Foreign policy coordination and diplomatic alignment in the OSCE

Differential patterns of Europeanisation in non EU-Europe

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Abstract:

This paper builds on Europeanisation studies to investigate how sustained interactions with the EU in multilateral fora can affect the foreign policy of non-EU member states. More specifically, it enquires into the politics of declaratory alignment of seventeen European non-EU member states in the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). It analyses quantitatively the frequency with which those non-EU states have aligned themselves with EU declarations since 2004, and it researches qualitatively the causal and constitutive underpinnings of declaratory alignment. The paper finds that non-EU states’ positions in the OSCE are often distinctively convergent with EU preferences, but not always so. The paper then scrutinises the contractual obligations falling under various EU conditionality regimes, and finds that in foreign policy matters, compliance plays a non-essential role in re-orientating the multilateral diplomacy of EU partners. It also explores the dispositional forces that induce states to redefine their foreign policy interests in collective rather than individual terms, and underscores the importance of socialisation in this respect. It finally investigates the teleological motives that prompt non-EU states to emulate EU practices or seek rational solutions, and finds that this dimension should not be neglected. Having explored the manifold underpinnings of alignment, the paper discusses the multifaceted reasons of non-alignment, and concludes that states’ “Europeanness” should not solely be assessed in light of their non-alignment with EU declarations.

Keywords: Europeanisation, foreign policy, alignment, OSCE, non-EU Europe

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1. Introduction

With the consolidation, at the European level, of EU political, legal and institutional structures, the issues raised by Europeanisation research have become more salient than ever (for an overview, see Graziano & Vink 2007). But the remarkable development of this research agenda should not conceal the fact that Europeanisation remains an “emergent field of inquiry” (Goetz & Hix 2001: 15). Conceptually, Europeanisation remains poorly bounded, not least because of its peculiar genealogy with EU integration theories, which hinders its conceptual emancipation (Marciaq 2011b). Spatially, Europeanisation remains overtly dominated by an academic interest for EU member states alone, which tends to fuse Europeanisation with EU-isation. Methodologically, this pitfall nurtures a “no variation issue” that is detrimental to the sound understanding of the phenomenon. Phenomenologically, it remains unclear what Europeanisation entails in general terms, beyond the all-embracing notion of change, not least because researchers are reluctant to consider Europeanisation in terms of observable outcomes. And an aetiology (not to mention a theory) of Europeanisation is still missing, despite some pioneering contributions. All in all, it is obvious that challenges in Europeanisation research are far from extinct.

Taking stock of these challenges, this paper intends to make a reflexive contribution to Europeanisation research in a geopolitical field that lies at the crux of two under-researched inquiries. Geographically, first, it explores Europeanisation in non-EU Europe, i.e. in states with highly differentiated perspectives of EU membership. Sectorally, then, the paper focuses on the Europeanisation of national foreign policies, and more specifically, states’ multilateral diplomacy in the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). This twofold focus echoes some of the main challenges faced by Europeanisation research today. Conceptually, it suggests that Europeanisation is more than accommodating “pressures emanating directly or indirectly from EU membership” (Featherstone & Radaelli 2003: 7); spatially, it contends that Europeanisation is not bordered by EU territoriality; methodologically, it responds to the no-variation issue by selecting highly differentiated cases; phenomenologically, it proposes to anchor Europeanisation in convergence studies, and aetiologically, it finally shows that Europeanisation is not limited to compliance and conditionality.

The paper starts with discussing specific aspects of Europeanisation research. In the empirical part, then, the paper analyses quantitatively the changing patterns of declaratory alignment of seventeen non-EU states in the OSCE between 2004 and 2011. Using Carlsnaes’ (2002) meta-theoretical framework of foreign policy analysis, it qualitatively explores the structural causes, normative dispositions and teleological motives underpinning the differential patterns of alignment, and concludes by discussing the (non) issue of non-alignment.

2. Researching Europeanisation… in non-EU Europe?

2.1. Spatial and conceptual challenges
Europeanisation research has long focused on EU member states alone. This is because the concept of Europeanisation, in many studies, is co-defined by EU integration. Conceptualised as the domestic impact of EU integration/membership, Europeanisation, often exhibits a conceptual domain that is delineated by the extent to which the EU has widened in territory and deepened in competency, and a geography that is ineluctably confined to that of the EU. This conceptual interweaving, which fosters an “EU domination” bias (Vink & Graziano 2007), falsely conflates Europeanisation with “EUisation”. More dramatically, its coalescence of EU and European spaces neglects the spatial domain that exists between the two—a “non-EU Europe” that Europeanisation research has no reason to discard (Marciacq 2011b).

This paper steps into the breach that some researchers have recently opened (e.g. Lavenex & Ucarer 2004; Schimmelfennig 2009; Börzel 2010; Lavenex 2004) and adopts a European governance, rather than EU integration approach to Europeanisation. It defines Europeanisation as domestic change in states’ political structures, induced by interactions performed on European governance structures (Marciacq 2011b). This conceptualisation ceases to treat Europeanisation as a phenomenon consubstantially linked to EU integration. This paradigmatic shift is important, as it allows for scrutinising the external dimension of Europeanisation in European states with differentiated, if any, EU accession perspectives, and in space that have been targeted by European foreign policy actions.

Pushing away this New Frontier not only responds to legitimate concerns over refining the concept of Europeanisation. It also opens avenues for overcoming the so-called “no-variation” issue (e.g. Haverland 2003; Goetz 2007). This methodological bias pertains to a suboptimal selection of cases (most cases studied in the Europeanisation literature are pre-2004 EU member states). Since there is a lack of cross-national variability in the independent variable, comparisons between Europeanised countries usually end up by underscoring the specifics of each case, and therewith fail to shed light, more generally, on Europeanisation’s key challenges -its phenomenology and aetiology.

2.2. Phenomenological challenge

Europeanisation researchers are often reluctant to investigate what Europeanisation entails in phenomenological, rather than processual terms, throughout Europe. This may explain why quantitative studies are scarcely used in Europeanisation research. In many research designs, e.g. inspired by the “goodness of fit model” (Green Cowles, et al. 2001; Börzel 2003), the role assigned to intervening variables (e.g. number of veto points) critically oversteps that of independent variables in determining what Europeanisation is. Often, researchers even assume that Europeanisation has no proper phenomenological manifestation of its own (other than “change”), which they could generalise as definitional trait of the phenomenon. Their conclusions on the nature, scope and pace of Europeanisation typically remain specific to their study. Though legitimate, this wariness is treacherous, because, as Sartori puts it, “we cannot measure unless we first know what it is that we measure” (1970: 61).
A brief outlook of the specialised literature shows that Europeanisation, in its most visible manifestation, affects political structures by inducing a certain level of policy convergence. This paper acknowledges this empirical observation in its very premises as a possible solution to the loosely defined phenomenology of Europeanisation that hitherto prevails in the literature. Policy convergence, understood as the “growing similarity of policies over time” (Holzinger & Knill 2005: 776), does not equal identity. It may accommodate an “empirically observable differential impact” (Börzel & Risse 2000: 1), and even “considerable variability” (Radaelli 2003: 33). Some authors, referring to the Europeanisation phenomenon, have also preferably spoken of “clustered convergence” (Börzel & Risse 2000), or “convergence towards moderate diversity” (Falkner 2000). But all in all, it is arguably high time to overcome the fears exemplified in the story of the blind men and the elephant. If one admits, like this paper, that Europeanisation is not about any kind of change, but that it pertains, more specifically, to convergent changes, then, the study of Europeanisation would not only gain in internal coherence; it would convey an operational teleology that also would be beneficial to the development of the discipline, just as democratisation gained from better delineations of its concept.

2.3. Coming to terms with an aetiology of Europeanisation

To many researchers, it remains unclear how Europeanisation flows outwards, into non-EU Europe, and what forces drive this process (but see Börzel & Risse 2009). Some have argued that EU preferences are diffused externally, in concentric circles of external governance, through the outwards extension of EU’s rule-based authority. These circles differ from one another according to the legal-institutional relationship the EU has developed with non-EU states. Lavenex & Ucarer (2004: 423), for instance, distinguish between close association, accession association, pre-accession association, neighbourhood association and loose association circles. Accession association supposes that the relationship between the EU and its partner is denser, in legal-institutional terms, than loose association. This approach is premised on the ontological existence of objective forces (e.g. treaties, legal obligations) responsible for inducing domestic changes, generally through political compliance. It also supposes that the EU incarnates a unified actor in its relationship with non-EU states, and that it acts as a point of reference. This approach is pertinent in many aspects of European politics. But it builds on assumptions that overlook the significance of social interactions in Europe, and might therefore comparatively overestimate the role of compliance mechanisms, which are already considered as prevalent (e.g. Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2007; Grabbe 2001).

Another way of conceiving outwards Europeanisation is premised on a more idealistic, sociological approach to interactions. Rather than focusing on the legal-institutional dimension of EU/non-EU relationships, this approach underlines that borders today, have become ontologically permeable or “fuzzy” (Christiansen, et al. 2000). This is most obvious in the EU’s “near abroad” (Christiansen, et al. 2000), or “wider-Europe” (Lavenex 2004), i.e. in those “intermediate spaces between the inside and the outside of the Union” (Christiansen, et al. 2000: 411ff.). Therein, speaking of clearly identifiable, concentric circles of external governance is at best illusory. Europeanisation does not flow structurally from a reified EU centre towards institutionally differentiated circles of
non-EU Europes. It affects states’ policy structures at the individual level too, e.g. through learning processes. The mechanisms underpinning Europeanisation may then not be restricted to compliance. (see Marciacq 2010).

The two aetiological approaches in fact echo different positions in the structure-agency debate. But they are not mutually exclusive. Legal-institutional closure may (and often does) overlap with normative propinquity (without the former entailing the latter). Europeanisation, importantly, does not operate through an all-or-nothing logic. Likelier is that it is driven by a set of different forces.

3. Measuring Europeanisation in the OSCE

Europeanisation research has not been very prolific in the specific field of diplomacy (but Blair 2004). Some interesting contributions can be found, which for instance examine convergent patterns of voting behaviour in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) (Luif 2003; Laatikainen & Smith 2006; Rasch 2008) Often, these are conceived as contributions to the European foreign policy research agenda -not Europeanisation per se (but Alecu de Flers 2007; Marciacq 2011a). This paper, intended as a contribution to Europeanisation research, chooses to focus on the study of convergent changes in non-EU states’ declaratory politics in the OSCE, and more specifically, on their alignment with EU statements between 2004 and 2011.

3.1. The OSCE, the EU and the politics of alignment

The OSCE, a regional, Vienna-based organisation with 56 participating states and 12 Partners for Cooperation, will be used in this study as primary source of data. Born in Helsinki as a Conference (in 1973), the OSCE has developed as an intergovernmental organisation, in which intense diplomatic activities are deployed in the pursuit of security-oriented goals in Europe. It is thus an excellent forum in which convergent changes in non-EU states’ multilateral diplomacies can be observed, and accounted for. At the strategic level, the OSCE is aimed at promoting, through diplomatic means, a comprehensive approach to European security in three dimensions of security: politico-military, economic and environmental, and human. Its activities cover a wide range of issues (from the promotion of good governance, fair elections and fundamental freedom to cooperation against international terrorism, support for CFE negotiations and SALW arms control), and a broad geographical area (from North America, Continental Europe and South Caucasus to Japan, Thailand, Afghanistan and Egypt). Of course, the activities covered by the OSCE do not always mirror the foreign policy interests of all participating states in a perfect manner. Nevertheless, it is here argued that the overall coverage of OSCE activities is broad enough to guarantee a satisfying degree of external validity. It can be considered as relatively representative of the typical spectrum of the diplomatic activities deployed worldwide by European states participating in the OSCE, including then EU and non-EU states.

Although decisions taken by the OSCE have no legal power, they are politically binding. These decisions are taken in different loci and at different levels, i.e. occasionally in
OSCE Summits; yearly in Ministerial Council (MC); weekly, at the ambassadorial level, in the Permanent Council (PC) and Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC). And they are taken by consensus (although the consensus-minus-one rule may exceptionally apply). As no vote takes place in the OSCE, it is not possible to research Europeanisation by scrutinising EU and non-EU states’ voting behaviour, unlike in the UNGA. This limitation can be circumvented by the analysis of states’ declaratory politics in the OSCE. The OSCE, after all, is an organisation, which very much relies on shame and fame politics, and the participating states do engage, rather intensively, in declaratory politics. They use their declaratory might as a diplomatic instrument endowed with substantive, rather than procedural, powers. Amongst them, the growing use of declaratory alignment in the OSCE is of particular interest, not least because of EU’s activism in this respect. Other alignment groups do exist in the OSCE, e.g. within GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova) or the “likeminded” (e.g. Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Canada, Norway, Iceland), and alignment also takes place on an ad hoc basis between individual countries. But these configurations have considerably shrunk, whereas the relative weight of the EU in alignment politics has remained outstandingly high (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: The EU as primary actor in OSCE alignment politics**

![Graph showing the EU as primary actor in OSCE alignment politics](source: F. Marciacq, OSCE 2011 research-in-residence programme)

Foreign policy coordination, in the form of declaratory alignment, has been extensively supported by the EU in its external relations with other OSCE participating states, as part of its political dialogue framework. Although the EU cannot voice itself its positions in the OSCE (it is not a participating state), it is represented by the Presidency in all meetings. It is then the Presidency that, speaking on behalf of the EU, reads out EU statements. In most cases, these statements are open to alignment, and the list of non-EU states that accept alignment is added at the bottom end of EU declarations, following a predefined model, e.g. in 2010:
The candidate countries CROATIA and ICELAND, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries ALBANIA and SERBIA, the European Free Trade Association country and member of the European Economic Area NORWAY, as well as UKRAINE align themselves with this statement.

The size of the EU-led alignment group in the OSCE has steadily increased since 2004 (see Figure 2). In 2004, alignment was only offered by the EU to two states (Croatia and Turkey), whereas in 2011, up to seventeen states could align with EU statements. This means that on some declarations, the EU speaks on behalf of 44 states (out of 56 OSCE participating states). The efforts sustained by the EU to achieve the largest possible base of consensus are commonly admitted by EU member states’ diplomats in the OSCE. These echo the self-declared “commonalities of interests and objectives that characterise the OSCE-EU relationship” (EU delegation to the IO in Vienna), and the functional as well as geographical overlaps that characterise the two organisations (see doc. 14486/03; Coreu SEC 0704/01). Legally, the EU is committed to act externally in accordance with the principles of the OSCE, enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris (art. 21.2.c TEU). And the EU has also acknowledged as a strategic objective interest its will to enhance the “strength and effectiveness of the OSCE” (European Security Strategy, 2003). Politically, the EU is also intertwined with the OSCE through the extensive development of cooperative initiatives on the field (e.g. in Georgia) and at the inter-institutional level (e.g. through regular high-level meetings).

**Figure 2: From EU-29 to EU-44 / the rising size of the EU-led alignment group**
3.2. The EU alignment mechanism

The mechanism of EU alignment in the OSCE has been routinised in Vienna. The Permanent Council (PC) is the primary locus of declaratory politics in the OSCE, and its regular meetings take place every Thursday from 10 a.m. Intense consultations precede these meetings, to coordinate the positions of EU member states internally, first, and manage alignment with non-EU states externally, then. The decision, by the EU, to make a declaration at a PC meeting is usually taken on Mondays, around 3 pm, during the internal meetings of EU representatives to the OSCE. This decision is followed by internal coordination meetings at the expert level in order to elaborate a draft statement, which is circulated for approval among EU member states by Tuesdays evening. On Wednesdays, at 3 p.m., a meeting is held at the deputy-ambassadorial level, to finalise the negotiations. Depending on the sensitivity of the topic, the negotiations can be short, ending around 4 pm, or lengthy, in which case consensus is finalised at the ambassadorial level on Thursdays morning, shortly before the PC meeting. Non-EU states do not participate in this process of internal coordination. Nor are they allowed to formally participate in the decision-making process, e.g. by making suggestions or amendments. What they ultimately face is a “take it or leave it choice”. Informal briefing meetings at the ambassadorial level are nonetheless held every Tuesday with candidate states and the likeminded group. But the proposition to align is only formulated after consensus emerged among EU members, i.e. at the earliest on Wednesdays afternoon. The draft declaration is then sent by email, and non-EU states are expected to reply before the beginning of the PC meeting, by the next morning. In the absence of reply, it is assumed that they do not align. Owing to the tight deadline, some non-EU states may not succeed in replying on time. The EU, under the Belgian Presidency, has accordingly softened its deadline rule, and now, belated communications are accepted until Thursday 2-3pm. The names of latecomers are simply added on the alignment list before the final text is officially circulated. Since the Lisbon Treaty, EU foreign policy coordination falls under the competency of a joint team composed of staff from the EU Presidency and from the newly established EU Delegation.

Interestingly, the very meaning of “alignment” has been changing over the past few years. Alignment, in the mid 2000s was understood as normative compatibility with EU positions. It did not, accordingly, prevent states from issuing their own statement, in their national capacity, in addition to aligning, although this possibility was in practice rarely used. Non-EU states could therewith clarify their view or express nuances whilst acknowledging the correctness of EU statements (as in the UNGA). Alignment thus preserved, at least conceptually, the separateness of two modes of declaration –individual and collective. With the Lisbon Treaty, this interpretation of alignment has shifted to a more exclusive interpretation. Non-EU states may no longer speak in their national capacity if they choose to align themselves. This new practice of alignment puts non-EU states in front of severed choices, since their alignment automatically implies their individual behaviour being fused into collective action. This development, it will be seen in the conclusion, has attracted important critiques among non-EU states.

3.3. Data and method
This paper assesses the Europeanisation of non-EU diplomacies by measuring the (changing) frequency at which non-EU states have aligned themselves with EU statements in the OSCE. This measure of convergence is based on the calculation of declaratory alignment indexes (DAI), whereby 100% DAI means that alignment has been systematic with all statements, and 0% DAI that no occurrence of alignment has been recorded. The dataset that will be used consists of the statements and declarations made by the delegations of the rotating Presidencies on behalf of the EU, mainly at the PC and the FSC. Other arenas for declaratory politics include the Review Committee (RC), the MC, the Economic (and Environmental) Forum (EF and from 2009, EEF), and the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM). The dataset discards the few EU statements that were closed to alignment. All in all, the research encompasses the individual positions of seventeen non-EU states with regards to 1214 EU statements. Data collection has been performed manually by retrieving data from OSCE documents (e.g. PC and FSC meeting journals) and consulting archives at the OSCE documentation repository in Prague (as OSCE researcher-in-residence).

The temporal scope of the study starts with the first Presidency after the 2004 enlargement wave, and ends with the end of the Hungarian Presidency in 2011. The timeline is sectioned by EU Presidency, on a half-yearly basis. The geographical scope of the research encompasses the EU(12,15,25 and 27), considered as a declaratory actor, and the seventeen European non-EU states, to which the EU has hitherto offered alignment (see Table 1). It excludes Bulgaria and Romania between 2004 and 2007.

Table 1: Chronology of non-EU states’ first alignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-EU State</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Declaration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TUR (Turkey)</td>
<td>13/01/2000</td>
<td>PC.DEL/2/00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRO (Croatia)</td>
<td>29/06/2004</td>
<td>PC.DEL/600/04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICL (Iceland)</td>
<td>02/06/2005</td>
<td>PC.DEL/442/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LICHT (Liechtenstein)</td>
<td>02/06/2005</td>
<td>PC.DEL/442/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRW (Norway)</td>
<td>02/06/2005</td>
<td>PC.DEL/442/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UKR (Ukraine)</td>
<td>19/05/2005</td>
<td>PC.DEL/392/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDA (Moldova)</td>
<td>30/06/2005</td>
<td>PC.DEL/699/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALB (Albania)</td>
<td>07/07/2005</td>
<td>PC.DEL/721/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOS (Bosnia-Herzegovina)</td>
<td>07/07/2005</td>
<td>PC.DEL/721/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAC (FYRoM)</td>
<td>14/07/2005</td>
<td>PC.DEL/745/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRB (Serbia)</td>
<td>14/07/2005</td>
<td>PC.DEL/748/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNG (Montenegro)</td>
<td>18/07/2006</td>
<td>PC.DEL/759/06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AZE (Azerbaijan)</td>
<td>05/07/2007</td>
<td>PC.DEL/698/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEO (Georgia)</td>
<td>14/06/2007</td>
<td>PC.DEL/563/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARM (Armenia)</td>
<td>21/06/2007</td>
<td>PC.DEL/615/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANDO (Andorra)</td>
<td>25/06/2010</td>
<td>PC.DEL/639/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANM (San Marino)</td>
<td>25/06/2010</td>
<td>PC.DEL/639/10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After having evidenced differential patterns of declaratory convergence, the paper delves in analysing qualitatively the causes, reasons and motives of alignment. The analysis then primarily relies on semi-structured interviews (kept confidential) conducted between March and July 2011 with seventeen EU and (mostly) non-EU diplomats posted in Vienna or in their capital. The analytical approach followed in this part of the research is inspired by Carlsnaes’ (2002) meta-theoretical framework of foreign policy analysis. It
distinguishes between structural forces, dispositional inducements and teleological motives. These three aetiological dimensions best reflect the complexity of social change in international politics, and the fact that Europeanisation may not only flow from objective (top/down) pressures, but may also be induced by subjective (bottom-up) projections/calculation and intersubjective (reflexive) norms. This analytical framework thus envisions an aetiology of Europeanisation covering: political compliance, which commands alignment without states’ interests being changed (e.g. alignment as a precondition to EU integration); emulation and simple learning, which suppose that alignment stems from instrumental changes in states’ interests (e.g. alignment as a satisfactory solution); and socialisation, which is conducive to thicker changes in states’ interests (e.g. alignment as a norm) (see Table 2).

Table 2: A framework for analysing EU alignment in the OSCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analytical dimension</th>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Determinant</th>
<th>Cognitive approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>structural causes</td>
<td>political compliance</td>
<td>objective obligations</td>
<td>“We shall align!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dispositional reasons</td>
<td>socialisation</td>
<td>collective identity</td>
<td>“We are Europeans!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teleological motives</td>
<td>emulation, simple learning</td>
<td>internal dissatisfaction</td>
<td>“We want to align because…”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Marciacq (2010)

4. Differential patterns of declaratory alignment in the OSCE

The following section presents a descriptive account of the results. It identifies three groups of countries with differential patterns of declaratory alignment, based on their frequency of alignment (DAI). The boundary between these three groups is not permeable. It reflects gradual differences rather than mutually exclusive categories.

The first group (“non-convergence”) consists of Turkey, Serbia, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Moldova. It is characterised by declining or stagnating DAI over time, though considerable differences exist in terms of DAI levels (see Figure 3). The cases of Turkey and Ukraine are nonetheless remarkable. In 2004/2005, Turkey aligned itself with 98% of EU statements, and Ukraine with 73%. These DAI were at that time very high in comparison to other non-EU states (compare with Figure 5). By 2011, they had respectively fallen to 68% and 28%. Similar patterns of disalignment can be found in Armenia and Azerbaijan, although these two never really came much closer to the EU. Their DAI remained under 40% for the former and 20% for the latter. The cases of Serbia and Moldova are less obvious. Although their overall level of alignment remains moderately high (between 60 and 80%), their DAI has either stagnated (Moldova) or fluctuated downwards, with a 56%-minima in 2009 (Serbia).

The second group (“moderate convergence”) consists of Liechtenstein, Georgia, San Marino and Andorra. It is characterised by a smooth increase in DAI, leading to moderate levels of declaratory alignment (around 50%) (see Figure 4). The case of San Marino and Andorra will need to be re-evaluated with further data in the future.
The third group ("high convergence") consists of Croatia, Macedonia, Iceland, Albania, Bosnia, Montenegro and Norway (see Figure 5). It is characterised by DAI levels that clearly converges towards identity (i.e. 100%). In 2011, these seven states were aligning themselves with up to 98% of EU statements, and behaved as if they were actual EU member states, systematically adopting EU common statements as their own.

Figure 3: Divergent or loosely convergent patterns of alignment

Figure 4: Moderately convergent patterns of alignment

source: F. Marciacq, OSCE 2011 research-in-residence programme
5. An aetiology of declaratory alignment in the OSCE

5.1. Why do non-EU states align themselves with EU statements?

*Political compliance: “We shall align!”*

The EU is often seen as a “rule-based polity” (Olsen 2007: chap. 8). And indeed, it has developed with its European partners a series of contractual relations, which extend the realm of its governance beyond its institutional borders. The most obvious illustration of this extended governance is EU’s conditionality regimes, developed with EU’s external partners in preparation of their institutional rapprochement with the EU. Amidst the plethora of rules codifying EU/non-EU relations, some pertain to foreign policy coordination in multilateral fora. These are usually enshrined in a relatively uniform wording as part of EU’s political dialogue with European states (see Table 3 for the references). These rules convey two kinds of obligations: one is an *obligation de moyens* regarding foreign policy coordination in international organisations; the other is an *obligation de résultat* regarding foreign policy convergence.

The *obligation de moyens* provides in substance that political dialogue with the EU shall “tak[e] full advantage of diplomatic channels between the Parties, including appropriate contacts in the bilateral as well as the multilateral field, such as the United Nations, OSCE meetings and elsewhere”. Cooperation should furthermore ensue through “providing mutual information on foreign policy decisions” or “inform[ing] and consult[ing] one another on important matters of common interest”. There is little cross-national variation in the legal formulas used in these texts, nor in the time of their introduction (see Table 3). The structural constraint weighing on non-EU states’ multilateral diplomacy in the OSCE is thus relatively uniform in this respect, and it
cannot objectively explain cross-national variations in non-EU states’ patterns of alignment.

The obligation de résultat, by contrast, is not imposed on all non-EU states (see Table 3). Only candidate and Western Balkan states are required to ensure an “increasing convergence of positions on international issues, and in particular on those matters likely to have substantial effects on one or the other party”. The Commission is then responsible for assessing states’ compliance with this obligation. It demands, for instance, that would-be candidate states attach a justification of their non-alignments to their Answer to the Commission’s Questionnaire. Though explicit, this obligation does not suffice to ensure effective alignment in the OSCE (see Turkey and Serbia). Nor is it a necessary condition for alignment to be quasi systematic (see Norway).

Table 3: Non-EU states’ rights and obligation with regards to foreign policy coordination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1: divergent or loosely convergent</th>
<th>Obligation to coordinate</th>
<th>Obligation to converge</th>
<th>Legal basis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>PCA (OJ L 239, 09/09/1999) ENP-AP (doc. UE-AM 4553/06)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Group 2: Moderately convergent          |                         |                        |             |
| Liechtenstein                          | 1995                     | --                     | EEA Council (doc. EEE 1604/95) |
| Georgia                                | 1999                     | --                     | PCA (OJ L 205, 04/08/1999) ENP-AP (doc. UE-GE 4654/06) |
| San Marino                             | 2010                     | ---                    | Report to the Council (doc 11466/11) |
| Andorra                                | 2010                     | --                     | Report to the Council (doc 11466/11) |

| Group 3: Highly convergent             |                         |                        |             |
| Iceland                                | 1995                     | 2010                   | EEA Council (doc. EEE 1604/95) Negotiating framework (27/07/2010, 19) |
| Albania                                | 1992                     | 1992                   | Joint Declaration (doc. 6166/92, Annex) Thessalonica agenda (doc. 10369/03) SAA (doc. 8164/06) |
| Montenegro                             | 2007                     | 2007                   | Council conclusions (doc. 11575/06) SAA (doc. 11566/1/07) |
| Norway                                 | 1995                     | --                     | EEA Council (doc. EEE 1604/95) |
All in all, it is rather improbable that compliance can explain alignment. The shape of the contractual structure binding non-EU states’ behaviour to the EU positions does not conclusively reflect the differential patterns of alignment. Although the existence of provisions creating an obligation de résultat seems to foster actual alignment, it is neither a sufficient, nor a necessary condition to it. Interviews with diplomats confirm this finding. Western Balkan states, for instance, all testify to the absence of direct pressures for alignment stemming from the EU, whether prior to PC meetings or thereafter, in case of non-alignment. At best, EU diplomats may ask “out of curiosity” the reasons that prevented alignment, but non-EU states’ diplomats all concur in dismissing the view of an EU demanding alignment on contractual grounds. Although they may perceive an asymmetry in their relationship with the EU, it is not at all assessed in terms of effective power of coercion. The asymmetry rather revolves around resources, expertise and level of involvement in the decision-making process. Occasionally, however, candidate states admit that occurrences of non-alignment are recorded in Brussels, and supposedly analysed. For those who still have to undergo the Commission’s Questionnaire or are reaching the threshold of EU membership, concerns over non-alignment may indeed be formulated in terms of compliance, but it then pertains to a more elusive will to demonstrate one’s ability to adopt the CFSP acquis altogether. Only in this sense do some candidate states concede that “non-alignment should be the exception”.

Socialisation: “We are Europeans!”

Socialisation entails “obedience” rather than compliance, i.e. the “rule-induced behavior caused when a party has internalized [a] norm and incorporated it into its own value system” (Raustiala & Slaughter 2002: 544). It commands foreign policy actions, like alignment, that accord with collective expectations, following the “logic of appropriateness” (March & Olsen 2004). And it entails the normative redefinition of states’ national interests in collective rather individualistic than terms. In the OSCE, socialisation considerably helps understanding the differential patterns of non-EU states’ declaratory alignment.

It is clear that non-EU states have not undergone the same process of normative redefinition regarding their foreign policy interests in the OSCE. The states that align the least with EU statements most typically are those, whose national interests remain individualistic par excellence. Armenia and Azerbaijan, for instance, pursue in the OSCE a foreign policy almost exclusively directed at the defence of their respective positions towards the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. They seek to “use” the OSCE, and whenever possible EU alignment, to support these national priorities. In other non-EU states, collective interests may also be expressed, but national approaches usually prevail. This is for instance the case of Turkey and Serbia, who share with the EU key principled beliefs, but who, uphold their national perspectives when they deem that collective ones are ill-advised. It is also the case of Moldova and Georgia, whose collective identity formation is limited by existential threats (in Transnistria and South-Ossetia) and the resulting securitisation of their discourse on sensitive issues. Those non-EU states, who align the most with EU statements, by contrast, tend to define their national interest in terms that are fully compatible with EU collective identity (e.g. Iceland, Lichtenstein, San
Marino). They typically underline the soft security dimension of their foreign policy objectives in the OSCE (e.g. human rights, good governance), and insist on the fact that their actions are not guided by strong national interests. Western Balkan states even go further, as they characteristically define their national interest in the OSCE as primarily collective, i.e. in terms of EU accession. For instance, unlike Armenia, who seeks to upload its individual interests in the OSCE, Macedonia does not mention the naming issue as one of its key prioritises the OSCE. Its objectives are only defined in collective terms (joining the EU and Nato). For others (e.g. Croatia, Albania, Liechtenstein), the very action of alignment has a collective teleology –its intent is to demonstratively participate to European foreign policy, and to demonstrate a “European way of thinking”. All in all, there appears to be some constitutive relationship between the formulation, by non-EU states, of national interests in collective rather than individualistic terms on the one side, and their propensity to align with the EU in the OSCE.

Alignment, for some non-EU states (e.g. Macedonia, Albania, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Iceland) has become a norm, i.e. a position that is applied “by default”, following a “bureaucratic approach”. The cognitive process leading to alignment, in this case, is not one comparing EU statements with national positions on an equal footing. It is one that takes for granted the correctness of the statement, and consequently, the appropriateness of alignment. In approaching the text, these states display highly positive assumptions on its content, and typically find it hard to conceive instance of non-alignment, even though their actual positions, expressed in official discourses, goes slightly further than those of the EU (e.g. for Albania, on Kosovo), or admits substantive nuances. The cognitive pattern is different for those states that align less frequently with EU statement. Because they uphold some individualistic definitions of their national interests, which they insulate from EU collective redefinition, they usually read EU draft statements through the prism of their own foreign policy. The prism may be more or less comprehensive. In its slightest form, it uses keywords crystallising highly sensitive and securitised issues (e.g. for Moldova, “Russia”, “Ukraine”, “Belarus”). In its thickest form, it commands the rational assessment of EU statements’ utility in its capacity to serve particular individualistic interests (e.g. for Armenia, EU’s support of CFE negotiations). These prisms constrain references to collective interests and undermine socialisation on specific issues.

EU/non-EU socialisation in the OSCE is fostered by the intensity of contacts between EU and non-EU delegations. Here again, notable differences can be observed between the candidate states and the like-minded group (plus Andorra and San Marino) on the one side, which meet the EU delegation and the Presidency every week, and other non-EU states on the other side, which have to content themselves with meetings at the margin of plenary sessions or occasionally, phone calls. Even amidst the latter, differences should be pointed out between, on the one side Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina, which meet Western Balkan candidates in an ex-Yugoslavia format every month, and have privileged contacts with particular EU member states (e.g. Slovenia), and South Caucasian states on the other side, which are more isolated. These often regret the lack of regular contacts with the EU. Socialisation is finally facilitated in many non-EU states by the fact that decisions, increasingly, are taken in Vienna rather than in the capitals. This
decentralisation of foreign policy making has already been studied under the label of "Brusselisation" (e.g. Sjursen 1998: 11ff.), but it can also be observed in Vienna. Non-EU states always face very tight deadlines for replying to EU's alignment proposals (they often receive EU texts two hours before the PC meeting starts). This often induces them to take decisions locally, i.e. in an environment that is very prone to EU socialisation. It is indeed remarkable that those states, which most align with the EU, are also those, whose decisional centre for OSCE affairs is located in Vienna, not in capitals (cf. Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia, Montenegro, Iceland, Liechtenstein). Their delegation does not need to systematically go back to the capital and ask for instructions. They can rely on a more general mandate, giving them more latitude in interpreting the necessity to consult with their home Ministry. This mandate is formulated as "align whenever there is no dispute within the EU", "whenever the topic is not that important", or whenever the "topic has been discussed before". States that align the least with the EU (e.g. Moldova, Turkey, Georgia, Armenia) by contrast, always have to seek instructions before communicating a position to the EU. Arguably, their diplomacy is less prone to EU's socialisation.

Emulation: "The EU embodies the civilised world"

A lesser studied reason for non-EU states' alignment is their desire for sheer conformity, which emulates EU actions and decisions regardless of their actual success. Specific to emulation, in this case, is the irrelevance of the actual performances of the EU. The empirical importance of emulation should not be underestimated. It only concerns Georgia and to a lesser extent Albania and Montenegro, which view EU positions as those "of the civilised world", or those "of the perfect forum that brought democracy, prosperity and stability in Europe". Emulation may help explaining Georgia's moderate propensity to align.

Simple learning: "A solution to specific problems"

Alignment can finally be analysed in some cases as a rational response to non-EU states' specific lack of expertise and their overall lack of resources. The EU and its member states' understandingly concentrate considerable amounts of expertise and gain in international visibility. It is even more critical for EU prospective member states (e.g. Macedonia, Iceland, Montenegro), whose EU future membership implies that they should get interested in topics in which they would otherwise not have been interested. It should be kept in mind, however, that for small-sized countries, the EU is not the only source of expertise in the OSCE. Iceland and Liechtenstein, for instance, regularly meet as like-minded with Switzerland and Canada, or with the US and Canada, to take decisions locally, i.e. in an environment that is very prone to EU socialisation. It is indeed remarkable that those states, which most align with the EU, are also those, whose decisional centre for OSCE affairs is located in Vienna, not in capitals (cf. Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia, Montenegro, Iceland, Liechtenstein). Their delegation does not need to systematically go back to the capital and ask for instructions. They can rely on a more general mandate, giving them more latitude in interpreting the necessity to consult with their home Ministry. This mandate is formulated as "align whenever there is no dispute within the EU", "whenever the topic is not that important", or whenever the "topic has been discussed before". States that align the least with the EU (e.g. Moldova, Turkey, Georgia, Armenia) by contrast, always have to seek instructions before communicating a
Russia. They therewith have access to diversified sources of intelligence, and tend to be less dependent on EU’s expertise, and thence alignment.

Alignment can finally be analysed as a very pragmatic response to critical restrictions in non-EU states’ delegations regarding sheer resources. In delegations like San Marino, Lichtenstein, Iceland, Andorra, Moldova, Montenegro, Bosnia and Albania, which comprise one to five diplomats responsible for all multilateral affairs in Vienna (i.e. UN, OSCE, IAEA, CTBTO, etc...), human resources are very scarce. Often, they cannot be dedicated to OSCE politics in a satisfactory manner. Small delegations rarely (if ever) succeed in attending all the meetings their mandate would allow them to. Under such conditions, alignment represents an economy of time and work, and can critically help small-sized delegations in prioritising their work. These can for instance spend less time on drafting statements, which would be redundant.

6. **Non-alignment… failed Europeanisation?**

Although it “is not a goal the EU pursues *per se*”, alignment is undoubtedly supported by the EU as a means to strengthen its position within the OSCE and build an ever larger consensus on European security (“from 27 to 44”). Does it make it inherently good? From the perspective of the EU, it is clear that alignment participates in the diffusion of EU’s normative power. It allows the EU to act as a norm-setter in international affairs, and as EU norms often underscore principles that are presumably universal, non-alignment then runs the risk of appearing as reactionary, and inherently problematic. Is it really so? Because alignment is necessarily perceived as “good” by the EU, does it imply that non-alignment is necessary “bad”? This very normative question can be answered by examining the various motives of non-alignment.

Non-alignment can often be explained by *geopolitical* factors. In regions characterised by very tense neighbourly relations and critical economic dependencies (e.g. Moldova/Georgia towards Russia), non-alignment is sometimes envisioned as means to avoid retaliatory behaviours from influent partners, and preserve the precarious *status quo*. These geopolitical pressures sometimes preclude alignment with specific EU statements, despite a deep “understand[ing of] the correctness of the critique made by the EU”. Non-alignment then rather reflects EU’s weak position in the East, and its overall incapacity to “substitute for the costs incurring from alignment”. In a less chaotic environment, geopolitics also matter for members of the like-minded group. Liechtenstein, for instance, is very interlinked with Switzerland, which upholds a political line excluding, by principle, the prospect of EU alignment. There, the influence of Switzerland can thus be felt. Often, non-alignment is also preferred to alignment in order to gain in international visibility on issues that are important to non-EU states (e.g. human rights for Iceland, Liechtenstein, Central Asia for Turkey). The decision not to align is then often taken even before the EU communicates its text, and a national statement is prepared.

Non-alignment can also be grounded on *normative* differences. These differences are mostly expressed in terms of skin-thin nuances, and they rarely suffice to trigger non-
alignment. When they do, it is not rare that non-EU statements start with a supportive acknowledgment of EU position. On some specific issues, however, soul-deep divergences may constitute a major obstacle to alignment. For instance, Moldova’s harsh opposition, on normative grounds, to the defence of the rights of the Gays, Lesbians Bisexuals and Transgenders (GLBT) collides with EU perspectives on the subject.

Non-alignment can also be motivated by utilitarian motives. It is then alignment itself that is questioned, as it arguably sacrifices the OSCE community’s well-being on the altar of EU’s particular interests. The utilitarian critique against alignment first underscores the inadequacy between the asymmetrical involvement of EU and non-EU states in alignment politics and the intergovernmental nature of the OSCE, which was meant to foster debate among equals. By depriving non-EU states from actively participating in the elaboration of draft statements, the alignment mechanism reduces the intensity of the debates, and arguably then, the quality of their output. Considering its considerable involvement and expertise in the region, it is, for instance, surprising that Turkey is not allowed to participate in the drafting of EU statements on Western Balkan issues (a point of view also shared by Croatia, Macedonia and Montenegro). In the end, the substantive quality of EU statements is regularly questioned, not least because it is watered-down by the consensus requirement and the impossibility to “sharpen” then through national statements. The asymmetrical relationship that the alignment mechanism institutionalises between the EU and non-EU states also crystallises among non-EU states important frustrations. When EU diplomats do not skilfully succeed in relieving these symptoms, non-EU states may feel sidelined by the EU, because they are part of a one-way dialogue, in which are second-rank partners. The second utilitarian critique directed against alignment concerns the informal rule that no complementary statement can be tolerated, when there is alignment. Alignment, it contends, is self-sufficient. This “either/or” approach is criticised by some non-EU states (e.g. Turkey), which raise concerns on EU’s possible attempt at imposing on the OSCE its own agenda by muting its partners. It is also a position defended by Switzerland, which regrets that in the end, only the EU, the US and Russia speak in the OSCE. Non-alignment may finally concern EU statements that are not perceived as relevant for other OSCE participating states, e.g. because they are too EU-centric or self-congratulatory.

There are finally practical reasons to non-alignment. These primarily affect small-sized delegations, whose resources are very limited. It is clear, for instance, that the scope of European foreign policy considerably exceeds the foreign policy agenda of Liechtenstein and San Marino (e.g. in politico-military matters). Their lack of expertise, in such areas, then understandably hampers alignment. The deadline issue (whereby non-EU states just have a few hours to communicate their answer to the EU), finally, constitutes a limitation to alignment, but less so today, owing to the possibility offered to non-EU states since 2010 to align _ex post_, and the increasing use of new technologies (e.g. smart phones).

Intense interactions between EU and non-EU actors, it has been seen in this paper, have fostered, albeit differentially, foreign policy convergence in the OSCE. Alignment, for many, has become the rule, and non-alignment the exception. For EU-minded persons, non-alignment might then seem an issue. But the normativity underlying this question
should be tempered. Non-alignment can be driven by very different forces, and some of them should not question states’ “Europeanness”. Why, after all, would alignment with the EU necessarily be a better benchmark than alignment with the likeminded, if it is European security that matters most? Should all “good” Europeans be EU-minded? Doubtfully so, and the discrepancy between the overlapping concepts of Europeanisation and EUisation illustrates this argument. In assessing non-EU states’ “performance”, EU policy-makers should then be wary about the normatively of their assumptions. They should strive for the broader, more complex phenomenon of Europeanisation, not solely that of EUisation.

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