality developed into the central element of Austrian identity and was particularly useful to distance herself from "NATO-Germany" and the "Warsaw Pact-GDR". As Voggenhuber MEP explains, there was a strong sentiment of "never again marching on the wrong side."[60] Reiter (1992: 34) criticizes this mystification of neutrality by pointing out that the new identity had only existed for 36 years - only a very short period in the Austrian history of more than one thousand years.

## 2.3. Austria's accession to the EU in 1995

*"Austria was as keen on European integration as the keenest member of the Community."*[61]

Austria's accession to the EU in 1995 has generally been very smooth. Positive factors in policy adaptation were the country's federal structure, as well as its tradition of *corporatism*, where decisions are made preferably by consensus and by a big coalition of social partners and interest groups. As Luif (1998: 122) explains, decentralized and informal decision-making processes also characterize EU policy-making, and European matters are handled very similarly to those in Austria. Due to the close ties the country always had to the Community, Rothacher (1996: 284) calls Austria a "would-be founding member" of the EC. In contrast to the other neutrals, Austria has had such close relations since the founding of the Coal and Steel Community in the early 1950s. Therefore, according to Luif (1993: 19), "it came as no surprise that this Central European republic officially applied for EC membership – even before the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe."

### 2.3.1. Economic incentives

Comparable to the Irish case almost two decades before, severe economic problems in the mid-1980s forced the Austrian political and economic elite to rethink relations to the EC. "Better economic growth would only come if the large sheltered sectors would feel fresh

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[60] Interview conducted in May 2005
[61] Peter Calvocoressi (1994: 154)

winds from the EC competitors" (Luif 2003a: 278). Besides the bad performance of the Austrian industry, also several scandals led to a general decline of confidence in the "island of the blessed" image that the country had, in particular during the rule of the charismatic Chancellor Bruno Kreisky (1970-1983). The debate on EC membership intensified when the EC launched the concept of a Single Market in 1985 and Austria feared to become excluded and left even further behind (Hummer 1996: 23). As a consequence, first big business and then also small and medium-sized companies and the farmers' organizations pushed for EC membership (Luif 1998: 117). Shortly afterwards, in January 1988, the party with close links to the farmers and business groups and junior partner of the coalition government, the ÖVP, decided to request full membership in the EC. More than a year later, in mid-1989, ÖVP and SPÖ finally reached an agreement on how to proceed further with integration policy (Luif 1993: 29f).

## 2.3.2. Membership and neutrality

After the Austrian declaration of its "perpetual neutrality" in 1955, EC membership had been seen for decades as being impossible for a neutral country (Schweitzer 1992: 111). International law specialists argued that even the membership in an economic union would not be compatible with the status of neutrality, and a neutral country would have to suspend its membership if one or more of its members were involved in a military conflict (Luif 2003a: 277). This was even more relevant in terms of a political union, which was generally considered a violation of neutrality by Austrian politicians and scholars. They claimed that a majority vote in the Council or decisions taken by supranational institutions such as the Commission would be a loss of national sovereignty and, hence, be incompatible with the country's status of neutrality.

It is important to note that the debate on Austrian neutrality and the shift in foreign policy that led to the application for EC membership happened in 1987, two years before the end of the Cold War with all its huge geopolitical implications. As Reiter (1992: 11) explains, the Austrian government defended its policy shift by insisting on a "neutrality clause" in the accession treaties.[62] As Luif (2003: 278) points out, this was the first time that a "conditional"

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[62] The clause stated that "Austria submits this application on the understanding that its internationally recognized status of permanent neutrality, based on the Federal and Constitutional Law of 26 October 1955, will be maintained and that, as a member of the European Communities by virtue of the Treaty of Accession, it will be able to fulfill its legal obligations arising out of its status as a permanently neutral State and to continue its policy of neutrality as a specific contribution towards the maintenance of peace and security in Europe" (quoted in Luif 2003a: 278).

membership application was submitted to the EC. According to him there were basically two reasons: first, the clause was a domestic compromise between the more "pro-neutrality" Social Democrats and the more "pro-integration" Conservatives that together formed the grand coalition. Second, the Berlin Wall still stood and the Austrian government, therefore, had to take into account the criticism of the Soviet Union.

However, the new security environment after the end of the Cold War with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991 considerably changed the political framework. In an interesting interplay of the two case studies, Austrian accession was also facilitated by the "Irish clause" in the Maastricht Treaty. Ireland was the only neutral EU member state during the Maastricht negotiations in the early 1990s and successfully lobbied for Article J.4, point 4 (TEU), which states that "the policy of the Union in accordance with this Article shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defense policy of certain member states […]"(Luif 2003a: 275).[63] Because of the new circumstances, in a memorandum to the EC Commission in 1992, Austria did not mention the "neutrality clause" any longer. In March 1994, negotiations between Austria and the European Union were successfully terminated and did not include any special arrangements concerning neutrality. As Hummer (1996: 14) points out, the disappearance of this clause is particularly interesting because the newly established EU and CFSP had much higher ambitions in the sector of foreign policy and defense cooperation than EC/EPC – two policy fields that were likely to become a considerable challenge for a permanently neutral country. As will be shown in the next part, an Austrian strategy to "play down" neutrality helps to explain this shift. After parliamentary approval, a referendum in June 1994 resulted in a clear majority of 66.58 percent in favor of accession, which then came into force on January 1, 1995 (Pieper 1997: 375).

## 3. Conclusion

Although there are considerable differences between Austria and Ireland in terms of the legal status of neutrality (*de jure* vs. *de facto*), the historical development and the political reasoning are strikingly related. An important similarity concerns neutrality as a comparatively new concept to both countries that was first applied in the early and mid 20th century in Ireland and Austria.[64] Another important characteristic that is shared by Austria

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[63] See also Part V, Section 2, on the Irish position during the Maastricht negotiations.
[64] The late development of neutrality distinguishes the two countries from the Scandinavian states as well as from Switzerland where neutrality has a much longer tradition and its origins date back centuries (Helmke 2000: 110).

and Ireland is the origin of neutrality as a "negative" issue. In both countries neutrality was first of all seen as a tool to achieve a certain goal, but not as a value in itself. In Austria as well as in Ireland neutrality helped to achieve or to maintain independence and national sovereignty. It was also seen as a function of distinction or emancipation. While Ireland wanted to emphasize its independence from the UK, Austria did so in respect to a powerful West Germany. In addition, neither of the two countries fully abided by strict and objective neutrality during the Cold War. As Gehler (2005: 116) explains, there was no doubt that both Austria and Ireland were "secret allies of the West". In both countries the concept of neutrality gained significant popularity among the general public – to an extent that made it particularly difficult for the political elite to give up or to weaken the status of neutrality as will be shown in the next part. The examination of the EC/EU accession indicated that the Community was largely conceived as an economic entity in both countries while participation in EPC/CFSP was seen as the "necessary price" to pay. The comparative analysis in the next part will show that this perception led to a severe underestimation of the political consequences of EC/EU membership for the foreign policies in both countries.

# V.    Comparative Analysis

Having clarified the two countries' origins of neutrality and their accession to the EC/EU, the comparative analysis will examine the impact of this membership on the national foreign polices of Austria and Ireland as laid down in the main hypothesis. The first section looks at the relevant foreign policy actors in both countries. Special attention is paid to their strategies within EPC/CFSP and to their individual benefits from the increased cooperation. Following the described two layer-approach of the dependent variable, the Irish and Austrian *foreign policy goals and means* will then be examined: the analysis of the goals (Section 2) focuses on the positions and strategies as announced in government declarations or international negotiations while the second layer is analyzed by comparing Irish and Austrian foreign policy action during international crises (Section 3). According to the structural hypothesis of this paper, a change in foreign policy should be expected in both countries after the accession to the EC/EU in the sense of a weakened neutrality status. Following this argument, the points of time are chosen in such a way that the influence of accession can be taken into account. Ideally, this would imply an analysis of both countries' foreign policies prior to and after the accession to the EC/EU. However, the long time period between Irish and Austrian accession and in particular the geopolitical changes that happened in between make such a comparison appear not so helpful. The analysis, therefore, focuses only on the 1990s and most recent events. In this context, the main hypothesis implies that, first, the Austrian accession to the EU in 1995 had a weakening impact on the country's neutrality and, second, Ireland can be expected to pay less attention than Austria to its status of neutrality at all points of time, due to Ireland's longer EC/EU membership. Section 4 discusses the main findings of the analysis by looking at the potential validity of alternative explanations and consequences for the status of neutrality.

## 1. The Foreign Policy Actors

According to the main hypothesis of this paper, European cooperation *socializes* individual national foreign policy actors and leads to a convergence of their preferences and interests. This section will demonstrate that foreign policy in Ireland and Austria is conducted by a relatively small group in the executive. It will be shown that both countries pursue a typical *small state strategy* within the European Union, supporting further integration and supranational solutions – however, with the important exception of all issues concerning their

neutrality. An analysis of the Irish and Austrian *EU Presidencies* will illustrate that they became an indispensable tool for their foreign policy by increasing both states' access to information, to resources and to high level actors.

## 1.1. Irish foreign policy actors

Ireland's foreign policy process may be characterized, according to Tonra (1996: 132) as "closed, elite-formulated and executive-driven." Ultimate collective responsibility for Irish foreign policy is vested in a cabinet government. The foreign minister is appointed by the president on the nomination of the Taoiseach and is charged with responsibility for the department's administration and political direction. Policy making occurs in a very limited setting with only weak input from Parliament (Tonra 1996: 133). A strong party loyalty and the whip system ensure that a government majority will normally last throughout a parliamentary term with little or no likelihood of a backbench revolt. While the Irish Constitution gives ultimate control over foreign policy to the executive branch, Parliament has the right to declare war, states of emergency in time of war, and has to ratify international treaties (Tonra 2000: 231). The Irish parliament established a select joint committee on foreign policy only in 1993 and a new joint committee on European affairs in 1995 both of which can be said to have only "very modest policy influence" (Tonra 2000: 232). At the executive level, foreign policy is established at the cabinet table with the Taoiseach overseeing all government policy. As Tonra (2000: 232) points out, the Irish "executive retains considerable latitude in the formulation of foreign policy. Serious parliamentary scrutiny is both a recent and comparatively weak innovation." The Irish foreign policy can largely be seen as an elite project, conducted by only a small number of decision-makers with considerable capacity to trade off various domestic interests in package deals and side payments. However, as an important exception to this, major international or European treaties such as the ones in Maastricht, Amsterdam or Nice are traditionally subject to referendums and need to be approved by the Irish people. This appears to have considerable impact on the formulation (not necessarily on the making) of Irish foreign policy as will be shown further below.

### 1.1.1. Strategies in EPC/CFSP

In the case of "traditional" EC policy competences which later became the communitarized first pillar of the European Union, Ireland pursued a typical small state

strategy of *integration*. The Irish consider a supranational structure as safeguard against the dominance of large member-states, in particular of the British. Ireland does not generally fear further integration and the people continuously express a very supportive attitude towards European integration. However, unlike the Benelux countries, Ireland is less inclined to change the balance between the Council and the Commission at the expense of the former. Instead, Ireland backs the wide use of QMV in the Council to restrain the dominance of the larger states (Soetendorp 1999: 47). An important reservation to this is made, however, with respect to the sensitive area of foreign policy where Ireland wants to preserve consensus rule.

Koßdorff (2000: 132) emphasizes that, at the time of Irish accession to the EC on January 1, 1973, European Political Cooperation was still in an embryonic stage. EPC meant only very lose coordination of national foreign policies without any obligations and at the exclusion of all issues related to security or defense. Of crucial significance for the Irish foreign policy was the existence of *domaines réservés* within EPC. Bilateral problems between member states or military and security related issues were excluded from the cooperation. This meant that the troublesome relation to Great Britain, and in particular the conflict in Northern Ireland, were no topic for EPC. The exclusion of security and defense issues clearly drew the line between the Community and NATO, which is of major importance for a neutral state (Koßdorff 2000: 136).

When the EC acted for the first time as a single voice during the CSCE negotiations in Helsinki in 1975, this did not cause any trouble for Irish neutrality (Koßdorff 2000: 133). Only a year later, in 1976, however, the *Tindemans-Report* asked for common defense measures and put neutral Ireland under pressure. The country was very reluctant to push for such further cooperation within EPC and followed a "doctrine of parallel integration" (Keatinge 1996: 209); meaning political integration should only proceed at the same pace as economic integration. Irish politicians made clear that a common security and defense policy could only be the consequence rather than the condition for a political union. Following this logic, Ireland achieved the inclusion of concessions regarding its neutrality in successive treaties and reports. The *London Report* of 1981 explicitly stated that progress in political union shall not exceed the progress in economic integration (Koßdorff 2000: 134). As will be seen in the following sections, Ireland insisted on such clauses and concessions also in the major treaty negotiations of Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice, however, its "resistance" became weaker. The first time that the Irish foreign policy was significantly influenced by her

participation in EPC was during the Falklands incident of 1982 (Keohane 2001: 34).[65] Despite the Irish military neutrality, close Irish-Argentinean relations (the Irish-Argentine community is the third largest in the Western hemisphere with over 300,000 Argentines claiming Irish ancestry), the country's strained relation to Great Britain and considerable domestic opposition, Ireland showed solidarity with the other member states and supported the EC sanctions against Argentina.[66]

### 1.1.2. Opportunities and changes

Ireland held the Presidency of the EC/EU six times already, in 1975, 1979, 1984, 1990, 1996, and most recently in 2004. As Koßdorff (2000: 158) explains, the Presidency of the European Council was particularly important for a small state like Ireland. It offered the country a more active role in Community policy-making and also increased its involvement in international affairs. During Ireland's presidency in 1975 and again in 1979, "Irish politicians and officials found themselves addressing the UN on behalf of the other member states, while the incumbent minister for foreign affairs undertook a series of third country visits on behalf of the Community" (Laffan 1983: 91). During the 1979 Presidency, Irish Foreign Minister O'Kennedy addressed the General Assembly: "on behalf of the European Community and its nine Member States and as foreign minister of Ireland."[67] During his speech he continuously spoke of "we" and "the Nine" (Koßdorff 2000: 153). It was especially the fourth Irish presidency in 1990 that should become Ireland's most intense presidency so far as it was marked by decisive developments in Europe with the main question on the agenda being the unification of Germany. It was during a meeting in Dublin on 25 and 26 June 1990, when the European Council decided to call an intergovernmental conference on political union. As De Schoutheete (1997: 45) points out, the two European Councils held under Irish presidency gave a powerful political impulse to the Community. Ireland entered the post-Cold War era with an unusually high diplomatic profile, offering the most a small state can to a multilateral process like EPC – a "helpful" Presidency (Keatinge 1996: 215). Also since then, according to Mitchell MEP, the Irish Presidencies were successful above-average, for instance with the

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[65] By some scholars it has been argued that the Falklands crisis marked an important contribution to EPC's further development. The particular element in the case was the coordination of the policy of the ten member states and the EC, showing that EPC and the EC ran in tandem. The crisis contributed to the "consultation reflex" among EPC partners and led to the adoption of a "median position" rather than the lowest common denominator, which might have been expected from a system based on unanimity (Edwards 1996: 54f).

[66] However, despite the general support for the EC sanctions regime, Pieper (1997: 254) emphasizes that the Irish government avoided all actions that might have led to a direct support of the British military.

[67] O'Kennedy, Minister of Foreign Affairs and President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers of the European Community, quoted in Salmon (1989: 255).

agreements on the Treaty of Amsterdam (1996) or on the draft European Constitution (2004).[68] As Mitchell puts it, "the Presidency is the major Irish foreign policy tool and is of crucial importance to the country." In addition, the Presidency provided Ireland a formerly unknown *access to international actors and decision makers*: "high level access to the major governments of both partners and third parties became a matter of routine and the Presidency offered a unique opportunity for a small state to demonstrate its new status" (Keatinge 1996: 209).

Participation in EU foreign policy cooperation has also, according to Tonra (2000: 237), "broadened the range, deepened the analysis and strengthened the impact of what they [the policy makers] see to be their national foreign policies." In day-to-day politics, Ireland benefits significantly from the *increased access to information and resources*. While Ireland used to be active only in a few selected areas of foreign policy, the high quality and quantity of information mainly through the COREU network increased the country's foreign policy options and interests notably (Koßdorff 2000: 189). But as Tonra (2001: 257) notes, this information is not value free and often sets the agenda in small states. According to one diplomat "we have, if you will, a ready made agenda and a lot of ready-made briefing material through our participation […]."[69]

## 1.2. Austrian foreign policy actors

Important decisions such as all foreign policy issues are taken by the Council of Ministers (cabinet), and must be passed by unanimous vote. The federal president would have considerable executive powers only in the event of war, but in peacetime his role is largely that of a figurehead. Although the nine states hold considerable powers and influence, the federal government has exclusive responsibility for defense and foreign affairs.[70] As Phinnemore (2000: 211) explains, the Federal Parliament can take a position on foreign policy issues; however the government can deviate for "compelling reasons of foreign and integration policy". In its foreign policy, the Austrian government faces very limited constraints and has also the possibility of deviation. According to Phinnemore (2000: 212), within the government, "power resides firmly in the ministries which are allocated proportionately to each of the coalition parties. The chancellor, although formally head of the

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[68] Interview conducted in May 2005
[69] Quoted in Ben Tonra (2001: 257)
[70] Source: The Economist - country briefing Austria: www.economist.com, accessed in July 2005.

government, is only *primus inter pares.* Austrian foreign policy is almost entirely a matter for the political executive, decided by a small number of decision-makers. The strong position of the ministers (in particular the foreign and defense ministries) and, hence, of the political parties that form the coalition government, plays an important role in the making of Austrian foreign policy.

### 1.2.1. Strategies in the CFSP

Because Austria had joined the European Union at a much later stage, the country had less time than Ireland to actively participate in or even shape the Common Foreign and Security Policy. In addition, foreign policy cooperation was much more developed and formalized at the time of Austria's accession and left a relatively smaller room to maneuver or flexibility. However, as Soetendorp (1999: 48) observes, Austria's behavior so far "hardly differs from […] the two veteran members Denmark and Ireland." This means that Austria shows a rather typical pattern of a *small state,* reflecting a desire to generally support supranational decision-making, but also ensuring national independence on matters that are considered national interests, particularly all issues concerning the status of neutrality.

The good start within the CFSP was particularly surprising for all those who expected problems with more neutral countries joining the EU. However, according to Phinnemore (2000: 209), at the time of accession, Austria's foreign policy interests were clearly coinciding with those of the EU. Especially the context of the civil wars and severe crises in Austria's immediate neighborhood made the emergence of the EU as a security community a welcome development, while the limited defense dimension of the CFSP was considered by the Austrian government as no serious problem for the maintenance of neutrality (Phinnemore 2000: 209). The EU and CFSP, at the time, seemed to be the perfect compromise between isolation on the one hand and joining a military alliance such as NATO on the other.

### 1.2.2. Opportunities and changes

Austria was so far only once president of the European Council in the second half of 1998 (the second Presidency is scheduled for the first half of 2006). According to Mölzer MEP the Presidency was seen by the government as an opportunity to position itself as the European "model student".[71] Austria had a particular interest to be seen as the strongest advocate for the planned EU enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe. Other issues on the agenda were the

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[71] Interview conducted in May 2005

increase of stability in South-East Europe, human rights and anti-personnel mines (Phinnemore 2000: 217). With regard to the CFSP, the main goal was to establish an active role for the EU in conflict prevention ending the crisis in Kosovo, and to monitor the situation in Bosnia and Middle East. Success was not, however, guaranteed and the Presidency certainly failed to prevent bloodshed in Kosovo.[72] The Vienna summit of the European Council also failed to agree on who should be "Mr. CFSP" and on the establishment of a policy planning and early warning unit. Phinnemore (2000: 219) emphasizes that the first meeting of EU defense ministers and the first informal meeting between the Presidency and the NATO Secretary-General took place during the Austrian Presidency. This was quite surprising for the government of a neutral state divided over the question of NATO membership. As in Ireland, the Presidency has also increased Austria's weight on the international stage in relation to third countries and gave politicians an increased *access to high level actors*. This was particularly experienced during the 1998 Presidency when Austria was suddenly in a situation where it looked for a peaceful settlement of the Kosovo crisis, in close cooperation with the United States (Luif 2003a: 288).

Also in Austria, EU membership has considerably widened the scope of foreign policy through the *access to additional information and resources*. According to Luif (2003: 287), Austria's concentration on Western Europe changed inside the EU to once again a more "global" outlook which used to be the trademark of "active neutrality" in the 1970s. To illustrate the "broadening" of Austrian foreign policy interests through membership, Luif points to the example that the first COREU message that Austria received dealt with Tajikistan.

## 1.3 Conclusion

The *club atmosphere* in which Austrian and Irish foreign policy is made mainly by a small group of the executive, the habit to increasingly share information with diplomats from other member states, and the continuing process of European integration is likely to contribute to the *socialization* of the relevant actors. A shared sense of community can be particularly found at the level of Political Director and European Correspondent, but also at ministerial and working group level (Tonra 2001: 261). Instead of seeing EPC and the CFSP as a

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[72] Austria could get the nomination of the Austrian ambassador to Yugoslavia, Wolfgang Petritsch, as Special Envoy for the Kosovo. He tried together with the US Envoy, Christopher Hill, to find a solution to the crisis but did not succeed – during the German Presidency in 1999, the Kosovo War broke out (Luif 2003a: 288).

constraint (as it was initially the case), Irish and Austrian foreign policy makers increasingly realize the potential benefits of such an additional policy level. Following the logic of *two level games* (Putnam 1988), they maximize their own field of political and diplomatic maneuver. The crucial question is now whether these observed changes at the individual level will also translate into changes of national foreign policy as assumed by the main hypothesis.

## 2. Foreign Policy Strategies and Positions

This section examines the first layer of the dependent variable, namely the *foreign policy goals* of both countries, by looking at Irish and Austrian strategies and positions during major treaty negotiations, their voting records in the UN General Assembly and their relations towards WEU and NATO. The expectation according to the structural hypothesis would be that both countries weakened their status of neutrality over time, due to the influence of EU membership. In addition, Ireland as a longstanding EC member can be expected to frequently pay less attention to its neutrality than Austria. However, the analysis of the two countries' strategies and positions shows that these assumptions can only partly be confirmed.

### 2.1. The major treaty negotiations

First, the two countries' foreign policies are examined by looking at their strategies and positions during major treaty negotiations. The Intergovernmental Conferences in Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice were most decisive for European foreign policy cooperation. In particular the latter two (in which Ireland and Austria both participated as EU members) shall be subject to further scrutiny.[73]

#### 2.1.1. Irish strategies and positions

Maastricht

For the Irish government, according to Tonra (2000: 226), the focus of attention in the run-up to the Maastricht negotiations was on the implications of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). In the field of foreign and security policy, the Irish delegation opposed the proposal to extend the CFSP to a common defense policy and to describe the WEU as an "integrative part" of the European Union. Agreement could only be reached because the goals

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[73] The Intergovernmental Conference 2003/2004 on the Constitutional Treaty shall not be considered here, in particular because as of today (August 2005) it seems highly uncertain whether the draft Constitutional Treaty will ever enter into force.

were set in a long term and defined very vaguely (Helmke 2000: 111).[74] Moreover, the already mentioned "Irish clause" was included into the final treaty, stating that the common defense policy "shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defense policy of certain member states" (Article J.4, point 4, TEU). In the view of the Irish government, this was a major success because it offered a sufficient safeguard for Ireland to preserve its neutrality or, in the worse case, to opt out (Soetendorp 1999: 48).[75] In an unprecedented exercise the four main party leaders issued a joint statement in which they assured the electorate that Irish neutrality was not threatened under the provisions of the TEU (Tonra 2001: 157). Although neutrality remained the main pillar of Irish foreign policy, Keatinge (1996: 219) emphasizes that after Maastricht "the taboo on even discussing neutrality had been broken." However, Tonra (2000: 226) points out, that the Maastricht Treaty provoked little public debate on foreign and security policy because most media and popular attention were focused "on the promise of a six billion pound European budget payoff and a political crisis surrounding abortion." The referendum approved the TEU by a clear two to one majority.

Amsterdam

The Irish government laid down its foreign policy goals in a 1996 White Paper in which it supported the principle of a more effective CFSP.[76] At the same time, however, the government further emphasized its neutrality, indicating that it would accept only limited engagement in the Petersberg tasks of the WEU (Tonra 2001: 162). The Irish position during the negotiations for the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1996 was considerably strengthened by the fact that three other neutrals, Austria, Finland, and Sweden, had joined the Union a year before. While opposition by a single member state can be dealt with by the inclusion of exceptions or clauses (as in Maastricht), this seemed impossible for four out of fifteen member states (Helmke 2000: 111). Nevertheless, the 1996 treaty negotiations were more problematic for the Irish government than Maastricht, in particular due to the broad debate surrounding the evolution of a European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) (Tonra 2000: 226). According to Helmke (2000: 106), Ireland opposed one of the major institutional

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[74] The final wording was the "eventual framing of a common defense policy, which might in time lead to a common defense" (Treaty on European Union 1992: Art. J.4, point 1, quoted in Soetendorp 1999: 47).

[75] In fact, Article 4, point 4, TEU, was mainly included, due to the pressure by NATO member states, in particular by the United Kingdom – however, the neutrals successfully interpreted the clause for their own purposes (Monar 1994: 129).

[76] For the Irish White Paper: http://www.foreignaffairs.gov.ie/information/publications/, accessed in July 2005.

innovations of the ToA, the creation of a "Mr. CFSP". Instead of this new position, the Irish government rather wanted to strengthen the existing structures with the Presidency and the Troika responsible for CFSP.

Irish decision-makers faced significant internal and domestic opposition to any development which might have been presented as a threat to Irish neutrality. The overall goal of the Irish delegation during the negotiations, as on the TEU before, was to maintain a position at the core of the European project while ensuring that developments in the field of security and defense might be presented at home as involving no threat to Irish neutrality (Tonra 2001: 162). However, this strategy became more and more difficult and the two goals of Irish foreign policy increasingly began to contradict each other. Ratification of the ToA was achieved by the so far narrowest margin in a European referendum, securing just 62 percent in favor, compared with 69 percent at Maastricht, 70 percent for the SEA and an 83 percent vote for membership in 1972.

### Nice and beyond

During the negotiations in Nice, the Irish government indicated that under "no circumstances" would it agree to an EU mutual defense agreement like that in the WEU and NATO treaties. However, the poor results of the treaty, with no changes in the EU Treaty relating to defense, in some ways let the Irish government "off the political hook" (Keohane 2001: 13). The Treaty was signed in December 2000, but shortly afterwards, for the first time, rejected by the Irish people in a referendum. Even the comparatively weak content of the Nice Treaty was, according to Crowley MEP, seen by many voters as undermining the Irish neutrality. [77] Before the second referendum on the Nice Treaty took place, resulting in a "yes", the EU member states agreed on the "Seville Declaration" on respect for Irish neutrality in June 2002. The purpose of the Declarations was "to make clear, beyond any reasonable doubt, that the Treaty of Nice poses no threat to Ireland's traditional policy of military neutrality. The Declaration confirms that this understanding is shared by all 15 EU Member States, in full conformity with the Irish government's position on ratification of the Treaty of Nice."[78]

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[77] However, Crowley emphasizes that foreign policy was just one among a whole range of issues during the referendum campaign and that many Irish were rather focusing rather on the economic situation than on the country's status of neutrality.

[78] Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, Press Release on June 21, 2002: http://foreignaffairs.gov.ie/ Press_Releases/20020621/980.htm, accessed in July 2005.

Regarding the more recent developments in ESDP, the Irish government has committed 850 troops to the EU Rapid Reaction Force (RRF). However, as Mitchell (2003b: 12) explains, these forces can only be deployed under the "Triple Lock" system. This means that any potential military operation must be endorsed by a United Nations mandate, approved by the Irish Parliament, and agreed within the government itself. According to Mitchell, the government has ruled out any realistic Irish contribution by applying such a restrictive regulation. For example, due to the Triple Lock, Ireland could not participate in the EU peacekeeping force sent to Macedonia (FYROM) in 2003: although this force replaced NATO and had both EU and UN support, it lacked a formal UN Resolution – a situation that leads Mitchell (2003b: 13) to the conclusion of the Triple Lock as a "political straightjacket" for the Irish foreign policy. As Coveney MEP puts it, the Triple Lock system with the need for a formal UN Resolution "basically gives Russia and China a veto over Irish foreign policy."[79] Coveney also points out that Ireland, probably as the only EU member state, will not participate in the planned EU "Battle Groups", due to the Triple Lock mechanism. The groups should be deployable within ten days but this makes it unlikely that there will be time to get the required UN Resolution passed. In addition there are legal difficulties with the planned multinational Battle Groups because under a defense act, Irish troops cannot be sent abroad for training, while having foreign troops in the country may breach the Irish Constitution.

### 2.1.2. Austrian strategies and positions

<u>Amsterdam</u>

In the context of the Amsterdam negotiations, Austria has continuously emphasized its willingness to fully participate in the CFSP, even with the perspective of a common defense. In order to increase the efficiency of the CFSP Austria supported a gradual shift to decision-making by qualified majority voting (QMV) – however, only at the exclusion of issues concerning military security that should remain subject to unanimity (Helmke 2000: 97). In order to fully allow for the development of the CFSP into an ESDP by incorporating the Petersberg tasks, as decided in the ToA, Austria made an amendment to Article 23f of the Austrian Constitution. The new wording allows participation of Austrian military troops in

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[79] Indeed China vetoed the UN Resolution on a peacekeeping mission in Macedonia because the FYROM recognized Taiwan.

peace-enforcement actions, even without a mandate by the UN Security Council. This significantly limited the effect of the 1955 Neutrality Act (Luif 2003a: 285).[80]

<u>Nice and beyond</u>

The change in the Austrian government from the traditional "grand coalition" between Conservatives and Social Democrats to the new ÖVP/FPÖ government in February 2000 had tremendous consequences, not only for the Austrian relation to its EU partners, who imposed sanctions against the new government, for the first time in EU history.[81] It also had significant impact on the foreign policy priorities and the Austrian neutrality. During the negotiations for the Nice Treaty, the Austrian delegation went as far as proposing the introduction of a mutual assistance clause (an "Article 5") into the Treaty, but did not find support among the other EU partners (Luif 2003a: 286). The development of CFSP/ESDP into a common defense is the declared ambition of the new Austrian government, in particular because the door to NATO membership is closed since this would require a two-thirds majority in Parliament which the ÖVP/FPÖ coalition lacks.

Regarding the Austrian security and defense policy of more recent years, it seems interesting that a major reform of the Austrian army in the sense of a reduction of its size and of a limitation of the system of conscription is taking place. These changes at least induce a distance towards the idea of credible national defense, an element narrowly linked to neutrality. As Ambassador Kuglitsch points out, within European defense cooperation, Austria contributes 2,000 troops to the Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) and also pledged 200 soldiers for a multinational EU Battle Group together with Germany and the Czech Republic.[82] Austrian troops also participated in the first military operation of the EU, *Concordia,* in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

## 2.2. Policy towards the UN, WEU and NATO

In a second step, the Irish and Austrian foreign policy strategies and positions are examined by looking at their policies towards important international organizations and military alliances. Of particular interest is whether there has been a "shift" away from the

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[80] This was explicitly stated in the introduction to the bill changing Article 23f: "In accordance with the Amsterdam Treaty, this [Austria's participation in the Petersberg tasks] is permitted also in case such a measure is taken without a decision by the Security Council." (translation by Luif 2003a: 285)
[81] See Section 4 for further discussion of these sanctions.
[82] Interview conducted in April 2005

classic UN orientation of both countries in favor of regional defense alliances such as WEU or NATO.

### 2.2.1. Irish and Austrian voting records

Since 1973, all EC members were also part of the United Nations. This immediately raised the question whether the EC could act as a "bloc" and should coordinate its UN policies. Officials note that there is a lot of soul searching before major UN votes, to try and ensure the greatest possible amount of Community cohesion (Tonra 1997: 192). Luif (2003b: 3) explains that coordination and consultation occur mostly in New York through a heavy agenda of meetings among the representatives of the EU states. According to Koßdorff (2000: 237), "the management of UN policy has, therefore, become more difficult as there is an inbuilt pressure towards consensus in political cooperation." However, there are few complaints about the loss of voting independence as most member states welcome the increased impact of "bloc voting" in the GA. As a senior diplomat puts it "you lose something which is largely irrelevant, which is the capacity of standing up and saying that I disagree but you win something which is far more relevant to the practical life of international relations which is the capacity to influence outside events."[83]

A useful measure for the analysis of foreign policy coherence is a country's voting record in the UN General Assembly. For the EC/EU this record can almost be seen as a "test case" for the functioning and efficiency of their foreign policy cooperation. However, it should be noted that although such an analysis can serve as a valuable basis for analyzing long-term tendencies of convergence between national foreign policies, these data only allow for a limited qualitative assessment of the voting behavior. For instance, it is hard to tell whether it is for tactical reasons or because of basic disagreements over policy if a state does not vote uniformly. Therefore, the UN voting pattern is only used as a complementary analysis of the foreign policy positions of Austria and Ireland in this paper. Table 4 indicates that there has been a general decline in EC/EU-voting coherence until the mid 1980s before the numbers increased again. After the end of the Cold War, the consensus among EU member states had steadily grown until 1998. After a decline in 1999 and 2000, the consensus votes have increased again, reaching about 75.5 percent in the General Assembly of 2002.

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[83] Quoted in Ben Tonra (1997: 193)

Table 4: *Percentages of recorded votes in the UN General Assembly with EU consensus (total of all votes)*[84]

| 1979 | 1983 | 1987 | 1990 | 1993 | 1996 | 1998 | 2000 | 2002 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 58.9 | 27.1 | 47.5 | 41.8 | 59.7 | 75.0 | 82.1 | 72.3 | 75.5 |

According to Koßdorff (2000: 244) two main factors explain this development. Firstly, the EC enlargements to Greece in 1981 and to Portugal and Spain in 1986 had negative impact, and secondly the foreign policy coordination within EPC was too weak to increase voting coherence significantly.[85] However, both issues changed in the late 1980s when the new members adjusted to the mainstream of the EC and, in addition, European foreign policy became more institutionalized through the SEA in 1986 and the Maastricht Treaty in 1991.[86]

As Table 5 (Annex) shows, this general trend towards greater voting cohesion holds true for all EU member states, however with considerable differences. Luif (2003b: 51) finds two major patterns in voting behavior that emerged since the mid-1990s: first, the voting of France and the United Kingdom is different from the EU "mainstream", this divergence is especially visible in security matters, being related to the particular status of France and the UK as nuclear powers and as permanent members of the Security Council. Second, Luif sees the "neutral and non-aligned" EU countries as a second, also slightly "deviating" group. In the case of Ireland and Austria this shall be further outlined.

The Irish record

Table 5 indicates that Ireland's voting coherence with the rest of the EC/EU has been constantly below the average in the 1990s. The country's "non-conformist" voting record is often last or second to the last in the cohesion statistics (Koßdorff 2000: 248). A closer look on the issues debated in the General Assembly shows that this difference can often be explained by questions of disarmament and security policy where Ireland as the only non-

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[84] Source: Paul Luif (2003b: 55), selected years
[85] In particular the new Pasok government in Greece had its own foreign policy agenda, without regard to the other EU states (Luif 2003b: 27).
[86] The Maastricht Treaty explicitly states that "Member States shall coordinate their action in international organizations and at international conferences. They shall uphold the common positions in such fora […]" (TEU, Article 19)

NATO member in the EC (until 1995) is often isolated. Also, Irish positions on de-colonization were clearly different from the other Community states with the exception of Denmark. But although Ireland's position at the UN often deviates from that of the EC/EU majority, its voting behavior has altered over time: rather than adopting a "yes" or "no" vote, Ireland increasingly decided to abstain (Laffan 1983: 99). It is also noteworthy that the Irish voting coherence is the lowest compared to Great Britain and the highest (90.5 percent in 1991) with non-EC member Austria. It seems that Ireland is still intending to dissociate itself from the "big brother" and clearly pursues a "neutral voting record" (Koßdorff 2000: 249).

<u>The Austrian record</u>

Also the Austrian position often deviates from the EC/EU mainstream, in particular in the years prior to EU membership. But compared to the overall voting pattern in the GA, Jankowitsch and Porias (1994: 53) note that "Austria developed a voting record that placed her very close to other West European democracies". Differences to the EU mainstream were mostly related, as in the Irish case, to issues such as disarmament, security, and de-colonization (Luif 2003b). Table 5 indicates a clear adaptation of the Austrian voting record since the early 1990s with 1999 and 2002 placing the country even above the EU average.

## 2.2.2. Ireland in the United Nations

At least partly due to its own bad experiences with Great Britain, the Irish foreign policy is traditionally anti-colonial and third world friendly. Since Ireland joined the United Nations in 1955, this organization therefore became the perfect framework and channel to pursue Irish foreign policy goals. Ireland has, according to Keohane (2001: 5), contributed military personnel and units to UN peace support missions around the world since 1958. The participation in UN peacekeeping became a cornerstone of Irish UN involvement. According to Tonra (2001: 111), the number of peacekeeping missions to which Ireland contributed between 1956 and 1970 was only exceeded by Denmark and Canada. However, the limited military capacity as described in Part V makes it increasingly necessary for Ireland to prioritize between its commitments to the UN and the EU. For example, Ireland could only earmark the sufficient number of troops for the ERRF by scaling down its UN force in Lebanon (Keohane 2001: 28).

<u>WEU and NATO</u>

Irish relations to the military alliances of WEU and NATO have been far more distant – in fact, the Irish concept of neutrality, as pointed out above, has been mainly based on the promise to stay out of any military alliance. However, since the end of the Cold War, it became increasingly difficult to maintain the strict distinction between the UN and the military alliances. As Keohane (2001: 5) explains, the UN is responding to an increasing number of conflicts and often encourages regional organizations to use their capabilities under a UN mandate to complete peace-support missions. Obvious examples of this development in Europe are the NATO-led support forces in Bosnia (SFOR) and Kosovo (KFOR). Ireland is participating in both missions which means a significant change in Irish defense policy (Keohane 2001: 6). This changing UN mission environment was a major factor in the Irish government's decision to become observer at the WEU in 1991 and to join the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) program in 1999. PfP gives Ireland access to NATO equipment, training and operational standards without implying future membership.

### 2.2.3. Austria in the United Nations

The United Nations was the major focal point in Austrian foreign policy for decades, in particular during the apex of "active neutrality" under Chancellor Bruno Kreisky in the 1970s. Austria continuously supported some of the guiding principles of the UN, such as the right of self-determination for emerging Third World nations (Jankowitsch and Porias 1994: 53). Austria made always clear that neutrality did not stand in the way of defending these principles. For instance, Austria supported the campaign against Apartheid and agreed to sanctions against South Africa without considering this as a breach of neutrality. The practice, exercised for decades, of participation in UN peacekeeping operations (under Chapter VI of the UN Charter), but also more coercive measures (according to Chapter VII) shows that Austria has "always subordinated its neutrality status to the resolutions of the UN Security Council" (Gustenau 1999: 10).

<u>WEU and NATO</u>

Austria's relation towards WEU and NATO has been less emotional than in Ireland, but instead the country faced clear legal constraints. Its codified status of neutrality as a special commitment towards the Soviet Union ruled out membership in any Western military alliance for a long time. However, this changed considerably sine the end of the Cold War. The trend

in the 1990s that UN mandated missions were increasingly carried out within the framework of WEU or NATO (and most recently also within the EU) led to a re-orientation in Austria's foreign policy. The country gained observer status at the WEU and joined NATO PfP in 1995. Two years later, the Austrian government upgraded its diplomatic links with NATO replacing the "liaison office" with a full diplomatic representation in Brussels. Austria has also agreed to participate in NATO-led peacekeeping activities via the "Enhanced Partnership for Peace" in 1998, including active steps to peace enforcement (Phinnemore 2000: 210). Austria is participant in the SFOR and in the KFOR-missions, both NATO-led operations of which the security mandate is based on Chapter VII of the UN Charter (Gustenau 1999: 10). However, the door to full Austrian membership in a military alliance remains closed unless the government would take steps towards the annulment of the 1955 Neutrality Act (Helmke 2000: 89).

## 2.3. Conclusion

The analysis of Irish and Austrian foreign policy goals shows a trend in both countries towards a weakening of their neutrality status. But although this general trend is in line with the predictions of the main hypothesis of this paper, the detailed case study analysis does not seem to support the implicit causal mechanisms. The assumption was that Ireland would give up or weaken her status of neutrality at an earlier stage and more significantly than Austria, due to her longer EC/EU membership. However and to the contrary, the analysis of the countries' position during the major treaty negotiations indicates that despite Austria's late accession to the EU, the country's stand in both conferences, Amsterdam and in particular Nice, was closer to the EU average, paid less attention to neutrality concerns, and was more willing to move forward with the security and defense components of the CFSP. Also the second part, the analysis of the countries' positions towards UN, WEU and NATO, arrives at similar results. Both countries experienced a shift in the center of gravity, away from their formerly dominant focus on the United Nations towards EU, WEU and NATO. Limited military capacity makes it almost impossible for Austria and Ireland to fully commit themselves to both the EU and the UN at the same time. But once again the comparative analysis shows that this happened quicker and more extensively in the case of Austria. The voting record in the UN General Assembly also backs these findings. While both countries moved towards the European "mainstream", this move was much more consequential in the Austrian record: the country started at a high degree of deviation in the 1970s and 1980s and

has recently arrived at an above average coherence, while Ireland still remains somewhat of an outlier. Possible underlying causes as well as theoretical consequences of these findings will be discussed further below.

# 3. Key Decisions in Foreign Policy

This section analyzes and compares the second layer of the dependent variable, namely the *foreign policy means* of Ireland and Austria by examining concrete decisions and action during a number of international crises. As mentioned in the beginning, the analysis focuses on the 1990s and most recent events and, therefore, two major international crises that happened roughly four years before and four years after the Austrian EU accession of 1995 will be subject to further scrutiny, namely the second Gulf War of 1990/91 and the war in Kosovo in 1999. The theoretical assumptions of this thesis would expect two major patterns emerging from the two crises: first, Austria will pay close attention to its status of neutrality during the Gulf War while this will play a somewhat less important role in the case of Kosovo. Second, the Irish foreign policy reaction towards both crises can be expected to be "less neutral" and to be closer to the EU mainstream than the Austrian. To further illustrate the picture, the more recent foreign policies of Ireland and Austria are briefly outlined in the end with a focus on the countries' positions in the international "War against Terrorism" after September 11, 2001.

## 3.1. The Gulf War

Policy events in the Gulf region in 1990/91 were an important challenge for neutral countries who were members of the United Nations. For decades, due to superpower controversy, the system of collective security laid down in the UN Charter could not be fully developed. But with the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait this system, for the first time, became fully operational. After diplomacy and sanctions had failed and Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein refused to withdraw his forces from Kuwait, on November 29, 1990, the Security Council passed Resolution 678, authorizing nations to use force against Iraq under Chapter VII of the UN Charter (Yetiv 1997: 25). European foreign policy coordination during the crisis was still in its rather weak EPC framework and support for the U.S.-led coalition was mainly exercised through the national capitals. The following section presents the reactions of neutral EC member Ireland as well as that of neutral EC applicant Austria.

### 3.1.1. Ireland in the Gulf War

Ireland's direct interests in the Gulf crisis were, according to Keatinge (1996: 216), "unusually significant for a small state outside the region." The largest Irish (and European) beef exporter, the Goodman group, experienced a financial crisis because beef exports to Iraq were curtailed. Besides these economic problems, more than 400 Irish nationals were trapped in Iraq, proportionately the largest group of hostages among the twelve EC members. The crisis started little over a month after the Irish EC Presidency and so the country was, through the troika system of European foreign policy coordination, much more involved in the crisis than would have otherwise been the case.

Initial moves by the EC, consisting of declaratory policy and economic sanctions, did not cause controversy in Irish domestic politics. However, Keatinge (1996: 216) points out that the prospect of being involved militarily against Iraq was more problematic. The Irish government refused an invitation to attend a WEU ministerial meeting on the crisis as observer and instead supported the continuation of economic sanctions and attempts to mediate. When the UN Security Council legitimized an intervention by an American-led coalition through Resolution 678, the Irish government made clear that it valued the obligations of UN membership higher than considerations of neutrality (Keatinge 1996: 217). The resolution requested "appropriate support" from all states and when hostilities began in January 1991, Ireland granted logistical facilities at Shannon airport. The expression of Irish support for the coalition through EPC caused no difficulty for the Irish government because the rapid end to hostilities and the brief land war were matched by an equally rapid end to public concern (Keatinge 1996: 217).

As a whole, the Gulf conflict was a major innovation in Irish foreign policy. Keatinge (1996: 217) emphasizes that for the first time an Irish government formally accepted the legitimacy of the actual use of force under a UN mandate. Also in the aftermath to the crisis, Ireland confirmed this trend when it supported the EC's demand for "humanitarian intervention" to protect Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq.

### 3.1.2. Austria in the Gulf War

The Austrian response to the Gulf crisis was unequivocal. Austria rapidly took such legislative measures as were necessary to support UN authorized action against Iraq. For the first time, Austria granted over flight and transit rights in the course of the second Gulf War,

and clearly demonstrated the subordination of its neutrality status to the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council (Gustenau 1999: 10). To support the troops in the Gulf fighting against Iraq, Austria even allowed the transport of NATO war materiel across its territory (Luif 2003a: 284).

As a consequence of the events, Austrian Parliament in 1991 revised the Austrian Act on the Export of Military Equipment and the relevant articles of the Penal Code, clarifying that measures taken within the framework of the collective security system according to Chapter VII of the UN Charter should not be considered as war (Jankowitsch and Porias 1994: 54). As Luif (1993: 24) explains, Austrian neutrality was re-interpreted in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis. Politicians spoke about "military neutrality" and consider the concept relevant for only a small part of Austria's external relations. The obligations of UN membership have taken precedence over Austria's duties as a neutral. This leads Gehler (2005: 117) to the assumption that Austrian foreign policy during the Gulf crisis was a first sign of "erosion" of her neutrality status because of the breach of the Verdross doctrine. This doctrine, named after Austrian international law expert Alfred Verdross, stated the priority of neutrality over all obligations of UN membership.

Although Austria was not yet member of the EC/EU in 1991, its foreign policy indicated an orientation towards the EU mainstream, trying not to be considered as an "outlier". As will be shown further below, Austria tried to intentionally "play down" its neutrality prior to EU accession and its foreign policy in the early 1990s should be seen in this light.

## 3.2. The Kosovo War

The background of the Kosovo conflict of March-June 1999 was the mounting Albanian-Serb tension and violence of the previous decade (Latawski and Smith 2003: 6). By the late 1990s, non-violent protest began to give way to armed Albanian resistance to what was seen as Serb repression. This manifested itself in the emergence of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which was gaining support within Kosovo. As the fighting intensified in 1998, Kosovo moved up the political agenda of NATO, which was determined to stop the crisis escalating to a level of violence seen earlier in Croatia and, especially, in Bosnia. In this context, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1199 in September 1998, calling for a cease-fire, withdrawal of Yugoslav security forces and talk between the parties in conflict. However, an agreement brokered by US Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke

failed, and so did the high-level negotiations by the "Contact Group", consisting of France, Germany, Italy, the UK, Russia and the United States. The Yugoslav refusal to sign this agreement in Rambouillet outside Paris, as well as the deteriorating situation inside Kosovo, led to NATO's decision to finally use coercive airpower in March 1999. The important legal difference to the Gulf war in 1991 was the lack of an *explicit* UN mandate for the *Operation Allied Force* in Kosovo. The major actors, in particular the U.S., the UK, France and Germany, rather claimed to have an *implicit* mandate through Resolution 1199, acting "in the spirit" of the UN Charter (Latawski and Smith 2003: 13).[87]

The fact that this crisis in the "European backyard" could only be solved by NATO and under the leadership of the United States was seen by many Europeans as an embarrassment. As already mentioned, it therefore a major trigger for the development of a European Security and Defense Policy that might lead to a common defense in the future. The Kosovo War presented an uncomfortable situation for the EU neutrals. None of them wished to breach their neutrality, and normally would not sanction a military operation without an *explicit* UN mandate. However, all realized that the humanitarian situation was grave and needed attention – the Irish and Austrian foreign policies during the Kosovo crisis are outlined in the following.

### 3.2.1. Ireland in the Kosovo War

According to Keohane (2001: 4), "Ireland proved the most interesting EU neutral case." The Irish government backed the EU-NATO members' statement and explicitly endorsed the NATO action. For the first time in Irish history, the country supported a military action without *explicit* UN mandate. According to the *Irish Times*, "for most, the decision is likely to be seen as a […] possibly regrettable, but necessary, break with neutrality in the face of UN impotence. Short of sending troops, the Government could not nail its colors to the mast more clearly […]."[88] The Irish foreign policy move is even more significant when compared to the country's position during the Bosnian conflict in the early 1990s: Ireland urged the UN Security Council to take action against Yugoslav President Milosevic and suggested that

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[87] Resolution 1199 did not explicitly legitimize the use of force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, but it spoke of the need to "avert the impending humanitarian catastrophe" and considers "further action and additional measures to maintain or restore peace and stability in the region" (www.un.org/docs/scres/1998, accessed in July 2005.) In addition, the UN Secretary General had called upon member states to take action to prevent a "humanitarian disaster" in Kosovo (Latawski and Smith 2003: 13).

[88] Patrick Smyth "Ireland has stepped off the neutrality fence", *The Irish Times,* April 14, 1999, quoted in Keohane (2001: 4)

military force should be sanctioned if negotiations failed – however, there was no question of Ireland acting outside the United Nations. In Keohane's (2001: 5) opinion, it is fair to suggest that not only are EU security decisions now as important to Ireland as those of the UN, but also Ireland may be starting to move away from the traditionally strict interpretation of the "military neutrality".

### 3.2.2. Austria in the Kosovo War

The Austrian reaction to the Kosovo crisis significantly differed to that of its Irish neutral counterpart. Because of the lack of a clear mandate by the UN Security Council, Austria condemned the bombings, and rejected any support for the *Operation Allied Force*, stating that to do so would violate the Austrian Constitution. Federal Chancellor Viktor Klima even denied a fellow EU member state, France, permission to send ships down the Danube from Passau, Germany, to Slovakia, and refused the use of national airspace by NATO planes involved in the bombing campaign against Serbia on the grounds of neutrality (Ferreira-Pereira 2005: 29).[89] However, this caused considerable debate in Austria with the minority coalition partner, the People's Party, which favors NATO membership for Austria, saying they would have supported the bombings if it were not for the Austrian Constitution (Keohane 2001: 4).

The increasing interplay of EU, NATO and UN structures proved to be a real challenge for those countries that are not part of all groupings such as Austria. In this context the agreement of the chancellor to NATO air strikes expressed in the EU Council seems odd and shows clear contradictions in Austrian foreign and security policy (Gustenau 1999: 14) In June 1999, only days after the NATO air raids came to an end, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1244, initiating the peace-building process for Kosovo. The fact that Austria participated in the Kosovo Force (KFOR) under this resolution clearly shows the country's commitment to UN Security Council mandates and the inclination for engagement in the framework of classic peacekeeping operations (Gustenau 1999: 11).[90]

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[89] Despite the strictly applied neutrality, Voggenhuber MEP emphasizes that "de facto" thousands of NATO airplanes crossed the Austrian airspace during the Operation Allied Force in Kosovo. This was not officially permitted but quietly tolerated (interview conducted in May 2005).
[90] However, KFOR is not exactly a traditional peacekeeping force, given its robust rules of engagement (Luif 2003a: 290).

## 3.3. Irish and Austrian foreign policy post 9/11

*"Against such an enemy, there can be no neutrality." [91]* - George W. Bush

In the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States government announced *Operation Enduring Freedom* as part of the war on global terrorism. The aim was to build a multilateral coalition against the Al Qaeda network and against the Taliban in Afghanistan.[92] The American efforts were supported by a broad coalition, including NATO and the UN Security Council. On September 12, NATO decided that the attack against the United States shall be regarded as an action covered by Article 5 of the Washington Treaty - this was the first time in the Alliance's history that Article 5 has been invoked. Shortly after the September 11 attacks, the UN Security Council demanded the Taliban surrender Osama Bin Laden to the appropriate authorities, but the Taliban rejected the ultimatum. The establishment of a broad-based interim government following the ousting of the Taliban by U.S. military intervention was based on the agreements at the UN-supported Bonn conference on December 5, 2001. Shortly afterwards, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), supported by NATO, was deployed to Afghanistan on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 1378 and 1386 under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.[93] ISAF was established to assist the government of Afghanistan in maintaining a secure environment. In April 2003, NATO troops were deployed under the ISAF mandate and NATO assumed the lead of ISAF shortly afterwards. As of November 2004 ISAF consisted of more than 8,500 soldiers, among them many from non-NATO and PfP nations such as Ireland and Austria.[94]

As member (and in October 2001 even president) of the United Nations Security Council, Ireland took a leading role in the unanimous backing of military action against the Taliban regime by a multilateral coalition, led by the United States. As part of the *Operation Enduring Freedom,* Taoiseach Bertie Ahern has offered to let the United States Air Force use Irish airfields. In particular Shannon airport was used as a major staging post for the US military (Newby and Titley 2003: 485). In July 2002, the Irish government provided seven members

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[91]  U.S. President George W. Bush, March 11, 2002 (quoted in Newby and Titley 2003: 483)
[92] Source of information: Irish Ministry of Foreign Affairs: http://foreignaffairs.gov.ie/press_releases, accessed in July 2005.
[93] Source of information: Global Policy Forum: www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues, accessed in July 2005.
[94] Source of information: www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/oef_orbat_isaf6.htm, accessed in July 2005.

of the Defense Forces for service with the ISAF in Kabul for a period of one year where they served under Turkish command.[95]

In a first reaction after the terrorist attacks, Austrian Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel said his neutral country would allow the use of its airspace and provide whatever support it can, but that Austrian soldiers would not be involved in military action, because of constitutional reservations.[96] However, after the military campaign against the Taliban regime was over, Austria participated in ISAF right from the beginning. First, only ten soldiers supported the multinational force, but more soldiers were being deployed as part of a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) of the German Bundeswehr in Kunduz, in the north of the country.

## 3.4. Conclusion

The results of the analysis of Irish and Austrian foreign policy means since the early 1990s are somewhat ambiguous. One of the theoretical assumptions which can be clearly confirmed is that Ireland, a longstanding EC member, compared to Austria, became more actively involved in all of the international crises analyzed and has appeared less hesitant to do so despite its neutrality. According to the second theoretical assumption, Austria was expected to play its "neutral card" more strongly during the Gulf crisis than in the Kosovo War almost ten years later after Austria had joined the European Union. However, Austria supported the sanctions against Saddam Hussein in 1990 while it claimed full neutrality during the war in Kosovo. At first glance, this observation seems to contradict the main hypothesis of this paper which argues a decreasing importance of neutrality, due to EC/EU membership. However, two underlying reasons for the Austrian foreign policy in the 1990s need to be considered: firstly, Austria still considers a mandate by the UN Security Council as an absolute condition for her foreign policy action. From the Austrian point of view, the *Operation Allied Force* in Kosovo was clearly illegal because it lacked an *explicit* mandate. Austrian willingness to constructively support the international action against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan after the September 11 attacks further supports this pattern (and makes the Irish position during the Kosovo crisis even more significant). Secondly, the expectation of a foreign policy shift *after* accession to the EC/EU as laid down in the main hypothesis

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[95] Source of information: Irish Ministry of Foreign Affairs: http://foreignaffairs.gov.ie/press_releases, accessed in July 2005.
[96] Source of information: Congressional Research Service. Operation Enduring Freedom: Foreign Pledges of Military & Intelligence Support: http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/6207.pdf, accessed in July 2005.

needs to be reconsidered. As the discussion on underlying causes of foreign policy changes in the two countries will show in the next section, Austria made all major adaptations *before* joining the European Union in 1995 – the government intentionally "played down" neutrality during the accession negotiations, which might explain the surprisingly active Austrian policy during the Gulf crisis in the early 1990s.

Another surprising result of the analysis of Irish and Austrian foreign policy action is the lacking concurrence with the results of the previous analysis of positions and strategies. In particular in the case of Ireland the two outcomes almost seem to contradict each other: while the country frequently insisted upon its "special status" as a neutral country during all major treaty negotiations, its concrete foreign policy actions seem to tell a different story. These contradictory results will be subject to discussion in the next section.

## 4. Discussion of Results

The observed changes in neutrality that took place in both Ireland and Austria during their time of EC/EU membership generally support the main hypothesis of this paper. In particular, the concrete Irish foreign policy decisions, such as in the Falklands or the Kosovo crises, as well as changing Austrian foreign policy positions over time, indicate considerable influence from the EC/EU. However, several findings cannot be explained by a causal relation between EU membership and a decreasing degree of neutrality, thus demanding further consideration. This section first discusses potential alternative explanations for the observed changes in Irish and Austrian foreign policy as laid down in the theoretical framework. It then summarizes the findings by examining the consequences for neutrality in both countries, outlining the current status and potential future developments.

### 4.1. Alternative explanations

Some results of the comparative analysis are not in line with the predictions of the main hypothesis. First, a surprising finding was that the adaptation of Austrian foreign policy took place *before* the accession to the European Union. Second, the end of the Cold War was of major importance in the neutral countries' foreign policy. Third, the broad and simplified overview of the case study results in Table 6 indicates an initially unexpected difference in the observed changes in both countries. While in Austria the transformation took place rather in foreign policy positions and strategies, the Irish change could be observed in concrete

foreign policy action. The main hypothesis of this paper can not sufficiently explain the change in foreign policy positions where Austria weakened her neutrality status earlier and more significantly than longstanding EC member Ireland. The examination of control variables and alternative explanations will show that the change in neutrality in both countries cannot be explained by a single factor but rather has to be seen as a complex interplay between different underlying causes.

Table 6: *Irish and Austrian neutrality – results of the case study*

| **Insistence on neutrality** | Maastricht[97] **(1991)** | Gulf War **(1990/91)** | Amsterdam **(1996)** | Kosovo War **(1999)** | Nice **(2000)** | Post 9/11[98] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **stronger** | n/a | Austria | Ireland | Austria | Ireland | n/a |
| **weaker** | | Ireland | Austria | Ireland | Austria | |

### 4.1.1. Early convergence

The analysis showed that Austria had already made considerable concessions regarding its neutrality prior to EU accession in 1995. As pointed out, the government no longer insisted on a "neutrality clause", contrary to their own position only a few years before. Also during the Gulf crisis in the early 1990s, Austria granted over flight and transit rights for foreign troops for the first time since it had claimed "perpetual neutrality". But what were the reasons for this "pre-convergence" of Austrian foreign policy?

When Austria applied for membership in the late 1980s, with the Single European Act and the President of the EC Commission, Jacques Delors, as a pushing force, the Community was in a very dynamic and pro-integrationist phase. According to Phinnemore (2000: 205), the application by a neutral country created fears within the EC, that moves towards the CFSP could be hampered. Delors himself expressed on several occasions his doubts about the membership of a permanently neutral country in the EC (Luif 1993: 31). Hence, in an attempt to secure membership, in particular at a time when an unprecedented number of states were

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[97] As a non-EU member, Austria did not take part in the Maastricht negotiations.

[98] The ongoing "War against Terrorism" makes a final assessment on the Irish and Austrian contribution difficult – however, so far Austria engaged more actively (deployment of a larger number of troops to the ISAF), while the Irish support was more passive (in particular the permission for the US military to use Shannon airport).

seeking accession to the EC, the significance of neutrality within Austrian foreign and security policy had to be played down. The Austrian foreign policy expert Hannes Swoboda MEP confirms that the country did not emphasize the issue of neutrality in the years prior to accession, due to reservations by the larger EU member states, in particular by France and the UK.[99] The Austrian government began to deemphasize the significance of neutrality through *aide memoires* stressing its commitment to the EC's goals regarding the development of foreign policy cooperation (Phinnemore 2000: 207). Austria agreed to participate "fully and actively" in the CFSP and to "take on in their entirety and without reservation" the EU's objectives relating to the CFSP, including the possibility of a common defense.[100] The government's White Book on membership even contained declarations to the effect that Austria would apply for observer status with the WEU and seek closer cooperation with NATO via the PfP program. As the case study analysis clearly showed, Austrian foreign policy positions had been significantly in line with those adopted under EPC and the CFSP – even in the years prior to membership.

The Austrian example shows that the main hypothesis was formulated too rigorously, claiming that "EU membership" is the main explanatory factor behind the change in the neutral status. It should rather be the "desired accession to and membership in the European Union" of neutral states that contributes to the weakening of their neutral status.

### 4.1.2. The end of the Cold War

An alternative explanation for the decreasing degree of neutrality in Ireland and Austria might be the decisive geopolitical changes that came with the end of bipolarity. It could be claimed that the most decisive turning point for neutral countries was the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, regardless of the date of accession to the EU. And indeed, the impact of these events on the neutrals can hardly be overestimated. For instance, the whole relevance of neutrality policies has been questioned after the end of the Cold War. According to Gärtner and Sens (1996: 195), neutrality presupposes that that there is a larger conflict to be neutral from; in the absence of such a conflict, neutrality is a recipe for self-marginalization. Also legally, the early 90s proved a crucial turning point for neutral Austria – as pointed out, the country's neutral status was mainly based on a deal with the Soviet Union that in exchange withdrew its occupying forces and gave Austria national sovereignty in 1955. The dissolution

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[99] Interview conducted in April 2005
[100] Treaty of Accession – Joint Declaration on Common Foreign and Security Policy, 1994, quoted in Phinnemore (2000: 208).

of the Soviet Union hence increased the Austrian room to maneuver and flexibility in foreign policy decisions considerably. Only in such an environment, Austria could gradually depart from its traditional focus on the United Nations and move towards the "embryonic European security system" that was seen as the perfect solution to reconcile Austrian neutrality with the new global order (Phinnemore 2000:206).

The question is certainly not whether the Cold War had any influence on the dependent variable or not, but rather to what degree it influenced events. It is helpful to assume for a moment that EU membership does not have any influence on the status of neutrality and that eventual changes in foreign policy positions can be entirely explained by other factors. Empirical support for this assumption could stem from the analysis of a neutral country outside the European Union, for example Switzerland. Indeed also Switzerland reacted to the changed global environment, for instance by reforming its army in a way similar to Austria, Finland and Sweden. However, without getting into too much detail, it remains unthinkable that Switzerland reduces its neutrality to the minimal core, allows transit rights for foreign troops or military equipment or would even take part in a military operation within NATO or WEU framework.

Furthermore, in both countries under observation foreign policy adaptation and changes took place while the Cold War was still going on. One example is the Irish position during the Falklands crisis, another is the Austrian EC membership application and discussion on its neutrality status two years *before* the Berlin Wall fell. It rather seems that the end of the Cold War provided the framework and flexibility for the political changes to take place. But it was then EU membership, using this changed environment and creating the incentives and mechanisms to make the observed shift in foreign polices happen. This can also partly explain the different pace of adaptation in Ireland and Austria. The Austrian accession to the EU and the end of the Cold War happened almost simultaneously and probably had a mutually re-enforcing impact on the country's foreign policy. Another part of the explanation is most likely to be found in the dynamic nature of the independent variable. Austria joined the EU and the CFSP at a comparatively advanced form of cooperation and integration and "had to swallow the whole ball of wax in one gulp" (Hanf and Soetendorp 1998: 5).

Finally, the end of the Cold War influenced all countries at the same time and can, therefore, not explain the observed differences between the foreign policy goals and means in

Austria and Ireland. These observed differences lead to an important set of control variables, namely the domestic factors and their potential impact on neutrality.

### 4.1.3. Domestic arrangements

As Hill (1996b: 5) points out, it is a defining characteristic of Foreign Policy Analysis not to assume that state behavior can be understood solely by reference to the external realm of power balances or geopolitics. "Any explanation of EPC or of the CFSP which does not include the national dimension is fundamentally flawed" (Hill 1996b: 11). Following the theoretical assumptions, this section will examine the influence of public opinion, party politics, and foreign policy traditions in Ireland and Austria and show that they provide useful explanations for the observed differences in the analysis.

<u>Public Opinion</u>

As pointed out above, the concept of neutrality enjoys wide public support in both Ireland and Austria. Although neutrality initially started as a "negative" issue in both countries, it soon became a source of positive self identification for the population. Opinion polls in both countries confirm this popularity of the neutral status, although the results are sometimes rather confusing and even contradictory. For example, recent opinion polls indicate that more than 70 percent of the Austrians approve the creation of a European army – but the principle of neutrality is still supported by the same number of Austrians.[101] This means a tough decision for politicians who do not have the luxury of pursuing contradictory goals at the same time.

While public opinion has to be taken into account in all democratic systems, it plays a particularly important role in countries that hold regular referendums on important issues. The Austrian population was only once asked for its opinion on a European issue – on the accession treaty in 1994. In contrast to that, the Irish government frequently consults public opinion in nation-wide referendums. Legally, it is only required to hold a referendum when the government wants to change the Irish Constitution, the so called *constitutional referendum.* However, when the government does not wish to change the Constitution, but to introduce a law that is of national importance, the two chambers of Parliament can also call for an *ordinary referendum.* So far all major European treaties required constitutional

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[101] Source of information: CFSP Watch 2004 (Austria): www.fornet.info/CFSPannualreports2004, accessed in August 2005.

amendments and therefore had to be approved by the people. While other European states hold very few referendums (with the exception of Denmark), Table 7 shows that Ireland was the only EU member state to hold a national vote on all treaties, including the Treaty of Nice (Mitchell 2003b: 12). Table 7 also clearly indicates a constantly decreasing approval rate over time with the 2001 referendum on Nice as a low point when the Irish people rejected a European treaty for the first time.

Table 7: *Irish referendums held on European matters*[102]

| Date | Issue | Result |
|------|-------|--------|
| **1972** | EC - Accession | (Yes 83 % - No 17 % - Turnout 71 %) |
| **1987** | Single European Act | (Yes 70 % - No 30 % - Turnout 44 %) |
| **1992** | Treaty of Maastricht | (Yes 69 % - No 31 % - Turnout 57 %) |
| **1998** | Treaty of Amsterdam | (Yes 62 % - No 38 % - Turnout 56 %) |
| **2001** | Treaty of Nice | (No 54 % - Yes 46 % - Turnout 35 %) |
| **2002** | Treaty of Nice | (Yes 63 % - No 37 % - Turnout 49 %) |

The common pattern in all Irish referendums was that they have only been won in spite of provisions on European foreign and security policy, either by denying that anything substantial is taking place, or by insisting that the position of the country has been specially recognized (Tonra 2001: 169). The obligation for Irish foreign policy makers to call a referendum makes it very likely that they take into account public opinion during the negotiations already, fearing a possible rejection afterwards. Although many in the Irish foreign policy elite consider neutrality as blocking their ambitions, they are "bound" by public opinion.[103] And indeed, as the results of the above analysis indicate, the Irish foreign policy positions and strategies in all major treaty negotiations differed considerably from the European mainstream. The Irish government was very hesitant to support any substantial

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[102] Source of information: www.unizar.es/euroconstitucion/Treaties/Treaty_Const_Rat_Ireland.htm, accessed in July 2005.
[103] Kyle O'Sullivan (interview conducted in April 2005)

development of qualitative leap in the CFSP and paid close attention to the maintenance of neutrality. The unique constitutional requirement on referendums is also very helpful in explaining the "gap" between the insistence on Irish neutrality during treaty negotiations on the one side and the very flexible approach in foreign policy action on the other: while all treaties need to be approved by the population, there are of course no referendums on concrete foreign policy decisions. As Tonra (1996) points out, there was extensive domestic opposition against the Irish government's position on the Falklands crisis – however, this opposition did not gain direct influence on the foreign policy process and was no decisive factor for the government. In addition, Irish foreign policy expert Kyle O'Sullivan points out that public opinion is considerably strong when the involvement of Irish troops is concerned – but much less so when it comes to the "indirect" support of foreign troops such as giving permission for the use of Irish airports.[104]

The analysis of the Austrian foreign policy positions further supports the assumption that the power of public opinion vis-à-vis the government plays a crucial role. In Austria, the lack of comparable constitutional requirements to call a referendum probably helped in the surprisingly quick and smooth adaptation of the country's foreign policy to the European mainstream. While the Irish foreign policy elite are "bound" by public opinion, their Austrian counterparts are much more flexible in pursuing their agenda. As Hannes Swoboda MEP explains, important decisions are made by a small "foreign policy elite" that becomes increasingly distant from the public opinion. However, another domestic factor is of crucial importance in the Austrian foreign policy making and plays a considerable role in changing attitudes towards neutrality: the differences between the political parties.

Party Politics:

Austrian Security and Defense policy was always a highly debated topic between the political parties. In particular the conservative People's Party became the manifestation of a more open-minded approach towards common defense. The conservatives had considerable influence on the foreign policy even as junior partner in the "grand coalition", because both the foreign and defense ministries were often in their hands. It was the ÖVP that led the bid for EC membership in the 1980s and which has since played a central role in challenging Austria's neutrality policy and advocating NATO membership (Phinnemore 2000: 212). However, participation in the Union's prospective common defense had been denied to the

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[104] Interview conducted in April 2005

Conservative foreign policy decision-makers by the Social Democrats' strict opposition during the times of the "grand coalition" (Ferreira-Pereira 2005: 28). The dispute emerged in particular when the "grand coalition" came to an end and a new ÖVP/FPÖ government took power in February 2000. In a new Security and Defense Doctrine in May 2000, the new coalition laid down its foreign policy positions. This doctrine welcomed the idea of future NATO membership, and claimed priority for the *solidarity* among EU members over the Austrian *neutrality* (Schneider 2003: 373). When the Austrian government decided to pledge troops for the EU Battle Groups, this was opposed by the Austrian President (and Social Democrat) Heinz Fischer who demanded that the Austrian participation should depend on an authorization by the UN Security Council. Politicians from the opposition parties, the Greens and the Social Democrats, insisted that the participation in the Battle Groups shall not affect Austria's status as a neutral country. The confrontational relation between the government and the opposition parties is sometimes even described as the end of the Austrian "consensual democracy".[105]

The enthusiasm for European solidarity promoted by the new Austrian ÖVP/FPÖ government was certainly cooled down by the sanctions applied against Austria by the other 14 EU members in early 2000.[106] According to Mölzer MEP the sanctions "froze" the integration process for a while and were maybe even a "step back". However, they could not change the overall pattern of the foreign policy agenda that could be further pursued after the sanctions were lifted in December 2000 (Gehler 2003: 154).

Also in Ireland, neutrality is debated between the parties and increasingly an issue in campaigns. For example, Fine Gael, one of the two "big players" in the Irish party system, recently called for a shift in foreign policy in order to move "beyond neutrality". As Coveney MEP explains, this means most of all a weakening of the rigid "Triple Lock" system. In his opinion, if a Security Council Resolution is vetoed, the EU should not have to wait for a mandate but become active – as long as the action is in light with the UN Charter and member states have an "opt-out" option. As Keohane (2001: 20) emphasizes, the move "beyond

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[105] Source of information: CFSP Watch 2004 (Austria): www.fornet.info/CFSPannualreports2004, accessed in August 2005.

[106] After the national elections on October 3, 1999, the Social Democrats (33.15 percent) were still the strongest party despite great losses. However, ÖVP and FPÖ (both 26.91 percent) together had an absolute majority and formed a new coalition. The participation of the right wing FPÖ led to unilateral sanctions by the "EU 14" for the first time against "one of their own", initiated by the Portuguese Presidency of the Council. Among other measures the sanctions included to stop support for Austrian candidates in international organizations and to receive Austrian ambassadors only at a technical level (Gehler 2003: 122f).

neutrality" does not mean all it might at a first glance. Fine Gael is not advocating that Ireland join NATO or a WEU Article V arrangement in the EU. Rather than an EU Treaty obligation, they emphasize Irish independence and the sovereign right to make own decisions. Although Fianna Fáil, the other big party, is more cautious on neutrality issues, there are no major policy differences between their stance and that of Fine Gael. In Ireland, most of all the small parties on the left, the Greens, Sinn Fein, and the Socialist Party are advocates of neutrality. They have all joined a campaign, organized by the "Peace and Neutrality Alliance", to enshrine the principle of neutrality in the Irish Constitution (Keohane 2001: 22). Although the small parties have comparatively little influence in the Irish political system, their power increases considerably with regard to the above described referendum campaigns. O'Sullivan emphasizes that Irish governments feel very vulnerable to possible campaigns by small parties such as Sinn Fein on neutrality issues and therefore try not to offer any point of attack.[107]

With regard to the results of the case study analysis, the importance of party politics in Austria is especially helpful to understand the observed "leap" in Austrian foreign policy around the year 2000. While the "grand coalition" under Social Democratic Chancellor Viktor Klima insisted on strict neutrality during the Kosovo crisis of 1999, Austria's more recent foreign policy, for instance the reaction after 9/11 or the participation in the European Rapid Reaction Force or the Battle Groups, reduces neutrality to its core. Such a fundamental change in foreign policy could not be expected after an election in Ireland – firstly, because neutrality is not such a controversial issue among the larger Irish parties and secondly, because the foreign policy elite is not as free in their room to maneuver.

Foreign Policy Traditions

A comparison between the foreign policies of Ireland and Austria is further complicated by specific traditions or ties with regard to third countries or external affairs in general. As already pointed out, both Ireland and Austria are considerably influenced by "big neighbors", namely the United Kingdom and Germany. One intention of the Irish and Austrian neutrality was to maintain independence and national sovereignty vis-à-vis the dominant neighbor. The following section will show that this is not the only "bias" in Irish and Austrian foreign policy.

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[107] Interview conducted in April 2005

Due to strong ethnic, demographic and historical links, Ireland's relationship with the United States has to be seen as a special category as well (Tonra 2000: 240). As Newby and Titley (2003: 485) point out, the presence of a large Irish Diaspora in America has placed Ireland in a different position from other European states such as Austria. For instance, Ireland was much more directly influenced by the terrorist attacks on 9/11 with a sizeable number of Irish and Irish-American victims. Although many people in Ireland question the constitutionality and the morality of the frequent use of Shannon airport by the US military, the close ties to American have certainly contributed to this Irish support. The fact that Shannon airport is still heavily used by the American troops on their way to Iraq, leads Newby and Titley (2003: 489) to the notion of an "American domestic airport" and a "de-neutralized" part of the country. In fact, American involvement has frequently led to a somewhat loser interpretation of neutrality – one might even call this a "double standard" in the Irish foreign policy.[108] But the special relation to the United States is not only due to pure Irish Atlanticism. Policy makers are also aware of the economic dependence on the United States, in particular after the Bush administration described the need for the U.S. to cultivate a "coalition of liberalizers", explicitly linking alliance with trade (Newby and Titley 2003: 487).[109]

Because of historical ties, dating back to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but also due to Austria's geographic location in the "heart of Europe", the country has particularly close links to its neighbors to the South and the East. These ties were artificially cut for many decades by the Iron Curtain, but since the end of the Cold War they are increasingly re-discovered. Austria was one of the major advocates for the 2004 EU enlargement towards Central and Eastern Europe and has also a close relationship to the Balkan countries. Compared to Ireland, the country was therefore much more directly involved in the many crises in the 1990s that destabilized the whole region and led to the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia. It was a real challenge for Austrian policy makers to maintain a neutral status vis-à-vis these event and, according to Reiter (1992: 27) they did not always succeed, for instance by demonstrating clear sympathies for Slovenian and Croatian independence.

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[108] The American invasion in Iraq in early 2003 was not legitimized by a UN mandate, and – unlike the war in Kosovo – neither supported by a "grand coalition" of allies nor seen as being "in the spirit" of the UN Charter. But despite this, the Irish government granted over flight and transit opportunities and there was no official condemnation of US action (Kyle O'Sullivan, interview conducted in April 2005).

[109] The fear of countries opposing the U.S. foreign policy was to become "Yemenized". This refers to Yemen voting against the Security Council resolution that legitimized the Gulf War in 1991. Due to the severe economic consequences, this decision was regarded, in the words of one U.S. diplomat, as the most expensive "no" in history (Newby and Titley 2003: 487).

With regard to the comparative case study, the consideration of Austria's strong links to the Balkan countries does not really facilitate the understanding of Austrian foreign policy. One might have assumed that Austria would become involved in that region more actively, but to the contrary, the geographic proximity and historical ties did not prevent Austria from maintaining strict neutrality during the Kosovo War of 1999.Seen in this context the strict neutrality seems even more surprising. The consideration of Ireland's special relationship to the United States, however, proves very helpful to further explain the "gap" between Irish insistence on neutrality in treaty negotiations on the one side and its concrete foreign policy that often moved "beyond neutrality" on the other. As the last remaining superpower, the U.S. was the major player in all the analyzed events, the Gulf War, the Kosovo War, as well as the "War against Terrorism". It can be assumed that this was an incentive for Ireland, not to play the "neutrality card", while the country had fewer problems to maintain the status of neutrality towards its European partners.

## 4.2. Consequences for neutrality

The comparative case study looked at the *process* of change, analyzing Irish and Austrian foreign policy positions and strategies as well as concrete decisions over a longer period of time. The following section outlines the *current status* of neutrality by summarizing the crucial changes, presenting the main legal and political aspects, and speculating about potential future developments. The results of the analysis indicate that the importance of neutrality indeed decreased over time in both countries as expected by the main hypothesis, however at a different pace and to a different degree. Ireland and Austria both modified their neutrality to allow for an active participation within European foreign policy cooperation, but they are still short of joining any military alliance. Helmke (2000: 227) emphasizes that neither of the two countries gave up their neutrality, but they reduced its meaning to the core.

### 4.2.1. Current status of Irish neutrality

As shown in the analysis, Ireland frequently insisted upon its neutral status during all major treaty negotiations. However, in its concrete foreign policy action Irish politicians showed a surprising flexibility in interpreting neutrality. Be it the Falklands conflict in 1983, the Gulf crisis of 1991, or the 1999 Kosovo War – Ireland always played an active role and never fully "opted out" of joint EC/EU measures.

In Keohane's (2001: 23) opinion, the Irish decision to participate in the European Rapid Reaction Force or the support for the use of force in Kosovo shows that the country is not neutral when it comes to security issues. According to him it is thus more correct to describe Irish defense policy as *non-aligned* or *post-neutral.* Indeed, in the "White Paper on Defense" of February 2000, the Irish government affirms that the "long-standing policy of military neutrality" has never been "a limiting factor in the use of defense as an appropriate tool of international policy in the UN context and in the context of European Union."[110] O'Sullivan emphasizes that constitutional requirements and especially public opposition make it highly unlikely that the Irish will ever formally give up their status of neutrality. They will rather continue to empty the content of the concept.

The Irish "Triple Lock" system, demanding approval from the Government, Parliament and the UN Security Council, still applies – however, only in such cases where Irish troops are being sent abroad. Other support measures, such as over flight rights, use of Irish territory or economic sanctions, are no longer considered to fall under the triple lock doctrine. Koßdorff (2000: 90) criticizes this artificial distinction as an invention by Irish diplomats trying to save their "last piece" of Irish neutrality and making it therefore increasingly intransparent and confusing.

The results of the analysis indicate that the requirement to hold public referendums on all major international treaties is one of the most crucial intervening variables in the Europeanization of Irish foreign policy. This obligation is deeply rooted in the Irish political system and not likely to change any time soon. As Helmke (2000: 99) explains, the Irish government has promised that any Irish participation in a European common defense policy would have to be subject to a referendum. Given the popularity of neutrality among the population and the decreasing approval rates in referendums on EU issues, this arrangement can be expected to "slow down" the ambitions of the Irish foreign policy elite in the foreseeable future.

However, there are indications that the zenith of this public enthusiasm about the concept of neutrality has already been crossed. As Brian Crowley MEP points out, people increasingly realize that the strict rules of the "Triple Lock" system are not necessarily to the benefit of the

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[110] For the Irish White Paper on Defense: http://www.defence.ie/website.nsf/home+page?openpage, accessed in July 2005.

own foreign policy goals.[111] The most recent example being the tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean in December 2004 where the Irish government was not able to deploy troops in order to help the affected countries because there was no immediate UN mandate. Another aspect is described by Gay Mitchell MEP who emphasizes that socialization is taking place on many levels in Europe and is by far not limited to the foreign policy elite. [112] According to him, socialization is increasingly taking place among the European citizens themselves who are often even ahead of politicians, due to open borders and cheap flights. The Irish people, formerly stuck on their remote "island behind an island", are nowadays much more familiar with other countries. Germans, French and others are no longer considered foreigners and, according to Mitchell MEP, this might have significant impact on public opinion, in particular with regard to European solidarity and mutual assistance arrangements.

### 4.2.2. Current status of Austrian neutrality

*"For us the EU has been a reform whip […]. The past fifteen years were the most decisive years in the Austrian post-war history."[113]* - Wolfgang Schüssel

During international negotiations, the Austrian position was on a regular basis closer to the EU mainstream and insisted less on its neutrality than the Irish. However, regarding concrete foreign policy action, the analysis showed that Austria was more hesitant and until recently regarded a mandate by the UN Security Council as an absolute condition for any involvement.

Johannes Voggenhuber MEP emphasizes that the Austrian neutrality is very strongly embodied, not only in international law, as the Irish, but also in constitutional law where the *de jure* neutrality is codified in the Neutrality Act of 1955.[114] But despite the fact that the changes in neutrality faced more legal hurdles in Austria, the country adapted very quickly to the European mainstream and even left the Irish behind.[115] These changes demonstrate the flexibility of the neutrality concept even within its existing legal framework (Gärtner 1996). As shown above, the striking pace of transformation as compared to the slower development

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[111] Interview conducted in May 2005
[112] Interview conducted in May 2005
[113] Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel, in *Süddeutsche Zeitung,* June 11/12, 2005, author's translation
[114] Interview conducted in May 2005
[115] This was also increasingly noticed by the outside world – as Pieper (1997: 237) points out, the Russian President Yelzin had cancelled his official state visit to Austria in 1995, among other reasons due to the Austrian refusal to accept a declaration on the continuity of its "perpetual neutrality", guaranteed by Russia as the successor to the Soviet Union.

in Ireland can probably be best explained by the consideration of domestic arrangements in both countries. In Austria the political class has more room to maneuver vis-à-vis the general public and in addition, the People's Party and the smaller Freedom Party work as a "pushing force" towards further weakening the status of neutrality.

Although the Neutrality Act is still in force, the Austrian government made some crucial modifications after the 1995 EU accession. In May 1999 it adopted an amendment to the Article 23f of its Constitution, enabling soldiers to participate in peace-enforcement actions, not necessarily under UN mandate. As Ambassador Kuglitsch points out, these modifications "overshadow" and considerably limit the Neutrality Act.[116] Leading experts in international law have interpreted this amendment of Article 23f of the Austrian Constitution as practically the end of permanent neutrality (Luif 2003a: 285). Instead of neutrality, they would rather label the Austrian status as *non-alignment*. Due to the continuing popularity among the Austrian people and the strong legal codification of neutrality it seems unlikely that the country will formally give up the concept any time soon.[117] But as Voggenhuber explains, although Austria remains *de jure* a neutral country, it has *de facto* reduced this status to the core, meaning non-participation in a war, no foreign bases on Austrian soil and non-participation in a military alliance.

## 4.3 Conclusion

The somewhat ambiguous results of the comparative case study can be much better understood by taking into account external and domestic factors as alternative explanations. In particular the consideration of public opinion, party politics, and foreign policy traditions are helpful in understanding the observed difference in pace and intensity of the Europeanization of foreign policy in Ireland and Austria. Despite these qualifications, the results of the analysis generally support the structural hypothesis by showing a clear shift towards the EU mainstream and a decreasing significance of neutrality in Ireland and Austria. In both countries the concept of neutrality was more and more regarded as an obstacle and, therefore, gradually reduced to the core.

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[116] Interview conducted in April 2005
[117] From a strictly legal perspective, Austria does not even have the full control over its neutrality status. As pointed out, the Neutrality Act of 1955 had been acknowledged by a number of third countries and according to international law all of them would have to "release" Austria from its obligation. As Hummer (1996: 37) explains, this could result in the paradox situation that one third country's veto could leave Austria in its "perpetual neutrality" forever.

# VI.   Conclusion

*"The hottest place in hell is for those who are neutral."*[118] - Dante Alighieri

The comparative case study generally supports the assumptions of the main hypothesis. The impact of membership in the EC/EU is evident in both Ireland and Austria. But further analysis also indicated that this causal mechanism is not as simple as the theoretical assumptions might have suggested, and that the hypothesis can be considered valid only with considerable qualifications. First, the major changes in national policies, in particular those related to security and defense, were only possible in the post-Cold War environment where the neutral countries gained much more political room to maneuver. The results indicate that although the end of the Cold War was not the "trigger" for foreign policy change, it provided the necessary framework in which the mechanisms of Europeanization were able to develop and influence the neutral countries. The neutrals' participation in a post-Cold War EU with a common foreign and security policy raises the question of whether they should now be realistically considered "post-neutrals" (Manners and Whitman 2000: 248). Second, the analysis shows that the assumed causal relationship of the main hypothesis was too rigid. The examination of Austrian foreign policy indicates that the most important adaptations took place before the country joined the European Union. The Austrian foreign policy elite even played down the issue of neutrality in order to allow for a smooth accession process. Finally, the comparative analysis clearly indicates that the pace and intensity of foreign policy change depend on the domestic arrangements in each country. Factors such as public opinion, decision-making structures, party politics or national foreign policy traditions can either have a supportive effect on Europeanization (as in Austria) or they can slow down the process of change (as in Ireland). This interplay between outside pressure and domestic factors points to a closer link of the foreign policy approach to the "traditional" concept of Europeanization than originally expected. It also indicates that adaptation is more a function of attitude than of time as originally assumed by the structural hypothesis.

Although the impact of EU membership seems to be of great relevance in explaining the observed changes in the status of neutrality, the comparative case study showed that it is impossible to describe Europeanization as the single causal factor. The outcome of the

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[118] Dante Alighieri, quoted in Daniel Keohane (2001: 3)

analysis, the observed intervening factors and relevant alternative approaches make it, therefore, necessary to reword the structural hypothesis accordingly:

*The desired accession to and membership of neutral states in the European Union contributes to the weakening of their status of neutrality. The pace and intensity of this process of Europeanization depend on a range of external and domestic factors such as the security environment of the country or public opinion.*

The broad analysis of the dependent variable in two layers seems useful in the sense that it allows for the examination of rationalist as well as constructivist assumptions. It has helped to identify an important and unexpected outcome of the comparative case study, namely the "growing gap" between the two layers: the Irish and Austrian neutrality was illustrated by an analysis of the foreign policy goals on the one hand, and concrete foreign policy means on the other. The results indicate that, in both countries, these two layers are increasingly drifting apart. In Ireland neutrality is most prominently maintained in foreign policy positions and strategies as laid down in international treaty negotiations, while concrete foreign policy pays less attention to this status. Austria, to the contrary, adapted its official goals very quickly to the European mainstream while it is much more hesitant with regard to concrete foreign policy action. The crucial question is now whether this "gap" is likely to widen even further or whether it has to be closed at some point. In other words, will Austria fit its foreign policy action to the "brave" wording, and will Ireland adapt its neutral rhetoric to its often rather "un-neutral" foreign policy? The dynamic processes in both countries since the early 1990s make it unlikely, that the "contradictory" layers in foreign policy will be kept in parallel for a long time. In addition, the importance of domestic arrangements allows the prediction that Austria will change its status earlier and more significantly than the Irish counterparts.

## 1. Deficits and potential improvements for further research

An important limitation of the analysis concerns the possible generalization of the findings. First, it is a characteristic weakness of the comparative case study design that the results often lack external validity. Second, the conditions and criteria of the case selection were quite narrow, and the findings can only be directly applied to the few other EU neutrals. However, the assumed mechanisms of the theoretical model are expected to be valid for all small states in the European Union on a more abstract level. Not focusing specifically on the status of neutrality, but on general foreign policy convergence, the examined mechanisms of

socialization, spillover, path dependency, and the benefits through the increased access to information and high level decision makers, are expected to be relevant for all small states. A "medium-n" study among small states, maybe including the Central and Eastern European countries would certainly be advantageous to external validity.

Another method that could be improved by future research concerns the "measurement" of socialization processes among individual foreign policy makers. Although it is evident that such a process is taking place, it was beyond the scope of this thesis to provide answers as to where exactly and to what extent socialization occurs. In particular to find out whether or not a "European identity" is gradually emerging it remains an important task to find out to what degree the process of "social learning" may lead to "complex learning", meaning a reassessment of fundamental beliefs and values (Aggestam 2004: 86). To detect even subtle changes in member states' national interests and positions, the analysis could be somewhat refined, for instance by a *content analysis* of relevant documents and speeches. A useful starting point could be the study by Kovács and Wodak (2004: 240) analyzing the speeches of Austrian presidents to show the change over time of the semantic, ideological concept of neutrality. Their study shows a transformation from passive constructions to active constructions and strategies, and finally even to destructive strategies, when the concept of neutrality is viewed as obsolete. As Kovács and Wodak point out, "these transformations manifest themselves on the syntactic and semantic levels of grammar, as well as in the rhetoric of politicians." By examining where, when, and how the national interests of the member states converge, or at least are not in conflict, we might be able to clarify whether we observe the creation or the existence of an autonomous "European Interest".

Moreover, the range of interviewees would have to be broadened in order to detect socialization and spillover effects on different political levels. This thesis often relied on previous research in the field, while only a limited number of interviews were conducted. Other than foreign policy experts from the academia and among diplomats from the two countries, most interviewees were Irish and Austrian Members of the European Parliament. Although most of them are well familiar with the research question and provided useful information, they probably all share a political "bias": Hannes Swoboda MEP emphasizes that, according to his own experience, Members of the European Parliament from the neutral countries tend to be somewhat more skeptical towards this concept than their national counterparts in the parliament or the executive. Swoboda explains this tendency by the

frequent contact with the colleagues from other European countries, that takes place almost on a daily basis. But although this points to a possible overestimation of the socialization mechanism in this thesis, it can also be seen as further proof of the general validity of the assumption. Future research might even systematically analyze the socialization within the EP and the possible repercussions on national foreign policy, for instance through the analysis of party positions.

## 2. Outlook

*"There is nothing inherently moral about adopting a neutral stance on every issue, irrespective of the unique circumstances of each situation."*[119] - Gay Mitchell

The development of the CFSP with its increasing pace and intensity, including more and more security and defense related issues, seems to confirm Lord Dahrendorf's (1971: 120) early prediction that the political union "will certainly never be finished." At a time when the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy was perceived to be in shambles after the disagreements in Europe over Iraq and especially the U.S. policies, a surge of ESDP activity illustrated that EU member states continue to share a wide array of common interests and are willing to pursue common policies. Therefore, even the "residual neutrality" of contemporary Ireland and Austria is likely to become incompatible with the general objectives and philosophy of the CFSP in the long run. In theory, the participation of Austria and Ireland in CFSP/ESDP does not include any clause of automatic mutual protection; however, in practice these countries feel more and more involved in the collective security and an "opt out" of the inner-European solidarity seems increasingly difficult. Some foreign policy experts see the introduction of the Solidarity Clause into the EU treaties after the Madrid bombings on March 11, 2004, as a first step towards a system of mutual assistance and defense. Although this clause does not apply in case of military attacks by other states and concerns the police rather than the military, Swoboda MEP considers neutrality seriously threatened by such an arrangement. According to him, it is now thinkable, for the first time, that Austria might be dragged into a conflict without having any direct link to the underlying causes.

However, another development, the continuing enlargement of the European Union, might stop or at least slow down the development of a political union for some time. As outlined in the analysis, a crucial element of socialization is a *club atmosphere* based on

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[119] Gay Mitchell (2003b: 9)

several unwritten rules such as *confidentiality* and *consensus.* In particular the intergovernmental structures of the European Union such as the CFSP may be destabilized by continuing enlargement of the European Union. "With 12 member states you can still create a sort of family atmosphere – when there aren't a lot of knives flashing around – but the bigger the table gets the more difficult that becomes".[120] As Jørgensen (2004: 19) points out, the original six EU member-states made a system of fifteen bilateral relationships. "The Nine" constituted a system of thirty-six bilateral relations, "The Twelve" had sixty, and the current Union with 25 member-states makes a system of 300 relations and it is "needless to say, the cultivation of such an impressive number of relations would be very costly in terms of time and manpower resources" (Jørgensen 2004: 19). The analysis indicated that previous enlargements had a negative impact on the foreign policy coherence of the European Union and it remains to be seen what influence the unprecedented extension to ten new member states in May 2004 will have on the national foreign policies.
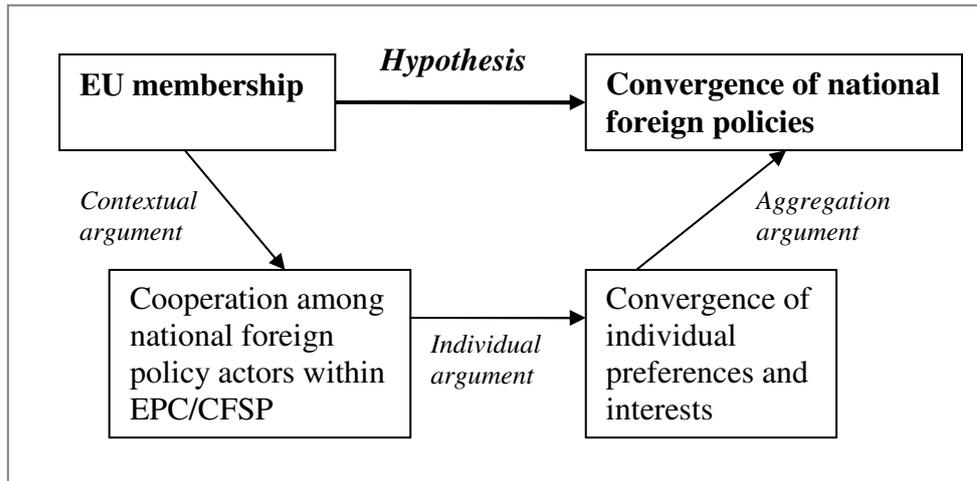
Finally, the foreign policy analysis of the neutrals in particular since the end of the Cold War revealed an increasing disconnection between the people and the politicians they have chosen to represent them. It is evident in both (post)-neutral EU countries that the political elites are much more in favor of giving up their country's neutrality status than the general population. As shown above, the political leadership in a small state has a lot to gain in power and influence from European foreign policy cooperation, and neutrality is increasingly conceived as a stumbling bloc. An increasing distance from the "ordinary people" is something the EU is frequently accused of, and the results of this study further strengthen this accusation. European foreign policy cooperation seems to put national decision-makers more and more in a situation where they have to choose between their popularity at home and the influence on their colleagues in other European countries.

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[120] A policy practitioner prior to the 1995 EU enlargement, quoted in Tonra (2001: 12).

# VII. Annex

## 1. Schemes and Tables

Scheme 1: *The structural hypothesis*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **EU membership** | *Hypothesis* → | **Convergence of national foreign policies** |
| *Contextual argument* ↓ | | ↗ *Aggregation argument* |
| Cooperation among national foreign policy actors within EPC/CFSP | *Individual argument* → | Convergence of individual preferences and interests |

Scheme 2: *The impact on national foreign policy*

- **International System** (power structure, globalization)
- **European Foreign Policy Cooperation** (EPC/CFSP)
- *Europeanization*
- **National Foreign Policy** (status of neutrality)
- **Domestic Factors** (public opinion, party politics, traditions)
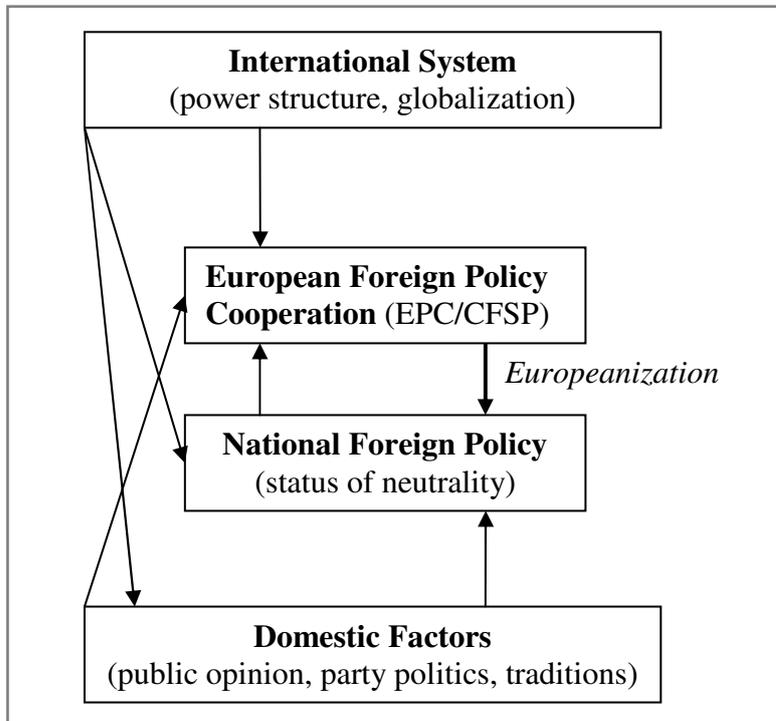
Table 5: *Distance from the EC/EU majority (all votes)*[121]

|  | 1979 | 1983 | 1987 | 1990 | 1993 | 1997 | 1999 | 2002 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Austria** | **17** | **26** | **19** | **22** | **8** | **4** | **2** | **3** |
| Finland | 21 | 25 | 21 | 18 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Sweden | 20 | 21 | 21 | 21 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Spain | 26 | 20 | 13 | 14 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Portugal | 17 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Greece | 28 | 35 | 24 | 15 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| **Ireland** | **10** | **18** | **15** | **17** | **7** | **5** | **4** | **5** |
| Denmark | 9 | 13 | 11 | 11 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| UK | 9 | 12 | 9 | 15 | 9 | 7 | 9 | 8 |
| France | 13 | 8 | 7 | 14 | 9 | 6 | 13 | 8 |
| Italy | 8 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Germany(FR) | 5 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Netherlands | 9 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Luxembourg | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Belgium | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Average** | **12.9** | **13.8** | **10** | **10.1** | **4.4** | **2.7** | **2.9** | **3.1** |

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[121] Source: Paul Luif (2003b: 32): maximum distance from the majority = 100, minimum = 0, selected years

## 2. Interview Report

To enrich the understanding of the foreign policy change and its underlying causes in Ireland and Austria as well as to widen the spectrum of data sources, the author conducted a number of personal interviews with selected foreign policy experts and practitioners.

The interviews were based on a semi-standardized questionnaire. Depending on the reaction and response of the interviewed person, some questions were either shortened or extended. If not otherwise marked, the interviews were carried out in person in the Permanent Representations of Austria and Ireland to the EU in Brussels and in the European Parliament in Strasbourg and Brussels. As the technical equipment was not available to record the interviews, reconstructions are available from the author.

Interviewees:

*Coveney, Simon* MEP, Fine Gael, Ireland, date of the interview: May 12, 2005

*Crowley, Brian* MEP, Fianna Fáil, Ireland, date of the interview: May 10, 2005

*Kuglitsch, Franz Josef*, Ambassador, Permanent Representation of Austria to the EU, date of the interview: April 1, 2005

*Mitchell, Gay* MEP, Fine Gael, Ireland, date of the interview: May 12, 2005

*Mölzer, Andreas* MEP, FPÖ, Austria, date of the interview: May 4, 2005

*O'Sullivan, Kyle*, First Secretary, Permanent Representation of Ireland to the EU, date of the interview: April 12, 2005

*Phinnemore, David*, Jean Monnet Chair, The Queen's University, Belfast, Interview conducted via Email in May 2005

*Swoboda, Hannes* MEP, SPÖ, Austria, date of the interview: April 28, 2005

*Voggenhuber, Johannes* MEP, Greens, Austria, date of the interview: May 25, 2005

## 3. Deutsche Zusammenfassung (German Summary)

Die vorliegende Arbeit befasst sich mit der Auswirkung der Europäischen Politischen Zusammenarbeit (EPZ), sowie ihrer Nachfolgerin, der Gemeinsamen Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik (GASP), auf die nationale Außenpolitik kleiner EU-Staaten. Am Beispiel der beiden neutralen Länder Irland und Österreich wird die Hypothese untersucht, Mitgliedschaft kleiner Staaten in der EU führe langfristig zu einer Konvergenz ihrer Außenpolitiken. Der Forschungsstand zur Europäisierung von nationaler Außenpolitik liefert dabei nützliche Erkenntnisse über mögliche Mechanismen eines solchen Einflusses, die im Bereich der rein zwischenstaatlich organisierten außenpolitischen Kooperation als besonders schwach angenommen werden. Relevant sind dabei insbesondere konstruktivistische Ansätze, die von einer „Sozialisierung" außenpolitischer Akteure und einer resultierenden Konvergenz ihrer Interessen und Präferenzen ausgehen. Zum besseren Verständnis der Umwandlung dieser Interessen in nationale Außenpolitik sind die Mechanismen des „Spillover" und der Pfadabhängigkeit aus dem Bereich des Neo-Funktionalismus hilfreich. Die vorliegende Arbeit verbindet diese Mechanismen in einem theoretischen Modell mit den speziellen Erkenntnissen über außenpolitische Strategien aus der Kleinstaatenforschung und zeigt, dass dieser Ansatz eine nützliche Ergänzung der Europäisierungsforschung bedeuten kann.

Das theoretische Modell wird im Rahmen einer vergleichenden Fallstudie am Beispiel der neutralen EU-Staaten Irland und Österreich untersucht. Die Entwicklung des Neutralitätsstatus beider Länder über einen längeren Zeitraum dient dabei als Indikator für eine mögliche Konvergenz ihrer nationalen Außenpolitiken. Die Untersuchung der abhängigen Variablen erfolgt auf zwei Ebenen: zum einen werden die außenpolitischen Ziele eines Landes analysiert, wie sie beispielsweise in den Positionen und Strategien im Rahmen internationaler Vertragsverhandlungen zum Ausdruck kommen. Zum anderen befasst sich die Arbeit mit konkreten außenpolitischen Entscheidungen Irlands und Österreichs in internationalen Krisensituationen. Das zugrunde liegende theoretische Modell ließe vermuten, dass es in beiden Ländern zu einer Abschwächung des Neutralitätsstatus nach dem jeweiligen Beitritt zur Europäischen Gemeinschaft beziehungsweise Union kam. Darüber hinaus stünde zu erwarten, dass die Außenpolitik Irlands durch die langjährige Mitgliedschaft in der EG/EU sich schon stärker dem europäischen Mittel angepasst habe, und das Land seine Neutralität daher weniger stark betone als das vergleichsweise junge EU Mitglied Österreich. Obwohl die vergleichende Fallstudie diese Voraussagen in weiten Teilen bestätigt, legen die Ergebnisse

auch wichtige Einschränkungen der theoretischen Annahmen nahe. Zwar scheint die EU Mitgliedschaft eine entscheidende Rolle bei der Abschwächung der Neutralität in beiden Ländern gespielt zu haben, doch sind auch andere Einflüsse von großer Bedeutung. Insbesondere innenpolitische Faktoren, wie zum Beispiel das Gewicht der öffentlichen Meinung oder der Parteipolitik, scheinen maßgeblich Intensität und Geschwindigkeit des Europäisierungsprozesses zu beeinflussen.

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