Small States in the Common Security and Defence Policy. Insights from Foreign Policy Role Conceptions

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Abstract

The objective of this paper was to find out to what extent foreign policy role conceptions can help us to understand the policies of small EU member states in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). It provided a framework that enables us to research foreign policy role conceptions based on qualitative content analysis and applied the framework to one smaller EU member state, the Netherlands. The results showed that the Dutch foreign policy role conception has remained rather stable in the time period under research (1990-2010). However, we can see certain modifications. Dutch CSDP-policies fit the foreign policy role conception in the whole period under research. Yet, The Hague emphasizes different parts of the role conception in different time periods. Besides, it manoeuvres between roles that are partially contradicting, e.g. since the 1990s a conflict between the roles as partner of NATO and security partner of the US on the one hand and membership in EU on the other hand becomes obvious and finally causes instabilities in Dutch CSDP-policy. In conclusion, the case study confirms that foreign policy role conceptions provide an interesting attempt to better understand CSDP-policies of small EU member states.
Introduction

The evolution of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) will be an important factor for the future global impact of the European Union. At the same time European countries still consider defence as part of the core of national sovereignty and thus CSDP is marked by intergovernmentalism. Therefore the member states’ positions, their willingness to cooperate, and to implement decisions in their states are decisive for the development of CSDP.

Because of the strong role of member states that usually decide by unanimity it is important not only to work on CSDP-institutions in Brussels but also on the CSDP-policies of member states.

However, only few publications dealing with national CSDP-policies exist. Based on strategic culture, Santopinto/Price (2013) deal with the expectations of member states in CSDP, Chappell (2010) and Frank (2008) research Polish CSDP-policies while Ehrhart (2002) presents an overview of CSDP-policies of several member states and non-member states. The majority of such publications deals with the CSDP-policies of the ‘Big Three’, Germany, France and Britain, e.g. Giegerich (2006).*

Publications usually do not deal with the behaviour of the smaller member states in CSDP. But the majority of member states are small states and in a mainly intergovernmental policy we should not neglect their influence.

Therefore, it is the objective of this paper to offer a framework for the analysis of CSDP-policies of small EU member states. The paper is inspired by a constructivist position and argues that ideas and identities are the basis for the formation of the interests of small member states. One possibility to link ideas to foreign policy behaviour are foreign policy role conceptions. Thus, the paper asks: To what extent can foreign policy role conceptions help us to understand the CSDP-policies of small member states? The paper follows Aggestam’s definition of role conceptions: “A role conception is a set of norms expressing expected foreign policy behaviour and action orientation. It can be thought of as a ‘road map’ that

* Besides, publications dealing with the positions of member states in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and anthologies including chapters on national foreign policies of EU member states exist. The CSDP is an integral part of CFSP. The anthologies of Hill (1996) and Manners/Whitman (2000) present articles on the general foreign policies of member states while Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet (2002) deals with CFSP-conceptions. Unfortunately, the majority of such books provide a lack of clear comparisons and theory. Two exceptions are Joerissen/Stahl (2003) who deal with the link between foreign policies and identities and Tonra (2001) who compares the foreign policies of the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland.
foreign policy-makers rely on to simplify and facilitate an understanding of a complex political reality.” (Aggestam 2000: 87).

The paper is a first step to test the framework by providing a case study of Dutch CSDP-policies. Though being the ‘biggest of the small’, the Netherlands provides an interesting case because it is a country struggling with typical challenges for small EU-states in defence and security policy: e.g. the relations to the US, NATO and EU, the relations to the big neighbour Germany, the significance of supranationalism, the role of small states in peacebuilding as well as old traces of neutralism and colonialism. At the same time, the Dutch traditionally follow a very active foreign policy.

**Theoretical and methodological background**

**Foreign Policy Role Conceptions**

Role Theory has originally been used in sociology and anthropology. In the 1970s Holsti introduced it to Foreign Policy Analysis (Hudson/Vore 1995, Carlsnaes 2002). Here, role theory has often been used as a constructivist approach that considers roles as basis of the interests and behaviour in the foreign policy of a state: “National role conception is one of the few conceptual tools we have for the study of how society and culture serve as a context for a nation’s foreign policy. It allows one to bridge the conceptual gap between the general beliefs held in a society and the beliefs of foreign policy decision makers.” (Hudson/Vore 1995: 226).²

States usually have several roles that are based on the state’s own expectations rooted in common values, ideas and norms (*ego part*) as well as on the expectations of others (*alter part*), i.e. other actors in the international system and systemic conditions (Holsti 1970).³ I follow Gaupp’s definition of roles: “International roles are systematic – i.e. collectively normed and individually conceptualized – patterns of attitude and behaviour of states and

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² Biddle (1986) presents an overview of role conceptions in the social sciences. Thies/Breuning (2012) describe the differences in European and American ‘role’-traditions. Whereas in the US researchers see the individual as starting point and use cognitive approaches, European researches focus on structures and institutions or see constructivism as starting point. See for the American branch Walker (1987), Wish (1980), Jönsson/Westerlund (1982); for the European branch Kirste/Maull (1996), Krotz (2002). New research tries to link the American and the European traditions (Harnisch/Frank/Maull 2011, Foreign Policy Analysis 2012).

³ Holsti focuses on the *ego part* whereas Jönsson/Westerlund (1982) emphasize the importance of the *alter part*. 
other actors that are realised by representatives in international systems revealing consolidated positions.” (Gaupp 1983: 109).4

Foreign policy role conceptions provide frameworks for the actors. They do not influence the behaviour of a state directly but offer some sort of orientation. They set boundaries but also permit certain flexibility. Thus, role conceptions focus on the long lines of a state’s foreign policy (Aggestam 1999, Larsen 2000).

Case selection

As first attempt to test the framework of analysis the paper provides a case study analysing one small EU member state. Because of the significance of NATO-EU-relations for the development of CSDP, the country should be full member of NATO. Besides, it should be a founding member state of the EU. The reason is that the idea of a European defence policy has been discussed for decades before the implementation of CSDP. So, three smaller EU member states could be interesting cases for the paper, Belgium, Luxemburg, and the Netherlands. As first step the paper researches the Dutch case.

The Netherlands has traditionally been a strong supporter of European integration and of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), of which CSDP forms part. It has also been a loyal ally to the US and NATO. The Netherlands has an active foreign policy, strong bilateral relations to various states and is embedded in international organizations. The country deals with lots of questions in foreign, security, and defence policy that are important for other member states as well: for example, NATO-EU-relations, relations to the US and Germany as well as to former colonies, and the role of small states in peacebuilding.

Kirste/Maull (1996) state that foreign policy role conceptions also provide a framework for the comparative analysis of similar states. Hence, this case study could be a first step for a comparative analysis of small member states of the European Union.

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4 All translations from Dutch and German to English are the author’s own translations.
Framework of analysis

The framework of analysis consists of two steps: first, I provide a general framework for the research of foreign policy role conceptions of small EU member states, and second for the analysis of national CSDP-policies.

Following Mayring (2008) I analyse foreign policy role conceptions by using qualitative content analysis. All speeches included in my research were given by the so-called foreign policy elite in the second chamber of the Dutch parliament.\(^5\) For the whole period under research (1990-2010) the following speeches are included: the yearly Queen’s speech (Troonrede), the government declaration, a general debate called Algemene Politieke Beschouwingen and the budget debate. Only statements referring to general foreign policy are included in the coding.

Based on secondary literature and a first review of sources, four main categories guiding the research have been defined. Category one consists of the general principles of foreign policy (Leitbilder), including basic values, objectives and international status. Category two includes the roles of the country in international politics based on the perception of the institutional framework, of partner countries and the geographical regions of interest. The third and fourth categories are formed by roles inside European Union and in security and defence. The coding of the parliamentary debates offers numerous codes and subcategories that can be subsumed to these four categories. In sum, these categories form the ego part of analysis. In addition, I use a concept I call indirect alter. It presents the perception of Dutch politicians of the expectations expressed by other countries and international organizations as stated in the speeches.

The analysis of Dutch CSDP-policies is based on secondary literature. In future research I will add an in-depth analysis of primary sources as well as the results of expert interviews. The chapter analyses how the Netherlands considers the idea of a European security and defence before and after the summit of Saint Malo that is a starting point for the foundation of CSDP. It asks if the country welcomes or rejects the introduction of CSDP. The Intergovernmental Conferences leading to the treaties of Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice offer good insights. Further important aspects for the research are the significance of the relations of CSDP to the US and NATO, Dutch support for the development of capabilities and the commitment to

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\(^5\) Speeches were given by the prime minister, the defence minister, the foreign minister and their secretaries of states as well as by the queen. The Queen’s Speech is also attended by the first chamber of the parliament.
CSDP-missions and operations. In sum, I can identify five periods of evolution in Dutch CSDP-policy between 1990 and 2010.

**Dutch Foreign Policy Role Conception**

In the following part, I analyse the elements of Dutch foreign policy role conception. This enables us to see if the role conception is stable or reveals modifications or even changes.

**General principles: values, objectives and international status**

Looking at the general principles of Dutch foreign policy including values, objectives and international status, we can see that the roles remain rather stable. Only few modifications occur.

In the whole period under research The Netherlands presents as a *defender and supporter of universal rights*. The speakers consider the protection and support of human rights, peace, democracy and freedom as most important values. Besides, the speeches mention justice, rule of law, solidarity and tolerance. Often these values are described as interrelated (Begroting 1994: 1850). The speakers think that only European and international cooperation can protect and promote these values (APB 1994: 68) and thus present the Netherlands as *promoter of international cooperation*.

The importance of human rights becomes clear for example when politicians criticise the behaviour of the American partner in the ‘war on terrorism’ (Begroting 2004: 49-51). However, at the end of the research period, politicians demand certain selectivity: “I want to quit the idea that we should bustle always and everywhere as soon as we hear the term ‘human rights’. We have to be selective.” (Begroting 2010: 63). Besides, Dutch politicians often discuss the relation between the Dutch commitment to human rights (*dominee*) and the role as a trading country (*koopman*). Mostly, both are said to reinforce rather than to contradict.

Overall, the number of codes referring to values does not change significantly in the period under research. Only after the terror attacks in the US in 2001 the typical hierarchy in the number of codes changes slightly but returns to the usual status soon.6

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6 For example, in 2001 the value „freedom“ becomes much more important.
Based on these objectives, we can identify several fundamental objectives of Dutch foreign policy in the speeches during the whole period under research. The most important one is the protection and support of security and stability. The importance of this objective rises even more after 1998. Politicians consider European and international cooperation as solution for such challenges (Troonrede 2005). However, international cooperation is more than just an instrument: it is also a major objective of Dutch foreign policy and forms a major Dutch interest: “An active international attitude of the Netherlands is thus more than a moral duty or an old tradition. It is a strategic national interest and even a bitter necessity.” (Begroting 2005). So, we can see again the role of promoter of international cooperation. However, in the mid-1990s bilateral cooperation becomes more important as well. Besides, the role agent of own interests is of increasing importance: since 1998 and even more since 2005 speakers put more emphasis on national interests and mention them more explicitly, in particular regarding the Dutch situation in the European Union.

Overall, the Netherlands presents as an open, economically successful and export oriented country that is connected to other parts of the world. It considers itself a model\(^7\), a supporter of developing countries and of international cooperation but also starts acting more and more as agent of own interests.

Finally turning to the status of the country in the international system, the speeches generally present the Netherlands as a part of a whole: “The destiny of the world is our destiny.” (Troonrede 2006). Facing world-wide interdependency, feeling new threats and having strong political and economic links to Europe, the Dutch emphasize the importance of the European and the international level (Troonrede 1998, Begroting 2003: 2717-2718, APB 2008: 177) and present as reliable and constructive partner (Begroting 2005: 1739, APB 2007: 106, Troonrede 2007, APB 2009: 156). At the same time, we can see a slight retreat to the ‘own community’, to Dutch identity, in the mid-1990s. However, being an open, international and wealthy country, the speakers emphasize that the Netherlands should be a country that assumes international responsibility, something closely connected to basic values and objectives such as peace, security, human rights and development cooperation. Thus, assuming responsibility is presented as something ‘normal’ for the country (Troonrede 1990: 1, Begroting 1990: 43).

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\(^7\) The Dutch present as advocate of developing countries and want to fight against poverty. Development cooperation is presented as moral duty as well as Dutch interest, the latter because of stability and economic interests. In 2010 the foreign policy elite scrutinizes efforts for development cooperation for the first time. See for example Regeringsverklaring 2003: 4, Troonrede 1995, APB 1995: 144.
In the 2000s the codes describing a small country decrease while the description as a strong and influential country becomes more and more important. However, The Hague knows that the Netherlands is not a ‘big player’ and thus sees bilateral, European and international cooperation as chance for Dutch foreign policy: “As a small country, we need an international environment that is in good order, as well in Europe as in wider contexts.” (Begroting 1997: 2797). Nevertheless, the speakers also see the Netherlands as a country that can influence decisions and make a difference e.g. because of its efforts in peace missions, for the UN and in development cooperation (Regeringsverklaring 2007).

In sum, the statements reveal a positive picture of the Netherlands: it presents as a credible country, as a reliable partner, and as an example: “The Netherlands is a country and stays a country to be proud of, marked by wealth and tolerance.” (Regeringsverklaring 2002: 5). Though being rather small, it knows how to represent its interests in the EU and how to influence decisions. It feels a strong interdependence with the rest of the world and wants to assume international responsibility.

Roles in international politics

In the whole period under research, the speakers perceive NATO, EU and UN as core of the Dutch institutional framework in foreign policy. Other organisations like Benelux and OSCE loose significance. In the 2000s the institutional framework widens, now including further organisations like G20 and in the traditional core priorities are shifting. The UN cannot fulfil Dutch expectations as expressed at the beginning of the 1990s. As a consequence, since 1995 the coded statements become more sceptical: “During my stay in New York, I have personally got an impression of the extremely bad condition of the UN.” (Begroting 1995: 1563) In contrast, the relevance of the EU grows in the 1990s. It is increasingly seen as natural framework for action. Whereas in the 1990s speakers often feared the consequences of bilateralism for European integration, in the 2000s bilateral cooperation becomes a natural supplement for multilateralism.

8 The Netherlands sees the OSCE as a very important actor at the beginning of the 1990s. However, it cannot fulfil Dutch expectations. Benelux is mentioned especially in the 1990s. In the 2000s also organisations in other parts of the world, e.g. the African Union, are mentioned.
In sum, the Netherlands presents as *promoter of international cooperation and international institutions* during the whole period under research. However, the concrete framework is shifting and bilateralism becomes more important.

In addition, the country presents as a *good partner* for other countries, above all for the US, the UK, Germany, Belgium, Luxemburg and France. The Netherlands feels a strong relation to the US and considers itself as partner and good friend. Because of the Netherlands Antilles, former foreign minister Ben Bot even creates a geographic closeness of the Netherlands and the US (Begroting 2007: 1515).\(^9\) The cooperation with Luxemburg and Belgium is inter alia used to increase Dutch influence, above all in European integration.\(^10\) The relations to these countries are traditionally good as well as those to Great Britain while the difficult relationship with France starts getting better in the 1990s. Germany, the much bigger neighbour country, often serves as point of reference in the debates.\(^11\) However, the Dutch see the partnership as a bit one-sided and would like to see stronger German interest. The preferred partner countries are stable during the period under research. However, we can see a certain decline of codes. After 1998 speakers ask increasingly for more cooperation with all EU member states and with partners outside the EU.\(^12\) Such a flexible approach should support Dutch interests. The Netherlands now wants to decide for the best and most efficient solution, being it bilateral or multilateral, with ‘old’ or ‘new’ partners. So, though presenting as good partner in the whole period under research, starting in 1998 we can again identify the role of *agent of own interests*.

Looking at the geographic regions of interest, we can finally see that the Netherlands present rather as a ‘big player’ being present and seeking for influence in nearly all politically and economically important regions and trouble spots worldwide.\(^13\) In the discussions referring to these regions, the discussion about *koopman* and *dominee* appears again when the Dutch

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\(^9\) Being a close ally, the Netherlands also feels in a position to criticize the US, above all in questions of human rights (APB 2002: 136, Begroting 2002: 2078). In particular the Dutch reject the behaviour of the US in Guantanamo and asks for respect of the international legal order (Begroting 2006: 1005, Begroting 2007: 1514-1515).

\(^10\) Luxemburg is even called a neighbour country: „For the sake of convenience I consider Luxemburg indeed as a neighbour country, too.“ (Begroting 1994: 1831).


\(^12\) Within EU due to enlargement the possibility of enforcing interests alone or in Benelux-cooperation diminishes for the Netherlands. Thus, the country is looking for new partners. Outside EU, the speakers mention inter alia Singapore, Australia and Mexico.

\(^13\) There are only few codes for Southern and Middle America whereas new (economic) interests in Asia arise. Still the traditional sphere of interest appears including Suriname, Indonesia and East Timor where politicians see strong links and a Dutch responsibility.
emphasize their commitment to human rights and development cooperation as well as their economic interests.

Roles in the European Union

In the whole period under research, the Netherlands considers the European Union as positive and important for the country: “Europe is not a foreign country any more. Europe is our future, it’s where our chances are.” (Troonrede 2000) The positive view is deeply rooted and does not change after the failed plans of the Dutch presidency in 1991 or the rejection of the European constitution in the Dutch referendum. Yet, the speakers also mention problems like a democratic deficit, the distance between the EU and its citizens, the challenges in the Common Agricultural Policy or the high costs for the Netherlands. Despite of this positive picture, in the 2000s, the speeches reveal a new pragmatism while the ‘European enthusiasm’ visible at the beginning of the 1990s has disappeared. The Netherlands also starts to present more explicitly as agent of own interests, e.g. in financial questions. In sum, we can describe the Netherlands as supporter and promoter of European integration in the 1990s and then see a slight change to a pragmatic supporter and promoter of European integration.

Furthermore, we can again identify the role of merchant because the speakers emphasize the importance of the economic element of the community. However they also consider the EU as community of values which fits the role as defender and promoter of values. Finally, one role changes decisively: being a promoter of supranational EU in 1990, the country slowly changes this position in the 1990s and finally becomes a promoter of supranational and intergouvernmental EU.

Roles in security and defence policy

The Dutch reveal a strong international orientation and want to be able to assume international responsibility.\(^{14}\) The perceived importance of UN missions grows strongly in the beginning of the 1990s and rests at a high level. Such missions fit aspects mentioned before such as the significance of international cooperation, the protection of the international legal

\(^{14}\) E.g., Dutch military reforms are partially focused on getting the capabilities to assume international responsibility (APB 1991: 414, APB 2003: 152).
order and the wish to present as a reliable partner. Thus, we meet again the role as *supporter of international cooperation* and the *will to assume international responsibility*.

Traditionally NATO forms the core of the Dutch security framework.\textsuperscript{15} So, in the period under research speakers refer to the transatlantic organization every year. They regularly assign a ‘particular value’ to NATO. The number of codes for its role as ‘stabiliser and preserver of peace’ is particularly high until 1998 and shortly after 9/11 whereas the code ‘most important security organisation’ is strong in the mid-1990s and finally ends in 2003.\textsuperscript{16}

In general, in the 1990s NATO is described as indispensable for Dutch security and for peace: “NATO remains the cornerstone of our security.” (APB 1999: 95) The Netherlands sees as *partner of NATO* in the whole period under research. However, the NATO loses its exclusiveness in security and defence for The Hague beginning in the mid to end 1990s.

Turning to the US it is interesting that the speakers describe the US to be ‘responsible’ for Dutch security only till 2000. This is partially based on an American loss of interest in Europe that speakers already mention at the beginning of the 1990s. So, at the end of the decennium The Hague starts to accept more independence from the US. Already in the mid-1990s it wants to broaden the focus of transatlantic relations that should not be centred on security anymore. Rather, the US and Europe are seen as a community of values, norms and interests (mid-2000s). Thus, the Netherlands presents as *security partner of the US* in the whole period under research. But the partnership is becoming broader and loses significance and the kingdom loses the conviction that the US is automatically responsible for its security.

**Perceived expectations of others**

In the speeches we can find 38 codings dealing with the perspective of other countries and institutions. Besides, the speakers often compare their positions to those of leading politicians in Germany and the US or use them as point of reference. That confirms that both countries act as *significant others* for the Netherlands. The speakers perceive the expectations of others as important. They think that the image of their country is positive, rooted above all in development cooperation, participation in peace missions and a successful economy: “Internationally, the Dutch contributions in the form of peace missions and development

\textsuperscript{15} At the beginning of the 1990s, NATO, CSCE, WEU and UN form the institutional framework (Begroting 1992: 1950). That changes to a triangle consisting of NATO, UN and WEU in the mid-1990s and to NATO, UN and EU at the end of the 1990s (Begroting 1998: 2350-2351).

\textsuperscript{16} One exception is in 2010.
cooperation are very much appreciated.” (APB 2006). They also think that the Netherlands is considered as an influential actor and that other actors listen to its positions (Begroting 2000: 1289). A remarkable change occurs in 2010. Now the speakers fear that the withdrawal from Afghanistan and the success of right-wing populist parties in the Netherlands might have damaged the Dutch image abroad.

Continuity and change

Overall, the roles of the Netherlands in foreign policy remain rather stable during the period under research. Nevertheless, some important changes occur. The following table summarizes the main roles that could be identified, their continuity and changes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Continuity</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defender and supporter of universal rights</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporter of development countries</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>First signs that role could lose significance in 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral example</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of a whole</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoter of international cooperation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country willing to assume international responsibility</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructive and credible partner</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>The NL is open for new partners in the 2000s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporter of multilateral missions based on civilian means</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>UN mandate loses significance, broader institutional framework for missions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convinced but critical European</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pragmatic European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoter of supranational EU</td>
<td></td>
<td>Promotor of supranational and intergovernamental EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner of NATO</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>The role loses its exclusiveness in the mid-1990s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security partner of the US</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>The partnership is less focused on security/defence in the 2000s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant/salesman</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agent of own interests</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Becomes much more important since 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong and influential country</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Becomes more important in the 2000s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Continuity and Change in Dutch foreign policy roles

Dutch CSDP-policies

Though having been a strong supporter of European integration for decennia (Pijpers 2007, Kurzer 1997, Coolsaet/Soetendorp 2000) the Netherlands has traditionally rejected any
attempt to introduce a European defence element. Therefore the evolution of the Dutch position to CSDP from an opponent at the beginning of the 1990s to a critical supporter is astonishing: “While the Netherlands [...] has traditionally pursued a NATO-based security and defence policy, The Hague has over the 1990s gradually developed a much more positive position on the construction of a CESDP and can today be seen as a cautious supporter of this project.” (Stahl et al 2004: 431). On the whole, we can identify five steps in the development of Dutch CSDP-policies since 1990.

The beginning of the 1990s: traditional fears and the Treaty of Maastricht

At the beginning of the 1990s the Netherlands still rejected European cooperation in security and defence and considered the US as sole security guarantee. In case of European defence cooperation the Dutch feared an American withdrawal from Europe, a strengthening of intergouvernementalism in the EU and a weakening of NATO. In addition, a German-French dominance and a constriction of Dutch political scope were seen as potential threats. These fears had already been visible in the discussions on European Defence Union (1950s), European Political Union (1962) and European Political Cooperation (1970s) (Jansen 1981, Wielenga 2000, Soetendorp/De Wijk 2002, Cooolsaet/Soetendorp 2000). Yet, since the 1970s the Dutch had finally accepted cooperation at least in foreign policy.

In 1991 the Netherlands was president of the European Council and prepared the Intergouvernemental Conference resulting in the Treaty of Maastricht. As traditional supporter of supranationalism, the country proposed to abolish the three pillars of the EU and wanted to apply supranationalism to the new Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (Cooolsaet/Soetendorp 2000). However, these attempts failed. So, we can see that the Netherlands was open for further integration in CFSP. Nevertheless, it still rejected any defence cooperation.

However, after the end of the Cold War the environment was changing and a certain American withdrawal from Europe appeared probable. Though first leading politicians started

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17 However, Dutch support for the integration process has lowered especially in the 2000s due to following reasons: economic stagnation, decreasing solidarity of society, immigration, insufficient profile of government, fear of marginalization, financial transfers, discomfort, e.g. with the Euro and enlargement (Lang/Majkowska 2005). It now reveals a new kind of European pragmatism (Pijpers 2007) and a certain “Eurorealism” (Lang/Majkowska 2005: 1) and puts more emphasis of national Dutch interests in the EU. Hellem (2009) provides a good overview of Dutch foreign policy in English language.

18 On „Black Monday“ all countries but one rejected the Dutch proposals (Tonra 2001).
to support the vision of a future European defence policy (Teunissen 2002), the official Defence White Paper 1991 still kept the old traditions (Tobergte 2006). Also concrete foreign policy action confirmed this approach: in September 1991 the Netherlands was one of the atlantic countries that rejected an operation lead by the Western European Union (WEU) in Yugoslavia (Coolsaet/Soetendorp 2000) and only one year later Dutch foreign minister Van den Broek did not welcome the adoption of the Petersberg tasks by WEU. Yet, in 1993 Dutch defence policy faced fundamental changes: the parliament decided to suspend conscription (Teunissen 2002) and the new White Paper strongly emphasised the importance of peace operations.

In sum, at the beginning of the 1990s, we meet a country that is on the one hand still strongly atlanticist and sees no alternative to NATO. On the other hand, The Hague realizes that its environment has changed and it reveals strong addiction to European integration.

Mid-1990s: European ideas and Yugoslavian reality

In 1994 Hans van Mierlo (D’66/left-liberal) became Dutch foreign minister. In contrast to the majority of leading Dutch politicians, Van Mierlo was a supporter of a stronger European orientation of Dutch security policy and welcomed an integration of the Western European Union (WEU) in the EU (Teunissen 2002). When in the same year the US rejected to participate in a military operation in former Yugoslavia, Dutch politicians concluded that WEU should be able to react independently of NATO (Teunissen 2002).

Tonra (2001: 224) describes the reason for Dutch commitment in the Balkans as follows: “For the Netherlands, the conflict in the former Yugoslavia was in some ways a special challenge, since it defied so many core values and beliefs in Dutch foreign policy.” In consequence, 15% of ground forces in Bosnia and Croatia consisted of Dutch soldiers and the Netherlands sent more airplanes to Kosovo than the much bigger neighbour Germany. Despite of this commitment the Netherlands did not become part of the contact group. This was one source of a certain mistrust entering Dutch relations to the US and the UK (Boekle/Swoboda 2003, Wallace 2010). In consequence the Dutch started to be more open to independent and stronger European defence capabilities. However, The Hague had to face reality soon when in July 1995 Dutch soldiers of a UN-mission could not prohibit the killing of up to 8000 people in Srebrenica. Following Srebrenica, Dutch politicians considered NATO again as the sole security organization that is able to supply such missions, in contrast to WEU and EU
(Soetendorp/De Wijk 2002). Besides, The Hague was satisfied with the role played by the US in the Balkans again. So, thinking about a European defence element just remained a short episode followed by a turn back to NATO (Boekle/Swoboda 2003).

Nevertheless, during the IGC 1996/1997 Dutch positions had lost some of their strong atlanticist convictions. Policy makers in The Hague were at least not unanimously opposed to the integration of WEU in EU any longer (Teunissen 2002, Tonra 2002). In fact, neither the coalition parties nor the different ministries did find a common point of view towards a Europeanization of defence policy (Wallace 2010). So, although originally a common strategy of the Benelux had proposed an integration of WEU in EU, the Netherlands finally rejected a concrete timetable (Kwast-van Duursen 1995/96).

In sum, the IGC confirmed the disputed and gradual increase in support of a stronger European defence cooperation (Stahl et al 2004). But at the same time, since 1996, Dutch positions towards European integration in general have become more critical (Pijpers 1996/97). Finally, we can observe another important development in Amsterdam: here, the Netherlands gave up its traditional resistance to intergouvernementalism (Coolsaet/Soetendorp 2000).

End of 1990s: the summit of Saint Malo

The end of the 1990s was a time of growing political differences between western European states and their American partner. Kosovo war showed again the strong European dependence on the US. In this time, the Netherlands got disappointed with American behaviour and the role of NATO in the Balkans:

“Crucial for the development of the ESDP has been the fact that during operation Allied Force, NATO’s much praised political consultation mechanism turned out to function unsatisfactorily. Compared to its role as a military organisation, NATO played no role of importance as a political organisation. This led to considerable uneasiness among a number of allies, including the Netherlands. In its after action report the Dutch government complained about its limited access to NATO’s decision-making machinery during the air campaign.” (Soetendorp/De Wijk 2002, p. 87)

Often, small and informal forums decided on NATO’s strategy, and in these forums the Netherlands were excluded. Here, we see the traditional fear of directories that has also

19 In 1997 the WEU did not launch an operation in Albania. This confirmed the position of foreign policy makers that NATO should carry out such operations.
20 The contested issues were inter alia missile defence, unilateralism, the conservatism of the Bush government and trade disputes (Teunissen 2002).
prohibited Dutch support for intergouvernmental structures in the EU for decades. Despite of this difficult situation after the French-British summit of Saint Malo proposing a CSDP, the Dutch government first remained cautious. Whereas right-wing liberal coalition party VVD was doubtful, its partners, social-democratic PvdA and D’66 (left-wing liberal) as well as the biggest opposition party, Christian Democratic CDA, welcomed cooperation in military matters (Pijpers 1999/2000). Other splits occurred in the armed forces and the ministries of foreign affairs and defence: Navy rejected CSDP, Air Force did at least not completely oppose it, defence minister De Grave rejected the project and the foreign ministry remained sceptical officially but parts of its staff were favouring it. Still in 1999, foreign minister van Aartsen opposed a true European defence structure and asked for close cooperation with the US. Only by the end of 1999 the ministry of foreign affairs started to support CSDP in practice while preparing the Helsinki summit of the European Council (Teunissen 2002).

This unclear Dutch position raised criticism in other member states, above all in Germany and the UK that wanted the Dutch to take a decision (Pijpers 1999/2000, Tonra 2002). So Dutch politicians feared isolation and the loss of influence if they rejected CSDP (Boekle/Swoboda 2003), a mechanism we could also see in the earlier discussions on European Defence Union and European Political Union. Finally the ministers Van Aartsen and De Grave agreed with the Finnish document on CSDP (Pijpers 1999/2000, Tonra 2002).

After the summit of Helsinki, the Netherlands became an active participant of the debates on the future development of CSDP, a committed member of the European Capabilities Commitment Conference in 2000 and decided to contribute with ground, air and naval assets to the Rapid Reaction Forces. It presented a concept with France for a European Multinational Maritime Force and with its British and German partners ideas for a European Air Transport Command. Cooperation was welcomed and the government even planned spending extra money for projects related to CSDP (Soetendorp/De Wijk 2002, Pijpers 1999/2000).

Yet, knowing that European capabilities were still weak, NATO remained the most important security organization. We can see that the discussions about NATO and CSDP often resulted in compromises. E.g. the Defence White Paper 2000 included both new and traditional aspects, inter alia traditional security and peace operations or the importance of NATO and of EU (Teunissen 2002). However, keeping in mind the total rejection of European defence cooperation in the past, the developments surrounding Saint Malo are a “dramatic policy change” (Soetendorp/De Wijk 2002) for the Netherlands.
Beginning of the 2000s: between supporting CSDP and atlanticist reflexes

At the IGC resulting in the Treaty of Nice the Dutch proposed permanent structures for CSDP which should be rooted in the European treaties. They wanted to define EU-NATO relations and prohibit any sort of directorate (Soetendorp/De Wijk 2002, Pijpers 2000/2001): “The Netherlands, for example, considers its ability to exercise sufficient influence on military decision-making an important aspect of the ESDP. It will almost certainly oppose any development in the direction of a directorate of the big three.” (Soetendorp/De Wijk 2002: 93)

Although The Hague was actively participating in CSDP, the US still had strong influence on its defence policy. For example, the press assumed that American rejection was the reason for Dutch non-participation in the European satellite observation programme proposed by the European Commission (Teunissen 2002). And in Iraq, the strong American-Dutch relations were striking: “The growing European and transatlantic disagreements forced to an own statement that was noticeable pro-American.” (Pijpers/Terhorst 2002/2003: 378) Here, The Hague strongly criticized German opposition to the US and took a position not only different to that of Germany but also to its other partners Belgium and France. Although the Netherlands did not sign the letter of the eight and did not participate in war directly, it sent 1100 troops to Iraq in June 2003 (Stahl et al 2004)21. In consequence, the Dutch did not participate in the summit in Tervuren in 2003 while Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt, Luxemburg’s Prime Minister Jean-Claude Junker, French President Jacques Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder met, all of them usually being close allies of the Netherlands. So, it becomes obvious why The Hague felt some discomfort when being forced to decide between the US and its European partners. However, its answer was atlanticist.

End of 2000s: the Netherlands in CSDP missions

In the 2000s the Netherlands manoeuvres between NATO and EU, emphasizes the significance of the US but also participates in many CSDP-missions and operations. In the German context such a policy is often called “sowohl als auch-Politik”, a policy that tries to fulfil two contradicting demands at the same time.22

22 Stahl et al 2004 also use the term ‘sowohl-als-auch’ for their description of Dutch behaviour.
In Afghanistan and Iraq, the US has been a central partner for the Dutch and the country still buys capabilities in the US. E.g. The Netherlands has spent 800 million US-dollars for the development of the American Joint Strike Fighter and did not support the European Eurofighter.

The Hague has become much more pragmatic in questions of European integration than at the beginning of the 1990s. Nevertheless, it participated in the majority of CSDP-missions between 2003 and 2010. For example, in 2008 504 Dutchmen were participating in military missions. Compared to other states, for example 308 Belgians, 2045 Germans and 805 British, this is a number we could expect from a small but active member state. So, we see an active commitment here. The same is true for civilian missions (Grevi et al 2009). The following table shows the participation of Dutch staff in CSDP-missions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of CSDP mission</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Netherlands involved?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EUPM Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>2003-2012</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCORDIA FYROM</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTEMIS DRC</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUPOL PROXIMA FYROM</td>
<td>2003-2005</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUJUST Themis Georgia</td>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUFOR ALTHERA</td>
<td>Since 2004</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUPOL Kinshasa</td>
<td>2004-2007</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUJUST-Lex Iraq</td>
<td>Since 2005</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUSEC DR Congo</td>
<td>Since 2005</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU Support to AMIS Sudan</td>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU BAM Rafah Palestinian Territories</td>
<td>Since 2005</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU BAM Moldova/Ukraine</td>
<td>Since 2005</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUPAT FYROM</td>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMM Banda Aceh</td>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUPOL COPPS Palestinian Territories</td>
<td>Since 2006</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUFOR DRC</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUPOL DR Congo</td>
<td>Since 2007</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUPOL Afghanistan</td>
<td>Since 2007</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUFOR Chad/ C.A.R.</td>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUNAVCO/ EUNAVOR Atalanta</td>
<td>Since 2008</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUSSR Guinea-Bissau</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU MM Georgia</td>
<td>Since 2008</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EULEX Kosovo</td>
<td>Since 2008</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUTM Somalia</td>
<td>Since 2010</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the end of the 2000s we can describe Dutch behaviour in CSDP as rather pragmatic. Contrary to its traditional conviction of supranationalism it now accepts intergouvernmentnalism and rejects majority voting in CFSP. It remains sceptical in the question of a mutual defence clause but welcomes cooperations with Germany and Belgium.

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23 The number of staff is not stable.
(e.g. naval cooperation). In addition, its commitment to CSDP-missions is based on pragmatic reasons rather than on the will to further an independent European defence capacity (Tobergte 2006): „As the transatlantic relation is the cornerstone of Dutch foreign policy, deepening the ESDP will require no less than a paradigm shift in Dutch foreign policy.” (Soetendorp/De Wijk 2002: 82).

Conclusion

The main objective of the paper was to find out to what extent foreign policy role conceptions can help us to understand CSDP-policies of small EU member states. I provided a framework for the research of foreign policy role conceptions and national CSDP-policies and presented a case study dealing with the Netherlands.

The results show that the majority of Dutch foreign policy roles and the underlying values remain stable in the period under research (e.g. defender and supporter of fundamental rights, moral example, promoter of international cooperation). Yet, we can also observe modifications and slight changes of roles. E.g., the role agent of own interests becomes more important since 1998 whereas the promoter of supranational EU loses significance in the 1990s and the roles partner of NATO and security partner of the US lose their exclusiveness.

The CSDP corresponds to many of the traditional Dutch roles: CSDP and Dutch foreign policy both share values and norms and emphasise civilian elements. CSDP fits the Dutch objectives of international cooperation, of helping poorer countries and of assuming international responsibility. Besides, when participation in CSDP-missions the Netherlands continues its tradition of sending troops to UN and NATO-operations in a new framework. So, the majority of Dutch roles welcome the introduction of and participation in CSDP.

Besides, three roles that are changing allow for a more flexible approach in foreign policy. The Netherlands quits its role as strong promoter of supranational EU and becomes a promoter of supranational and intergouvernemental EU. In addition, the role agent of own interests becomes more and more important, and finally the country becomes a pragmatic European. These modifications allow for a policy that adapts more strongly to changes in the environment and can therefore ease participation in CSDP.

Yet, the analysis shows that three roles exist that are or were challenging CSDP. First, at the beginning of the 1990s the Netherlands were still a promoter of supranational EU. Second, the
role partner of NATO remains important though losing its exclusiveness. Third, the role security partner of the US remains important. All of them can be in opposition to a participation in CSDP. The analysis of the indirect alter has shown that the US remains a ‘significant other’ to the Netherlands. This confirms that Dutch foreign policy is still closely linked to the positions of the US. So, these roles can explain the hesitation to introduce CSDP at the end of the 1990s and the atlanticist reflexes of the 2000s.

The last paragraph has shown that the Netherlands is still caught in a role conflict between its loyal cooperation with NATO and the US on the one hand and participation in the EU on the other hand. During the Cold War this conflict has not come to the surface because NATO and EU were dealing with different spheres (security vs. economy). However, since the 1990s the Netherlands faces changes in its environment, a US-withdrawal from Europe, new threats and disappointments with NATO and the US. Those have weakened the traditional roles of security partner of the US and partner of NATO and allowed for the introduction of CSDP.

However, the co-existence of these roles and the manoeuvring between the two poles can only work as long as CSDP remains weak. If the roles clash, role conflict becomes obvious. This causes an unstable Dutch CSDP-policy and shifting commitment to the European security and defence element.

The research presented in this paper implied one single case study on Dutch national role conception and CSDP-policies. So, in the next step of research it will be interesting to include case studies of other small EU member states. Kirste/Maull (1996) propose the use of foreign policy role conceptions above all for the comparison of most similar states. In consequence the comparative study of CSDP-policies of member states should be interesting.

In conclusion, in the Dutch case study the framework based on foreign policy role conceptions has helped to better understand national CSDP-policies. The case study shows that modifications in foreign policy role conceptions are able to explain change of CSDP-policies. This can help us to better understand changing CSDP-policies of small states. So, the results confirm the assumption that constructivist role theory is a valuable way of analysing national CSDP-policies.
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23


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24 http://www.statengeneraaldigitaal.nl/ https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/zoeken/parlementaire_documenten