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EU Diplomacy Papers

5 / 2008

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Abstract¹

Since its creation in 1999, the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) has evolved rapidly. This new policy area presented Sweden, a once neutral state, with a challenge to its security policy tradition. In responding to this new security context, Sweden was initially reluctant about the ESDP but has today become one of its staunchest supporters and active members.

By examining Sweden's participation in the ESDP since its inception, the paper seeks to answer what impact Sweden has had on the ESDP, but also to what extent the ESDP has influenced Swedish security policy. Furthermore, the paper seeks to shed light on why Sweden has become so active and supportive of the ESDP despite the initial reluctance.

Applying the multidimensional model of Europeanisation put forward by Reuben Wong and carried out primarily through conducting interviews with key officials, the paper argues that Sweden has embarked on a rather spectacular journey, from being a sceptical and hesitant participant to being one of its main driving forces. While the ESDP has had a major influence on Sweden's security policy and engendered several changes and adaptations at the domestic level, the paper, however, also argues that Sweden has had a major impact on shaping the current character of the ESDP. As for the reasons behind Swedish activism in the ESDP, it is argued that it was the opportunity to influence the development of the ESDP, including pushing it to reflect Swedish interests, that has been the main driving force. Hence, the paper points to an interwoven relation between European and domestic levels that confirms the bi-directional character of the process of Europeanisation.

¹ The author would like to thank C. D'Aniello for her assistance while writing his M.A. thesis, which this paper builds on. A special thank also goes to M. Strömviik who encouraged research into this topic in the first place and who gave precious advice along the process. Finally, thanks also go to all those officials who agreed to be interviewed.

1. Introduction: Europeanising Swedish Security Policy

'If you want to do something in the [area of] the ESDP [...], it needs to fit into a triangle of France, the UK and Sweden'².

To many, not just Swedes, the above remark may appear surprising. At first sight, it seems rather doubtful that a relatively small member state of the European Union (EU), and moreover one that is not a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), would be considered to be in the same league as two of the largest and most powerful member states of the EU. This may seem even more remarkable as Sweden, which joined the EU only in 1995, was in the late 1990s highly sceptical towards the creation of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), even indicating that it would be prepared to block it. Following the decision by the Cologne European Council in June 1999 to launch the ESDP, the Swedish government distinguished itself from other EU member states by declaring that the new policy was to mainly focus on 'minesweeping, police training and the interpretation of satellite images'³.

Despite this narrow appreciation of the coverage of the new policy, the record since paints a different picture. Sweden has contributed with personnel to all ESDP operations to date, including the military engagements. In 2003, it was the only other EU member state to join France in deploying combat forces to Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)⁴. In 2004, Sweden announced that it would not only take part in, but also lead one of the EU Battle Groups (EUBG). Sweden contributes the lion share (2,300 out of 2,800 troops⁵) to the Nordic Battle Group (NBG), on standby mode since 1 January 2008. From having viewed ESDP initially with great scepticism and reluctance, Sweden has today become one of its most active participants. There seems thus to be a clear indication of a policy shift since 1999 which raises questions as regards the relation between Sweden and the ESDP.

Since its creation in the late 1990s, the ESDP has evolved with the 'speed of light', as Javier Solana, the EU's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), has put it. This is striking, in particular viewed against the incremental steps taken since the failure of the European Defence Community in the 1950s. Furthermore, the development is even more remarkable given that security and defence policy is at the core of national sovereignty and thus an area that many would have considered the least likely to be subject to such rapid progress⁶. Since the first ESDP operation was launched in 2003, there have been some twenty missions and in February 2008, the EU launched its largest, and possibly most challenging, civilian mission hitherto in Kosovo.

This new policy area presented Sweden, a longstanding neutral state, with a challenge to its security policy tradition. It had to consider what role to play in

² Interview #2.

³ N. Sandberg, 'Jag lyssnade på...', *Dagens Nyheter*, 06.06.1999.

⁴ M. Strömvik, *To Act as a Union*, Lund, Department of Political Science, Lund University, 2005, p. 228.

⁵ The NBG also includes troops from Finland (200), Norway (150), Ireland (80) and Estonia (50).

⁶ J. Solana, 'Preface', in N. Gnesotto (ed.), *EU Security and Defence Policy*, Paris, EU-ISS, 2004, p. 5.

Europe's evolving security order and how to respond to the new security context. At the time of accession, some authors argued that the Swedish security policy tradition of non-alignment would make it impossible for Sweden to claim a place at the core of the EU and that Sweden lacked a strong commitment to the ESDP. Furthermore, several scholars have argued that Swedish foreign policy today is more the EU's than its own⁷. This interpretation is not without merit. Certainly, the ESDP is likely to have had an impact on Sweden's security and defence policy. However, it fails to explain why Sweden has played such an active role in the ESDP. Furthermore, it would be quite remarkable if activism had not translated into some form of influence. This perspective thus neglects the possible impact that Sweden has had on the ESDP and the role Sweden has played in the development of the ESDP. Hence, it seems necessary to search for alternative approaches to better understand Sweden and the development of the ESDP.

Dimensions of Europeanisation

The concept of 'Europeanisation' has recently started being applied to the study of national foreign policies within the context of Europe, including the impact of the CFSP⁸. According to Reuben Wong, Europeanisation under the CFSP can be understood as 'a process of foreign policy convergence' being a 'dependent variable contingent on the ideas and directives emanating from actors [...] in Brussels, as well as policy ideas and actions from member state capitals'⁹. With this definition, Europeanisation becomes a concept encompassing both the 'process of change manifested as policy convergence (both top-down and sideways) as well as national policies amplified as EU policy (bottom-up projection)'¹⁰. In the relationship between a member state's foreign policy and the CFSP, Europeanisation is thus understood as a process with at least two directions.

The first dimension is a top-down process of national adaptation and policy convergence ('downloading') that focuses on the increasing influence of the EU level on national structures and procedures and the adaptation of member states. Initially, Europeanisation was considered to be a concept to describe the convergence of national policy-making styles and content that EU membership leads to (sometimes also referred to as 'Brusselsisation')¹¹. The state is thus perceived largely as reactive, underlining the dilution of the 'national' in favour of the 'European', a transformation that usually translates as an 'incremental process of adjustment and adaptation re-orienting member states' politics and policies towards the EU'¹². This process of policy convergence is the one that so far has received most attention by scholars and that is predominantly used in the academic literature on Europeanisation. Indeed, most

⁷ Cf. e.g. T. Tiilikainen, 'The Nordic countries and the EU-NATO relationship', in A. Bailes, G. Herolf & B. Sundelius (eds.), *The Nordic Countries and the ESDP*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, and P. Rieker, *Europeanization of National Security Identity*, London, Routledge, 2006, p. 2f, 63.

⁸ R. Wong, 'Foreign Policy', in P. Graziano & M. Vink (eds.), *Europeanization*, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 322ff.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ R. Wong, 'The Europeanization of Foreign Policy', in C. Hill & M. Smith (eds.), *International Relations and the EU*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 145.

¹² *Ibid.*

works tend to view the ESDP as a new security context to which member states have had to adapt and react without much possibility to influence its development¹³.

The second dimension is a bottom-up process where states are the primary actors and agents of change rather than mere passive subjects. It emphasises the roles played by the member states themselves. Europeanisation is thus seen as a process where member states use the EU as an instrument to export domestic policies, models, preferences, ideas and details to the EU level¹⁴. This is perhaps the most interesting dimension given that it is expected that only 'states which command large resources, strong domestic pressure or dogged commitment' are able to change or forge a certain EU policy¹⁵. Following this concept, the larger EU member states use the European level to further their national interests and increase their international influence. However, as Wong writes, sometimes the EU also gives 'small states the necessary institutional resources [...] to project their own interests as European interests'¹⁶ though this has received much less scholarly attention to date. In sum, it seems that it is only by combining these two dimensions of Europeanisation that we can actually better apprehend the complex relationship between the ESDP and member states' foreign policies.

The Europeanisation of Swedish security policy triggers interest in three key questions: To what extent has the ESDP influenced Swedish security policy? What impact has Sweden had on the ESDP? Why has Sweden become so active and supportive of the ESDP? The first question relates to the possible impact of the ESDP on Swedish security policy in terms of procedures and substance, the dimension that Wong calls 'downloading'. The second question touches upon the implications for the ESDP of the Swedish commitment, which corresponds to the 'uploading' dimension of Wong. This is particularly relevant as there is reason to believe in our case that Sweden has exerted influence on parts of the institutional and political features of the ESDP. Together the two first questions aim to examine the extent of the redefinition of Swedish security policy in response to the CFSP, and in particular the ESDP, but also the projection of Swedish interests as European. The third question flows from the other two and focuses on the motives behind the Swedish participation in the ESDP, but also on possible explanations as to the policy shift that seems to have taken place. Addressing these three questions, Wong's dimensions of Europeanisation will serve as an analytical framework and research model for this paper. For each dimension, there are a number of indicators, set out in Table 1, which will guide the study.

¹³ N. Græger, H. Larsen & H. Ojanen, *The ESDP and the Nordic countries*, Helsinki, Ulkopoliittinen instituutti, 2002.

¹⁴ Wong, *op.cit.*, p. 137.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

Table 1: Dimensions of Europeanisation in national foreign policy

<i>Aspects of Europeanisation</i>	<i>National foreign policy indicators</i>
I. Adaptation and policy convergence ('downloading') <i>Harmonisation and transformation of a member state to the needs and requirements of EU membership</i>	a) Increasing salience of European political agenda b) Adherence to common objectives c) Common policy outputs taking priority over national <i>domaines réservés</i> d) Internalisation of EU norms and policy ('EU-isation')
II. National projection ('uploading') <i>National foreign policy of a member state affects and contributes to the development of a common European foreign policy</i>	a) State attempts to increase national influence in the world b) State attempts to influence foreign policies of other member states c) State uses the EU as a cover/umbrella d) Externalisation of national foreign policy positions onto the EU level

Source: Adapted version from R. Wong, 'Foreign Policy', *op.cit.*, p. 326.

As the subject of Sweden's involvement in the ESDP has so far generated little interest, with the exception of a few works¹⁷, the paper has been carried out primarily through conducting interviews with key officials in Stockholm (the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Justice) and Brussels (the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the EU) as well as in the EU institutions (the Council and the Commission)¹⁸.

The paper first explores the journey from initial scepticism to overt enthusiasm in the ESDP that Sweden has embarked upon. The influence that Sweden has had on its development but also the impact of the ESDP on Swedish security policy will then be discussed. Finally, the underpinning reasons and motives of Swedish participation in the ESDP will be briefly examined and some conclusions will be drawn.

2. A Journey from Scepticism to Enthusiasm

The Bumpy Road to Cologne (1995–1999)

For Sweden, the future security and defence dimension of the EU was highly problematic and in the early years, the Swedish government did not seem entirely convinced of either the desirability or the necessity of such a development¹⁹. Indeed, Sweden was reluctant and wanted to stop progress towards an EU security and defence policy²⁰.

Sweden's starting point, shared by several other member states, was that crisis management should be clearly distinguished from a common defence, understood as territorial defence or mutual defence guarantees²¹. Sweden explicitly excluded mutual defence guarantees and the Finnish-Swedish initiative in 1996²², proposing

¹⁷ E.g. Bailes, Herolf & Sundelius, *op.cit.*, Rieker, *op.cit.*, as well as several pieces written by Strömviik.

¹⁸ The author is in this context indebted to M. Strömviik who helped identifying an initial list of potential interviewees. As regards possible interview bias, several interviewees were of Swedish nationality although associated with different institutions, bodies and agencies often in competition with each other.

¹⁹ P. Jonson, *The Development of the ESDP*, Stockholm, FOI, 2006, p. 197ff.

²⁰ Interview #13.

²¹ H. Ojanen, 'Sweden and Finland', in Græger et al., *op.cit.*, p. 164.

²² L. Hjelm-Wallén, Lena & T. Halonen, 'Svensk-finsk WEU-aktion', *Dagens Nyheter*, 21.04.1996.

that the EU could undertake the 'Petersberg tasks', was an attempt to block progress towards a collective defence²³. It should be viewed against a context where proposals of a merger of the Western European Union (WEU) and the EU were being discussed and, as new EU members, Sweden and Finland were not in a position to block these but instead had to consider how to limit their development²⁴. The result of the Finnish-Swedish proposal was that the 'Petersberg tasks' were transferred to the EU, but the WEU's territorial defence mission stayed outside the treaties²⁵. From the Swedish side, the inclusion of the 'Petersberg tasks' in the Amsterdam Treaty was perceived as a major diplomatic success and a form of demilitarisation of the EU's security dimension²⁶.

The Swedish reaction to the Anglo-French St. Malo declaration in 1998 was thus lukewarm as it raised concerns as to whether Swedish military non-alignment might be endangered²⁷. In November 1998, Sweden tried to stop – without actually vetoing it – the informal meeting of EU defence ministers in Vienna during the Austrian EU Presidency – a move which did not draw much sympathy from other EU member states²⁸. At the Cologne European Council in June 1999, the issue of a WEU-EU merger was again on the table. Even though the Cologne European Council saw the birth of the ESDP, the idea of a collective defence guarantee again failed as the decision was taken to include 'those functions of the WEU which will be necessary for the EU to fulfil its new responsibilities in the area of the Petersberg tasks'²⁹. The then Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson tried to marginalise the Presidency conclusions and told the Riksdag that the ESDP aimed at 'mine clearance in Bosnia and the training of border guards in Macedonia and police officers in Albania'³⁰. The Swedish government was thus still largely hesitant and reluctant. Foreign Minister Anna Lindh declared that a 'clear dividing line between crisis management and territorial defence should be upheld'³¹. At the Helsinki European Council in December 1999, during the discussions about crisis management troops, Sweden and other like-minded member states managed to insert in the Presidency conclusions that the ESDP process 'does not imply the creation of a European army'³².

However, the Swedish government's reluctant approval of the ESDP and its cautious remarks made in public should also be seen in the prism of the domestic political scene. The government's parliamentary basis depended on two eurosceptic parties and there were internal divisions in the ruling Social Democratic Party itself on the development of the ESDP. The timing is also important as elections to the European Parliament were coming up in June 1999, thus coinciding with the Cologne European Council, which politicised the issue further. Indeed, a week before the elections, the former Swedish Defence Minister Thage G. Peterson attacked his col-

²³ Interview #3.

²⁴ Græger et al., *op.cit.*, p. 16.

²⁵ Ojanen, *op.cit.*, p. 165.

²⁶ Rieker, *op.cit.*, p. 72.

²⁷ Jonson, *op.cit.*, p. 204.

²⁸ Jonson, *op.cit.*, p. 65f.

²⁹ Cologne European Council, 'Presidency Conclusions', 03-04.06.1999, p. 35.

³⁰ D. Ljungberg, 'Från riksdagsdebatt om EU:s militära roll', *Dagens Nyheter*, 03.06.1999.

³¹ A. Lindh, 'Foreign Policy Declaration 1999', 10.02.1999.

³² Helsinki European Council, 'Presidency Conclusions', 10-11.12.1999, para 27.

leagues publicly for accepting an increasing militarisation of the EU³³. Furthermore, the media published articles warning of a 'common EU defence' and an 'EU army', which pushed the government into a defensive stance³⁴.

Promoting the Civilian Dimension (1999–2001)

Even though the Swedish government had succeeded in avoiding the development of a common defence in 1999, it was not reassured by the course of events the following year as the introduction of crisis management into the EU started with a heavy emphasis on its military dimension. The set-up of new crisis management institutions such as the EU Military Committee (EUMC) and the EU Military Staff (EUMS) tilted the balance clearly towards the military side³⁵. In order to counter this development, Sweden became very eager to emphasise the non-military aspects. It was also perceived as easier to sell the ESDP politically if it was not too military and thus not seen as calling into question the policy of military non-alignment³⁶.

However, there was also a genuine belief that the civilian instruments were lacking if the ESDP was to be a serious tool for crisis management³⁷. Sweden argued that a comprehensive security approach was needed and that by promoting the civilian aspects, the EU was a suitable actor since its strength lies in its ability to deploy both civilian and military instruments³⁸. There were also questions as to whether the military aspects of the ESDP, which were being strongly pushed for in some quarters, were actually what was required – whether there was indeed a demand for purely military crisis management.

Although Sweden had already pushed for the recognition of the civilian aspects of crisis management in Cologne, it now embarked on a campaign lobbying for conflict prevention, civilian crisis management (CCM) and the possibility of strengthening the United Nations' (UN) role in peacekeeping. However, this was not a perception shared by other member states at the time who questioned Sweden's intentions³⁹. Indeed, Sweden's vocal promotion of the civilian aspects met with rather stiff resistance and even animosity. Swedish officials even felt ridiculed by their colleagues, in particular those from member states that wanted to focus and devote their energy on developing the military dimension of the ESDP. As Sweden championed a civilian dimension of the ESDP, it was thus clear it was against headwind⁴⁰.

However, the Swedish attempts were eventually successful as its persistence led to the creation of a Civilian Crisis Management Committee in May 2000⁴¹. The Swedish EU Presidency in the first half of 2001 undoubtedly offered Sweden a unique opportunity to give a strong impetus to the CCM aspects. Sweden was particularly ac-

³³ D. Ljungberg, 'Thage G. Peterson får mothugg', *Dagens Nyheter*, 08.06.1999.

³⁴ Interview #1.

³⁵ Ojanen, *op.cit.*, p. 170.

³⁶ Interview #8.

³⁷ Interview #3.

³⁸ Interview #8.

³⁹ Interview #1.

⁴⁰ Jonson, *op.cit.*, p. 205.

⁴¹ Council Decision, 2000/354/CFSP, 22.05.2000.

tive on these issues and there was a clear focus on the civilian dimension⁴². For example, the Presidency drafted an action programme for conflict prevention that was adopted by the Göteborg European Council in June 2001⁴³. Sweden was also one of the member states initiating the Civilian Headline Goal 2008 (CHG 2008) in order to match development on the military side. The so-called Civilian Response Teams (CRT), an idea borrowed from the EUBG concept and aimed at establishing a civilian rapid reaction capacity, was launched together with Germany⁴⁴.

3. Towards Unequivocal Enthusiasm

Embracing the ESDP (2001–2003)

Sweden's initial hesitation towards the ESDP had therefore somewhat faded as the civilian dimension became more recognised and, with it, less need to defend its existence⁴⁵. Holding the EU Presidency had led to a change in attitude not only in political circles but the Swedish public had grown more positive towards the EU in general⁴⁶. However, there was still a certain anxiety with regard to the military dimension of the ESDP which would finally be overcome in 2003⁴⁷.

The shift in attitude first arose in response to the situation in Macedonia (FYROM) and Operation Concordia, considered a watershed. The Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh had played an active role during the Swedish EU Presidency in negotiating the Ohrid peace agreement in FYROM⁴⁸. This was very important since Lindh and Sweden had been in the driver's seat and thus been able to observe the process from the start⁴⁹. When the decision was taken in January 2003 to launch Concordia⁵⁰, the first military ESDP operation, it was a 'Berlin plus' arrangement and largely conform to expectations. However, there were several sensitive points for the Swedish government such as the conformity with its policy of military non-alignment but also the EU's independence of decision-making⁵¹.

If Concordia started to reduce fear of the ESDP's military dimension, Operation Artemis would definitely help eliminate it and this operation had major importance for Sweden's relation to the ESDP. The decision to launch the operation in the DRC in June 2003⁵² took place only a few months after the EU disagreement over the Iraq war and there was thus a wish among EU member states to show some clout⁵³. Artemis was unique in several ways: it was the first time the EU deployed troops out-of-area, the first time based on a UN Chapter VII mandate and the first time without re-

⁴² Göteborg European Council, 'Presidency Conclusions', 15–16.06.2001, para. 47–54.

⁴³ Council of the European Union, 'EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts', 15–16.06.2001.

⁴⁴ M. Strömviik, 'Starting to think big', in Bailes et al., *op.cit.*, p. 210.

⁴⁵ Interview #11.

⁴⁶ Interview #3.

⁴⁷ Interview #9.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Interview #8.

⁵⁰ Council Joint Action, 2003/92/CFSP, 27.01.2003.

⁵¹ Interview #9.

⁵² Council Joint Action, 2003/423/CFSP, 05.06.2003.

⁵³ Interview #10.

course to NATO assets⁵⁴. While France was willing to launch the operation on its own, it was wary of it being perceived as neo-colonialism⁵⁵. It was on a Swedish initiative that the EU started looking at options for an operation and talks between Sweden and France eventually led to the two being the only member states contributing combat troops to Artemis⁵⁶.

For Sweden, Artemis was, as one official put it, a 'form of triple touchdown: it was the UN asking the EU for help, it was an autonomous operation and it was Africa'⁵⁷. These three factors suited Swedish motives as well as Lindh's profile perfectly and she thus pushed for Swedish participation strongly, even, according to some sources, against the Prime Minister's wishes. For Lindh, it was central that it was on a direct request by the UN given the traditional emphasis placed on the UN in Swedish foreign and security policy⁵⁸. Furthermore, Sweden had been cautious about the 'Berlin plus' arrangements and reluctant to let NATO, of which it was not a member, interfere or make decisions for the EU. Finally, it was Africa, traditionally a Swedish priority, and Lindh had not only visited the DRC a few weeks earlier but also been on the phone with the UN Secretary-General, who had warned against a repetition of Rwanda⁵⁹. It should also not be forgotten that there was a parallel discussion in the Convention on the Future of Europe on common defence guarantees⁶⁰. These factors contributed to Lindh seeking to influence the process and pushing the ESDP in a direction that she favoured⁶¹.

Hence, there is general agreement that Artemis had far-reaching implications and that its effects should not be underestimated. Firstly, as it was widely perceived as a major success – the EU was said to have stopped a potential genocide – it restored the EU's self-confidence after the debacle over the Iraq war. However, it also had a contagious effect and lent Sweden greater influence not only within the ESDP but also in other CFSP-related areas⁶². Secondly, Artemis showed that being a military non-aligned state does not mean fear of military engagement. In particular, due to its strong push for the civilian aspects, Sweden had been perceived as a country with an aversion to the military aspects⁶³. Whether merited or not, this perception largely changed in 2003⁶⁴. Thirdly, Artemis also had effects on the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF), whose focus previously had been mainly on NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP). The SAF started seeing the value of the ESDP as it entailed being fully involved in the whole process including the decision-making⁶⁵. Artemis would also influence the Swedish position on the EUBG⁶⁶. Fourthly, Artemis moved France and

⁵⁴ M. Strömviik, *op.cit.*, p. 229.

⁵⁵ Interview #9.

⁵⁶ M. Strömviik, 'Suède: Une ouverture croissante à l'action internationale', in Patrice Buffotot (ed.), *La Défense en Europe. Avancées et limites*, Paris, La Documentation Française, 2005, p. 177.

⁵⁷ Interview #13.

⁵⁸ Interview #7.

⁵⁹ Interview #9.

⁶⁰ Interview #10.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Interview #9.

⁶³ Strömviik, *op.cit.*, p. 211.

⁶⁴ Interview #3.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Interview #10.

Sweden closer to each other in the ESDP, whereas previously Sweden had more often ended up on the Anglo-Saxon side⁶⁷.

However, the main consequence of Artemis was that it led to a decisive change in attitude towards the ESDP and the military dimension. As one official said, 'Artemis led to a change, and from that moment Anna started to love the ESDP and Sweden became one of the most ESDP-friendly countries'⁶⁸. The ESDP became uncontroversial and the cautious and hesitant approach eventually gave way to enthusiasm.

Shifting into Higher Gear (2003–)

The clearest symbol, however, of how Sweden's view on the ESDP and in particular its military dimension had changed came with the Swedish support of the EUBG concept proposed by France and the UK. Following Concordia and in particular Artemis, the ESDP project was seen in a more positive light⁶⁹. Operation Artemis had also demonstrated to the Swedish government the importance of a European rapid reaction capacity. In April 2004, Sweden declared, together with Finland, its intention to create an EUBG and assume responsibility as a Framework Nation⁷⁰ and in November 2004 the NBG was presented⁷¹.

On the Swedish side, this decision was motivated by both foreign policy and defence policy motives⁷². The Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA), wishing that Sweden would be as active as possible in the ESDP, and considering it as an opportunity to support the UN favoured Swedish participation. However, this does not explain the Swedish decision to take the lead of a battle group and the MFA⁷³. As one official said, 'the decision [to lead a battle group] would never have come about if the Defence Ministry would not have wanted it'⁷⁴. Firstly, it was an opportunity for the SAF to plan and lead a military unit of battalion size, unlikely to happen in the PFP⁷⁵. It was therefore perceived that leading a EUBG would strongly contribute to developing the Swedish military capacity for taking part in international crisis management operations⁷⁶. Following Artemis, the SAF had become much more interested in the EU and indeed France had praised the Swedish contribution⁷⁷.

However, the main reason was that it coincided with the government's efforts to transform the SAF from a territorial defence force to an intervention force⁷⁸. The transformation of the SAF had been a difficult process and despite an objective to increase the number of troops deployable for international duty, it had never been accomplished⁷⁹. No defence minister had managed to overcome the resistance within the SAF, and the reformist camp thus saw a unique window of opportunity in

⁶⁷ Interview #8.

⁶⁸ Interview #10.

⁶⁹ Interview #8.

⁷⁰ I. Hedström, 'Sverige vill delta i stridsgrupp', *Dagens Nyheter*, 06.04.2004.

⁷¹ S. Bøe, 'Norge med i nordisk EU-styrka', *Dagens Nyheter*, 23.11.2004.

⁷² Interview #3.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Interview #10.

⁷⁵ Interview #3.

⁷⁶ Interview #4.

⁷⁷ T. Nandorf, 'Fransk järnvilja vill rusta EU', *Dagens Nyheter*, 2.09.2004.

⁷⁸ Interviews #3, 4.

⁷⁹ Interview #10.

the EUBG to give a decisive push for defence reforms⁸⁰. The Commander-in-Chief of the SAF, General Håkan Syrén, took on board the EUBG concept as well as the European Security Strategy (ESS)⁸¹. Even though the ESS is not a legally binding document, it was used as a 'smokescreen', an imaginary constraint, by the Ministry of Defence to make politically difficult domestic reforms under the cover of EU prerogative⁸².

4. Activism and Europeanisation

The Changing Character of Activism

From this overview, it seems clear that there has been a development over time and that Sweden has made quite a significant journey in the ESDP. As one official said, 'we have moved quite remarkably [in the ESDP], from the initial ideas when we were concerned that it was only focusing on military aspects to pushing for the civilian dimension and more recently also the military one'⁸³. Perhaps this journey is best personified in the former Foreign Minister Anna Lindh who went from initial suspicion of where the project would lead to realising the great potential of the instrument⁸⁴.

There had been concerns in the EU that the non-aligned member states Finland, Austria and Sweden would become problematic and 'sources of nuisance power' as Hanna Ojanen calls it, because their military non-alignment could hamper further development of an EU security and defence policy⁸⁵. It was said that in the early years of the ESDP, Sweden would receive the 'Maginot medal' for its defensive behaviour since it always threw its weight behind wording that would halt any possible expansion of the ESDP⁸⁶. Not a very glorious epithet to hold, concerns that Sweden would be isolated seem to have pushed its government to take a more pro-active stand on the ESDP. The civilian dimension became a means to shape and influence the ESDP in a way conducive to traditional Swedish foreign and security policy thinking. However, it also contributed to a greater openness, as one official noted: 'we did not want to be perceived as anti-military or fearing the military aspects'⁸⁷. This pushed Sweden to show in the eyes of the other member states that it was credible when it advocated its broader concept of security, encompassing both civilian and military instruments⁸⁸. A second reason was that there was a lack of understanding of the ESDP from both administrative and political circles leading to an instinctive reaction from Stockholm to hold back⁸⁹. As one official stated, 'we thought that it was

⁸⁰ Interviews #4, 10, 12.

⁸¹ Interviews #8, 9, 10, 13.

⁸² Interviews #9, 10, 13.

⁸³ Interview #3.

⁸⁴ Interview #8.

⁸⁵ Ojanen, *op.cit.*, p. 155.

⁸⁶ Jonson, *op.cit.*, p. 199.

⁸⁷ Interview #3.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Interview #4.

only about common defence and that the ESDP would equate to a common defence'⁹⁰.

The domestic context should not be underestimated either. As a major shift in Sweden's security policy was taking place, it took some time to gain widespread approval and support⁹¹. As time passed, the government adapted to it as well as the *Riksdag* and the two eurosceptic parties supporting the government. The more people understood and saw that the ESDP worked, the more acceptable it became, the military dimension included⁹². There is also wide consensus that the experience of holding the EU Presidency had an impact as it forced Sweden to take responsibility for the EU and laid the ground for a more positive attitude amongst the public towards the EU, including the ESDP⁹³.

The ESDP's Impact on Swedish Security Policy

As Reuben Wong writes, there is merit in making a distinction when speaking of change in foreign policy as to whether it regards procedures and structures or the actual substance of a policy area⁹⁴. On a structural level, it is clear that the EU membership and the development of the CFSP and the ESDP have had a clear impact on all aspects of Swedish foreign and security policy. As one official stated:

*Holding the EU Presidency forced the whole government administration, from the lower levels to the highest level, to think in EU terms and to manage the *acquis communautaire*⁹⁵.*

There was a learning process and the early years of membership were mainly devoted to 'keeping Sweden's head above the steadily rising EU water level'⁹⁶. The scope and the scale of the changes required by membership somewhat struck Swedish government officials by surprise and it became quickly clear that the EU was not merely another international organisation⁹⁷. It introduced a completely different way of working, very intense and above all time-consuming⁹⁸.

As regards policy on a macro level, the effects of the ESDP seem to be less marked as it is rather EU membership as such that has provoked changes in the Swedish security policy tradition. The policy of military non-alignment seems to have had little impact on the conduct of Swedish security policy with regard to the ESDP. As Swedish diplomats noted the term 'military non-alignment' is never used when discussing the ESDP, only in matters relating to the PfP. The only time military non-alignment seems to have been brought up following the creation of the ESDP was in connection with the discussions in the Convention on the Future of Europe on mutual

⁹⁰ Interview #3.

⁹¹ Interview #3.

⁹² Interview #9.

⁹³ Interviews #8, 9, 10.

⁹⁴ Wong, *op.cit.*, p. 324.

⁹⁵ Interview #9.

⁹⁶ M. Ekengren & B. Sundelius, 'Sweden', in B. Hocking & D. Spence (eds.), *Foreign Ministries in the EU*, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2nd ed., 2005, p. 240.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

⁹⁸ Interview #10.

defence guarantees⁹⁹. However, on a micro level the change is more substantial, in particular as regards operations as one official notes:

In the EU, we participate fully [...] and we sit as a member around the table, we take part in the process of developing concepts and we take decisions. We are involved not just in the later stages. This has had an enormous impact¹⁰⁰.

The fact that in the ESDP, the member states are involved from beginning to end, from idea to implementation, seems to be key. This aspect is particularly important as Sweden's activism in the early years also was driven by a fear that it would not be considered on an equal footing with the NATO members in the ESDP¹⁰¹. The impact of EU membership in this regard cannot be underestimated¹⁰².

Perhaps the clearest example of the ESDP's impact on Swedish security policy is in the area of defence reform. It is clear that the transformation of the SAF is largely taking place as a result of the development of the ESDP. According to a Swedish officer, the change is the 'biggest in the history of the SAF for the last 500 years'¹⁰³. The commitments made to ESDP operations have been used as a tool by the Swedish government for introducing controversial national defence reforms¹⁰⁴. The transformation of the SAF was, if not brought about, then at least accelerated by the development of the ESDP and in particular the NBG¹⁰⁵. The ESDP process has thus served as an important vehicle for reforms, or as one official described it, as a 'transformator'¹⁰⁶.

From this overview, it is possible to say that at least three of Reuben Wong's indicators for adaptation and policy convergence, set out in Table 1 above, can be found (although less so the one on common policy outputs taking priority over national *domaines réservés*). Firstly, there has been a growing salience to the European political agenda as Sweden has embraced the ESDP. Secondly, there has been an adherence to common objectives as Sweden first reluctantly recognised in the late 1990s. Thirdly, there has been an internalisation of EU norms and policy in terms of both procedure and content. This may hint at a relatively strong degree of the first aspect of Europeanisation and Hanna Ojanen has even argued that Swedish foreign policy today is more the EU's than its own¹⁰⁷. However, this may be an exaggeration. Europeanisation is not such a unidirectional and clear-cut process as Sweden has also been active in shaping the ESDP.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Interview #4.

¹⁰¹ Interview #9.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ E. Stenberg, 'EU:s insatsstyrka bäddar för svensk yrkesarmé', *Dagens Nyheter*, 17.04.2005.

¹⁰⁴ Interview #10.

¹⁰⁵ Interview #8.

¹⁰⁶ Interview #4.

¹⁰⁷ Ojanen, *op.cit.*, p. 155.

Sweden's Impact on the ESDP

From the overview above, it is also clear that Sweden has had a rather substantial influence on the development of the ESDP. This points to an interwoven process as it is a question not only of the ESDP influencing Sweden, but also of Sweden influencing the ESDP. It has participated actively in shaping the process and influencing other member states. Sweden rather quickly saw that the ESDP was a dynamic framework that was relatively flexible and possible to influence, much simpler than, for example, the UN¹⁰⁸.

As has been noted above, Sweden is one of few EU member states that has contributed with personnel to all the military and civilian ESDP operations launched to date. Though figures need to be verified, some internal calculations by the MFA suggest that Sweden has contributed 10 per cent of all civilian personnel in ESDP operations making it the fourth biggest troop contributor¹⁰⁹.

In terms of conceptual contributions, it is clear that Sweden has played a leading role in the development of the civilian dimension. As one official put it, the 'fact that there is a civilian dimension of the ESDP today is almost a Swedish accomplishment'¹¹⁰. While Sweden considered it crucial for the success of the ESDP that there would be both a military and a civilian dimension, there was, as we have seen above, a strong degree of incomprehension from the other member states fearing that it would dilute the military dimension¹¹¹. However, it is a very different situation today as the comprehensive security approach and the broad range of civilian and military instruments of the EU is touted in most keynote speeches. Furthermore, of the twenty ESDP operations launched so far only five have been military. Although most civilian operations have been rather small, it nevertheless shows that Sweden and other like-minded member states had been correct¹¹². Swedish diplomats thus take a certain pride, perhaps not wrongly so, in having succeeded in ensuring both a civilian and military approach in the ESDP¹¹³.

It has been highlighted above how the ESDP and the process associated with the NBG have contributed to a more rapid transformation of the SAF. However, the NBG has also worked the other way round as it has made Sweden more proactive on the military side¹¹⁴. In implementing the EUBG concept meant that Sweden could play a very active role and contribute to the discussions at the EU level¹¹⁵.

Sweden has thus exerted quite a substantial influence on the ESDP given its size. As one official said, 'Sweden is recognised, it is a great power within the CFSP'¹¹⁶. A recent study by Daniel Naurin seems to confirm this as Sweden is ranked the fourth most sought-after member state (after Germany, the UK and France) in the CFSP and

¹⁰⁸ Interview #1.

¹⁰⁹ Interview #12.

¹¹⁰ Interview #10.

¹¹¹ Interview #9.

¹¹² Interviews #8, 9.

¹¹³ Interview #2.

¹¹⁴ Interview #10.

¹¹⁵ Interview #8.

¹¹⁶ Interview #12.

that its scores are higher in foreign policy than in economic and agricultural policy¹¹⁷. This seems to defy previous research on Europeanisation where only the larger member states are said to be powerful enough to fashion the structures and influence the EU policies according to their interests, in particular in areas of 'high politics'¹¹⁸. This is particularly interesting in light of what was mentioned above regarding the challenges that member states face with regard to the CFSP policy-making process. Indeed, for several smaller member states, the capacity to launch initiatives is hampered in the CFSP by the limited resources of their ministries. However, the case of Sweden proves that if you are a player ready to contribute with ideas to the policy process and with personnel to operations, you can wield an influence much beyond your size.

In terms of the second aspect of Europeanisation, national projection, we can therefore find a rather strong presence of more or less all four indicators. Firstly, Sweden has attempted to increase its national influence in the world through the ESDP such as in the case of Artemis. Secondly, it has attempted to influence the policies of other member states by being one of the most active member states in the ESDP, pushing the development of its crisis management capacity. Thirdly, it has used the EU as a cover as we have seen with regard to defence reforms. Fourthly, it has externalised its national foreign policy positions onto the EU level by pressing for issues that fitted well with traditional Swedish security policy such as conflict prevention, civilian-military cooperation and EU-UN relations. It therefore seems clear that Sweden has made its mark on the ESDP, emphasising a bi-directional process of Europeanisation.

5. Explaining Swedish Activism in the ESDP

The EU as a Foreign Policy Platform

From the attempts in the late 1990s when the focus was to stop all progress towards a common defence, Sweden today embraces the ESDP. The conclusion that such an attitude change to the ESDP, and in particular its military dimension, has taken place raises the question why this took place. Some indications have already been given, but there are also some broader underpinning reasons. A general reason explaining Swedish activism in the ESDP was a generally positive attitude towards the CFSP and belief in the EU as an actor on the international stage, including in terms of security policy¹¹⁹. The experience of the EU presidency in this regard was very important in recognising the EU as a global actor¹²⁰. In the political discourse, this is also possible to observe from the declarations and speeches, with Foreign Minister Carl Bildt emphasising the special position of the EU in Swedish foreign and security policy¹²¹.

¹¹⁷ D. Naurin, *Network Capital and Cooperation Pattern in the Council of the EU*, EUI Working Paper RSCAS 2007/14, Florence, EUI, 2007, p. 10.

¹¹⁸ Wong, *op.cit.*, p. 137.

¹¹⁹ Interview #1.

¹²⁰ Interview #9.

¹²¹ C. Bildt, 'Foreign Policy Declaration 2007', 14.02.2007.

However, one should note that Sweden also has a long tradition of pursuing an active and independent foreign policy with a strong self-confidence and vision, believing that a smaller state can make a difference. Furthermore, Sweden has a long tradition of participation in international peacekeeping operations, both in the framework of the UN and NATO¹²². This tradition has facilitated Swedish participation in ESDP operations, as there were no taboos with regard to sending military troops abroad. The experiences of taking part in first UN-led, then NATO-led operations in the Balkans, also contributed to an awareness that the UN was not well-equipped to handle the new types of complex threats such as those in the Balkans¹²³. This led Sweden to become genuinely interested in strengthening the EU's crisis management capabilities. Furthermore, whereas peacekeeping enjoyed considerable public support, the EU itself was less warmly appreciated. As such, participation in the ESDP was also a way of influencing domestic opinion and showcasing the EU as a project for peace. With its tradition of an active foreign policy, but recognising that as an EU member it was no longer possible to act in the way it once had, Sweden thus needed to find a new approach.

Even though perhaps reluctantly in the first years, Sweden thus came to recognise that the EU offered the best way to channel Swedish foreign policy¹²⁴. As a smaller country with international dependence, it was probably easier to accept international co-operation¹²⁵. For Sweden, the CFSP and the ESDP thus presented an opportunity as a new platform for continuing to pursue an active foreign and security policy¹²⁶. However, it also pushed Sweden to become more active as it realised the possibility to influence the EU's broader agenda for international peace and security.

Realising the Potential of the ESDP

It may at first sight seem a paradox that Sweden has taken such an active part and promoted an area which strikes at the core of national sovereignty. On the other hand, the Swedish government has been careful in stressing the intergovernmental basis of the ESDP, rejecting the use of qualified majority voting. As one official said, the intergovernmental structure of the ESDP has been an 'indispensable condition' and Sweden has been able to be active in the ESDP because it has been intergovernmental¹²⁷. The fact that the ESDP has been in the hands of the member states have given them a sense of retaining control of its development, particularly important in the case of a Sweden keen not to see any progress towards a common defence. Furthermore, it has created a strong sense of ownership¹²⁸.

Another important explanation for the Swedish appreciation of the ESDP has been that it proved to be an efficient instrument in terms of both resources and results¹²⁹. As one official noted, it is a 'cheap form of foreign policy'¹³⁰. The CFSP

¹²² Interview #10.

¹²³ Jonson, *op.cit.*, p. 203.

¹²⁴ Interview #3.

¹²⁵ Interview #8.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Interview #3.

¹²⁸ Interview #9.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

budget covers all civilian ESDP costs, except for salaries for the personnel, which Sweden is funding out of the development aid budget¹³¹. For a small member state, there is thus a clear added value as it would cost more to act alone. Furthermore, Sweden saw that the ESDP functioned well and that its operations delivered results¹³². Finally, the development of the ESDP was in line with Swedish views of a wider concept of security¹³³. The combination of different instruments suited Sweden well and as the civilian dimension grew to become the dominant one, thus rewarding a hard-fought struggle, it gave further encouragement¹³⁴. This made the ESDP a very attractive option for Sweden.

6. Conclusion: Bi-Directional Europeanisation

The aim of this paper has been to examine the role Sweden has played in the ESDP and why it has become so active in this policy area, including how and to what extent the ESDP has influenced Sweden and vice versa.

There has been an adaptation of Swedish security policy due not only to EU membership itself, but also the pressures arising from the development of the ESDP. Sweden has had to reform and to reshape its security policy as a result of EU membership. However, Sweden has also played an active role in the ESDP and tried to bring its own foreign policy orientations to bear on its development. At the outset, Sweden was firmly against the development of the EU into a military actor. However, as Sweden concluded in the late 1990s that it was not possible to stop the establishment of the ESDP, the second best option was to ensure that it reflected Swedish priorities such as CCM and conflict prevention¹³⁵. This meant to be active in the policy process and contribute. Taking part in missions, including military ones, follows the same logic of showing commitment and thus influencing the direction. There is also a more psychological phenomenon linked to this. As the former chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs put it, if the EU needs troops, the 'question is posed to all around the table: the country that does not raise its hand will count as a lightweight – even in other political issues'¹³⁶. This example highlights the bi-directional nature of Europeanisation; in one way, it shows the peer pressure that is put on member states in the EU context, and in another, it shows how to gain influence in the ESDP by playing a pro-active role and obtaining an influence going beyond its size.

The Swedish activism in the field of the ESDP also highlights the question of partners and relations with other actors in the ESDP. In this regard, Sweden seems to have been careful of maintaining good relations to both France and the UK, the two main players in the ESDP and the ones with perhaps the most opposite views on the *finalité*

¹³⁰ Interview #3.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Interview #10.

¹³³ Interview #9.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Interview #10.

¹³⁶ Strömviik, *op.cit.*, p. 212.

of the ESDP¹³⁷. In the debate between what scholars refer to as 'Europeanists' and 'Atlanticists', Sweden seems to have exploited the gap existing in the ESDP between France and the UK by supporting both a stronger EU crisis management capacity and a stronger transatlantic link¹³⁸. Sweden has thus gained a certain room for manoeuvre by not belonging to any of the extreme sides of the spectrum and by playing the pivotal role as a 'third state'¹³⁹.

The results clearly show that in the case of Sweden and the ESDP, Europeanisation has been a bi-directional process. A study on the consequences of EU membership prepared by two retired Swedish diplomats in 1994, stresses the potentially sweeping changes for Sweden's security policy, but at the same time underlines that the EU would also help promote Swedish security interests:

No one should be mistaken that EU membership will bring about far-reaching obligations of a character that Sweden hitherto has not needed to consider or undertake. But no one should either believe that Sweden hereby abandons the control over its foreign policy. What is at stake is to assemble the European states to collective action through the promotion of common values and interests¹⁴⁰.

Fourteen years later, this assessment seems to hold even though neither the ESDP nor the concept of Europeanisation existed at the time.

¹³⁷ Interview #8.

¹³⁸ Interview #10.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ L. Leifland, S. Åström & A. Hagelberg, 'Historiskt vägval', SOU 1994:8, quoted in N. Andrén, *Maktbalans och alliansfrihet*, Stockholm, Norstedts, 1996, p. 170.

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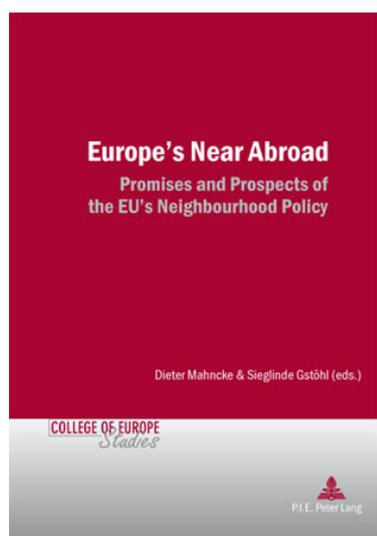
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