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## European Security

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713635117>

### The EU's logic of security: politics through institutionalised discourses

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Online publication date: 22 December 2010

**To cite this Article** Barnutz, Sebastian(2010) 'The EU's logic of security: politics through institutionalised discourses', European Security, 19: 3, 377 – 394

**To link to this Article:** DOI: 10.1080/09662839.2010.528397

**URL:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2010.528397>

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## The EU's logic of security: politics through institutionalised discourses

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*(Received 14 June 2010; final version received 22 September 2010)*

This article develops a methodological approach to analyse the logic of security in the European Union (EU) as an inter-subjective construction. Security is established when discursive practices take place at the interplay of three different fields: (1) EU identity constructions; (2) the perception of challenges as security relevant; and (3) constructions of security practices and hence discourses on governance and governmentality. When discursive practices make cross-references between these fields they construct the logic of security. The empirical section applies this method in order to analyse the EU's logic of security at the turn of the twenty-first century. Understanding the dynamic effects at play between situations of under-development and conflict led not only to the construction of the need to implement civilian as well as military capabilities at the EU level, but this dynamic is also central to understanding the EU's way of approaching international terrorism.

**Keywords:** logic of security; discourse analysis; conflict prevention/management; security governance; European security; development; poverty

European security is a much contested concept. It is not clear to what kind of entities it applies: nation states, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or the European Union (EU)? Although European states carry out their own foreign policy and NATO is still the serving alliance in Europe, it is the EU's role which puts a new quality to this question. The EU has implemented remarkable structures, bodies, capabilities and processes to act as a global actor in the field of security. At the same time, what remains contested is the kind of security logic implemented at the EU level, and which policy fields are incorporated into European security.

The question therefore is what kind of security logic serves as the rationale for the EU's security governance? This article develops a methodological approach and applies the approach on institutionalised EU discourses of the time period of late 1999 and 2001. Thereby, this article does what the special issue is about: putting the security dimension back into the EU security governance perspective. The methodological approach understands the discursive process of constructing the logic of security as relational in the sense that discourses are related, constructing identity, the perception of security challenges and the definition of how to govern these challenges.

The article follows this approach empirically by asking questions about the security logic as implemented at the EU level at the turn of the twenty-first century as the starting point of its institutionalised security policy. More specifically, it focuses

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on the period of December 1999 until August 2001 as the moment in which EU actors discussed the implementation of structures of an EU security policy as agreed by the European Council in Helsinki in 1999, even though the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) of Nice in 2001 was perceived as a failure, unable to keep up with the challenges ahead. The analysis does not cover 11 September 2001 because the events of that day marked the beginning of a 'crisis' period which in the long run had a great impact on how security was spoken about. Instead, the article focuses specifically on the 'early' meaning of security which was during that period and which served as a reference point for the process of making sense of the events of 9/11.

The empirical section argues that EU actors perceived situations of poverty and under-development as security relevant because they potentially led to conflict and thereby jeopardised achievements of its development policy. Accordingly, a security policy was required equipping the EU with tools to prevent conflict from negatively affecting the achievements of development policy and economic aid. This constitutes change in the EU's self-perception compared to the period prior to the inauguration of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) when the EU did not perceive it its responsibility to act externally in the field of security. Also, the dynamic effects between development and conflict served as the blueprint of how to make sense of international terrorism following 9/11 – as dynamic challenges. This will be explored in more detail in the empirical section of this article.

The article concludes by arguing that the methodological approach developed and applied is a fruitful approach for analysing the logic of security in further case studies in relation to the regional context and the issue areas of security challenges.

### Discursive approach

The methodological approach to analysing the logic of security established at the EU level is based on the introductory article by Christou *et al.* The starting point is that humans are understood as language users who 'enter a system that already contains the objects one can speak about and the relationships one can invoke' (Shapiro 1981, p. 130). Here, 'system' does not mean language as such. The 'system' contains a huge variety of meanings which can be practised through language. Or to put it differently, the system of meanings constitutes a particular discursive practice. The analysis of this practice provides insight into political structures. The discursive practice constitutes subjects 'who have the legitimacy to speak and act in such a way that they control [...] objects' (Shapiro 1981, p. 141). Discourses constitute a dominant interpretation of the world, the conditions of identities as well as structures and actions (Howarth 2000, p. 112). Thereby, discourses limit political action accordingly (Mole 2007a, p. 18).

The key for developing the research method of analysing text is to understand politics of discourse as creating 'subjects, objects, and relationships among them' (Shapiro 1981, p. 141). Subjects, objects and their relations are given meaning in discourses. These meanings can be studied by a variety of methods like predicate analysis (Milliken 1999, p. 231), juxtapositional method and the method of subjugated knowledge (Doty 1996, p. 6, Milliken 1999, p. 243). These methods can be integrated into a research strategy which is inspired by a 'grounded theory' approach (Charmaz 2006). It is designed to identify generalisable categories of meanings by analysing texts as empirical data. Theoretical categories are produced

by abstracting from the findings. Categories are satisfying when they are able to explain further empirical data and when they are not falsified by other findings.

The empirical data relevant for answering the research question needs to be applicable to the above-mentioned strategy. The article argues that the analysis of the logic of security established at the EU level needs to focus on discursive practices relating different discursive fields. These discursive fields are (1) on EU identity constructions; (2) on the perception of challenges as security relevant from this inter-subjective position and; (3) on constructions of security practices and hence governance and governmentality. When discursive practices make cross-references between these three discursive fields they construct the logic of security. This perspective is a continuation of the argument in Christou *et al.* that security is not an objective phenomenon but that it is 'constructed in the inter-subjective realm' (Wæver 2000, p. 252). In other words, discourses on EU identity are the starting point from which actors perceive something as security relevant which then leads to the definition of how to govern this problem. These discursive practices constructing security need to be understood as the processes 'of framing, politics and governmentality' of security (Christou *et al.* 2010). Governmentality is understood as 'the art of governing a population rather than a territory' (Huysmans 2006, p. 98). In this sense, security is the deliberate processes 'of securitisation/insecuritisation of the borders, of the identities and of the conception of orders' (Bigo 2000, p. 173). Accordingly, the article does not focus on speech acts as such but on the galvanised results of the deliberate process practiced by performative speech acts made by officials and fixed in documents of the most relevant EU bodies in the field of security. The discursive field on identity construction refers to discourses on EU identity and constructions of the EU as an international actor; the discursive field on security challenges refers to EU discourses on the perception of external phenomena, actors and their behaviour as security relevant; and the third discursive field focuses on security governance/governmentality including discourses on how to appropriately and effectively organise security policies and discourses comprising normative dimensions of security action. Discourses on security governance/governmentality include more than processes of discursive legitimation and practical ethics of dialogue (Williams 2003, pp. 521–524). Security practices need to correspond to existing understandings of appropriate action (Doty 1996, p. 239, Mole 2007b, p. 157).

The discursive fields need to be anchored in time and space in order to answer the research question of this article. The time period of interest is December 1999–August 2001. Institutionalised discourses at the EU level within the most relevant EU bodies reflect the space of interest. Relevant bodies are the European Council, the Council – especially the General Affairs Council and Development Council – the General Secretariat and its supplementary bodies like the Civilian Crisis Management Committee (CIVCOM) and the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER).

The following analysis is conducted in five steps. The first task is to highlight text passages in the official documents of the named period which engage in one of the three constructions: (1) identity constructions; (2) perception of challenges as security relevant; and (3) constructions of security governance/governmentality. Codes for each construction need to be identified in the second step. Codes represent particular meanings. Based on the codes, the third step is to mark and highlight quotes as shorter passages of texts which represent a particular code? In the fourth

step, the subjects, objects and relations among them need to be identified for each individual quote by using the above-mentioned research techniques. This analysis needs to qualitatively check for whether identified codes support or falsify the codes they are related to. The first case supports the code and, the second leads to the identification of another code for which further text passages need to be identified. In the final step, the codes are put into order of relevance; in other words: a meaning becomes dominant – and hence more relevant – when the construction of other meanings refers to it. Then, the dominant meaning affects and limits the construction of others. Therefore, a meaning is not only more relevant the more often it is used in discourse; the relevance is higher when the meaning in question serves as the reference for the construction or stabilisation of other meanings (see Laclau 1996, p. 43). This research strategy provides a table of meanings ordered in regard to their relevance for the construction of the security logic.

This strategy is able to analyse the construction of security logics in specific moments in time and space. Change in the construction of security logics can be discovered by a comparative research design. In this case, the research strategy needs to be played out on different sets of texts which vary in regard to time and/or space. Generally speaking, change in discourses takes place when dominant interpretations are different in one period of time compared with another, when earlier marginalised discourses gain support and contest established interpretations. Change can come about as development through contested discourses or successful speech acts (Kitchen 2009), or in a moment of crisis, may that be a discursive crisis (Diez 2001, p. 14) or an identity crisis (Habermas 1975, p. 3).

### **The EU's security logic**

How then, was the EU's security logic constructed at the turn of the twenty-first century? As already alluded to, this question will be answered by analysing institutionalised EU discourses around key events of the period from December 1999 to August 2001. This period is very important for the development of the logic of security established at the EU because of various reasons: during this period, the European Council of Helsinki defined European security policy introduced into the treaties during the IGC of Nice. In this period, the European Council, the Council and its supplementary bodies were actively engaged in revising the treaties. This included processes of reasoning on European security as was discussed in 1998 and 1999 initiated during the St Malo meeting between France and Britain, as well as during the European Council meetings taking place under the Austrian and German Presidencies. Although 1998 and 1999 are most frequently regarded as the years of change in the EU's approach in setting up its own security policy (Howorth 2000, Gnesotto 2004), this article focuses on the period from Helsinki until just before 9/11 for good reasons: first, the period included the run up to the IGC of Nice. Discourses of that time represented the knowledge and dominant interpretations which were established since the St Malo meeting. Second, the time prior to Helsinki is left out in favour of the year 2001 until August since the Treaty of Nice was declared being of lower value almost immediately after the IGC ended. The Treaty did not address the challenges ahead, e.g. enlargement and how the EU was able to carry out its role on the international level after enlargement. It was this understanding of a 'system crisis' that led to an 'identity crisis' (Hay 1996, p. 88) and which initiated the post-Nice process

paving the way to the Laeken declaration (European Council 2001b), the Convention on the Future of Europe and the process of reforming the EU, its treaties and institutions by utilising a deliberative approach different to the IGC model. In other words, the year 2001 marked the beginning of a process of recasting EU identity and one in which EU actors realised the potential of the EU's security policy (Solana 2004).

However, the article leaves out the final months of 2001 since it is particularly interested in the rationale of the 'early' meaning of security – prior to 9/11. The argument can be pushed even further. The 'early' meaning of security included a characteristic ascribed to security problems. This is that security problems are dynamic. The article will show that this dynamism was perceived to take place in moments of under-development and poverty which potentially could lead into conflict. This character was already laid out in the 'early' meaning of security. Later, it dominated the perception of almost all security challenges through processes of sense-making on the phenomenon of 11 September 2001. In other words, in order to understand fully the construction of security after 9/11 it is important to understand the rationale of this 'early' meaning of security.

In the following, the article conducts a discourse analysis of processes of EU identity constructions, perceptions of challenges as security relevant and constructions of the security practice. The research design developed above enables the analysis to show that the EU's logic of security built up on the EU's self-perception of being an international actor. The definition of this actorness referred to dominant interpretations established in international discourses, for example, at the UN level. The experience of intra-state conflicts in the 1990s led to the necessity that actors had to be able if not to prevent conflict then to prevent people from being harmed by conflict. The EU perceived situations of poverty and under-development as potentially leading into conflict – and accordingly development policy as conflict prevention. This perspective dominated processes of sense-making of the EU's role on the international level and contributed to the meaning of actorness (see McLean and Lilly 2000, p. 8, Manners 2006, p. 185). In other words, situations of under-development and poverty were perceived as 'other' to the EU's 'self'.

In order to prevent this dynamic, the EU intended to establish conflict prevention and crisis management mechanisms at the EU level. The need for doing so was argued by referring to the EU's development policy and to the logic that the established security measures served the goals of development policies by other means – using civilian and military capabilities to stabilise states in order to prevent or stop dynamic effects running from poverty and under-development to conflict. Without these security measures, the EU's development policy was understood to be at risk of ineffectiveness, and the achievements of its aid policies considerably undermined.

However, the analysis will also show that these processes of sense-making were still unstable and contested which disabled not only the implementation of short-term strategies, but also the agreement on implementing robust capabilities for the EU's disposal.

### *EU identity*

During the period under review here, the meaning of EU actorness was in the process of stabilising its external, international dimension. In contrast to earlier periods, EU

actorness was directly linked to the EU's external action and here, conflict prevention. Prior to the implementation of ESDP and certainly prior to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the EU did not perceive it to be its responsibility to act externally in the security field.

Prior to the implementation of ESDP, the EU – and here the European Council – argued that it had to play a more prominent role internationally. This was framed as a reaction to external developments rather than any self-determined process: 'The international situation increases the responsibilities of the Union and the need to strengthen its identity on the international scene with the aim of promoting peace and stability' (European Council 1996, p. 3). At the same time – prior to the implementation of ESDP – the meaning of duplication dominated the EU's perspective on external action. The duplication of structures, processes and action was perceived as inappropriate when the EU's external action fell into the policy field of another international organisation or indeed states. For example, the EU's Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region had to 'coordinate closely with the representatives of the UN and the OAU in the region avoiding duplication of the initiatives of these organizations' (Council 1996, Great Lakes Region).

Probably the most central case prior to the inauguration of ESDP in which the EU showed that it did not consider it to be its responsibility to act externally in the field of security was that of the crisis in Albania. In 1992, Sali Berisha, was elected as Head of Government in Albania, gaining support from the USA and Europe. The latter offered \$800 million of financial aid making Albania the recipient of the highest aid per capita of that time (Perlez 1997). After his re-election in 1996, which was criticised heavily by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the country suffered from a collapse of its financial pyramid schemes leading to political protests. This led to the breakdown of public order and to brutal attempts by the government to re-establish public order. In this situation, rebels were able to control the most important cities in southern Albania which led to a massive refugee movement especially into Greece and Italy (Permuter 1998, p. 206). Although France, Greece and Italy were ready to engage in an EU/Western European Union (WEU) security operation to establish order in Albania, the project was rejected mainly because of the opposition of Germany, Great Britain and Sweden (Greco 1998, p. 205). Finally, on 24 March 1997, the EU Council decided to send an advisory mission to Albania as soon as public order had been established by the Albanian Government (Greco 1998, p. 205, *The Economist* 1997).

Thus, the EU member states followed the dominant understanding of responsibility. The Albanian Government was expected to take up its responsibility in establishing public order and turn back into the path of democracy by itself. Also, the EU avoided duplication by not sending an EU/WEU force because the United Nations Security Council approved Resolution 1101 calling for a Multinational Protection Force for Albania. Finally, the EU did not act on Albania following the rationale – as spoken by the Council in another context – that the 'EU should abstain from acting in a manner likely to be perceived as an attempt to impose solutions' (Council 1997, Africa). Overall, prior to the inauguration of ESDP, the EU was not constructed as an actor in the field of external security and the above claim almost entirely disabled external action in the security field.

In contrast to that period, the EU's actorness was more solidly defined in the period of December 1999 and August 2001, even though it remained contested. The

meaning of EU actorness oscillated from being an international actor to a regional actor and, to being a military actor, that is in the process of learning and defining its international role (Stavridis 2001a, 2001b, Treacher 2004). Still, the EU *learned* its role based on its 'knowledge and experience' (Council 2001b).

One central concept on which the discourse on the EU's international actorness was calibrated was that of poverty and conflict (McLean and Lilly 2000, p. 8, Manners 2006, p. 185) with many ministers stressing 'that European integration was an excellent example of conflict prevention' (Council 2001f). The understanding of the European integration process as conflict prevention opened up the possibility for the EU to perceive itself as a capable actor in this field: 'Preserving peace, promoting stability and strengthening international security worldwide' was a 'fundamental objective of the Union, and preventing violent conflict' constituted 'one of the most important external policy challenges' (Solana 2004, I.1).

Thereby, the EU constituted itself as an experienced actor with broad knowledge in the field of conflict prevention. Although the integration project was exclusively civil, discourses on the international role of the EU followed a grand design saying that international actors had to be capable of military action. This was clearly formulated by the COREPER preparing a document on conflict prevention for the European Council in Gothenburg in 2001, which stated that, 'The international community has a political and moral responsibility to act'; the EU – as a member of this community – 'is a successful example of conflict prevention, based on democratic values and respect for human rights, justice and solidarity, economic prosperity and sustainable development' and the advancement of the EU's capabilities into the military field will 'thereby also enhancing the preventive capabilities of the international community at large' (COREPER 2001).

The meaning of EU actorness was still in the making, it was not fixed in discourses on EU identity despite the clarity of the intervention by COREPER. The Council and European Council searched for arguments legitimising the EU's international role. For example, the Council argued that it was 'appropriate [...] at the same time to ensure greater visibility for the Union's action' (Council 2001a). The reference to 'appropriateness' was a sign that the meaning of actorness was still in the making. In a similar way, the European Council reaffirmed 'its commitment to building a Common European Security and Defence Policy capable of reinforcing the Union's external action' (European Council 2000, section I C). The word 'reinforcing' was again, a sign of the fact that the EU's external action was a goal to be established.

Furthermore, the EU reassured itself of its actorness by referring to the way in which external actors perceived the EU. For example, the Council welcomed 'the warm reception received from the three countries by the Troika visit, perceived as a sign of the EU's continued commitment to the region' (Council 2001d). This sentence re-established the relevance of the EU's external action and noticed that it was well recognised by other states. Elsewhere in the text, it was said that external states supported 'a stronger EU role' (Council 2001d). Establishing this 'role' became a goal in itself as, 'The Council called for closer co-ordination among Member States and the Commission in the delivery of assistance to meet the challenges set out above so as to promote a more coherent, effective and visible role of the Union as a whole' (Council 2001d, Indonesia). All these examples showed that the meaning of EU



actorness was still in the making and far from being widely inter-subjectively shared, let alone stable or dominant.

Despite this weakness, the EU argued for the global relevance of core principles of its identity. These core principles were labelled ‘European standards’ (Council 2000g, Annex) to which other states had to apply if they wanted to draw ‘closer to the European structures’ (Council 2000f). European standards were ‘respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law [...] and to respect international law and standards’ (Council 2000e, Zimbabwe), to name a few. They reflected the most central aspects of European integration. These standards were equipped with an external dimension by having global legitimacy (Hettne and Söderbaum 2005, p. 545). This affected the EU’s approach towards its external sphere. Almost all external policies of the EU reflected upon these standards (Council 2000f, Cuba).

In this regard, processes of reasoning on European standards built up on a meaning of ‘people’ as the principle addressees of EU’s policy, as they were the constituting units of European standards. The meaning of ‘people’ was constitutive for all European standards. Prior to the inauguration of ESDP, the EU actively engaged in implementing European standards domestically or in close cooperation with Middle and Eastern European countries reaching for membership.

However, the dominant discourse on the responsibility to protect taking place at the UN level affected the EU’s reasoning on its international responsibility. Since the late 1980s, the UN more often had to face situations of domestic violence, intra-state conflict, human crises and so forth. These situations, such as in Somalia in 1992, were interpreted as threats to international peace and security (UNSC 1992). By the beginning of the twenty-first century the UN prepared itself to be capable of solving civil wars, insurgencies, state repression and state collapse and thereby, UN bodies argued for a responsibility to protect ‘ordinary people, at risk of their lives, because their states are unwilling or unable to protect them’ (ICISS 2001, p. 11). This framing required a security policy capable of civilian and military operations in support of the suffering people – which was nothing less than the EU’s shared understanding of the purpose of security policies in cooperation with development policies.

The remarkable development at the EU level was that the meaning of people influenced by the debate on the responsibility to protect was applied not only to domestic, but also to external policies and related to security. Internally, with regard to the discourses of the future of Europe, reforms were called for to bring the political structure of the EU closer to its citizens (European Council 2001a, pt. 6). At the same time, the centrality of the concept of human rights and the responsibility to protect for the EU’s policies was apparent in the EU’s external action (Manners 2006, p. 192). For example, the Council demanded for Angola ‘to implement transparent management of public resources for the benefit of all her peoples’ (Council 2000b, p. 2). In other words, the Council required the implementation of European standards by state structures in order to protect the citizens.

Indeed, situations in which European standards were absent were perceived as problematic and as a situation of under-development, poverty or even conflict. This was reflected in the statement of the Council on development policy which was ‘grounded on the principle of sustainable, equitable and participatory human and social development. Promotion of human rights, democracy, the rule of law and good governance’ were ‘an integral part of it’ (Council 2000d, no. 6).

Discourses on effectiveness and coherence constituted two further important meanings of how the EU's actorness was constructed. Indeed, discourses on effectiveness and coherence influenced all policy fields because the EU prepared itself for enlargement and had to rethink its structures, procedures and competences in relation to the potential doubling of EU member states. Also, both meanings affected the way in which the EU understood itself and its role – also in regard to security policies (Council 2001g, conflict prevention). The most relevant discourses on effectiveness and coherence were those relating to development policy, which stated that 'effective coordination at all levels' in regard to linking relief, rehabilitation and development was 'essential to ensure maximum impact in the country concerned' (Council 2001c).

The interesting aspect of discourses on effectiveness and coherence was that they established an objective logic of why the EU had to implement a security policy and what this policy and its structures should look like. Arguments only rarely referred to the perception of external challenges as security relevant. Effectiveness and coherence implemented a rationale and objective perspective by which structures were reviewed independently from actual experience on the ground. Effectiveness was a measure for the EU to equip itself with decision-making procedures and coordination processes as visible in the 'open debate' (Council 2001f). For example, the Council noticed that in 'principle we have adequate mechanisms for conflict prevention, including early warning, analysis and reaction. Now the key is putting these to effective use' (Council 2001b). This way of thinking enabled a security policy at the EU level because, first, the security policy was closely linked with already existing policy, i.e. development policy, and second, the process of establishing a security policy was just a management problem of how to make existing policies effective and coherent.

In sum, the three most central aspects of EU identity formation were: (a) actorness; (b) European standards and their external validity; and (c) the meaning of effectiveness and coherence. Although the meaning of actorness was still contested, the EU perceived itself as an international actor supportive in establishing European standards in the world by effective and coherent policies. It is worth noting that from the EU's perspective, these standards helped to overcome under-development, poverty – and even the war-shaken past of the European continent. They were perceived to enable external actors to reach the same outstanding results as European states did in Europe after the Second World War. This aspect is important for the next section analysing the perception of challenges as security relevant.

### *Security challenges*

Specific situations in external states or regions in which standards were not established qualified as security relevant. In general, situations of poverty were potentially perceived in this way. In discourses, the EU's development policies were presented as a 'fight against poverty' (Council 2000c, p. 9, Nielson 2001, Stewart 2008, pp. 237–238). The necessity to fight against poverty was due to two related problems. First, poverty undermined the main principles of EU identity. Poverty disadvantaged 'people to have control over their development, enjoy equality of opportunities and live in a safer environment' (Council 2000d, p. 5). In this sense, poverty did not only come about as lack of financial resources. Poverty was defined 'as encompassing the notion of vulnerability and such factors as no access to adequate food supplies,

education and health, natural resources and drinking water, land, employment and credit facilities, information and political involvement, services and infrastructure' (Council 2000d, p. 8). Environmental damage was also understood as a factor of poverty, as well as transmittable or communicable diseases (Flint 2008, pp. 56–58).

This list of 'factors' clearly related to European standards. Factors of poverty were measured in regard to whether or not access to appropriate recourses and services were provided to the population. In the quote on poverty above, 'access' clearly did not mean that state institutions had access to adequate resources. State institutions did not suffer from poverty. Instead, access referred to the civilian population which was constructed as the only objects suffering from poverty. They were characterised as 'vulnerable' (Council 2000a, no. 8). People were unable to change these circumstances. This was perceived as problematic because poverty made people suffer from inadequate implementation of European standards. This made them less 'self' to the EU (Council 2000d, p. 8).

In contrast, subjects of poverty were not clearly identified. Poverty was measured by a list of factors which added to the situation of poverty. They were constructed as possible causes of poverty – with a particular 'global dimension' (Council 2000d, p. 4, 2001d, development). These causes did not include states or other actors as subjects of poverty. States were perceived as being more or less capable in preventing poverty, they did not cause it.

The second problem of poverty was that 'poverty, and the exclusion which it creates, are the root causes of conflict and are endangering the stability and security of too many countries and regions' (Council 2000d, p. 1). The EU perceived poverty and conflict as being interlinked or interdependent. Countries which seriously suffer from poverty are perceived to be more likely to face conflict than those that do not (Council 2000d, p. 4). As a result, the Council emphasised the 'strategic role of development co-operation in conflict, as well as [...] post conflict situations' (Council 2000e, Africa, p. 1). This understanding established the meaning of a development–conflict cycle (Chandler 2007, Hadfield 2007). The cycle jeopardised the EU's development, poverty reduction and financial aid policies because conflicts 'are likely to jeopardise the beneficial effects of assistance and co-operation policies and programmes, their effectiveness and/or conditions for their proper implementation' (Council 2001c). In this regard, poverty and especially its dynamic character of potentially leading into conflict were perceived as security relevant.

The relation between poverty and security was established by two inter-subjective procedures. First, by defining its actorness and living up to according standards, the EU followed a grand design of an established international actor recognised by the international community. The ability to prevent conflict and act autonomously in the field of security was perceived as being central in order to establish the EU as a recognised international actor. The EU intended to approve its ability by presenting its development policy as nothing else than conflict prevention and by implementing a security policy as a last resort of crisis management.

Second, situations of poverty and their dynamic potentials to lead into conflict were perceived as 'other' to the EU's 'self'. The EU's 'self' built up on a conception of order including a vibrant civil society. Externally, a working civil society was a central partner for democratisation and conflict mitigation. Such a working civil society was absent in situations of poverty and under-development let alone conflict, making these situations 'other' to the EU's 'self'. Furthermore, these situations were

perceived to put at risk civil society actors which were active in poverty reduction and development. In accordance with its concept of actorness, the EU had to be able to protect civil society actors not least to secure its development policy as a form of conflict prevention. Based on this perspective, the EU's security governance/governmentality included, first of all, not only conflict prevention policies, but also crisis management measures which were rather reluctantly implemented.

### *Security governance/governmentality*

The EU promoted itself as an international actor capable of dealing with international problems. On this basis, the EU understood the dynamism of poverty and under-development potentially leading into conflict as a security problem. Development, poverty and conflict were perceived as situations in which European standards were undermined or challenged. These situations were 'Other' to the EU's 'Self' and had to be addressed from the EU's actorness perspective and for the sake of effective and coherent EU policies. This was the moment to establish conflict prevention and crisis management policies. The EU established rules of appropriate behaviour in accordance with these security problems, which included: (1) conflict prevention; and (2) crisis management.<sup>1</sup> The meaning of conflict prevention could be understood as the umbrella including crisis management. In contrast, crisis management directly addressed situations of conflict.

### *Conflict prevention*

The meaning of conflict prevention was closely related to the meaning of development and development policy as well as to the meaning of the responsibility to protect. As noted by the Council, 'the added value of development programmes in conflict prevention' was 'their ability to analyse the structural causes of conflict and instability and long-term development needs and priorities. The role of development cooperation' was 'conflict prevention rather than crisis management' (Council 2001c). Conflict prevention was perceived to be established through development policy and development cooperation. The meaning of development cooperation was central in this regard. It referred to the historical success in Europe of overcoming its brutal past through cooperation and integration. Informed by this perspective, development cooperation built up on a list of action including: 'trade policy instruments, trade and cooperation agreements, development cooperation programmes, social and environmental instruments, political dialogue and cooperation with international partners and countries at risk' (Council 2001f, open debate). Conflict prevention was constructed as a security policy framed within a long-term perspective of development policy that took action 'once peace is restored the EU is ready to consider long-term cooperation in support of national reconstruction' (Council 2001a, p. 1, Stewart 2008, p. 233).

Conflict prevention encompassed the implementation and support of 'elections' (Council 2001c, Western Balkans), 'democratic institutions [...] good governance [...] and the rule of law' (Council 2000d, p. 6). The EU was perceived to be 'especially well placed to support the strengthening of the partner countries' institutional capacities' (Council 2000d). Objectives in the economic area included 'sustainable development [...], their inclusion in the world economy and the fight against poverty' (Council

2000c, p. 8). The EU as a 'leading player' had to 'ensure that development policies and trade and investment policies' were 'complementary and mutually beneficial' (Council 2000d). The EU's long-term action of reconstruction focused first and foremost on nation building, democratisation and integration. The Council argued for the importance 'to build national capacity to prevent and resolve conflicts' (Council 2001b). This perspective affected the discussion of how the EU's civilian and military capabilities should look and that they should be used for nation building.

The leading idea of conflict prevention was to initiate a process which would lead to regional integration following the idea of European integration and thereby making crisis and conflict impossible. As well as European integration, conflict prevention is a peace project and hence a security policy by other means (Council 2001c, Western Balkans). In its close neighbourhood, other states were motivated to engage in long-term reconstruction efforts by 'a credible prospect of potential membership once relevant conditions have been met' (Council 2001e, Annex). Further afield, long-term reconstruction efforts were intended to initiate similar processes of integration in the respective region. Here, the EU focused on cooperation and 'constructive' dialogues initiated by regional organisations. For example, the Council 'expressed its readiness to increase its long-term capacity-building support to ECOWAS, in particular in the fields of conflict prevention, crisis management and regional peacekeeping' (Council 2001c, West Africa).

With regard to international organisations, the role of the UN was important in the field of conflict prevention. The UN was referred to as one international organisation apart from others which were active in conflict prevention. For example, CIVCOM pointed out not only that the EU 'should develop its crisis management capacity with a view to improve its ability to contribute to operations conducted by lead agencies, such as the UN or the OSCE', but also that it should be able to 'carry out EU-led autonomous missions' (CIVCOM 2001a, Annex, p. 1). The quest for autonomy demonstrated that the EU started to settle in its role of international actorness in the field of security. This perspective constituted change since still in Helsinki in December 1999, the European Council was determined 'to launch and conduct EU-led military operations in response to international crises [...] where NATO as a whole is not engaged' (European Council 1999). Despite this change, the EU was still inconsistent in its conflict prevention policy which obviously reflected the difficulties in defining and agreeing on a common concept for conflict prevention and its actual implementation (Stewart 2008, p. 238). This critique of contestedness applies even more to the EU's crisis management policies.

### *Crisis management*

Crisis management was designed to address situations of violence and conflict in which situations previously understood as development turned out to be a security problem. The threshold for a situation to become security relevant was their seriousness of disregarding or violating standards. Disregard included situations in which state structures were unable to provide basic policies in support of their citizens or to prevent circumstances from harming the civilian population. Also, direct violence against individuals or ethnic groups was incompatible with these standards. In both cases, situations were understood to be a security problem, including the potential to undermine the EU's development policy. This perspective led to the

reasoning that civil crisis management approaches and capabilities were appropriate to push a situation of crisis back into the boundaries of development. In general, approaches in this regard were closely related to the efforts of the UN. The UN was held as primarily responsible for defining how to approach situations of conflict in 'order to support the United Nations peace efforts' (Council 2000a, Article 2).

Crisis management included civilian as well as military capabilities. In general, civilian operations were the first choice. They were designed to encompass a full range of activities by addressing civilian administration, the rule of law and civil protection. Civilian administration included 'general administrative functions: Civil registration, Registration of poverty, Elections/appointments to political bodies, Taxation, Local administration, Custom Service' as well as 'social functions' and 'infrastructural functions' (European Council 2001c, Annex). Police missions also accounted for crisis management ranging 'from advice, assistance or training assignments to substituting for local police' (European Council 2001c). Although crisis was perceived as being security relevant and as requiring the EU's action, the EU designed civilian aspects of crisis management as long-term strategies following the logic of development policy and economic support (Stewart 2008, pp. 237–238). Thus, 'The close link between civilian administration in crisis management and long-term structural assistance' made 'continuity crucial' (CIV-COM 2001b, p. 4, European Council 2001c, Annex).

In contrast to civilian crisis management operations, civil protection operations explicitly focused on short-term goals. They were designed to assist humanitarian actors 'in covering the immediate survival and protection needs of affected populations, in respect to e.g. search and rescue, construction of refugee camps and systems of communications and provisions of other types of logistical support' (European Council 2001c). This went so far that the Council stated that a situation of conflict or crisis required 'in the last resort, the readiness to use military force for conflict solution' (Council 2001f, open debate). Based on this perspective, which referred to the Petersberg Tasks, the EU perceived it necessary to implement military capabilities at the EU level (European Council 1999, HHG).

The developments of appropriate military capabilities under the leadership of the EU were not finalised but contested in the period under review here, although the goal was to 'make the EU quickly operational' (Hill 2001, European Council 2001c, p. 11, Wivel 2005, p. 401). In order to face up to the problem of lacking in military capabilities, the European Council, for example, 'called for an arrangement permitting EU access to NATO assets and capabilities' (European Council 2001c, p. 11, Deighton 2002, p. 728). Overall, the EU perceived robust action necessary to face up to situations of crisis but it was not capable of applying it to its own perspectives, since the EU neither had military capabilities at its disposal nor was the agreement with NATO in place before 2003.

The perception that the EU had to be enabled for robust action in security policy derived from changes in the construction of the EU's international actorness following the grand design of being a full-fledged member of the international community for which military capabilities were necessary. The attempt to cooperate with NATO can be explained on the one hand, as the attempt to approve continuity of EU–NATO members, but on the other hand, because cooperation was necessary in order to prevent the EU from worsening its identity crisis given that it had already indicated an intention to engage in security policy internationally. However, the EU

was not capable of doing so without using NATO's assets (European Council 1999, Annex IV, Gordon 2000, pp. 15–16).

Overall, concepts of conflict prevention and crisis management were still contested in the period under review here. At first glance, they seemed clearly defined. Conflict prevention required action in the field of development policy and external action of trade cooperation and financial aid, whereas crisis management operations required the robust capabilities of ESDP. However, both concepts were not strictly defined, which made the differentiation between both logics of action almost impossible. Even for situations of crisis and conflict, the EU was reluctant to argue for robust conflict resolutions. Hence, discourses were contested. Accordingly, the distribution of competencies among EU bodies remained unresolved (Stewart 2008, p. 238). The EU did not implement civilian and military capabilities in order to be able to conduct crisis management at that time. Rather, it referred to its long-term development policies as appropriate tools (Hill 2001, p. 320). This can explain the EU's inactiveness in conflict prevention and crisis management where security policies, including civilian and military actions, were concerned (Hill 2001, p. 330, Treacher 2004, p. 58). In other words, the conflict–development cycle, the dynamic between situations of under-development on the one side and conflict on the other, was not securitised but politicised.

## Conclusion

The approach developed in this article established a research strategy to analyse security as a relational concept. The argument put forth was that the logic of security, which first of all is of an inter-subjective nature, can be studied and explored through a discursive approach. This approach locates the logic of security in overlapping discourses on collective identity, the perception of challenges as security relevant and the policy practices on security governance/governmentality.

The theoretical implications of this approach are that, first of all, it provides a theory-driven approach to analyse security beyond the 'traditional' borders of state-centric approaches where security is objectively given. The discursive perspective enables the researcher to identify processes of sense-making at different levels – and here at the EU level – which are constitutive for the dominant interpretation of security challenges. The research design is set out to identify the dominant interpretations, their marginalised others and the logics they implement. Second, the article argues to unpack the process of constructing the logic of security as discursive practices making cross-references between the three discursive fields. Thereby, the approach picks up on the securitisation literature while shifting the focus on discourse instead of speech acts. This strategy explicitly recognises the context in which constructions take place. Discursive fields are shaped by similar discourses of a given time and space. Accordingly, the analysis takes into account not only speech acts, but also the context in which they are made and their effects on this context in regard to continuity and change. At the same time, discursive fields reflect narratives which are not exclusively relevant in that particular given context. Discursive fields are also influenced by broader discourses shaped by actors external to the EU. The strong impact which discourses on the responsibility to protect had on the logic of security established at the EU level is just one example. Third, the approach is comparative by design. It incorporates a systematic way to shape the analysis with regard to time and space in

a comparative manner. This is important to not only recognise difference in the logic of security over time, but also with regard to differences in individual policy fields and even distinct security actors. This leads to the fourth implication of the research design. The analysis of institutionalised discourses discovers the logics which are codified in formal and informal rules of political and legal practice. Following the argument of Christou *et al.* that ‘it is not enough simply to declare that discourse is important’ (Christou *et al.* 2010), the findings of the analysis can be applied in case studies which check the result with the implemented security practice – which is the effectiveness, coherence and legitimacy of security governance.

The empirical part of the article concluded that, the EU’s self-perception of being an international actor was still in the making in the period under review. The EU established the security logic that poverty and under-development was likely to lead into conflict and that, accordingly, a security policy was needed including long-term approaches of development policies and short-term approaches of civilian and military action. At the same time, discourses on this security logic and its practices were still very much contested. One example was the indifference between conflict prevention and crisis management policies. Both hugely built up on long-term strategies of development support, instead of short-term robust operations. Furthermore, not only were these robust operations not established, but discourses were also contested on how to equip the EU for this purpose. As a result, the EU was not equipped to relevant capabilities until almost 2003.

Also, the dynamic effects perceived as being at play between development and conflict are important when it comes to how the EU perceived international terrorism after the events of 11 September 2001 and when the EU developed appropriate responses in this respect. Understanding global challenges as being dynamic in character led to the perception that security issues, previously thought of as individual problems, were interrelated and thereby had a cumulative negative effect on each other. This perspective is based on the understanding of the conflict–development cycle and dominated all areas of the EU’s security policy after 9/11 as prominently shown in the European Security Strategy of 2003.

## Note

1. See Article 17, no. 3 of Nice Treaty on the EU.

## Notes on contributor

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