

FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGIES OF THE
EUROPEAN UNION

by

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This thesis examines the foreign policy techniques utilized by the European Union (EU) today through the case studies of the current crises in Ukraine (2013-present) and Syria (2011-present). The European Union has been long considered to be weak in terms of creating and implementing a common foreign policy, however in recent years the EU has strived to become a more active global actor. Many factors affect what foreign policy strategies the EU will use in order to respond to international issues. This thesis looks specifically at the factor of distance.

Given this focus, the underlying question of this work is: how do the foreign policy strategies and methods used by the European Union to deal with international crises differ between issues that are close to home and those that are more removed? In order to address this question, the thesis looks at a variety of news sources and official EU documents to present an analysis of what the EU has done in each case and how these actions compare. The purpose of this analysis is to provide a clearer picture of the EU's abilities to form and act on external policy decisions as a single entity.

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
A Brief History of the Foreign Policy of the European Union	2
European Union Foreign Policy Today	5
Case Study: The Ukrainian Crisis (2013-Present)	8
European Union-Ukrainian Relations (1998-2013)	8
The Crisis in Ukraine (2013-Present)	9
Issues of Concern to the European Union in Ukraine	11
The European Union Response to the Ukrainian Crisis	17
Case Study: The Syrian Crisis (2011-Present)	27
European Union-Syrian Relations (1977-2011)	27
The Crisis in Syria (2011-Present)	29
Issues of Concern to the European Union in Syria	30
The European Union Response to the Syrian Crisis	33
Conclusions	40
Appendix	44
List of Abbreviations	44
Figure 1: Map of Ukraine	46
Figure 2: Map of Gas Pipelines	47
Figure 3: Map of Syria Showing Refugees	48
Figure 4: Graphs, and Charts Showing Aid and Refugee Applications from the Syrian Crisis	49
Figure 5: Diagram of the Structure of EEAS	50
Figure 6: Map of Arrested Terrorist Suspects in the EU	51
Bibliography	52

Introduction

The relationship between the European Union (EU) and foreign relations has been under debate since the creation of the EU's predecessor, the European Economic Community (EEC), in 1957. At that time the EEC's role in international politics was admittedly minimal; however, as time passed and the EU officially came into being, expanding not only geographically but also in influence, the EU has played an increasingly larger role on the world stage. This increased participation in world issues, not as individual countries, but as a whole entity has forced the EU to create common positions on foreign policy. This process of determining and carrying out these common decisions will be the focus of this thesis. My research questions are: How do the foreign policy strategies and methods used by the European Union to deal with international crises differ between issues that are close to home and those that are more removed? How and why are these strategies developed?

A Brief History of the Foreign Policy of the European Union

Although the European Union, as we know and understand it today, was not fully formed until 1992, the European community has been working toward collaboration on foreign policy issues since the 1950s. Originally, this collaboration was a reaction to the events of both World Wars. During this time, many countries were concerned about the power of Germany and the threat that it could present to surrounding countries. These concerns led to the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community between West Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxemburg in 1951. The motivation for this early attempt at European unification was the prevention of war by limiting arms production that could be used against one another (“The History of the European Union”). One year later, a step towards direct collaboration on military and strategic issues was taken with the proposal to constitute the European Defense Community (EDC). This failed to become a reality, however because of the inability of the French to secure parliamentary approval. Instead, the European Economic Community (EEC) was created in 1957 to extend collaboration in trade matters (Federiga 2010).

The EEC was originally made up of the same six countries as the European Coal and Steel Community, and has become known as the precursor to the modern European Union. Although it was essentially an economic union, it went beyond trade agreements among individual countries and achieved a common commercial policy where the EEC would represent all of the participating countries on external trade matters. This event marks the first time where the European countries clearly formed a common position on an issue and then gave up direct control of that issue to the EEC. The EEC also

introduced the idea of enlargement, which would become one of the main factors in foreign policy relations, internally and externally, for the European Union in later years. Enlargement is the process by which countries can become members of the EEC, or later the EU. Since the time of the European Coal and Steel Community, the number of countries has increased through this process from six to twenty-eight. Following the creation of the EEC, not much progress in terms of foreign relations was made for a little over a decade until 1970. In that year, European Political Cooperation (EPC) institutionalized consultations on foreign policy issues (Federiga 2010). A few years later, Denmark, Ireland, and the United Kingdom joined the EEC, an event that contributed to the creation of the Copenhagen Report that articulated a new foreign policy direction among the now nine member states (“The History of the European Union”). This report called for a meeting of the foreign affairs ministers at least four times a year to discuss policy or any foreign relations situations that come up. Later that same year, the EEC issued the Declaration on European Identity, which served to “better define the EEC’s relations and responsibilities to the rest of the world and the place they occupied in world affairs” (Federiga 2010: 21). With this declaration, the EEC stated that it intended to work toward a common foreign policy goal. This move toward a more defined and integrated stance on issues of foreign policy became more of a focus in 1981 when “member states . . . pushed for the reform of the EPC in order to make it more effective and ensure more active participation of the European Community in international affairs.” (Federiga 2010: 23). During this time an overhaul of the EPC did indeed take place through the London Report in late 1981, which more clearly defined and elaborated on the functions of the EPC as a whole as well as the

meetings of the foreign affairs ministers. Five years later, these changes were formalized and institutionalized in the Single European Act (SEA), which stressed the importance of intergovernmental cooperation in foreign affairs (Federiga 2010).

In 1992, the Maastricht Treaty was signed, officially replacing the EEC with the European Union. The Maastricht Treaty also marked a major change in the EU's approach to foreign policy by creating the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The CFSP serves as one of the three pillars of the EU; beside the CFSP, the other pillars are the European Communities, and Justice and Home Affairs (JHA), as laid down in the pillar structure by the Maastricht Treaty, the CFSP provides the framework for the EU's approach to foreign affairs today (Bache, George, and Bulmer 2011: 515). Although it mostly focused on economic foreign policy issues, the CFSP also laid out policy for many other issues, such as financial assistance to third world countries. The most recent important change to the EU's approach to foreign policy occurred in the Treaty of Lisbon in 2007. The Treaty of Lisbon merged the previous three pillar system into one and created the European External Action Services (EEAS), the EU's diplomatic arm, and the position of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (a position that merged those of the High Representative of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Commissioner for External Relations and the European Neighborhood Policy) ("The History of the European Union"). These changes served as the last major revamp of the EU's structure pertaining to foreign policy issues ("External Relations").

European Union Foreign Policy Today

Foreign policy in the European Union today is a very complex and a rather obscure process. While this statement can easily apply to the nature of foreign policy in general, it applies especially to the EU, which does not have the same level of cohesive functioning as most states. The provisions laid out in the Treaty of Lisbon, specifically through the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), largely dictate the current foreign policy in the EU. The CFSP functions under the High Representative who serves as “a bridge between external economic relations and the CFSP/ESDP,” with the European External Action Services (EEAS) as support (Bache, George, and Bulmer 2011: 515). The changes to the CFSP aimed to extend “the role and responsibilities of this post [the high representative] in the Lisbon Treaty were indicative of a desire to reduce the gap by increasing the 'actorness' of the EU” (Bache, George, and Bulmer 2011: 526). However, this desire to increase the ability of the EU to play a role as an actor in international relations is countered by the desires of individual states to maintain their sovereignty and control over foreign policy decisions.

Given this state of affairs, the actors and bodies involved in deciding foreign policy in the EU are numerous and varied. First there are the ‘official’ actors, or those who are assigned to this role in some formal capacity. These include the High Representative, the EU Special Representatives (EUSRs), the EEAS, the Council, and the Commission. The High Representative, currently Federica Mogherini (2014-2019), essentially serves as a manager and coordinator, while steering the foreign policy of the EU and working for consensus between the member states on foreign policy issues (“EU Special Representatives”). The EUSRs serve as diplomats in countries around the

world, promoting the EU's policies and interests as well as encouraging peace and stability in troubled regions. As the EU's diplomatic service, the EEAS works to carry out the policies of the CFSP. It encompasses many different positions, including those of the High Representative and the EUSRs ("About the European External Action Service [EEAS]). (For a full comprehension of the structure of the EEAS see Figure 5)

As the primary legislative body of the EU, the Commission has as its primary role in foreign affairs, the implementation of laws and controls that encourage and facilitate the creation of foreign policy goals. Recently, the Commission has taken a particular interest in the state of foreign affairs in the EU, setting as one of its main priorities for this year as serving as a strong global actor. In order to achieve this goal, the President of the Commission stated: "I intend to entrust other external relations Commissioners with the task of deputising for the High Representative both within the work of the College and on the international stage" (Juncker 2014: 10).

The Council sets the EU's political policy agenda by adopting 'conclusions' that indicate the concerns of the EU members and responses to them. This process applies to setting and directing foreign policy as well as to other policy issues. The role of the EU as a global actor is one of the current top five priorities of the Council ("What Does the Council of the EU do? 2015). It works together with the other groups to create foreign policy. For example, in the case of Ukraine a news article indicates this cooperation, stating: "It is understood the European Commission and the EU's foreign policy arm, the European External Action Service, are continuing to work on the various options for such sanctions, and what the Russian response to each would be" (Price 2014).

There are also actors involved that are not specifically assigned to the task of determining the EU's foreign policy; namely, the 28 European Union member states themselves. While these countries are represented in the Commission and Council in different ways, they also have the ability to be independent actors in the foreign affairs of the EU as a whole. This reality applies specifically to the most powerful and influential countries in the EU, which are generally the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. If one, or especially more than one, of these countries takes a strong stance on an issue, they can not only pressure other EU countries into taking similar steps, but also partially guide the direction of the EU as a whole. This process is more prevalent in some cases than others. For example, in the current crisis in Syria there has been a great division of opinion over some decisions regarding sanctions and restrictive measures. According to BBC, on one side, "Britain and France had been pressing for the ability to send weapons to what they call moderate opponents of President Assad, saying it would push Damascus towards a political solution to the two-year conflict" ("EU Ends Arms Embargo on Syrian Refugees" 2013), while on the opposing side "other countries had opposed opening the way for weapons to be sent, saying it would only worsen the violence" ("EU Ends Arms Embargo on Syrian Refugees" 2013). In the end the argument presented by Britain and France prevailed, showing the power and sway that EU countries such as these two can have over others in an unofficial capacity.

Case Study: The Ukrainian Crisis (2013-Present)

Ukraine serves as a good case study because it is a country that has close ties, not only to many European countries, but also to the EU as a whole. The recent crisis in Ukraine has drawn international attention and has no doubt had effects on the EU's relations not only with other countries but also with several international organizations. Since Ukraine is generally considered to be a part of Europe, specifically Eastern Europe, the crisis can thus be considered a 'European issue'. Therefore, one would expect the European Union to be involved with this issue. Ukraine is also a country that has been seeking a closer and more integrated relationship with the EU for a long time. For these reasons, Ukraine offers a useful example of the EU's manner of addressing foreign issues in two ways: first, how the EU forms foreign policy in light of a situation that it would be and is expected to deal with, and second, the geographical proximity of Ukraine which it cannot ignore.

European Union-Ukrainian Relations (1998-2013)

The basis of EU-Ukrainian relations is the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement that entered into force in 1998. In this agreement, four objectives were laid out. These were encouragement of political dialogue; promotion of trade, investment, and harmonious economic relations; enabling economic, social, financial, civil, scientific, technological, and cultural cooperation; and assistance in the development of Ukraine's democracy and market economy ("Partnership and Cooperation Agreement" 1998). EU foreign policy toward Ukraine has generally followed the same path for years, with both sides making various steps toward greater integration. When describing their foreign policy goals in regards to Ukraine, the EU website states: "The European

Union and Ukraine share an objective which transcends bilateral cooperation: gradual progress towards political association and economic integration” (“The EU's Relations with Ukraine”). These goals are reflected in the policy currently in place. For example, many of the agreements with Ukraine currently deal with the creation of a free trade area with Ukraine and financial assistance from the EU.

EU-Ukraine relations have been largely defined by the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and by the enlargement process. As part of the ENP, Ukraine has been the subject of an action plan that has defined its relations with the EU for some time (“The EU's Relations with Ukraine”). Additionally, the country has felt the effects of the enlargement of the EU and has desired to become a part of that process since the mid-1990s. In 2009, the Eastern Partnership, a denomination of the ENP that refers specifically to Eastern European countries, brought Ukraine into the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and led to the negotiation of an Association Agreement in the period between 2007 and 2011. The Association Agreement is a type of arrangement that the EU sets out with each country (or sometimes group of countries) that is part of the ENP as a way to structure how the parties will interact. However, prior to the start of the Ukrainian crisis, the agreement had not been signed. In fact, President Yanukovich had refused to sign it in 2013, instead favoring a trade deal with Russia. This decision is the crux of the current conflict in Ukraine.

The Crisis in Ukraine (2013-Present)

The current crisis in Ukraine began around November 2013 when the Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich refused to make a trade deal with the European Union, instead closing a deal with Russia over gas debt. Many of the citizens in Ukraine did not

support the move and protests began in the capital, Kiev. By December over 800,000 people had joined a demonstration against the decision in Kiev (See Figure 1). With the protests still going strong in January, Yanukovich passed several laws restricting the right to protest. Frustration over these laws turned violent and protestors clashed with police, causing the law to be repealed only eleven days after it entered into force. This violence reached its tipping point in Kiev on February 20th, 2014, when the police once again clashed with protestors. BBC comments: “Kiev sees its worst day of violence for almost 70 years. At least 88 people are killed in 48 hours” (“Ukraine Crisis: Timeline” 2014). Only two days later, the death count had reached 100 people and the government essentially collapsed with the disappearance of President Yanukovich. At this point, an interim president, Oleksandr Turchynov, was elected by parliament to serve until the May 2014 elections.

Previous to this point, the conflict had taken the form of violence between pro-European protestors and government forces, such as the police. However, in the period between Turchynov taking office in late February and the scheduled elections in May, Russia voted to send troops to Crimea, an area of land that Russia and Ukraine had been feuding over for some time. The Ukrainian government considered this a declaration of war and sought support from the UN, the US, and the EU. However, in March a referendum was held in Crimea and the voters opted overwhelmingly to leave Ukraine and become a part of Russia. Most countries and international organizations considered this outcome highly suspicious, if not outright fraudulent. At this point the EU began to interfere actively in the situation. This is also when the conflict began that can be seen now between the pro-European Ukrainian government and military and pro-Russian

separatists. The initial trigger for this fight occurred on March 18th, 2014, when masked gunmen took over a base in Crimea, killing one member of Ukraine's military and wounding another. This event prompted the Ukrainian government to authorize the use of deadly force to combat other such attempts. What followed was a series of similar incidents. This included the Russian and pro-Russian forces taking over an airbase, a military base, and a Ukrainian ship. By April, the conflict had turned into a civil war, with the pro-Russian rebels taking control of more than 10 cities in Donetsk, a region in Eastern Ukraine.

When the election came around in May, many people in Ukraine hoped that it would bring about a positive change. However, the violence only continued to escalate after the election of the new president, Petro Poroshenko. Since his election, the conflict has become more militarized, with the Ukrainian army clashing with the armed and equipped pro-Russian separatist rebels. Suspicions that Russia has been supplying the rebels with equipment and troops have caused tension between the two countries ("Ukraine Crisis: Timeline" 2014). The violence in Eastern Ukraine continued, culminating in a commercial airline being shot down by a surface-to-air missile in July. Since then there have been two attempts at a ceasefire between the two forces, one in September and the other in February. These, however, have not been fully successful ("Ukraine Fast Facts" 2015).

Issues of Concern to the European Union in Ukraine

The real question to consider before looking at what actions the EU has taken in response to the situation in Ukraine is: why is the situation in Ukraine a concern for the EU? There are several answers to this question; however, essentially there are three

issues: the power and influence of Russia, instability, and European foreign relations issues such as the European Neighbourhood Policy, enlargement, and the status of Europe as a region.

The power and influence of Russia has been a concern in Europe for over a century, but has become more focused following the creation of the EU. Ukraine, much like other Eastern European countries, has traditionally been seen as the connecting border between Western Europe and Russia. This is even more so the situation today; Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova are now the only three countries not directly aligned with Europe, as part of the EU, or with Russia. Of these three countries, “Ukraine is the biggest frontier nation separating Russia and the EU” (Gumuchian 2014). Given its location, Ukraine has often been seen as a means to an end for both the EU and Russia. A news source comments, “Ukraine is something of a pawn between Russia and the West. For the West . . . its reach would spread further east; by contrast, the Russians see the Ukraine as key to holding on to their turf” (Gumuchian 2014). The Russians have also expressed concern that the US push for more North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) activity on the Russian-Ukrainian border will bring Ukraine closer to the West. This concern is far from unfounded as one article points out “Since Russia’s reunion with Crimea and the start of the military conflict in eastern Ukraine last spring, NATO forces have stepped up military exercises along the Russian border – in the Baltic States and Eastern Europe” (“NATO activity near Russian borders increased by 80% – General Staff” 2015). Thus, Ukraine has been the center of a figurative tug-of-war between the US, European powers, and Russia since Ukraine declared itself an independent nation in the 1990s. Neither group wants the other to achieve its goal.

Therefore, Russia taking control of Ukraine, either in whole or in part, has been a major concern of the EU.

The current conflict in Ukraine has shown that these concerns are far from unfounded. Early in the conflict many legislative changes were made by the temporary Ukrainian government under the advisement of Russia, restricting freedoms such as the right to protest and the right of free speech. These restrictions were followed by other legislation proposed by a pro-Russian legislator, which “introduced a number of laws that closely resembled Russian models” (Snyder 2014). As the conflict continued, Russia became more and more involved, going from subtly influencing policy to sending troops to occupy Crimea, to sending weapons to the pro-separatist rebels. President Obama, during a speech in Brussels, articulated the West’s concern over this issue. In that speech, Obama condemned Russia’s actions in Ukraine, arguing that such coordination by the US and EU was necessary ““not because we're trying to keep Russia down, but because the principles that have meant so much to Europe and the world must be upheld”” (Smith-Spark 2014).

Another issue is the general instability of the region affecting other European countries and the EU itself. For the last 11 years (8 years for Romania), the four EU member countries bordering Ukraine have created and nurtured ties with each other. Instability in this area can have a direct effect on these countries and, by extension, the EU as a whole. As the situation in Ukraine has become increasingly volatile, the EU has become increasingly concerned about violence and its consequences. At the beginning of the conflict, the situation in Ukraine was described as follows:

“For the past few weeks, billowing smoke, large fires, burnt out tires and cars as well as smashed windows of public buildings have become

familiar scenes in the snowy city as protests have plunged Ukraine, an eastern European country of 45 million people, into a deep political crisis.

Some of the images beamed around the world have been particularly dramatic -- protesters knocking down a giant statue of the Russian revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin and hacking it with hammers to loud cheers, explosions reminiscent of a war zone echoing around downtown Kiev, fierce clashes and abuse. One protester, naked aside from his shoes, was seen being kicked and forced onto a police bus” (Gumuchian 2014).

Already in those first few weeks of the conflict, the instability of the region became evident. The news source continued to comment on how the situation had been “drawing concern from its neighbors” (Gumuchian 2014), especially from the EU. An EU representative commented on this matter, stating: “ We are frightened, in the east of Ukraine, not only for Donetsk and Luhansk and not only for Ukraine, but also for the safety and security of the European Union” (“Ukraine: EU Fails to Agree on New Russia Sanctions” 2014). These concerns became even greater once it became apparent that Russia intended to send troops to Crimea and later to supply pro-separatist rebels with weapons and other supplies. By this point, not only was the country itself unstable, but the quantity of weapons available to escalate the conflict and the level of destruction had also increased. For example, at one point “up to 90 military trucks with rocket launchers and other weapons were seen passing through rebel held areas of eastern Ukraine . . . Ukrainian military reported an ‘intensive deployment’ of troops and equipment crossing the border from Russia into the east of the country” (“Ukraine Crisis: Rebel Elections Obstacle to Peace – EU” 2014). This deployment of troops and weapons increased the instability of the situation both physically and politically. At this

point the conflict was no longer limited to within the borders of Ukraine, but included Russia, a greater power that interfered directly in the Ukrainian situation.

The level of instability, both physical and political, in Eastern Ukraine also led to mass displacement; “Some 5.2 million people live in conflict-affected areas and 1.4 million are considered ‘highly vulnerable and in need of assistance’. More than a million people have fled their homes, with 633,523 living as displaced persons within Ukraine and 593,622 living outside Ukraine, mostly in Russia” (“Ukraine Conflict: EU Weighs more Sanctions on Russia” 2015). These numbers speak only to the number of people forced to flee their homes due to the conflict; they do not address the numbers of those who have been injured or killed in the course of the conflict. According to BBC, over 5,000 had been killed and over 10,300 had been injured (“Ukraine Conflict: EU Weighs more Sanctions on Russia” 2015). Having such a large number of displaced, injured, and dead led to challenges in housing and caring for these people. While most of this burden seems to have fallen on Russia and the government of Ukraine rather than on the EU directly, the EU has played a part in assisting Ukraine with facing these challenges.

Besides causing problems physically, politically, and logistically, instability has led to issues concerning the distribution of resources, especially gas. As a main supplier of gas to both Ukraine and the EU, Russia shut off gas to Ukraine, and by extension to the EU as a whole. There are several gas lines that run from Russia into Europe; however, one of the largest of these runs directly through Ukraine, and this the one that has been most affected (See Figure 2). While this source is only one of several that services Ukraine and the EU, it makes up a significant portion of their access to the

product. According to news sources, 50% of Ukraine's gas comes from Russia, while about one third of the EU's gas comes from Russia, about ½ of which is pumped through Ukraine. At least one sixth of normal gas levels depend on this transit through Ukraine. As a main source of heat during the winter for both Ukraine and other EU countries, gas is an issue of special concern to Europe. In fact, if the problem were to go unsolved, Ukraine would have a "winter shortfall of around 3 billion to 4 billion cubic meters of gas, analysts say" ("Russia-Ukraine Gas Deal Secures EU Winter Supply 2014). This shortfall would consequently affect the supplies of gas available to the EU, leading to the possibility that many Europeans would not be able to heat their homes throughout the winter.

The final point of concern for the EU is the manner in which these issues will affect the state of EU foreign relations through specific EU policies and Europe's status. Since Ukraine declared itself an independent state in the early 1990s, it has shown an increasing interest in being more closely aligned with Europe, a desire eventually manifesting in a declared intention to work to join the EU. The EU has generally greeted this desire favorably, but without actively encouraging it. Agreements with Ukraine, such as its place in the ENP, tie it to Europe and the EU, while still keeping the country from becoming completely integrated with the it. The most recent conflict and Russia's interest and actions in Ukraine have upset the previous balance, and now the EU may be forced into reevaluating Ukraine's place in Europe and their policies toward the country. The forces for joining Europe and those for joining Russia are tearing the country apart, and eventually a decision one way or the other will have to be made or the country will remain in its current state of limbo, furthering its current civil

war. When that decision is made, both Russia and Europe will have to be prepared to adjust to the consequences.

The European Union Response to the Ukrainian Crisis

How has the EU chosen to address the crisis in Ukraine? The process of deciding what to do in response to the situation in Ukraine has been far from easy or straightforward for the EU. At several points throughout the process their indecision has been clear. According to one article, “EU governments are deeply divided about taking action against Russia” (“Ukraine: EU Fails to Agree on New Russia Sanctions” 2014). Shortly thereafter, it was reported that within the EU there “was no agreement on how to respond to Russia's actions in Ukraine” (“Ukraine: EU Fails to Agree on New Russia Sanctions” 2014). This confusion over what should be done has certainly slowed the decision process and has affected the kinds of actions taken in response to the Ukrainian crisis. However, despite these challenges, the EU has taken an unprecedented role in the crisis. As of early April 2015, the EU’s actions in Ukraine have included sanctions on pro-separatist Ukrainian and Russian officials, providing monetary assistance to the government of Ukraine, serving as a mediator between Ukraine and Russia, providing on-the-ground help through a European Union Action Mission (EUAM), and putting in motion changes to the ENP and Association Agreement.

The first step taken by the EU as a whole in response to the situation in Ukraine and Russia’s role in the crisis was to impose sanctions. These have covered a wide range of areas and people, but have focused primarily on people supporting the pro-separatist rebels and businesses or areas of the economy important to Russia. The sanctions have become progressively more numerous since the beginning of the

conflict. Currently, “150 persons and 37 entities are subject to an asset freeze and a travel ban over their responsibility for actions which undermine or threaten the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine” (“EU Restrictive Measures in Response to the Crisis in Ukraine” 2015). These sanctions cover a wide variety of people in both Ukraine and Russia and include visa bans, asset freezes, and limited access to EU capital markets. Most of these sanctions are in response to actions that the EU did not approve of. For example, sanctions were placed on people involved in the misappropriation of state funds in Ukraine in order to discourage such behavior.

As the conflict continued, more sanctions were added not on individuals but on sectors of trade or geographic areas. Additionally, several other areas faced restriction. These included blocking new arms contracts between Europe and Russia, prohibiting the export of European military goods and similar items, limiting the export of energy-related equipment, restricting the loans on Russian state banks, and blocking defense-related technology exports and certain Russian oil industry exports. The geographical areas of Crimea and Sevastopol have been a particular focus of sanctions. Among these have been import bans on goods, a complete ban on investment, and a prohibition on the provision of tourism services to the area. These sanctions were a response to the EU’s disapproval of the annexation of the area by Russia (“EU Restrictive Measures in Response to the Crisis in Ukraine” 2015).

The main purpose of these sanctions has been to change the course of the crisis in Ukraine through influencing those supporting or perpetuating it. CNN commented: “The United States and EU are seeking to exert pressure on Russia through a combination of sanctions and diplomatic isolation” (Smith-Spark, Brumfield, and

Krever 2014). As this quote demonstrates, the main goal of the EU is to pressure Russia into doing what the EU wants. However, what the EU seeks from Russia in response to these sanctions is continuously changing. Sanctions are used primarily for two purposes: to threaten the subjects of the sanctions against taking a certain action or to punish the subject for failing to complete an action, or for participating in one that is not acceptable. At one point, the EU's end game was apparently the use of sanctions as a means of inducing Russia to stop aggravating the conflict in Ukraine. According to one news source, the "EU and the United States have repeatedly warned Moscow that more economic sanctions could be imposed if it doesn't act to defuse the crisis" (Smith-Spark, Almasly, and Walsh 2014). In its statement regarding the sanctions, the EU Council specifies that these are "meant as a strong warning: Illegal annexation of territory and deliberate destabilization of a neighboring sovereign country cannot be accepted in 21st century Europe" (Smith-Spark, Almasly, and Walsh 2014). Here, the EU's concern over issues such as instability and the image of 'Europe' is clear and is used to provide a rationale for threatening to impose sanctions on Russia as a consequence of further military action by Russia in Ukraine. Unfortunately, in this case the sanctions did not seem to have the desired effect, as noted in a subsequent article "Despite previous sanctions, the flow of weapons continues and on Tuesday the fighting appeared to have entered a dangerous new phase" (Smith-Spark, Almasly, and Walsh 2014).

Since the realization that using sanctions in a threatening manner as a warning against future bad behavior had failed, the EU turned to using sanctions more as a method of punishment. This method first became evident in the aftermath of the Flight 17 crash, when the sanctions were described by some as showing "a waning patience

with Russian President Vladimir Putin and the impact of the shoot-down of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17” (Smith-Spark, Almasry, and Walsh 2014). The crash of Flight 17 illustrated one of the main concerns of the EU in regards to the Ukrainian crisis: instability. Many Europeans died in this crash in Eastern Ukraine, providing the first major example of the crisis physically bleeding over into the EU.

However, even as the EU began to issue harsher sanctions, some EU member states expressed concern over the effects of such sanctions on their own economies, some even going so far as to actively oppose the sanctions. As these two ideas converged, the actual sanctions that were imposed by the EU took such concerns into account. Concerns over economic backlash were greatest for Germany, France, Britain, and Italy. More generally, trade was a major concern. As CNN commented: “The European Union had previously been reluctant to issue harsher sanctions against Russia because both regions rely on one another for about \$500 billion in trade and investment each year” (Smith-Spark, Almasry, and Walsh 2014). By restricting trade and business between themselves and Russia, European countries ran the risk of hurting their own economies as well as Russia’s. For this reason, the economic effects of sanctions on individual countries have to be balanced accordingly:

“Germany could be hit by Moscow because of its reliance on Russian energy supplies. France could suffer because of a deal to supply Moscow with two navy ships worth 1.2 bn euros to the struggling French economy. Britain is nervous because so much Russian money is tied up in London’s financial sector. All are vulnerable. As are many smaller EU states” (Price 2014).

Such concerns on the part of some of the largest EU countries remain in the background of all decisions regarding sanctions. Smaller countries also speak out strongly over their own concerns. For example, Italy was strongly opposed to EU sanctions on Russia. One

member of the European Parliament (MEP) from Italy's Northern League, Gianluca Buonanno, who was present at a vote regarding sanctions, was seen "wearing a T-shirt bearing the slogan 'No sanctions against Russia' on top of his suit in order to make his point" (Morris 2014). These concerns and disagreements among the EU member countries have limited the scope of sanctions. The sanctions have not been small scale. Holistically, they have affected almost every sector of Russian society, and the EU has not been reluctant to seek out people or institutions on which sanctions should be imposed. One article reports, "EU foreign ministers asked officials to put forward names of pro-Russian separatists to be added to the EU's sanctions list by the end of the month" ("Ukraine: EU Fails to Agree on New Russia Sanctions" 2014).

Beyond sanctions, another step that has been taken by the EU has been to provide support through monetary assistance to the government of Ukraine. The choice to provide this kind of assistance comes from two main sources: international pressure and the needs of the Ukrainian government. Since the onset of the crisis the main conflict at issue for Ukrainians has been whether to align themselves economically with Russia or the EU. As both the EU and Russia have interest in the area, in the end the Ukrainian government will have to decide whether it wants to align itself more closely to the East or the West. For this reason, the needs of Ukraine hold weight in the EU foreign policy decision-making process. For example, in light of the recent crisis, Ukraine is in desperate need of funds for a variety of purposes, something that the trade deal offered by Russia provides. Therefore, "with Ukraine desperately in need of a cash injection, Kiev cited the need for financial assistance if it were to do business with the EU" (Gumuchian 2014). This stipulation by the Ukrainian government is paired with

international awareness of the financial needs of Ukraine and a push to meet them to some degree.

Several different types of possible aid have been discussed, ranging from loans to free trade agreements to microcredits to visa-free travel for normal Ukrainians (Snyder 2014). Some European states, such as Germany, have pushed for quick financial aid to Ukraine with the help of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). After negotiations, a variation of this proposal began to be implemented. This plan would include money from both the IMF and the EU, equaling a total of 4.6 billion dollars (2.87 billion euros). This step is interesting because it is such a large amount of money. The European Council (EC) commented regarding the financial package: "Unprecedented levels of EU aid will be disbursed in a timely manner" (Morris 2014). Over half of this financial package will be made up of a loan for 1.6 billion euros that is to be used "to help it pay off some of its debts as well as supporting economic reforms" (Price 2014). Most of the rest of the money will go toward development assistance and to pay for the gas deal with Russia that will serve both Ukraine and EU countries. Some of the financial assistance comes in the form of indirect money, meaning that instead of giving money in loans directly to Ukraine, the EU will reduce costs for Ukraine on another front. In this case, the EU removed customs duties on exports from Ukraine to the EU.

Another major action that the EU has taken in response to the crisis in Ukraine is to act as a mediator between Russia and Ukraine, especially regarding negotiations over the gas pipeline. While the EU has been labeled as having this role, the actual negotiator(s) present have often been Germany's prime minister and, on occasion, the

prime ministers of France and/or the UK. For example, at one point BBC reported: “Earlier, German Chancellor Angela Merkel was reported to have called Ms Tymoshenko and urged her to work for unity. Mrs Merkel also called Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday to discuss the crisis; both agreed that the country's ‘territorial integrity must be safeguarded’” (“Ukraine: Interim Leader Turchynov Stresses ‘European Choice’” 2014). Germany, and by extension the EU, is trying not only to help Ukraine reach an agreement with Russia, but also to negotiate the status of Ukraine between the EU and Russia. A later article confirmed this idea by stating, “Germany is trying to act as a broker in the conflict and to assuage Russian fears that it will be threatened if Ukraine moves closer to the European Union” (“Ukraine: Interim Leader Turchynov Stresses ‘European Choice’” 2014). Thus, while Germany may be acting as a mediator between the two countries, it is also trying to further its own interests and those of the EU.

However, Germany has not acted completely alone. The EU as a whole, through various EU organizations, has actually brokered some of the negotiations. For example, the EU in the form of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has played a major role in negotiating ceasefires between Ukraine and Russia. Although the ceasefires themselves have not proven very effective, what is important is that the EU has sought such a major role in the negotiations. The EU has also played this role in the discussion of the gas deal between Ukraine and Russia. When the deal was reached, news sources reported it by saying: “Russia has agreed to resume gas supplies to Ukraine over the winter in a deal brokered by the European Union” (“Russia-Ukraine Gas Deal Secures EU Winter Supply” 2014). Another article made a similar comment,

stating: “The deal follows months of talks between EU officials and the Russian and Ukrainian energy ministers. The terms include the EU acting as guarantor for Ukraine's gas purchases from Russia and helping to meet outstanding debts” (“Russia-Ukraine Gas Deal Secures EU Winter Supply” 2014). In fact, discussions of the deal between the two countries are rarely mentioned without at least some reference to the role of the EU in its formation.

This move by the EU to become even more involved in the conflict within Ukraine between Ukrainian and pro-Russian forces and, by extension, between Ukraine and Russia has not been seen without a certain degree of skepticism. For example, one article reports the following concern: “If the EU is setting itself up as the guarantor power for Ukraine . . . in the face of lasting opposition from Moscow, ‘there is already a sense creeping into the foreign policy crowd that Europeans may have bitten off more than they can chew’” (Morris 2014). The article notes that while there are many who may not share these same concerns, the reality of the matter is that either way “this is new and uncharted territory for the European Union” (Morris 2014).

One of the most recent actions taken by the EU in Ukraine has been to commission and send an EEAS mission, known as a European Union Action Mission (EUAM), to the country. This program was set to start in January 2015 and the mission will stay in Ukraine for a couple of years. Missions like this one are not necessarily new ground for the EU, but are nonetheless a relatively recent development in their foreign policy approach. News articles discuss the operation only briefly as a type of “support group” (Price 2014) designed to help with “reforming the political and economic systems in the country” (Price 2014). A large number of the staff is from EU countries,

the rest coming from all corners of the globe. The primary goal of the EUAM is to help Ukraine “reform its civilian security sector – police, border authorities, intelligence services, and justice system” (*EUAM Ukraine Explained* 2014). They intend to do this by providing ‘strategic advice’ to relevant officials. By going through this process, Ukraine and the EUAM hope to foster trust between the people of Ukraine and their country’s security forces as well as to bring Ukraine’s standards in this area closer to those of the EU.

Another major response to the crisis in Ukraine is the signing of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU. The Association Agreement has been complete since 2011, but was not signed until about a year ago. Association Agreements are an important part of EU foreign relations and are designed to set up a thorough bilateral arrangement between the EU and another country. They can, as in the case of Ukraine, prepare a country for future entry in to the EU, but they also address many other aspects. For example, an Association Agreement must intend to establish close economic and political cooperation, create bodies for the management of the cooperation, create a privileged relationship between the European Union and its partner, and address human rights standards (“Association Agreements”). In many cases the Association Agreement will replace a previous Cooperation Agreement (a predecessor of the Association Agreement).

The EU offered the document to be signed by Ukraine in 2013, but the country’s president at the time refused, preferring a trade deal with Russia. The people’s frustration over this decision led to most of the initial conflict. Following the accession of the interim President, the EU and Ukraine moved to begin the process of signing and

implementing the Association Agreement. In March 2014, the political provisions of the Association Agreement were signed, leading to the signing of the full agreement in June 2014 after the new President Petro Poroshenko was in office. The Association Agreement includes the implementation of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area as well as “support to core reforms, economic recovery and growth, and governance and sector cooperation in areas such as energy, transport and environment protection, industrial cooperation, social development and protection, equal rights, consumer protection, education, youth, and cultural cooperation” (“EU-Ukraine Association Agreement: ‘What Does the Agreement Offer?’”). The EU website states that it “is unprecedented in its breadth (number of areas covered) and depth (detail of commitments and timelines)” (“A Look at the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement”). The implementation of this agreement has also been a big step in redefining Ukraine’s place in the ENP and as a possible candidate for entrance into the EU. “Economically these eastern neighbours of the EU have lagged behind other former communist bloc countries which joined the EU in the past decade. So economic integration is a big step towards possible EU membership in future” (Peter 2014). It is important to note that Ukraine is not the only country that signed such an agreement; this document in particular also includes Georgia and Moldova in the arrangement. These economic partnerships are strongly opposed by Russia (Peter 2014). The conflict in Ukraine thus forced the EU to reconsider such an agreement as well as to make a decision on taking more formal steps toward integration.

Case Study: The Syrian Crisis (2011-Present)

The second case study that I will be looking at is that of the European Union and Syria. This case presents a good example of the EU's response to a foreign policy crisis that is farther away from the member states that currently constitute the European Union. While the countries in the EU, as a whole and individually, have interests in Syria, the latter is not a country with which the EU has ever been especially closely connected. So, although the unrest caused by the crisis in Syria certainly has effects on the EU, and by extension on its foreign policy in that area, the crisis there is not likely to spill over into the EU as the one in Ukraine might do.

Although Syria is also within relatively close proximity to several EU countries and is part of the European Neighborhood Policy, it is largely defined as being within the orbit of the Middle East and the crisis there is defined as Middle Eastern rather than European. The international attention to the crisis is large, as recognized by the EU website, which states: "By 2014, the Syria crisis had become the largest humanitarian and security disaster in the world" ("The EU's Relations with Syria"). This statement clearly indicates that the situation in Syria is an issue that concerns the entire international community, and the responsibility for dealing with the problem is not viewed as being associated with any one group of countries.

European Union-Syrian Relations (1977-2011)

Relations between the EU and Syria have been historically shaky at best and practically undefined at worst. The foundation of the EU's foreign policy in regards to Syria today is still based on the Cooperation Agreement between the Syrian government and the EEC signed in 1977. The agreement took the form of a traditional international

treaty, with each EEC country signing separately, and focused almost solely on setting up a trade agreement between the signatory countries and on providing development aid to Syria. Article one of the agreement clearly lays out its purpose.

“The object of this Agreement between the Community and Syria is to promote overall cooperation between the Contracting Parties with a view to contributing to the economic and social development of Syria and helping to strengthen relations between the Parties. To this end provisions and measures will be adopted and implemented in the fields of economic, technical and financial cooperation and of trade” (“Cooperation Agreement” 1977).

This agreement was amended twice in 1986 and 1994, and is likely to accommodate changes within the structure of EU foreign policy making. In 1995, the Barcelona Process began to prescribe development aid to Syria, leaving the Cooperation Agreement to focus only on the trade relationship. Since 1995, relations between the EU and Syria have been essentially static. In 2008, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED), as a section of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), replaced the Barcelona Process. However, this change had very little effect on relations with Syria as its membership in the ENP was already suspended due to unrest in the area before the current crisis and to generally poor relations with the EU. The Association Agreement was negotiated between the two countries over the course of six years between 1998 and 2004; however, it was never signed or implemented. Twice, once in 2004 and once in 2009, the agreement came close to being signed, but at both times the EU or Syria decided to put off finalizing the agreement. Had it been signed, it would have focused on three main areas: political relations, economy and trade relations, and cooperation. It also would have involved a regular political dialogue between the two parties, the creation of a free-trade area and the implementation of economic reforms, and cooperation “ranging from education and scientific cooperation, over cultural heritage

and environmental protection, to health, agriculture, investment and the fight against organised crime” (“European-Syrian Cooperation Agreement”). Previous to the outbreak of the civil war in Syria, this agreement exemplified the direction of EU foreign policy toward Syria.

The Crisis in Syria (2011-Present)

The current crisis in Syria has been ongoing since March 2011 and has evolved to become increasingly more complicated over time. The conflict began when the government of Syria fired on peaceful protestors in Deraa (a city in Southern Syria). These protests were primarily motivated by the people’s dissatisfaction with Syria’s president, Bashar Al-Assad. When he made no move to step aside, the protests devolved into violence between the protestors and the police. By November 2011, the crisis had become more militarized with the Free Syrian Army (FSA) attempting to topple the Assad regime by force. In June 2012, the conflict began to actively bleed into surrounding countries, particularly Turkey. This increased level of violence attracted the attention of several other countries and international entities, such as the UN. In November 2013, the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces was formed as an opposition government, and by December the US, Britain, France, Turkey, and the Gulf states recognized the Coalition as a legitimate force. The first large amounts of aid from international donors were pledged to relief aid for Syria at the beginning of 2013. This action reflected increased international concern over the crisis in Syria. In June 2014, the situation was further complicated by the declaration of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS or IS), with territorial claims extending from Aleppo in northwestern Syria to eastern Iraq. This declaration not only put ISIS in the

middle of the civil war in Syria, but also caught the attention of many other countries who were apprehensive about the sudden rise of such a powerful extremist group. The introduction of this third factor created a new level of challenge in the conflict in Syria, leading to increased concern from international powers.

At this point, the crisis became a three-way civil war between the government of Syria, the Free Syrian Army and National Coalition, and ISIS. The actions of the government of Syria under President Assad have remained relatively confined within the borders of Syria; however, the actions of the other two groups have involved several other countries. The Free Syrian Army, for example, is based in Turkey where it first came together in the capital of Istanbul. Similarly, the National Coalition was formed by a group of Syrians in Qatar. It is unclear at this point exactly where ISIS originated but it maintains some of its largest strongholds in Syria and Iran, as well as in a few other Middle Eastern countries. The civil war in Syria has left no area of the country untouched and has even sparked a few skirmishes with Turkey. The goals of the three main entities differ greatly, with the Syrian government attempting to keep President Assad in power, the FSA and National Coalition attempting to create a democratic government, and ISIS planning to create a caliphate, or an area ruled according to Muslim law (“Guide: Syrian Crisis” 2012).

Issues of Concern to the European Union in Syria

Several issues pertaining to the situation in Syria concern the EU as a whole. Three primary issues have occupied most of the EU’s attention: refugees, relations with Turkey, and security concerns. As for the first, the crisis has led to an enormous number of refugees and displaced people. As of October 2014, the EU believed that about 9

million Syrians had fled their country since the beginning of the crisis in March 2011. Of those refugees, over 6 million remain displaced in Syria and about 1/3 have sought refuge in surrounding countries, such as Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq (See Figure 3). The number of refugees, especially in Turkey, has been a major concern for the EU, partly because many of these refugees cross Turkey's Western border into the EU through Bulgaria, an EU member state. Many of the refugees in camps in Turkey and Bulgaria are trying not only to receive help, but also to officially enter the EU in order to have access to better opportunities. This situation concerns the EU due to the number of refugees attempting entrance into the region, and also because the situation creates challenges for the EU's relationship with Turkey. This is the second issue of concern coming out the crisis in Syria ("Syrian Refugees" 2013).

The EU is very closely tied to Turkey for several reasons, one being the fact that Turkey is a prospective member state that is in the process of applying to join. Furthermore, Turkey has long been an important ally for many other reasons. According to one EU news report, "Turkey is a key partner for the European Union as an active regional foreign policy player, with a strategic location, including for the EU's energy security" ("Turkey Visit Underlines Joint Action on EU External Relations" 2014). Maintaining good relations with Turkey forces the EU to take a stance on the Syrian crisis and to provide some kind of assistance. Since the EU has accepted a relatively small number of refugees, most of the latter have been forced to remain in Turkey, which does not have sufficient means to support them. Of the approximately 3 million refugees who sought safety in surrounding countries, 1 million are in Turkey. One EU report stated that by summer 2014 Turkey had spent over \$2.5 billion on camps and

other necessities for the refugees. Thus, Turkey has been propositioning the EU and other international entities not only to take on more refugees, but also for greater monetary support. Since Turkey is a prospective EU member, the EU cannot ignore these requests (“Syrian Refugees” 2013).

The third major concern of the EU in regard to the Syrian crisis is the contribution of the conflict in Syria to security concerns associated with terrorism. This concern stems from the reality that many European citizens going to Syria to join the fighting there may pose a threat to their home countries on their return. A news source comments, “the influx of European fighters into Syria is unprecedented” (Pizzi 2014). Europol expands on this concern:

“European fighters, who travel to conflict zones, are assessed as posing an increased threat to all EU Member States on their return. They may seek to set up logistical, financial or recruitment cells, and may act as role models to individuals within extremist communities – further enhancing their capacity to encourage others to travel. In addition, their resolve is likely to have strengthened in the conflict zones, and they may have gained the skills and contacts to carry out attacks in the EU” (“Returning Fighters from Syrian Conflict Cause Concern in the EU” 2014).

It is unclear how many European fighters are in Syria. They have joined all sides of the conflict, including the ISIS. Already, there have been several arrests and convictions of such ‘returned’ fighters and those that recruit them (See Figure 6). However, the EU anticipates that the longer the conflict persists, the more people will go to Syria to fight, and consequently the greater the number of EU citizens with fanatical intentions who will return (“Returning Fighters from Syrian Conflict Cause Concern in the EU” 2014). This situation not only causes concern amongst European citizens, but also leads to instability in a variety of sectors dealing with EU internal security.

The European Union Response to the Syrian Crisis

This leads to the question: what actions is the EU taking in response to the Syrian crisis? Unlike the situation in Ukraine, which has been described as a revolution in EU foreign policy, most commentators claim that the EU response in Syria is deficient. This is not to say, however, that the EU is not taking any action in Syria, but that the nature and level of the actions taken are different from those taken in response to the crisis in Ukraine. The EU has focused its efforts on freezing previous agreements with Syria, providing humanitarian aid, exerting political pressure, modifying refugee policies, implementing sanctions, and realizing anti-terrorism measures.

The first collective action taken by the EU was to retract and put on hold several agreements that the EU had with Syria. For example, at the beginning of the conflict, many of the previous agreements for monetary assistance and aid to the Syrian government were terminated or put on hold. In May 2011, one of the several conclusions adopted by the Council of the EU in response to the crisis in Syria stated “the EU has decided to suspend all preparations in relation to new bilateral cooperation programs and to suspend the ongoing bilateral programs with the Syrian authorities under ENPI and MEDA instruments” (“Council Conclusions on Syria” 2011). These bilateral aid programs were guided by the instruments of the ENP and have been among the more notable manifestations of EU-Syrian relations. The Council also stated that it would not consider signing the new version of the Association Agreement at that time either. Depending on the future status of the crisis in Syria, more measures may be taken and further community aid may be stopped, a threat that would be carried out in the next few years through various restrictive actions.

Another early action that the EU took in response to the Syrian crisis was to impose a variety of sanctions and other restrictions on the Syrian government as well as on some individuals and economic sectors, such as trade. From the beginning of the conflict in March 2011, the EU had been creating and pushing for sanctions on Syria. Initially, the EU focused not only on implementing its own sanctions, but also on encouraging other international entities, such as the UN, to do so as well. Although trade with Syria does not make up a large part of the EU's economy, it is critical for Syria. Thus, the sanctions and restrictions have the capability to be seriously damaging to the Syrian economy. The sanctions, which began in 2011, involve travel bans and asset freezes affecting over 120 people and 40 companies. "These include President Assad and most of his close family, the Syrian Central Bank and senior officials, including seven ministers" ("Q&A: Syria Sanctions" 2012). These sanctions also involve a ban on crude oil imports, an arms embargo, and a block on trade in gold, precious metals, and diamonds. It is believed that the ban on oil imports will have the greatest effect. One news article supports this conclusion, stating: "The EU's oil import ban is likely to hit Syria's economy hardest. Oil revenues account for around 20% of Syrian GDP. Before the EU ban, 90% of oil exports went to the EU, mainly to Germany, Italy and France" ("Q&A: Syria Sanctions" 2012). For this reason, the EU had good reason to believe that sanctions would put the desired pressure on the Syrian government in hopes of bringing an end to the conflict.

However, as the conflict became more complicated with the introduction of an organized and recognized opposition and ISIS, some of these measures were reevaluated in 2013. After an EU meeting in Brussels, the EU issued a declaration

dictating that all sanctions and restrictions would continue with the exception of the arms embargo, which would then be lifted. Now instead of not permitting any weapons into Syria, the EU decided that “Member states can now decide their own policy on sending arms to Syria, but agreed not to ‘proceed at this stage with the delivery’ of equipment” (“EU Ends Arms Embargo on Syrian Rebels” 2013). Ending the arms embargo was something that many influential EU countries had been considering for several months. Britain was especially vocal about its desire to end the embargo. However, some other EU countries, such as the Czech Republic, were not in favor of ending the embargo. This standstill led to the decision not to send any military equipment to Syria regardless of the technical end of the embargo. As a BBC news report on the declaration comments, “it is clear that the EU decision will not make much difference on the ground in the immediate future” (“EU Ends Arms Embargo on Syrian Rebels” 2013).

The main action that the EU has taken in regards to the Syrian crisis is to provide humanitarian aid, primarily through monetary means. Monetarily, the EU as a whole has given the most aid to victims of the Syrian crisis, greater even than the United States. As of 2015, the EU had dedicated 2,900,000,000 euros (currently about \$3,103,000,000). This number is a couple of million euros more than what the US provided. According to the EU delegation in the US, the “bulk of the resources allocated early on in the crisis have helped refugees inside camps. In 2014 the focus has primarily been to support refugees living outside camps, in particular new arrivals” (“Syrian Refugees” 2013). Since 2012, large proportions of aid have also gone to support the provision and allocation of medical care and supplies, food, shelter, water,

sanitation, and psychological support for refugees and displaced people, both inside and outside of Syria (“Syrian Refugees” 2013). Some of the aid has also gone to fund basic education for young Syrian refugees. This pattern of aid will continue over the next couple of years. One program that is currently being planned will give around 40 million euros “aimed at enhancing access to services, strengthening resilience of host communities as well as facilitating integration of refugees. It will also be supporting direct capacity-building for the Turkish Government in migration management” (“Syrian Refugees” 2013). Beyond this more direct aid to Syria and Syrian refugees, the EU has also given money to help Turkey support the large number of Syrian refugees residing in their country. The purpose of this aid was described as follows: “With growing numbers of refugees from Syria seeking sanctuary in Turkey, the European Commission is stepping up its assistance with an additional €10 million in humanitarian funding both inside Turkey and inside Syria via cross-border assistance from Turkey” (“Syrian Refugees” 2013). Some of the aid money is also used to fund a physical EU presence of humanitarian experts in Turkey to monitor the crisis in Syria and the refugee situation in Turkey. Beyond purely humanitarian aid, the EU has also given funds to provide assistance for the international effort to remove and destroy the chemical weapons held by the Syrian government. This removal was finally completed in June 2014 by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the United Nations (UN).

In addition to physical and economic measures, the EU has also attempted to pressure Syria politically into changing their tactics by condemning various actions taken by the Syrian government. For example, early on in the conflict, one news source

stated: “Five EU nations have summoned Syrian ambassadors to condemn Damascus' recent violent crackdown on anti-government protesters” (“Syria: EU Nations Summon Syrian Envoys over Crackdown” 2011). An early conclusion by the Council included eight points, five of which were dedicated purely to condemning the actions of the Syrian government against its own people (“Council Conclusions on Syria” 2011). This trend continued during the chemical weapon attack, where even after their removal, the EU continued to maintain “pressure on the country to ensure that its chemical weapons programme is completely and irreversibly dismantled” (“The EU’s Relations with Syria”). Despite the EU’s intention to pressure Syria into abandoning chemical weapons, its efforts in this instance remain financial in nature. While this tactic is one that is nearly always used by all organizations and governments, what is interesting here is the use of this tactic as an acknowledged response to the situation.

Another main response to the Syrian crisis has been to implement new policies and quotas for refugees in European countries. With Turkey as a major destination for displaced people, many refugees attempt to either cross the border from Turkey to Bulgaria illegally or to apply for legal refugee status in the EU. Some countries within the EU have been more open to accepting refugees than others. For example, Germany and Sweden have both made moves to accommodate large numbers of refugees, while countries such as Lithuania and Estonia have not. Many EU countries have expanded quotas either for refugees in general or for Syrian refugees specifically to allow more of them to apply for and locate temporary or permanent residence in the country. For example, in 2013 Austria increased the quota for Syrian refugees by 1,000 spaces (“Syrian Refugees” 2013), and a total of ten EU countries had followed suit by 2013

("EU Slammed by Amnesty over 'Pitiful' Syrian Refugee Response" 2013). By far the leaders in taking in refugees have been Germany and Sweden (See Figure 4). Since 2013, Germany alone has pledged to take in 30,030 Syrian refugees through a variety of means and in several degrees of permanent settlement. Several other EU countries have agreed to take on anywhere between around 70 to a couple of thousand refugees ("Syrian Refugees" 2013). However, as a whole, the EU response to refugees has been two sided. While "the EU has accepted the vast majority of Syrians who have applied for asylum, it has to date received relatively few requests. Its response to a UNHCR call for more than 130,000 resettlement spots for Syrian refugees between 2013-2016 has also been tepid" ("Syrian Refugees" 2013). There are also some complaints that the refugees in some countries, such as Greece and Bulgaria, are not treated well. Nonetheless, over 55,000 Syrian refugees have been successful in achieving some level of asylum in the EU ("EU Slammed by Amnesty over 'Pitiful' Syrian Refugee Response" 2013). The status of refugees does not involve official EU policy or EU demand for action by member states, but is rather determined individually by many of the largest and leading EU states. While being left up to the individual countries, actions deriving from such refugee policies have been generally supported and encouraged by the EU.

One of the most recent actions taken by the EU in response to the crisis in Syria has been to implement more anti-terrorism measures. In January of 2014, as concerns over possible terrorist attacks in the EU by returned fighters from Syria increased, the EU decided to update its strategy for combatting radicalization and recruitment of extremists. The initial proposal issued by the Commission called for holding a

conference led by the EU's Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN) on foreign fighters in Syria. RAN is a group set up by the EU as a part of its counter-terrorism strategy, focusing on preventing EU citizens from becoming involved in extremist groups or convincing them to stop participating in such activities ("Radicalization Awareness Network [RAN]" 2015). The purpose of this conference was described as follows

"This conference will bring together representatives of all relevant sectors (law enforcement, healthcare, etc.) from the cities in the EU where foreign fighters are causing the most concern. Local practitioners and national experts will share practices and exchange ideas on preventing potential fighters from going to Syria and engaging with foreign fighters after they return" ("Radicalization Awareness Network [RAN]" 2015).

Following this conference, in summer 2014, the EU decided to create an action plan in order to "combat the threat posed by returned fighters" (Pizzi 2014). This action plan is still incomplete and continues to be a point of discussion among European leaders and RAN in 2015. The initial idea behind that plan was to set up a system that "would encourage the sharing of intelligence across borders to enforce travel bans and track suspects" (Pizzi 2014). These measures would target specifically lone wolf' terror suspects, or those that work alone to carry out acts of terrorism.

Conclusions

The case studies of the current crises in Ukraine and Syria both present two different and pertinent examples of the varying foreign policy strategies employed by the EU. In response to the civil war in Syria, the EU focused its efforts on freezing previous agreements with Syria, providing humanitarian aid, exerting political pressure, modifying refugee policies, implementing sanctions, and realizing anti-terrorism measures. In response to the situation in Ukraine, by contrast, the EU imposed sanctions on pro-separatist Ukrainian and Russian officials, provided monetary assistance to the government of Ukraine, served as a mediator between Ukraine and Russia, provided on-the-ground help through an European Union Action Mission (EUAM), and put changes to the ENP and Association Agreement into motion.

In some ways the EU's response to these two situations was similar. For example, in both cases one of the earliest responses was to pull away from the situation and to impose sanctions. In the case of Syria, the negative reaction was even more extreme, with the EU completely ceasing all negotiations and agreements with the Syrian government. In both cases the EU also moved toward a more positive approach as the crises continued, often turning toward providing some kind of monetary assistance and taking diplomatic measures. However, the nature of these methods varied fairly significantly between the two. The EU also took some actions that did not overlap between the two cases, such as the anti-terrorism and refugee policies in the Syrian case and the presence of the EUAM and the signing of the Association Agreement in the Ukrainian case.

Fundamentally, the EU's response to the crisis in Syria presented a much more removed approach that focused on creating change through policies internal to the EU, while their response to the crisis in Ukraine proved to be a much more invasive and proactive policy approach. All of the actions taken in the Syrian case fall into one of two categories: either they are ones that can be taken safely from afar and do not require any direct intervention, or they are internal measures taken by either the EU as a whole or by individual member states. The sanctions, humanitarian aid, political pressure, and the end of the agreements with Syria are all actions that do not require direct intervention or contact of any kind. The EU can judge from afar measures that need to be taken and implement these or, in the case of the agreements, the EU stops an action completely. Some of these actions, especially ending the agreements, could also have negative long-term consequences permanently affecting relations with Syria depending on how the conflict ends. The refugee and anti-terrorism policies affect foreign relations and are felt by the other countries. However, the measures are largely internal applying only to the EU member states themselves. So instead of preventing or encouraging the other party from doing an action, the EU prevents or allows its members to undertake an action. However, in either case such responses do not require the cooperation or consent of the other parties involved and are, in that way, removed.

In the case of Ukraine, quite the opposite is true. While some EU actions function primarily from afar, such as sanctions and monetary assistance, the EU also voluntarily immerses itself in the crisis. It sends a EUAM to Ukraine to help the government, it actively becomes involved mediating negotiations between Ukraine and Russia, and it enters into a long-term economic and cooperative agreement. These

actions require a great deal of effort on the part of the EU and require it to send people into the conflict and take greater risks with long lasting agreements. In this case, one could almost argue that the EU is an equal actor in the conflict with Russia, which is actually directly involved. These actions are also more focused on maintaining or creating permanent relations with the parties involved. It is necessary for the EU to maintain close relations with both Russia and Ukraine, and this necessity is evident in the EU's actions.

The crises in Syria and Ukraine represent only two examples of how the EU reacts to events with serious foreign policy implications, and thus cannot reveal a concrete trend. However, such reactions can reveal tendencies that have significance for understanding how the EU responds to international issues. More situations would have to be studied in order to form a solid conclusion, but these two situations are enough to present a hypothesis on the tendencies of the European Union's foreign policy strategies.

From these two scenarios it can be hypothesized that the foreign policy strategies used by the EU will be different depending on how distant the situation is from the countries of the EU and their day-to-day functions. The strategies used in issues that are closer to home will be interventionist and would appear to focus on maintaining or facilitating close relations between the EU and the parties involved. Helping to resolve the crisis and to prevent further devolution of the situation would be a priority in such cases. On the other hand, issues that are a bit more removed from the EU will involve generally less direct action, but also more actions that could result in negative political consequences. I think that this difference exists because even though

the EU may have interests in countries or areas more removed from themselves, such as Syria, these interests will not outweigh their desire to not get involved in a crisis for which they have no 'ownership'. They have relations with that country, and want to continue those relations, but since the problem is not "theirs" they will react in a less interventionist manner. On the other hand, responses to issues close to home may be more positive and may focus on assistance because these are issues that the EU cannot avoid. The wrong move, or even no move, could cause serious repercussions in their backyard.

Appendix

List of Abbreviations

- CFSP - Common Foreign and Security Policy
- EEAS – European External Action Services
- EDC – Economic Defense Community
- EEC – European Economic Community
- ENP – European Neighbourhood Policy
- EPC – European Political Cooperation
- EU – European Union
- EUAM – European Union Action Mission
- EUROMED – Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
- EUSR – European Union Special Representative
- FSA – Free Syrian Army
- IMF – International Monetary Fund
- ISIS/IS – Islamic State
- JHA – Justice and Home Affairs
- MEP – Member of the European Parliament
- NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- OPCW – Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
- OSCE – Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
- RAN – Radicalization Awareness Network
- SEA – Single European Act

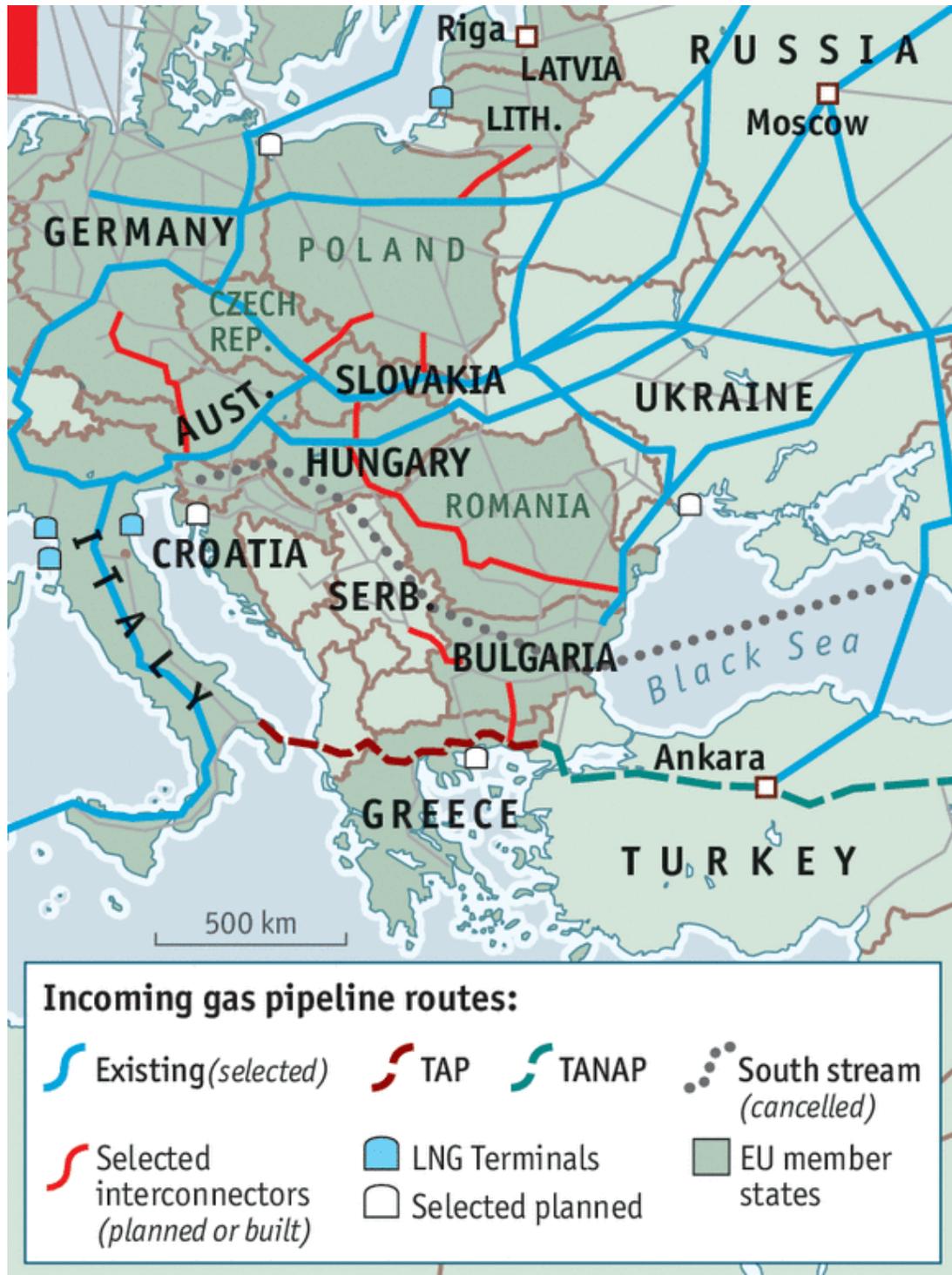
UN – United Nations

US – United States

Figure 1: Map of Ukraine



Figure 2: Map of Gas Pipelines



Economist.com

Figure 3: Map of Syria Showing Refugees

Syrian crisis displacement

2,000,000+
INTERNALLY
DISPLACED

603,867+
REFUGEES*

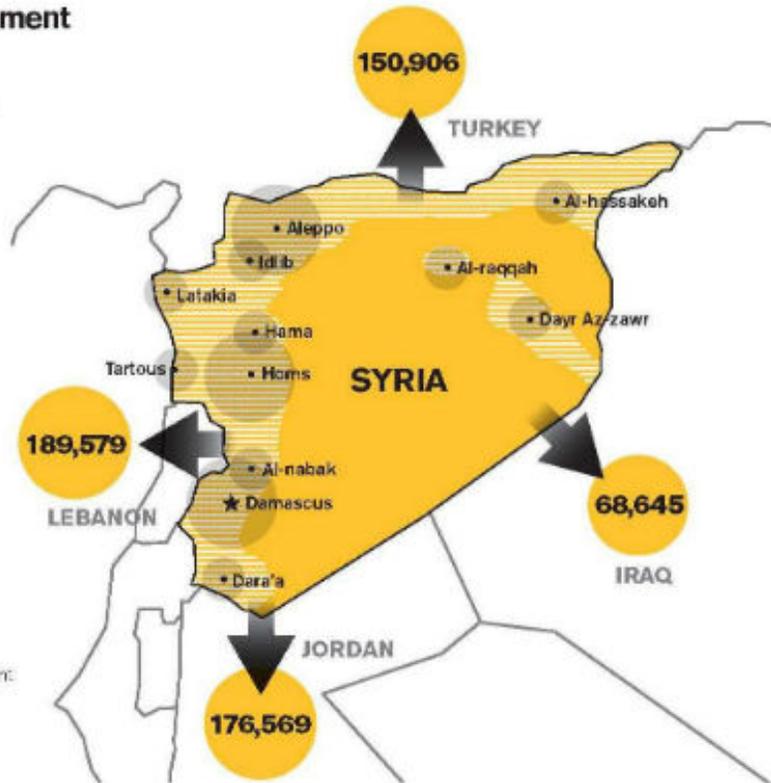
*Map does not include 18,158 Syrian refugees who have fled to Egypt and north Africa.

CITIES WITH THE MOST DISPLACED

- 20,000–100,000 IDPs
- 100,000+ IDPs

● Size of Syrian refugee population, registered and awaiting registration

▨ Areas of conflict & displacement



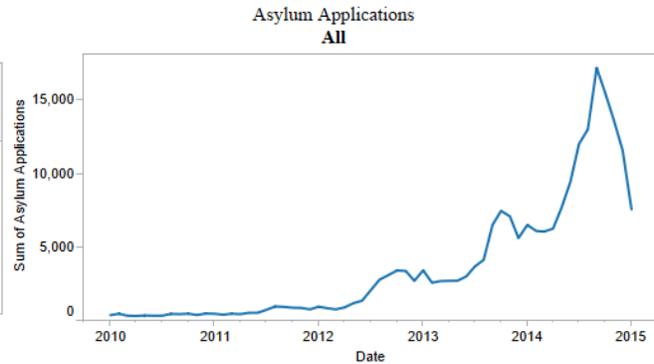
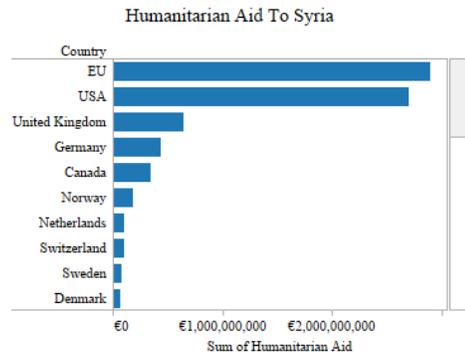
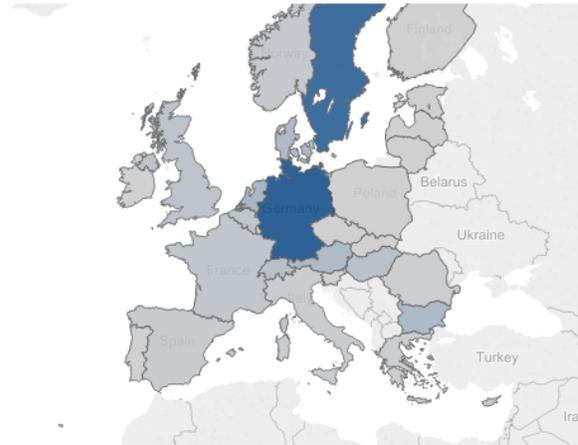
Sources: Displaced, IDMC; Refugee Numbers, UNHCR; Conflict areas, F.U. As of January 7, 2013.

Figure 4: Graphs, and Charts Showing Aid and Refugee Applications from the Syrian Crisis

This visualisation shows asylum applications of Syrian refugees in the EU, the amount of humanitarian aid distributed to Syria by EU member states & various actions taken by member states. Select a country on the map below for details. Click the country again to go back to main map.

Actions and political developments regarding Syria or refugees

Austria	<p>April 2014: Federal Minister of the Interior Johanna Mikl-Leitner declared that the Austrian Humanitarian Admission Programme (HAP), which shall support the most vulnerable refugees among them women, children and persecuted minorities, will be expanded from 500 to 1500 Syrian refugees. With this initiative Austria follows.</p> <p>June 2013: Austria withdraws its peacekeepers from UN mission in Golan Heights.</p> <p>May 2013: Cautions against ending arms embargo – argues that it would undermine US-Russia understanding and weapons could go to extremists.</p> <p>October 2012: Austrian Foreign Minister Spindelegger calls reported use of cluster munitions by Syrian army a flagrant human rights violation.</p>
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SOURCE: EUROSTAT/ECHO 29 October 2014

Figure 6: Map of Arrested Terrorist Suspects in the EU



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