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A Tale of Two Neighbourhoods:
Explaining Differences in EU Regional
Prioritisation Following the Arab Uprisings
and Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

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Abstract: In an era of concurrent crises, the European Union is increasingly called to react to, balance and prioritise objectives, partners and regions in its neighbourhood. Yet, the Union's vastly different responses across crises, and its seemingly greater willingness to prioritise Eastern over Southern states, raise questions on EU external action's double standards and the extent to which popular theories in political science, which seek to explain EU crisis-mode decision-making, suffice to explain recent developments. Comparing regional prioritisation after the 2011 Arab uprisings and the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, the present thesis conducts a qualitative frame analysis of EU institutional rhetoric, to amend the flaws of historical institutionalist literature that cannot explain why the EU significantly prioritised the Eastern neighbourhood post-2022, but not the Southern one post-2011. Upon examining four potential factors, the findings suggest that the level of perceived threat to the Union and the crisis-affected region's perceived Europeanness are the most potent factors that can be conceptualised as mediators between a crisis-driven critical juncture and regional prioritisation in the EU's neighbourhood. This indicates a multi-tier, unequal Neighbourhood Policy, where external action is conditioned by both the type of crisis and the affected region's characteristics, prompting the Union to more easily prioritise some of its partners over others.

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1. Introduction

The European Union (EU) lies in a neighbourhood constantly stricken by crises, and in an international environment of increasing geopolitical instability. Amid this context, scholars have sought to study how such crises affect the EU's institutional priorities, and specifically how they shape its foreign policy, not least in its immediate neighbourhood (e.g. Hernández and Closa, 2024; Dimitrova, 2023). However, as this thesis will argue, not only has the EU been inconsistent in its response towards different crises and its prioritisation of different crisis-affected neighbouring regions, but existing literature also falls short of explaining such discrepancies. As such, the present study seeks to highlight the flaws in historical institutionalist theories that attempt to map EU crisis-mode priority-setting mechanisms, whilst attempting to better explain why the Union appears more willing to prioritise some of its neighbours over others, amid a wave of constant geopolitical upheavals.

Upon its inception in 2003, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was born out of the EU's attempt to manage its neighbourhood, and has seen reviews prompted by geopolitical watershed moments in 2011 and 2015 (Kostanyan, 2017, pp. 7-15). The instrument itself is a broad set of engagements with the EU's most immediate neighbours, offering assistance and integration proportional to the fulfilment of conditions relating to the rule of law, democracy, human rights and economic reform (*ibid.*, p. 12). The ENP is typically seen as having two distinct regions: ENP South, largely consisting of the Union's Arab Mediterranean neighbours and Israel, and ENP East, which includes the European post-Soviet states that did not join the Union in the 2000s, but excludes Russia and accession candidates like the Western Balkans and Türkiye (*ibid.*, p. 12). The ENP is less of a concrete, coherent policy measure and more of a blueprint on which the EU's relations with its neighbours are based, but it serves as a useful metric for who the Union views as an immediate neighbour. Nonetheless, the instrument has not always been effective, with EU engagement in the neighbourhood drawing frequent criticism in the context of suboptimal reactions to geopolitical crises like the 2011 Arab uprisings (Teti, 2012). While the Union engaged frequently, supporting pro-democracy reforms, offering aid and consultations, not only was the response to the Arab uprisings subpar compared to those to other crises, but ENP South was also far from the Union's priority at the time.

On the other hand, the Union has been notably more responsive to other crises, such as Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine. As this thesis will show later on, the response to the crisis was notably more decisive than that to the Arab uprisings, but also made ENP East a

clear EU priority after 2022. The thesis will hence argue that upon their comparison, the two cases - two watershed moments that heavily shifted geopolitics in the EU's neighbourhood, with direct impacts on the Union in terms of energy, refugee flows and security risks - were met with vastly different responses, particularly in terms of prioritising the affected ENP regions vis-a-vis the other. This discrepancy is the empirical puzzle that the thesis will further explore, whilst simultaneously showing that current theories on how geopolitical crises affect EU priority-setting cannot offer robust explanations for the phenomenon. This yields the main research question: *Why did the EU's foreign policy response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine involve a more decisive response and shift in regional prioritisation compared to the Arab Uprisings?*

Conducting such research is particularly important on an academic level. Regional prioritisation is rarely discussed in EU studies, and never brought into dialogue with historical institutionalist theories on priority-setting. While there is a body of literature on differentiation across ENP regions, with the Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean being specialised frameworks for the East and South respectively (e.g. Poli, 2015), this differs from prioritisation. Simply put, differentiating across regions does not equal prioritising one of them. Hence, the present thesis is not concerned with qualitative differences in how the regions are treated, but the reasons why they are prioritised differently across crises. Second, while various scholars seek to explain the response to Russia's invasion or the Arab uprisings as separate phenomena, proposing a series of factors to explain them, these have never been put into dialogue with one another, implicating that explanations of the EU's response to either crisis exist in isolation both from alternative arguments and scholarship on the other crisis. The thesis innovates by comparing the two crises, as well as common factors identified by scholars as conditioning the EU's response, to determine their robustness on a comparative scale. Crucially, the thesis amends the aforementioned flaws in historical institutionalist theories and offers a more complete understanding of EU crisis-mode decision-making, covering a major gap in the most popular theories.

Moreover, the thesis's social and policy importance lies in the empirical puzzle that it aims to examine. Contrary to historical institutionalist expectations of a uniform EU priority-setting mechanism that will be analysed further on, the difference in prioritisation across the two crises implies the existence of a two-tier European neighbourhood. The thesis can help better understand how EU priority-setting operates in times of crisis, and expand our understanding of what has the potential to become an EU institutional priority and under what circumstances. Additionally, it can explain the difference between the EU's approaches to

different regions in its neighbourhood, as well as whether some regions are inherently less likely to receive aid when struck by a crisis. Certain theories and potential explanatory factors that will be elaborated on, like Europeaness, can also implicate that the EU maintains racialised perspectives of its neighbourhood and follows such archaic logics when engaging with it. All in all, the study can offer insights into the ENP and the extent to which it has created a two-tier neighbourhood, with ENP South being treated as less of a priority, or if the identified discrepancy is merely up to the type of crisis the EU is called to react to.

Upon engaging with relevant literature to illustrate the identified empirical puzzle, knowledge gap and flaws in historical institutionalist theories, the thesis puts forward an original research question and outlines mediating factors that could better account for the relationship between a geopolitical crisis and regional prioritisation in the EU's neighbourhood. Subsequently, it outlines its research design, including case selection and methodology: a qualitative frame analysis to transform each identified factor into a distinct frame, analysing EU institutional rhetoric to determine their occurrence in each crisis. It then proceeds to present, compare and contrast the frame analysis's results, concluding on which factors hold more explanatory power based on their frequency and style of occurrence, in dialogue with the theories that the thesis seeks to complement. It concludes with an answer to the research question, a judgment on the fit of the selected factors to explain the empirical gap, and a discussion of the study's weaknesses that can be ameliorated in future inquiries.

2. Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

a. Puzzle

i. Critical Junctures & Issue (Re)Prioritisation

As already indicated, the core of the present thesis's inquiry lies within theories of historical institutionalism, particularly their inability to explain certain discrepancies in EU institutional behaviour in relation to critical junctures, institutional preferences and regional prioritisation in the Union's neighbourhood. Understanding these theoretical and empirical contributions is key before discussing the puzzle that the present thesis seeks to engage with. Historical institutionalism in political science emerged from attempts to determine how and why institutions play a role in international, national and regional politics. The discipline is concerned with how "temporal processes and events influence the origin and transformation of institutions", including shifts in institutional structures and design, strategies or policy (Fioretos, Faletti and Sheingate, 2016, p. 3). In other words, historical institutionalists examine

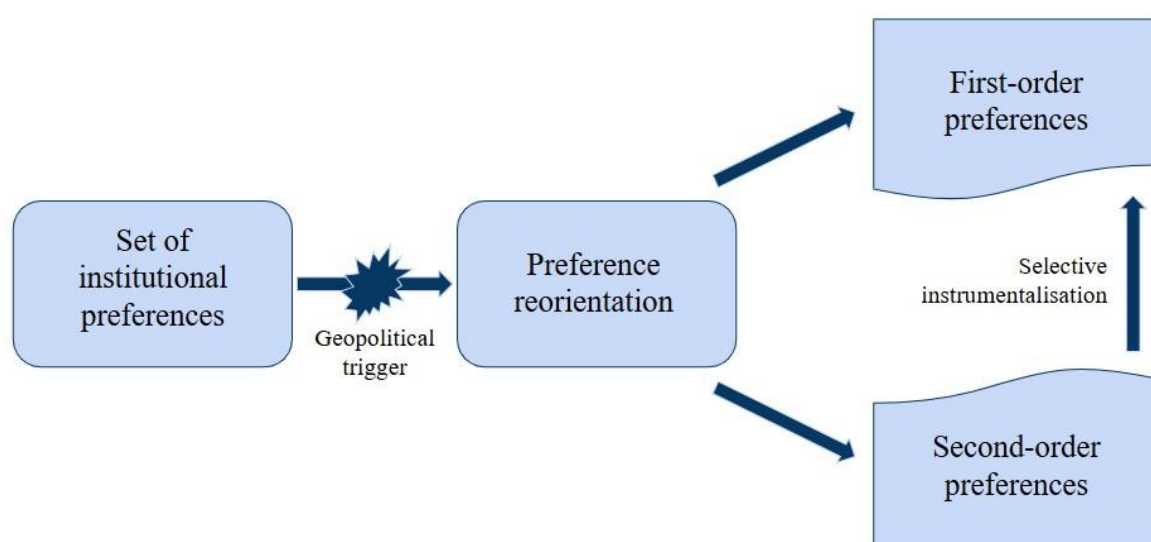
how institutions or their actions change and adapt to temporal phenomena such as path dependence or critical junctures.

Critical junctures are commonly defined as periods of interest and policy realignment as a result of altered political opportunities following a watershed moment, such as a geopolitical trigger (Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007, p. 343). Scholars identify critical junctures as creating both restrictive and permissive conditions for policy development, respectively limiting and widening the options of institutional actors when reacting to a trigger event (*ibid.*, p. 348). While trigger events vary in type, they hold the potential to alter political actors' preferences and priorities as the eruption of novel crises alters the perceived urgency of addressing different issues, indicating that actors' preferences are rarely constant over time and are best understood contextually (Jones and Baumgartner, 2005). The concept has been linked to path dependence, to argue that past watershed moments can alter institutional development, structures, policy and preferences in the future (Capoccia, 2016, p. 20). Critical junctures can also create legacies that reproduce the watershed moment's initial effect, or re-enforce it in a path dependent manner, without necessitating the recurrence of the trigger event (Collier and Collier, 1991, pp. 31-34). To illustrate how such processes occur in practice, Kingdon (2014) argues that visibility is a key determinant of perceived urgency, implying that policy areas become "first-order priorities" during a critical juncture period when the trigger event renders them more visible. For example, as the re-orientation of political actors' priorities follows the form of the juncture's trigger, a geopolitical event with security implications is expected to heighten the perceived urgency of security issues.

The latter contribution is part of a wave of scholars departing from the large-scale study of how critical junctures impact institutional structures and rather focusing on policy, strategies and issue prioritisation. At the EU level, Hernández and Closa (2024) describe how such processes divide issue areas into first- and second-order priorities (p. 972). Through an empirical analysis, they conclude that second-order issues are then primarily invoked when they serve to advance goals pertaining to first-order issues. This is because the European Commission calculates that it can use them as bargaining chips to achieve objectives perceived as more urgent (hence first-order) by itself and the member states alike, thereby achieving support in the European Council (*ibid.*, pp. 969-972). The authors illustrate this argument by examining EU issue reprioritisation following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, positing that the war has rendered geopolitics and security first-order issues vis-a-vis second-order areas like democracy and the rule of law. They explain that the Union's approach towards rule of law deficiencies in Hungary and Poland had until this point been characterised by forbearance -

often described as a permissive approach (ibid., p. 968). Nonetheless, the reorientation of EU institutional priorities upon the war's outbreak has allowed for the suspension of forbearance where instrumentalising a second-order issue like the rule of law can push for greater unity or alignment with first-order, geopolitical goals. Namely, although by 2022 both Poland and Hungary suffered from rapid democratic backsliding and rule of law erosion, the Union has since adopted a stricter stance on Hungary compared to Poland.

The authors attribute this to Poland's alignment with EU geopolitical objectives - a strong condemnation of Russian aggression in Ukraine, sizeable rhetoric and material support for Ukraine, and an active role in housing Ukrainian refugees. On the other hand, while Poland is rewarded with forbearance, Hungary is punished for its relatively anti-sanctions and less decisively anti-Putin approach. As a result, EU rule of law enforcement mechanisms (pertaining to a second-order issue area) are weaponised to punish Hungary and coerce it to align with EU geopolitical/foreign policy objectives (first-order issue area) (ibid., pp. 980-988). Other empirical contributions have applied this mechanism to external EU action, showcasing how, for instance, the Copenhagen Criteria have become a second-order priority vis-a-vis geopolitics and are instrumentalised by the Commission as such in accession processes (Ioannou, 2024).



Graph 1. Simplified visual representation of institutional issue reprioritisation mechanism.

ii. Russia's Invasion of Ukraine (2022)

Moreover, this thesis posits that there is empirical evidence to substantiate that this mechanism can also apply to regional prioritisation in the EU's engagement with its neighbours in critical juncture periods, evident if one examines eastward engagement after Russia's

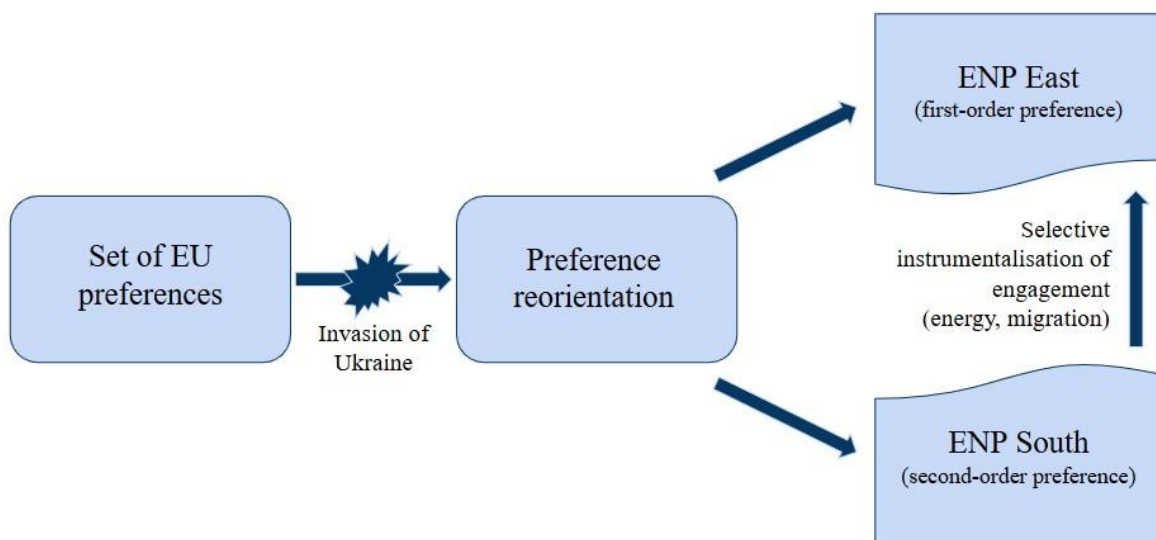
invasion of Ukraine. After the seizure of Crimea in 2014 and an almost decade-long insurgency in East Ukraine, Russia invaded the country in early 2022, a move met by a decisive response on behalf of Europe, not only in terms of arms provision but also financial, reform and rhetorical support among others (Wiesner and Knodt, 2024). The invasion has often been conceptualised by scholars as triggering a critical juncture, as it has shifted EU policy, strategies and even institutional structures in the areas of security, energy, strategic autonomy, enlargement and foreign policy among others (Dimitrova, 2023). The EU institutional response to the invasion was not only unprecedented in speed compared to previous crises, but also notably broad in terms of sectors covered and deep in terms of action initiatives (Bosse, 2024, p. 1223). Crucially, it not only rendered Ukraine itself into an EU priority but also most of the Eastern neighbourhood.

The Union has so far committed over €85 billion to Ukraine alone and has provided sizeable military, economic and humanitarian aid (European Council, 2025). Among other things, the Union has also established the EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine, involved in reinforcing Ukraine's military capabilities, and expanded the mandates of Eurojust and the EU Advisory Mission in Ukraine to investigate Russian war crimes (European External Action Service, n.d.-b; European Council, 2025). Additionally, the Union proceeded with a temporary trade liberalisation with Ukraine in May 2022, as well as triggering the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) to grant Ukrainian refugees the right to live and work in the Union (European Council, 2025). Furthermore, replacing years of enlargement fatigue, the Union has granted candidate status to three Eastern neighbourhood states - Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia - whilst pursuing closer engagement with Armenia, for example in visa liberalisation (European Commission, 2024a; European External Action Service, 2024). Similarly, the EU is pursuing close energy cooperation with Azerbaijan, in the wake of reduced Russian energy imports (European Commission, 2024b).

Further notable developments include the provision of border management support to Moldova by FRONTEX, as well as the launch of the EU Partnership Mission in the Republic of Moldova tasked with strengthening the country's security sector, and the EU Mission in Armenia functioning as an observer and occasional mediator in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict (Frontex, 2023; European External Action Service, 2025; n.d.-c). Moreover, large-scale sanctions were adopted, including asset freezes, travel restrictions, economic and trade limitations and more, towards the crisis's main perpetrators - Russia. Sanctions were also imposed on ENP East states like Belarus following their support of Russia, and Georgia amid increased democratic backsliding as well as pro-Russian entities within Moldova (European

Commission, 2025). Thus, although this section cannot provide a comprehensive list of EU novel relevant developments, it is evident that the Eastern neighbourhood is an EU institutional priority post-2022.

On the contrary, *novel* engagement in the EU's Southern neighbourhood since 2022 remains limited. Whilst some humanitarian aid was provided to Palestinians following Israel's war on Gaza, and minimal sanctions extensions to Libyan and Syrian entities were implemented, the vast majority of *new* southward engagement has focused on two sectors: energy and migration management (European Council, 2023). The EU's energy ventures in the South, such as enhanced discussions on energy cooperation with Algeria, are directly relevant to mitigating the impact of reduced Russian energy imports following the war in Ukraine (European Commission, 2023b). Similarly, migration management deals with Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt and Jordan can be seen as a response to increased refugee flows after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, necessitating further securing the EU's southern borders to ensure that EU institutional asylum infrastructure is not overwhelmed (European Commission, 2023a; Foy and Dubois, 2024). Therefore, in addition to being comparatively limited, the vast majority of novel EU engagement with the Southern neighbourhood serves to advance goals pertaining to the aftermath of the crisis in the Union's East - conceptualised above as a first-order issue for the Union. In that regard, following Hernández and Closa's (2024) model, the Southern neighbourhood can be conceptualised as a second-order issue. Hence, the first- and second-order prioritisation that the East and Southern neighbourhoods received respectively following Russia's invasion fit Hernández and Closa's theoretical expectation, and indicate that their model can be applied to regional prioritisation in EU external action, as per Graph 2.



Graph 2. Post-2022 EU regional engagement reprioritisation.

iii. Arab Uprisings (2011)

Nonetheless, the empirical puzzle identified by this thesis stems from the inability of this model to account for discrepancies in EU issue reprioritisation *across* cases, evident upon examining the Union's response to the 2011 Arab uprisings. Also called the "Arab Spring" in Western circles, the Arab uprisings were a series of pro-democracy protests that erupted in late 2010/early 2011 across the Arab world, triggered by the self-immolation of Tunisian fruit vendor Mohamed Bouazizi in protest (Alam and Ashwarya, 2024, p. 8). The protests quickly spread across the region, prompting changes in governments such as the ones of Tunisia and Egypt, pro-democracy reforms in states like Jordan and Morocco, but also escalating into armed civil conflict in Libya, Syria and Yemen (the latter of which is not part of the ENP) (ibid., pp. 9-12). The crisis is viewed as a major geopolitical shakeup, shifting dynamics in the region, triggering armed conflicts which soon involved foreign meddling, and creating large waves of migration. While the Arab uprisings are frequently conceptualised as having triggered a critical juncture in the ENP's development, prompting reform in 2015 to emphasise stabilisation and differentiation between partners, they do not appear to have had the same impact on regional prioritisation (Furness, 2017, pp. 200-206), with the EU response often criticised as inadequate, and ENP South being treated as far from a priority (Teti, 2012).

Upon the eruption of the crisis, the EU's engagement with the South was significantly slower and much shallower compared to that towards the Eastern neighbourhood post-2022 (Teti, 2012). The Union contributed a comparatively minute amount of €7-8 billion, mostly focused on democracy promotion, economic development and human rights, pursuing no novel action in the sectors of energy, European integration, or investigations of humanitarian law violations, whereas much of EU action was limited to confidence-building meetings with leaders, ministers and transitional administration representatives (European Commission, 2011). While migration management gained significant attention post-2015 in the aftermath of escalating conflicts in Syria and Iraq, this falls outside this thesis's scope, which focuses on the so-called "Arab Spring" itself as a critical juncture, typically delimited between 2011 and 2013, after which many (Western) scholars began referring to the situation as the "Arab Winter" (Kurzman et al., 2013). Even so, responses to migration from the South fell short of the decisive measures taken post-Ukraine, like the TPD.

Notably, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) assumed an active role in the case of Libya, pursuing military intervention in the country's civil war (Koenig, 2014). While this included several EU member states, it was not an initiative undertaken at the EU institutional level, which is what this thesis intends to examine. Speeches by EU officials from

the time explicitly reference this distinction, distancing the Union from the NATO-led mission (e.g. Van Rompuy, 2011c). The EU's involvement in Libya was instead manifested through the EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) in Libya, which nonetheless solely related to border and migration management, rather than conflict resolution or de-escalation (European External Action Service, n.d.-a). This is in line with Koenig's (2014) inquiry into the EU's role in Libya, which argues that the Union was unable to overcome its "traditional role as a civilian power" and act decisively, beyond the confines of EUBAM (p. 265)

As opposed to the aforementioned array of Common Security and Defence missions deployed after 2022 in Eastern neighbourhood countries, no further missions were launched in the South after the Arab uprisings besides EUBAM Libya, despite the large number of countries affected. Lastly, sanctions were imposed on Tunisian, Egyptian, Syrian and Libyan actors deemed to be impeding democracy or harming protesters, including asset freezes and travel bans. In the latter two, sanctions also included arms embargoes. However, the scale of those sanctions is comparatively insignificant compared to the ones imposed eastward post-2022 (European Commission, 2025).

On the other hand, engagement in the Union's East at the same time continued at similar levels to that of the South. Meetings with ministers and leaders in support of democratic reforms persisted, as did pre-existing ENP-related initiatives, whilst the covered sectors included democracy promotion, human rights and economic development, much like in the South (Trapouzanlis and Placzek, n.d.). Perhaps most notably during that time, the Union was in the process of drafting and negotiating Association Agreements with Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, deepening political and economic integration between those states and the EU (European Commission, n.d.-b; n.d.-a; European External Action Service, 2016). Sanctions were also implemented in the East - namely on Belarus - mirroring those in the South and including travel bans, asset freezes and restricting the sales of arms that could be used for internal repression (European Commission, 2025). Subsequently, it is observed that EU engagement across the two regions at the time of the Arab uprisings remained similar in intensity and design, implicating that the first-/second-order dynamic in regional prioritisation is not to be found in this case, despite the Arab uprisings being widely accepted as a critical juncture for the European Neighbourhood Policy (Furness, 2017, pp. 200-206). Regardless, the absence of regional prioritisation in this case indicates that the EU did not consider the Southern neighbourhood to be a first-order issue vis-a-vis the East as a potential second-order area, despite the geopolitical flux caused by the Arab uprisings.

Although this section is unable to offer a comprehensive list of all EU action in ENP South and ENP East post-2011, this overview highlights a yet-unanswered empirical puzzle: why can Hernández and Closa's (2024) issue reprioritisation mechanism be applied to regional engagement in the case of Ukraine, but not the Arab uprisings? Whilst Ukraine shows that it is indeed possible to employ this framework in dialogue with regional prioritisation, the Arab uprisings indicate that the framework's current state cannot account for empirical differences across cases. Hernández and Closa explain how issue reprioritisation works, but ultimately fall short of painting a comprehensive picture of the conditions under which it is triggered or potential factors restraining it. The present thesis then posits that there must be one or more mediating factors explaining this discrepancy.

b. Mediating Factors

i. Literature Gap & Research Question

As indicated earlier, in addition to the empirical puzzle identified above, this thesis seeks to cover a persisting, threefold literature gap. First, this thesis innovates when applying issue (re)prioritisation theories and Hernández and Closa's (2024) framework to EU regional prioritisation in its neighbourhood, comparing different regional responses to crises. Although a handful of empirical inquiries apply the theories to external engagement in the Eastern neighbourhood (e.g. Ioannou, 2024), there has yet to be a contribution to put them in dialogue with the Southern neighbourhood. Second, comparative research between the two selected cases remains sparse, with minimal instances focusing exclusively on the reception of Ukrainian and Middle Eastern refugees in the EU, in the aftermath of each crisis (e.g. Mickelsson, 2024; Oliveira, 2023). Third, scholars have often attempted to explain why the EU reacted swiftly upon Ukraine's invasion or followed a muted approach after the Arab uprisings, identifying a range of differing and frequently contradicting explanations, depending on the narrow theoretical approach they employ (Bosse, 2024, p. 1223). However, there exists no comparative research across these explanations to determine how they measure up to one another, implicating that these varying arguments solely exist in isolation from the rest in existing literature.

Subsequently, this thesis aims to amend these gaps by applying institutional (re)prioritisation theories to regional engagement in the context of the aforementioned empirical puzzle, engage in a deeper comparison of Ukraine's invasion and the Arab uprisings, and compare the most prominent explanations that can account for the discrepancy in EU regional prioritisation between the two cases, in hopes of isolating the mediating factor(s)

holding the most explanatory power to complement Hernández and Closa's framework. This yields the research question: *Why did the EU's foreign policy response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine involve a more decisive response and shift in regional prioritisation compared to the Arab Uprisings?* As the thesis's research design heavily relies on analysing EU institutional rhetoric, a sub-question is also considered: *How did this discrepancy manifest in EU rhetoric justifications?* Nonetheless, to allow for a comprehensive inquiry, it is crucial to first engage with current contributions on the mediating factors that can potentially justify the discrepancy in response and regional prioritisation across the thesis's two cases.

ii. Rejected Factors

First, a series of factors that have been put forward by scholars to explain either support for Ukraine or indifference towards the Arab uprisings cannot account for the discrepancy across the two cases, as they would be observed both after 2011 and 2022. For example, there is sizable scholarship on strategic narratives and their role in conditioning how the EU responds to crises, particularly in regional geopolitics (e.g. Miskimmon, 2017; Roselle, Miskimmon and O'Loughlin, 2014; Chaban, Miskimmon and O'Loughlin., 2017). Schumacher (2015, pp. 385-387) and Nițoiu (2013, pp. 243-247) posit that EU self-perceptions as a "promoter of peace", a "democratising force", an advocate of "good neighbourliness" and a protector of "the wellbeing of people" push it to engage in geopolitical crises in ENP states when there is a sizeable threat to peace, challenge to democracy, tension with/between neighbours, and/or danger posed to civilians. However, the authors identify such narratives as predating both crises, persisting from either the EU's inception or key reform moments like the 1990s or 2007, and thus are not a novel factor post-2011 that can justify the difference between this thesis's cases. Crucially, both the Arab uprisings and the invasion of Ukraine fit the criteria to trigger these narratives, as they involved regional destabilisation, varying levels of conflict, struggles pertaining to democracy and atrocities targeting civilians (Açıkalın and Bölücek, 2014; Ellison et al., 2023).

An additional example, albeit not qualitatively identical across the two cases, is material and political interests often identified as salient factors conditioning action in the East post-2022 and the South post-2011. Long before the full-scale invasion's outbreak, Smith (2014) argued that while strategic narratives and the EU's self-assumed image as a normative actor remain important, material and political interests have conditioned how the Union interacts with Ukraine since the early 2000s. These include energy and food access, as well as balancing Russia, thus indicating that the EU has material and political incentives to actively engage in

the East in times of geopolitical tensions. Similarly, Jervis (2013) argues that EU material and political incentives were also heavily present in the Southern neighbourhood during the Arab uprisings, including energy, migration, and the sizeable portions of Western European electorates of Arabic descent (pp. 193-194). Therefore, upon an initial examination, material and political interests appear to be often identified by existing contributions in both cases. Admittedly, qualitative differences between the types, salience and consistency of said interests across the cases may hold explanatory power to account for the difference in response and regional prioritisation, however not only is it hard to empirically measure such hidden interests, but it is also incompatible with the present thesis's rhetoric-driven analysis - and thus falls outside this paper's scope. Nonetheless, it is possible to identify four distinct explanations of EU action in existing scholarship that differ across the cases in a much clearer manner - and are thus better fit to examine as potential mediating factors to Hernández and Closa's framework.

iii. Europeanness

Scholars have often identified notions of Europeanness as a key factor that mobilised support for Ukraine and the Eastern neighbourhood more broadly, upon Russia's invasion in 2022 (e.g. Tallis, 2023, pp. 217-220). Albeit to a smaller extent, Europeanness (or, in this case, non-Europeanness) has also been identified in relation to the EU's muted response after the Arab uprisings, for example regarding refugee treatment (e.g. Mickelsson, 2024). Upon an examination of relevant key contributions, Europeanness can be conceptualised as possessing three distinct dimensions: the racial-religious dimension, the geographic dimension and the common path dimension.

First, the racial-religious dimension has in itself two facets. The racial facet pertains to the historical development of the idea of Europeanness or a "European identity" in dialogue with racial hierarchies. Mapping the notion's progression from colonial to modern times, Goldberg (2006) argues that "the idea of the European excludes those historically categorised as [...] not white" (p. 347). He argues that this popular perception remains the case even in instances of non-white individuals being born and raised in Western European countries, a claim which he illustrates via a series of typically far-right led "anti-immigration" protests in countries like the Netherlands which more often than not in reality targeted European citizens of colour (ibid., pp. 347-348). It can thus be expected that this ingroup-outgroup dynamic is further exacerbated regarding non-white individuals with no links to Europe. On the other hand, the religious facet follows a similar logic, but with a focus on Christianity rather than race as

the qualifier of belonging in the ingroup, rendering non-Christians as the outgroup (ibid., p. 347). Nonetheless, the two facets remain similar enough to be conceptualised as a single dimension of Europeaness, as certain scholars have argued that “whiteness” is a complex social phenomenon, not devoid of a religious, Christian component (Morgunova and Moraru, 2022, p. 746). In this regard, the difference across the thesis’s cases is clear: the vast majority of the Eastern neighbourhood is Christian and perceived as white, whereas the majority in the South is Arab and Muslim.

The second dimension, geography, relates to the imagined borders of Europe, which have historically excluded the Southern neighbourhood, but increasingly include the East. Wallace (2002) argues that the EU has recognised the need of any contemporary (Western) polity to have clearly demarcated borders and has thus sought to define what is and is not within “Europe” (pp. 83-85). In that regard, Didelon-Loiseau and Richard (2021) illustrate that Ukraine is most commonly perceived as geographically belonging to Europe, contrary to certain Russian strategic narratives. In fact, Wallace (2002) posits that the Western European perspective of what lies within the borders of Europe can be traced back to Medieval views of Eastern Europe’s Slavic-majority regions as the frontier of Europe, a notion further popularised in imperial times and eventually the Cold War (pp. 89-90). While the picture is less clear concerning certain Eastern neighbourhood states like Azerbaijan, Wallace concludes that the geographical Europeaness of most of the states that would later be part of ENP East is uncontested in popular European mindsets, as is the “non-belonging” of the South (ibid., pp. 91-93). This is further evidenced by the enlargement perspective given to a series of ENP East states, and the rejection of Morocco’s 1987 membership application on explicitly geographical grounds (European Commission, 2024a; European Parliament, 1998).

The last dimension is the constructed narrative of a common historical path of those perceived as European. Larat (2019) illustrates how EU narratives actively attempt to paint a picture of Europe as a continent of common, cohesive and continuous historical development, to posit that European states developed in parallel and often intersecting ways in terms of politics, economics and society (p. 276). While this is less fit to include Eastern European states, which remained distinct from their Western counterparts until the 1990s, the fall of communist regimes in the region allowed the EU to pursue a similar narrative eastward, accentuating the historical commonalities it shared with the new EU members of the 2000s (ibid., p. 278). Certain scholars have argued that similar narratives have been applied to Ukraine and the Eastern neighbourhood, stressing their commonalities with the rest of Europe (Klymenko, 2020). Others argue that a special type of commonality is invoked between ENP

East states and Eastern European EU members, as the war in Ukraine has activated historical legacies permitting analogies of Russian aggression and past historical trauma in post-Soviet states, including suppression, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing (Kalhousová, Finkel and Kocián, 2024). Similar patterns are not observed with Southern ENP states.

In addition to the three conceptualised dimensions of Europeanness, the concept can be useful in conjunction with the literature on emotions as a support driver for ENP East. This body of literature argues that policymakers were quick and decisive in their response to the invasion because it triggered positive emotions of sympathy and identification, and negative emotions of anger and fear (e.g. David and L.D., 2024). While negative emotions will be addressed later on in this thesis, positive emotions are best conceptualised as inherently linked to perceived Europeanness. Xi (2023) posits that sympathy and identification are more likely to be directed towards individuals perceived as members of the ingroup, as the aforementioned factors increase the likelihood of sympathising with a “fellow European” (p. 78). As a result, EU citizens are less hostile towards Ukrainian refugees or the idea of funding Ukraine’s struggle, whereas policymakers’ warmer emotional responses condition the speed, breadth and depth of their engagement with ENP East.

Hence, a key distinction between the thesis’s cases and a potential mediating factor in the EU’s response and regional prioritisation is perceived Europeanness. ENP East benefits from being perceived as European on account of its white-Christian majority, geographic location and constructed historical path, which triggers emotions of sympathy and identification. Conversely, ENP South lacks in all three dimensions of Europeanness, implicating that a region-specific geopolitical crisis is unlikely to activate either such emotional responses, or a narrative of helping the ingroup, or “fellow Europeans”.

iv. Threat Perception

A second potential mediating factor in Hernández and Closa’s (2024) framework is threat perception, once again often identified in Ukraine-focused literature. Threat perception pertains to greater or lower levels of perceived threat as a result of a geopolitical crisis conditioning EU responses, with heightened threat perception typically necessitating more decisive reactions (Gehring, 2021, pp. 1491-1492). Existing contributions mention two distinct ways threat perception manifests: physical and norm/value threat.

First, the perception of a threat to the physical being of Europe and its people results from the identified potential of a military, hybrid or terrorist attack (Gehring, 2021, p. 1492). Following the invasion of Ukraine, Russia’s military prowess and the return of interstate war

in Europe are likely to have activated such feelings of threat and thus are often identified as a motivator for extensive EU support to Ukraine and engagement with the Eastern neighbourhood post-2022 (ibid., pp. 1494-1495). This is further exacerbated by Russia's proximity to the EU, as it shares a land border with the Baltic states, as well as historical legacies of suppression and occupation in post-Soviet states (Ellis, 2024, p. 229; Kalhousová, Finkel and Kocián, 2024). Such arguments have been proposed across a range of schools of thought, including realism, liberalism and constructivism, which would posit that support for ENP East is a result of an anarchic international system pushing the EU to engage in "self-help", that threat is a conductor of international cooperation explaining leaps in EU military integration and renewed enlargement momentum, or that threat perception results from aggressive Russian signalling, respectively (Rousseau, 2006, p. 19; p. 36; p. 8). On the other hand, the Arab uprisings posed a comparatively less existential, physical and immediate threat to Europe, whereas a physical barrier - the Mediterranean - created distance between the Union and the Arab world.

The second type of threat perception relates to norm and value threat. This approach, more constructivist in nature, focuses on specific acts of signalling perceived as a threat directed towards treaty-derived EU norms and values, rather than its physical being (Gehring, 2021, p. 1494). In that regard, Russia's violation of norms and values enshrined in EU Treaties and narratives, such as sovereignty, human rights and adherence to international law, has been occasionally framed as an attack on European values, and - by extension - Europe. Similarly, the often repeated talking point of the war in Ukraine constituting a struggle between democracy and autocracy, or the "free world" and aggression, fits into this category (e.g. von der Leyen, 2022, para. 2). Both processes have similar effects to the physical dimension, activating increased support for ENP East following Ukraine. While the Arab uprisings did involve instances of "European values" like human rights being violated, such as the atrocities in Libya, those were not in what is perceived to be European territory or against people perceived as European (Amnesty International, 2021). In this sense, norm/value threat perception exists in close dialogue with physical threat perception, as the location of the violations conditions the perceived threat's severity. Similarly, it remains in dialogue with Europeanness, as identification can exacerbate these effects (Xi, 2023, p. 78). Simply put, Europeans are more likely to perceive norm/value threat if "European values" are violated at/close to home, and/or against those they perceive as European.

Additionally, within the aforementioned literature on emotions, negative emotional responses like fear and anger have also been identified as motivators of support for ENP East

post-2022, and tie in with the arguments on threat perception. Fear and anger are both responses to and exacerbators of threat perception - citizens and policymakers react in such a way because they are threatened, and feel more threatened as a result of fear and frustration (Gross Stein, 2013, pp. 380-381). Subsequently, much like “positive emotions” tie into Europeanness, “negative emotions” tie into threat perception, despite often being examined in isolation in academic contributions (e.g. David and L.D., 2024; Floyd and Weber, 2024). Regardless, the difference in how Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and Arab uprisings could have triggered physical and/or norm/value threat perception warrants their inclusion as a potential mediating factor explaining the discrepancy in EU response and regional prioritisation.

v. *Temporal Contingency*

Furthermore, a third common explanation for support in Ukraine that can account for the difference in EU reactions and regional prioritisation across this thesis’s cases is temporal contingency. The term refers to the specific sequencing of events conditioning how policymakers react to a novel geopolitical crisis (Ikani, 2018, p. 19). The implication is that the temporal context of a crisis can make the affected policy area more salient, heightening perceived urgency and facilitating policy change (ibid., p. 22). Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is a fitting example to illustrate this: it was a major geopolitical crisis preceded by a series of relevant escalating events such as the 2008 Russo-Georgian War, Euromaidan, the 2014 invasion of Crimea, the insurgency in Donetsk and Luhansk and the downing of flight MH17 among others (ibid., pp. 14-15). Additionally, it followed a series of other, unrelated geopolitical crises, such as the Arab uprisings themselves, to which the EU was unable to respond decisively or effectively, not only receiving extensive criticism but also experiencing adverse consequences such as the 2015-2016 migration crisis (ibid., p. 5). Subsequently, the critical juncture period following Russia’s full-scale invasion accentuated such recent events to order them in a sequence or pattern of escalating Russian aggression and European weakness, painting a clear picture in the minds of policymakers and highlighting the need for decisive and comprehensive action in ENP East.

On the other hand, most literature that engages with the Arab uprisings presents them as a trigger event themselves, yielding a series of occurrences after them, such as the Syrian Civil War (e.g. Korotayev, Shishkina and Khokhlova, 2022). Even though a deeper reading can reveal potentially identified patterns preceding the uprisings’ explosion in 2011, this paper posits that at least on a surface level, there is a clear distinction between the temporal context of the Arab Uprisings and invasion of Ukraine, particularly in the way they are approached by

literature (e.g. Açıkalın and Bölücek, 2014). Where these preceding events and their sequencing *are* discussed, the factors/incidents identified are primarily domestic and endogenous to the Arab world, such as political corruption, years of civil liberty suppression, and inflation (Grinin and Korotayev, 2022). This is a stark comparison with Russia's invasion of Ukraine, whose preceding events involved interstate conflicts and international incidents (e.g. MH17), which would be significantly more perceptible to policymakers. As a result, the surface-level distinction between the two cases, as well as the qualitative difference in the events that preceded them, render temporal contingency a potential explanation for why the EU adopted different responses and regional prioritisation.

vi. Political Leadership & Bureaucratic Politics

The last factor that is frequent in the literature on reactions to Ukraine's invasion or the Arab uprisings is political leadership and the role of bureaucratic politics. Per Smith (2022), a bureaucracy's capacity to act within the executive branch of a polity's government is dependent on individuals' personalities, leadership styles, expertise, cognitive complexity and personal interest in policymaking (p. 2). Additionally, institutions and policymakers alike have specific agendas and self-perceptions that condition how they act and engage with various policy areas (ibid., p. 3). Subsequently, the mere fact that there were different leaders and institutional actors between the thesis's two cases renders necessary the examination of the way they express their goals, self-perceptions and desired involvement to determine if they hold explanatory power for the difference in EU response and regional prioritisation.

For example, the response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the renewed push for engagement with ENP East was led by Ursula von der Leyen's so-called "Geopolitical Commission", with an expressed intention to assume an active role in global and regional geopolitics from the 2019 European elections onwards (von der Leyen, 2019). Contrastingly, this might not be the case with the different EU institutional leadership during the Arab uprisings, led by Commission President José Manuel Barroso and European Council President Herman Van Rompuy. This pertains less to the institutions' and leaders' willingness to respond to a crisis in *realpolitik* terms, but rather to their response being fuelled by a perceived need to fulfil a "role" or self-assumed duty, their understanding of their institution's capabilities and obligations, their self-perceived expertise, or personal convictions. Similarly, it is distinct from strategic narratives, which typically draw from European values like democracy protection, either to instrumentalise them towards meeting policy objectives or to align with the Union's historical normative mission (Schumacher, 2015, p. 384).

Upon this overview of four distinct factors identified in the literature that can account for the discrepancy across the thesis cases, the goal of this chapter is not to hypothesise on which might be better at complementing Hernández and Closa's (2024) mechanism. Instead, as the following sections will show, the intended purpose is to treat each factor as worthy of further examination, comparing and contrasting them using EU institutional rhetoric as a metric, to show differences and similarities in both the quantity and quality of their occurrence following the Arab uprisings and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Doing so will allow for the isolation of the factor(s) that appear best fit to explain what existing literature cannot, in hopes of answering the aforementioned research question.

3. Research Design

a. Case Selection

The present thesis has already engaged with the differences between the two selected cases: the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine and the 2011 Arab uprisings. However, to establish their comparability, it is also key to discuss their similarities. Both are conceptualised in literature as critical junctures for EU institutional development, and specifically the European Neighbourhood Policy, having felt impacts such as the 2015 ENP reform or renewed post-2022 enlargement momentum (Furness, 2017; Dimitrova, 2023). Both crises were major geopolitical events, shifting dynamics in the EU's neighbourhood, either by heightening EU-Russia tensions or replacing numerous governments in the region and triggering a series of civil wars. As indicated earlier, they had similar spillover effects on the EU, in terms of increased refugee flows, energy and security risks (Alam and Ashwarya, 2024; Wiesner and Knodt, 2024). Crucially, they each concerned a specific region within the European neighbourhood, with the Arab uprisings concerning the Southern neighbourhood and the Russian invasion impacting the East.

Nonetheless, they differ in their outcomes regarding EU regional prioritisation, as earlier analysed, with Hernández and Closa's (2024) model only being observed in the instance of Russia's invasion. Subsequently, this allows for the comparison of two similar cases of geopolitical upheaval with deviating outcomes, facilitating the examination of which of their differences (Europeanness, threat perception, temporal contingency, political leadership and bureaucratic politics) mediates the relationship between a geopolitical trigger and regional prioritisation. In that regard, the thesis employs a Most Similar Systems Design.

b. Methodology

The thesis employs frame analysis, a form of qualitative content analysis linking ideas, expressions and utterances into cohesive “packages of meaning” to describe broader patterns or frames (Crespy, 2015, pp. 106-108). As such, each of the four potential mediating factors will be conceptualised into a distinct frame to determine its occurrence in quantity and quality across the two cases. The optimal data type for this inquiry is speeches by high-ranking EU officials, on a twofold logic. First, as Hernández and Closa (2024) focus on institutional prioritisation and opportunity calculus, such data facilitates the specific study of EU institutional rhetoric, as opposed to studying speeches by heads of state or individual Members of the European Parliament. Second, whilst rhetoric cannot indicate hidden motives, it can showcase the perceived urgency/visibility that Hernández and Closa describe as conduits of reprioritisation, as well as illustrate how EU institutional actors frame crises (*ibid.*, p. 972). By turning each potential mediating factor into a frame and investigating if/how it occurs in EU rhetoric, the thesis can then determine the role it had in the process of EU priority evaluation, determining if it holds explanatory power for the difference in regional prioritisation across cases, upon their comparison. Such methods facilitate studying the occurrence of these frames both on a quantitative level (how often things like threat perception are invoked) and a qualitative level (what types of threat are invoked). Additionally, studying rhetoric also allows for examining the development of EU framing across different speakers, target audiences, and time points, even within a single crisis period.

Per frame analysis standards, and to transform the four potential mediating factors into frames with subcategories, a coding framework is put forth, as seen in Table 1. First, the “Europeanness” frame refers to EU rhetoric framing a region as European (or non-European), potentially motivating EU support on such justifications, and contains four mutually exclusive subcategories that closely follow the previous chapter’s conceptualisation of Europeanness. “Racial/religious Europeanness” (E1) frames a region as (non-)European depending on its people’s whiteness or Christianity. It can similarly refer to the (lack of) support/prioritisation for this region as yielded from the presence or absence of either characteristic. Admittedly, this subcategory is unlikely to be invoked by typically centrist high-ranking EU officials, but remains an important part of the Europeanness literature and is thus included. “Geography” (E2) frames a region as (non-)European or justifies support/prioritisation (or its absence) in terms of geography. Moreover, “history” (E3) frames (non-)Europeanness and support/prioritisation as linked to a historical trajectory that either aligns or deviates from that of Europe. Lastly, “Europeanness: other” (E4) includes either more general statements about a



region's (non-)Europeanness not fitting the other three subcategories, or an alternative aspect of Europeanness not expected by the previously analysed literature.

Second, the “threat perception” frame consists of statements linking the EU’s reaction to a crisis to the perceived threat level, and contains three subcategories that follow the form of the aforementioned literature. “Physical threat” (T1) motivates support/prioritisation because of a perceived physical threat stemming from the crisis, including military or hybrid attacks. It can also include motivating no support/prioritisation based on no perceived urgent physical threat, or simply framing the situation as threatening or not. It also includes explicit mentions of proximity as an exacerbator of threat. On the other hand, “norm/value threat” (T2) frames the crisis as a perceived threat to EU treaty-derived values such as human rights, democracy, sovereignty, self-determination, international law, etc. This subcategory includes references to attacks on the “rules-based international order” or a crisis being framed as a “clash of values”. Finally, “threat: other” (T3) includes statements identifying threats without specifying their type, or alternative types of threat not anticipated by the previous chapter’s literature.

Third, the “temporal contingency” frame situates the crisis in a temporal context as identified in the thesis’s theoretical framework, either as part of a chain of events or as an isolated incident, and affecting policymakers’ mindsets. The first of its three subcategories is “past events” (C1), which frames the crisis as a culmination/part of a sequence of events, indicating that the process of temporal contingency is heightening the perceived urgency of addressing the crisis in the minds of policymakers, as per the previous chapter. Furthermore, “past failure” (C2) frames the crisis as resulting from previous EU institutional failure to deal with other crises or the concerned region, similarly indicating that the temporal contingency process expected by Ikani (2018) is activated. Contrastingly, “isolated” (C3) frames the crisis as not linked to past events/EU failure, hinting at the absence of perceived temporal contingency.

Fourth, the “political leadership and bureaucratic politics” frame pertains to the impact of individual leaders’ and bureaucrats’ personal convictions, characteristics, self-perceptions and expertise as determinants of response and regional prioritisation, and includes two subcategories. “Duty to act” (P1) refers to explicit mentions of the aforementioned characteristics of either individual leaders, EU bureaucrats or institutional bureaucratic structures, as drivers of action. This is distinct from calls to action due to realpolitik concerns, strategic narratives or interests, and more in line with self-perceptions and individual role assumptions pushing for crisis response and regional prioritisation. Put simply, the subcategory

occurs when an EU official explicitly motivates support for a region based on their/their institutions' self-perceived role, expertise or character, such as the “Geopolitical Commission’s” mission to engage with global geopolitics. “Duty neutral” (P2) occurs when similar traits are used to justify inaction, minimal action or maintaining a neutral stance during a geopolitical crisis. Table 1 provides an overview of the frames, their subcategories and illustrates them with indicative examples.

<i>Frame</i>	<i>Subcategories</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Example</i>
Europeanness 	Racial/religious Europeanness (E1)	Racial/religious identities as qualifiers of (non-)Europeanness.	N/A
	Geography (E2)	Geographical location as a qualifier of (non-)Europeanness.	“Never before has this Parliament debated the State of our Union with <i>war raging on European soil</i> ” (von der Leyen, 2022l, p. 1).
	History (E3)	Historical trajectories as a qualifier of (non-)Europeanness.	“The Maidan uprising is a landmark in <i>our shared European history</i> ” (Michel, 2023f, p. 1).
	Other (E4)	Non-specific mentions of Europeanness or alternative characteristics as a qualifier of (non-)Europeanness.	“ <i>Ukraine is part of Europe</i> , and we will stand by our fellow Ukrainians now, while the war is raging, and once the peace has been achieved” (Borrell, 2024a, p. 2).
Threat Perception 	Physical threat (T1)	Perception of physical threat against Europe and/or its citizens (military, hybrid attacks).	“If we stop providing military support to Ukraine, the peace that we achieve will not be peace: it will be a Russian victory, which would pose <i>a terrible threat to our security</i> ” (Borrell, 2023a, p. 3).
	Norm/value threat (T2)	Perception of a threat against European values (sovereignty, human rights, democracy, international law, etc).	“ <i>But it is also a war against our values, and a war against the idea of a united and free Europe</i> ” (von der Leyen, 2023e, p. 1).
	Other (T3)	Non-specific mentions of perceived threat, or alternative types of threat.	“We simply cannot rely so much on a supplier that <i>explicitly threatens us</i> ” (von der Leyen, 2022a, p. 3).

Temporal Contingency	Past events (C1)	References to the crisis as part of a series of linked, escalating events.	<i>“First, in 2014, and now against Russia's full-scale invasion”</i> (Michel, 2023f, p. 1).
	Past failure (C2)	References to the crisis as (partly) stemming from past EU failure to respond to other crises or engage in the region.	<i>“Some of you have said that we failed to react after Crimea”</i> (Borrell, 2023a, p. 6).
	Isolated (C3)	References to the crisis as an isolated/unexpected incident/phenomenon.	<i>“Who would have predicted that the winds of freedom would blow from Tunis to Yemen and Syria?”</i> (Barroso, 2011g, p. 1).
Political Leadership & Bureaucratic Politics	Duty to act (P1)	Traits of leaders, bureaucrats or institutions (self-perception, stated missions, character, expertise, convictions) framed as drivers of action.	<i>“When I became the High Representative, which was a little bit of a shock to me, as you may have read, I said that there were three things that I needed to do in my mandate”</i> (Ashton, 2011l, p. 2).
	Duty neutral (P2)	Traits of leaders, bureaucrats or institutions (as above) framed as drivers of inaction or neutral stance.	<i>“The European Union has no wish to interfere in Egypt's internal decisions”</i> (Barroso, 2011e, p. 2).

Table 1. Coding framework.

Upon analysing a speech, relevant sentences were manually sorted into one of the frames and subcategories using Atlas.ti, which allows for the systematic grouping of quotations per code and the optimised visualisation of results. The sample consisted of 100 speeches, 50 per case, drawn from a broader population of speeches by the European Commission President, European Council President and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission (HR/VP) from the period of each crisis. For the Arab uprisings sample, these were José Manuel Barroso, Herman Van Romuy and Catherine Ashton respectively, whereas for the Russian invasion sample they were Ursula von der Leyen, Charles Michel and Josep Borrell (Bindi, 2022, pp. 40-49; Müller and Tömmel, 2024, p. 58). These three roles were selected as they are the most relevant high-ranking officials for EU external affairs, as opposed to, for example, the European Parliament President (Bindi, 2016). Each “crisis period” is delimited to three years following the crisis’s outbreak: 2011-13 for the Arab uprisings and 2022-24 for the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This is due to the scarce availability

of speeches from 2025, during which the thesis is written, and the aforementioned delimitation of the so-called “Arab Spring” to 2011-13 by Western scholars (Kurzman et al., 2013).

The 50 speeches per case were randomly selected from the archival websites of the European Commission (Europa), European Council (Consilium) and European External Action Service (EEAS) using keywords such as “Arab Spring”, “Arab uprisings”, “war in Syria/Libya”, “situation in Tunisia/Egypt”, “revolutions of dignity” and “Russian invasion”, “Russian aggression”, “war in Ukraine”, “situation in Moldova/Georgia” and more. Random sampling increases objectivity and limits researcher bias, although most of the available speeches were nevertheless included as the overall population was close to 50 per case. This means that key periods, such as but not limited to the week following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, or the election of Mohamed Morsi in Egypt, are well represented within the sample. It is worth noting that there is an overrepresentation of speeches by HR/VP Catherine Ashton in the post-Arab uprisings sample, and an overrepresentation of speeches by Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in the post-Russian invasion sample, as they made significantly more speeches than other officials during the delimited periods. Nonetheless, this is a finding in itself and will be addressed in subsequent chapters.

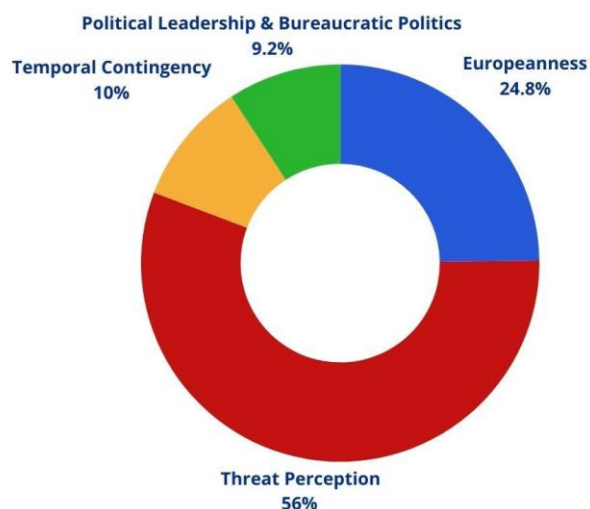
5. Findings

a. Findings: Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine

Upon analysing the 50 selected speeches from the 2022-24 period after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine to examine how EU rhetoric framed the crisis in a case where Hernández and Closa’s (2024) mechanism was observed, 359 unique relevant quotations were identified and sorted into one of the aforementioned subcategories. Table 2 presents the number of quotations per subcategory, whereas Graph 3 shows the percentage distribution of quotations across the four frames, and Graph 4 the percentage distribution of quotations across each frame’s subcategories.

Frame	Subcategory Code	Quotations
Europeanness	E1	0
	E2	5
	E3	4
	E4	80
Total:		89
Threat Perception	T1	63
	T2	76
	T3	62
Total:		201
Temporal Contingency	C1	26
	C2	10
	C3	0
Total:		36
Political Leadership & Bureaucratic Politics	P1	33
	P2	0
Total:		33
Overall Total:		359

Table 2. Quotations per frame and subcategory.



Graph 3. % spread of quotations across frames.

The least observed frame during this period was “Political Leadership and Bureaucratic Politics”, with only 33 quotations (9.19%). Those fit exclusively with P1 (duty to act) and are mostly references to the “Geopolitical Commission’s” unique role in geopolitics, as well as the role of bureaucrats, EU diplomats and institutional entities like the EEAS

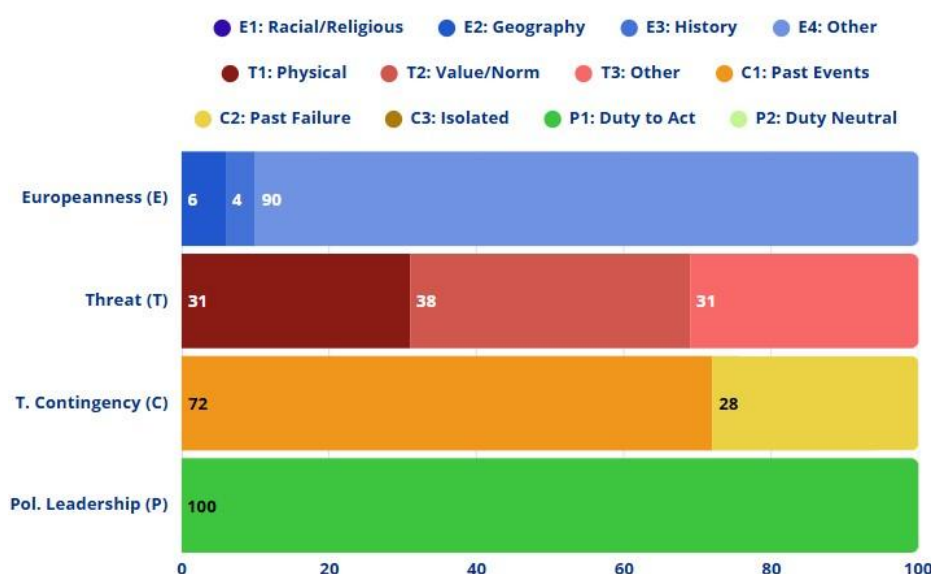
amidst the crisis. Especially HR/VP Josep Borrell makes frequent mentions of the role of diplomats and institutions like the European Parliament, citing their unique expertise or his personal conviction/vision about the role they should undertake in an increasingly contested world. For example:

“Europe must amplify its reflection on security issues and the European Parliament has had an important role to play in this regard” (Borrell, 2022a, p. 9).

Graph 4. % spread of quotations across subcategories per frame.

Similarly rare was the occurrence of the “Temporal Contingency” Frame, with 36 quotations (10.03%). Within this frame, 72% of these relate to past events (C1), with

references to the 2014 Euromaidan protests, the subsequent Russian invasion of Crimea and the recent past of Eastern Ukraine, linking them to the present crisis to form a coherent narrative



of escalating Russian aggression and Ukraine moving towards Europe. For example, when discussing Russia's westward expansionism, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen claims:

“It was a direct response to Ukraine’s Revolution of Dignity, in which brave Ukrainian citizens demanded justice, democracy and the right to choose their own future in Europe” (von der Leyen, 2022k, p. 1).

In some rarer cases, the invasion is linked to events of the previous century, such as the Soviet suppression of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and 1968 Prague Spring, in relation to Russian attempts to control its neighbours and expand/maintain its influence (Borrell, 2022a, pp. 40-41). At a lesser extent (28%), the frame occurs via the C2 subcategory, recognising past EU failure to respond to a crisis or engage in the region as an exacerbator of the present crisis. Such instances include admitting the failure “to react after Crimea” (Borrell, 2023a, p. 6), recognising that the EU “made strategic mistakes” by maintaining interdependencies with Russia (Borrell, 2023d, p. 4), or even regretting ignoring voices inside the Union, “in Poland, in the Baltics and all across Central and Eastern Europe” that remained sceptical of Russia as a reliable partner and urged for precautionary action (von der Leyen, 2022l, p. 4).

Notably more prominent is the “Europeanness” frame with 89 quotations (24.79%). While, as expected, the racial/religious subcategory (E1) was not observed, there is a distinctively low amount of quotations for the geography (E2) and history (E3) subcategories as well, with 5 and 4, respectively. This means that the vast majority of instances where ENP East states were framed as European post-2022 were unlinked to geography or common historical trajectories as signifiers of Europeanness. Instead, the remaining 80 quotations (90%) of the “Europeanness” frame were part of E4, of unspecified/alternative signifiers. This includes a series of statements simply affirming ENP East states’ Europeanness matter-of-factly, such as “Ukraine is the EU and the EU is Ukraine” (Michel, 2023a, p. 2) or “Ukraine belongs in the European family” (von der Leyen, 2022f, p. 2). Such quotations are often paired with links to Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia’s European perspective and later EU candidate status, framing Europeanness as an active choice of their people and intertwined with their “European future”, rather than characteristics like race, religion, geography or history. For example:

“You are part of our family, your future is in our Union, and our Union is not complete without you!” (von der Leyen, 2022l, p. 5).

A further aspect of Europeanness included in this subcategory as a result of deviating from theoretical expectations is certain shared values being framed as a qualifier of Europeanness. These include ENP East’s choice towards democracy, human rights, and equality, sometimes juxtaposed with Russian aggression. Examples include Ursula von der Leyen (2023c) describing Kyiv as “the beating heart of today’s European values” (p. 1).

Lastly, by far the largest observed frame in this period is “Threat Perception” with 201 quotations, representing 55.99% of all coded statements. 63 of these (31%) focus on the physical threat subcategory (T1), justifying action in the East as a means to fortify Europe and “prevent war” (Borrell, 2022a, p. 9) or describing the crisis as a ploy stemming from Russian President Vladimir Putin’s desire “to destroy Europe” (von der Leyen, 2023d, p. 2). A particularly indicative quote from European Council President Charles Michel reads:

“This is an attempt to drag us all back to a darker past, a world of nuclear confrontation and major food insecurity, with all the ensuing economic consequences” (Michel, 2024a, p. 1).

Within the “Threat Perception” frame, T2, pertaining to value/norm insecurity, is observed at high levels, with 76 quotations (38%). These include instances of the crisis being framed as an attack against human rights, sovereignty and international law, as well as the United Nations Charter (Borrell, 2023c, p. 3). Russian aggression against Ukraine and its expansionist tendencies across ENP East are framed by EU rhetoric as an explicit attack against the aforementioned European values, with Charles Michel (2023d) saying, “The Kremlin is attacking all that we believe in - freedom, democracy, prosperity and cooperation” (p. 2). The crisis is also often framed as a clash between two value systems, that of the Union and the “free world” versus Russia and its “league of authoritarians”, indicating that EU high-ranking officials see action in ENP East as a means of safeguarding their value systems. For example:

“This is a clash between the rule of law and the rule of the gun; between democracies and autocracies; between a rules-based order and a world of naked aggression” (von der Leyen, 2022a, p. 1).

Similarly many quotations fit the T3 subcategory, of unspecified or alternative threat perception, with 62 (31%). In their majority, those are general expressions of threat that remain too vague to be categorised as any of the previous three subcategories, such as references to a “more dangerous reality” post-Russia’s invasion (von der Leyen, 2024d, p. 1). In limited cases, the subcategory includes quotations containing elements from multiple of the other subcategories in one sentence, listing all types of threat that are perceived by EU officials:

“This is an attack on us all - our common European values, our European security, our common European dream” (Michel, 2023a, p. 1).

However, many T3 quotations also relate to identified types of threat that were not expected by the literature and hence fit no previous subcategory. Namely, these include a perceived threat to the EU’s economy as a result of the war, a perceived attack on EU energy infrastructure, as well as food security in the Union and beyond, which von der Leyen (2022h) claims has become “part of the Kremlin’s arsenal of terror” (p. 2). An indicative quote from T3, containing a mix of anticipated and unanticipated types of perceived threat, reads:

“This is a war on our energy, a war on our economy, a war on our values and a war on our future” (von der Leyen, 2022l, p. 2).

b. Findings: Arab Uprisings

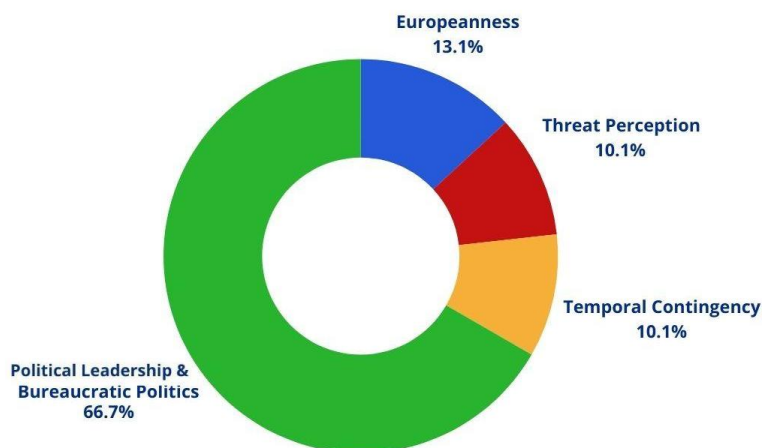
On the other hand, the findings from the 2011-13 period, corresponding to EU institutional rhetoric framing of the Arab Uprisings and the EU’s response to them, present a starkly different image. Upon analysing the 50 selected relevant speeches, the coding only yielded 99 unique quotations, which were subsequently categorised per the thesis’s framework. Table 3 presents an overview of quotations’ spread across subcategories, whereas Graph 5 indicates their percentage spread across the four frames, and Graph 6 illustrates their percentage spread across subcategories within each frame.

Frame	Subcategory Code	Quotations
Europeanness	E1	0
	E2	0
	E3	9
	E4	4
Total:		13
Threat Perception	T1	2
	T2	3
	T3	5
Total:		10
Temporal Contingency	C1	2
	C2	3
	C3	5
Total:		10
Political Leadership & Bureaucratic Politics	P1	51
	P2	15
Total:		66
Overall Total:		99

Table 3. Quotations per frame and subcategory.

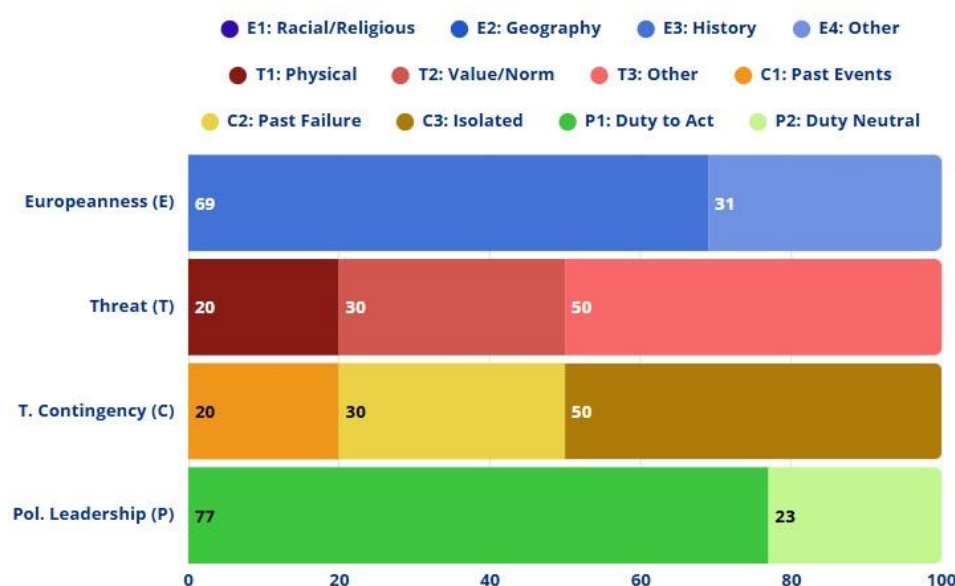
Graph 5. % spread of quotations across frames.

The “Temporal Contingency” frame occurs at low numbers, with only 10 quotations (10.1%). Within this, quotations are spread across the three subcategories,



with limited acknowledgements of the so-called “Arab Spring” as a “momentous chain of events” (Barroso, 2011e, p. 6) fitting C1, pertaining to past events, and recognition of “inefficiencies in previous EU action” (Barroso, 2012d, p. 2) fitting C2. However, unlike the other sample, half of this frame’s quotations (5) fit the C3 frame, presenting the crisis in the South as an isolated or unexpected incident, often recognising the “exceptional nature of the crisis”, unlike any other (Barroso, 2013d, p. 2).

Graph 6. % spread of quotations across subcategories per frame.



The “Threat Perception” frame also occurs low, with 10 quotations (10.1%). There are few (2) mentions of T1, pertaining to physical

threat perception, such as mentions of “direct security implications” for Europe stemming from the crisis (Van Rompuy, 2013c, p. 2). There are limited mentions of T2 (3), on value/norm insecurity, with HR/VP Catherine Ashton (2011q) asserting that “the indivisibility” of European values like human rights “is increasingly being challenged” as a result of the situation in the Southern neighbourhood (p. 4). Half of the frame’s quotations relate to T3, which exclusively include sentences expressing threat without specifying its type, but rather mentioning serious consequences for the future of the European project. For example:

“The Arab Spring is a profound transformation which will have lasting consequences not only for those peoples but also for Europe” (Barroso, 2011f, p. 1).

Moreover, the “Europeanness” frame also occurs at low rates, with 13 quotations (13.1%), the vast majority of which fit E3 (9). Specifically, this entails drawing historical parallels between the development of Europe and the Southern neighbourhood, comparing the 2011 Arab uprisings with Europe’s own experience with democratic revolutions and

transitions, to paint a picture of parallel or even intertwined historical trajectories towards democracy. A relevant quote by Commission President José Manuel Barroso reads:

“We remember our own experiences in Europe, when we were fighting for democracy - in Southern Europe, in Central and Eastern Europe, where some were saying that the fight for democracy will not be successful” (2011a, p. 3).

The rest (4) of the “Europeanness” quotations pertain to E4, on alternative or unspecified qualifiers of Europeanness. While these, to an extent, draw from the common historical trajectories of Europe and ENP South states like Egypt, they also contain mentions of a “common culture”, which nonetheless remains undefined by the speakers. For example:

“I believe that this is a true reflection of the importance of the relations between the European Union and Egypt, founded on common history and culture” (Van Rompuy, 2012b, p. 1).

The picture changes if one looks at the “Political Leadership and Bureaucratic Politics” frame, with 66 quotations (66.66%), which admittedly largely stem from Catherine Ashton’s speeches, as she made frequent references to EU bureaucratic agents, individual bureaucrats and herself, including their expertise, recent work, convictions and unique role as driving forces of the response to the crisis. She also frequently spoke in the first person, noticeably more than other speakers across both time periods, and frequently described her personal beliefs on what EU action in the South must entail. Nonetheless, quotations within the frame are spread across its two subcategories. P1 (duty to act) occurs 51 times (77%) and includes frequent mentions of institutions like the EEAS and their “unique” role, framed as “a force to prevent and resolve conflict” (Ashton, 2011j, p. 6). The subcategory also includes references to EU diplomats, bureaucrats and experts, their role, work and character as key factors that must shape the European response to the uprisings, with, for example, Ashton (2012e) saying: “These motivated men and women have the desire and will to effect change” (p. 5). Speakers frequently share their personal vision of what the EU response should structurally look like, including which institutions have the characteristics best fit to engage with the South, which experts are optimally prepared to contribute to pro-democracy reforms, and what priorities must be set internally. For example:

“I believe that the EU, including this Parliament, should play a central role in that process” (Ashton, 2011m, p. 2).

However, unlike the post-2022 sample, the P2 subcategory pertaining to these personal leadership and bureaucratic characteristics being used to push for neutrality, inaction or minimised action, is observed 15 times post-2011 (23%). For example, when speaking on behalf of the EEAS, Ashton (2011d) asserts that per their personal convictions, EU agents “will not dictate outcomes or impose solutions” (p. 2). At the same time, speakers occasionally express a vision for the region which relies on “homegrown” democracy, with minimal involvement from EU bureaucrats but rather an enhanced role for Arab civil servants, non-governmental organisations and grassroots movements, indicating an alternative post-crisis bureaucratic setup (Ashton, 2011f, p. 2).

5. Analysis & Interpretation

After having outlined the findings from the thesis’s two cases, it is crucial to compare and contrast them, as well as delve deeper into what they reveal about the gap in Hernández and Closa’s (2024) mechanism in relation to EU neighbourhood policy regional prioritisation. The two cases offer vastly different results, with the large difference in the amount of quotations gathered for each being a finding in itself, indicating that many of the factors, including perceptions of Europeanness, threat and temporal contingency, were much less present following the Arab uprisings than following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, with only the “Political Leadership and Bureaucratic Politics” frame being more common in the former than in the latter. This is telling of the urgency and importance placed by EU institutional leaders on each situation, with post-2011 speeches using predominantly matter-of-fact language characterised by acknowledgements of developments, condemnations of violence and outlining EU action and policies. Such speeches come into contrast with the post-2022 sample, which is much more value-laden, and includes frequent mentions of ENP East’s Europeanness, EU leaders’ feelings of threat and rousing statements on Ukraine’s bravery and Russia’s aggression.

Furthermore, as alluded to earlier, the overrepresentation of speeches by HR/VP Catherine Ashton in the post-2011 sample and speeches by Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in the post-2022 sample is also indicative of the urgency and importance placed on each respective crisis. The Arab uprisings were primarily covered by Ashton as they were

mainly seen as an external affairs issue fit for the mandate of the HR/VP. On the other hand, Russia's invasion of Ukraine sees the higher-ranked Commission President take a more active role, showcasing that the crisis is seen as more than a standard external affairs issue, and is frequently addressed by Ursula von der Leyen, the head of the European executive with an explicit geopolitical mission. Additionally, in the case of the Arab uprisings, there is a big difference across time, which is not observed in the post-2022 sample. Namely, not only are fewer speeches generally available from 2012 and especially 2013, but speeches also become increasingly matter-of-fact in their language towards the end of the sample period, containing fewer quotations. Contrastingly, the post-2022 sample remains more or less constant in both the availability of speeches and the occurrence of quotations across time. Subsequently, one can infer that Russia's invasion remained a high-priority topic throughout the three-year delimited period, whereas the importance placed on the Arab uprisings diminished across time, peaking in 2011.

There are also big differences across the two cases with regard to the quantitative and qualitative occurrence of the four frames. Perhaps the only frame that occurred relatively low in both cases was "Temporal Contingency". In the post-2022 sample, it appears like the process of temporal contingency identified by Ikani (2018) is indeed activated to a small extent, with speakers invoking past events and past EU failures to justify action targeting ENP East and to describe the crisis, painting the picture of a longer, coherent narrative of Russian escalation and EU incompetence. However, in the post-2011 sample, the way the temporal contingency frame manifests is much more mixed, with half of the identified quotations presenting the crisis as isolated rather than as resulting from past events and failures. Hence, it remains unclear if the mechanism of temporal contingency was activated in the minds of policymakers. Regardless, the frame's quotations in both cases remain too few to argue that temporal contingency had a decisive role in EU regional prioritisation.

The only frame which occurred more in the Arab uprisings sample than in the Russian invasion sample was "Political Leadership and Bureaucratic Politics". As aforementioned, this is largely due to Catherine Ashton's extensive invocation of the frame, which might just indicate a personal belief in the importance of bureaucratic politics and individual roles within a bureaucracy. Nonetheless, even then, there is a mixed image with both neutral and "duty to act" quotations being observed. The latter are more decisively present in the post-2022 sample, despite being lower in number. Regardless, as per the theoretical framework, the frame would hold explanatory power for the present thesis's research question either if there were significantly more "duty to act" (P1) quotations for the post-2022 sample (indicating that EU

bureaucrats prioritised ENP East because of their self-perceived roles, expertise, etc) or if the frame's quotations in the Arab uprisings sample were decidedly fitting with the "neutral" (P2) subcategory (indicating that EU bureaucratic self-perceptions mandated neutrality or no prioritisation). Hence, as the opposite is observed, the thesis's findings pertaining to this frame do not suggest that it holds explanatory power for the EU's difference in regional prioritisation across the crises, and are likely due to chance.

What is perhaps more insightful is the "Europeanness" frame. Although it does not represent the majority of quotations in the post-2022 sample, it is frequently invoked at 24.79% of the time, indicating that EU institutional leaders see ENP East states as European, albeit not based on the criteria that literature such as Goldberg (2006), Wallace (2022) and Larat (2019) would expect. This is not the case for the post-2011 sample, with far fewer relevant quotations mostly revolving around values and history, hinting that ENP South states were not perceived as European at the time, as per theoretical expectations. Interestingly, although the coding framework allowed for the inclusion of such quotations, there were no instances of explicit description of the South as non-European, or the justification of inaction/neutrality on such grounds. Regardless, the big difference in the occurrence of the frame across the two cases, with 89 post-2022 and 13 post-2011, might indicate that Europeanness holds a certain degree of explanatory power for the discrepancy in EU regional prioritisation across the two crises.

Perhaps the frame that offers the biggest insight into explaining the difference in EU regional prioritisation is "Threat Perception", which, whilst occurring merely 10 times after the Arab uprisings, was observed 201 times (55.99% of quotations) after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The consequence is that not only is there a big occurrence of expressed threat perception after the invasion of Ukraine, but also that there is a huge difference across the two cases by this metric. Hence, the thesis's inquiry into EU rhetoric has uncovered a prominent difference in institutional leaders' mindsets, who appear to express significantly greater feelings of threat after 2022 compared to after 2011. Subsequently, the frame can be seen as holding significant explanatory power for the difference in EU regional prioritisation across the crises, and is perhaps the most clear distinction between the two cases' findings. Within this frame, although all subcategories are observed, norm/value threat (T2) appears marginally more prevalent post-2022 (37.81%), hinting that threat perception is not merely about physical insecurity, but more often about a threat to the international rules-based order, EU values and norms.

It therefore appears that not all of the four frames and potential mediating factors identified in the literature are useful to explain the difference in prioritisation upon their

comparison. Temporal contingency and political leadership and bureaucratic politics do not offer particularly useful insights. On the other hand, Europeanness and, to an even greater extent, threat perception, appear to be strong candidates to be considered as mediating factors for Hernández and Closa's (2024) model. Based on these findings, it can be argued that the prevalent perception of ENP East as European led to increased feelings of urgency to prioritise a crisis-stricken region inhabited by fellow Europeans who share EU values, whereas the Russian invasion's physical, norm/value but also energy, economic and food insecurity threat augment the perceived need to engage. As such, Europeanness and especially threat perception render the Eastern neighbourhood a first-order issue as per Hernández and Closa, vis-a-vis other areas like ENP South, which are subordinated as second-order issues and are primarily engaged with when they serve to advance first-order interests. On the other hand, the absence of threat perception and perceived Europeanness of ENP South during the Arab uprisings meant that no such urgency was experienced by EU institutions, and hence Hernández and Closa's mechanism was not activated, with similar engagement levels in ENP South and ENP East.

The findings allow for an answer to be given to the thesis's research question as: the EU's foreign policy response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine involved a more decisive response and shift in regional prioritisation compared to the Arab uprisings largely due to heightened threat perception, and to a lesser extent due to the perceived Europeanness of ENP East states. This discrepancy manifested in EU rhetoric justifications by an overwhelmingly increased occurrence of expressions of perceived threat after 2022, compared to after 2011, on a physical, value/normative and alternative threat level. It also manifested by a high occurrence of post-2022 references to ENP East's European nature, largely on a shared value or unspecified basis, compared to minimal such references for ENP South post-2011.

6. Discussion & Conclusion

The present thesis has attempted to innovate in a series of ways, both in terms of its conceptual approach and research design. It is a novel instance of applying Hernández and Closa's (2024) issue reprioritisation framework to EU regional engagement, with the EU response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine illustrating that the model is fit for studying crisis-mode regional engagement. However, the thesis also highlighted certain flaws in this mechanism, which was unable to account for the discrepancy in regional prioritisation across geopolitical crises. Additionally, while scholars have identified several reasons why support

for ENP East was strong post-2022 and support for ENP South remained muted post-2011, the present study sought to be the first to compare these factors to each other, as well as across the two cases. The thesis was subsequently able to isolate two of these factors - threat perception and, to a smaller extent, Europeanness - as mediators, explaining when Hernández and Closa's mechanism is triggered, yielding prioritisation of one ENP region over the other. In that regard, the absence of both factors led to no regional prioritisation in the case of the Arab uprisings, unlike the case of Russia's invasion. The study also described how these factors occurred, in terms of physical, value/norm and energy/economic/food insecurity, as well as value-based and non-specified conceptions of Europeanness. This adds depth and furthers the academic understanding of how Hernández and Closa's mechanism functions amid geopolitical crises.

As hinted earlier, the thesis's findings have several implications in both academic and real-world contexts. Academically, it covers the aforementioned gap in historical institutionalist literature in terms of comparing the two cases and various identified factors, while it also explains the discrepancies in response and regional prioritisation across crises, which previous academic contributions have failed to account for. It also illustrated that Hernández and Closa's mechanism can be applied to more phenomena and issue areas than current academic contributions have employed it for, hinting at an academic myopia within historical institutionalism, whilst also covering the framework's flaws that did not account for the identified discrepancy in response.

On a social and policy level, the findings can expand understandings about how the EU operates in times of crisis, as well as what types of crises lead to what type of responses in the European neighbourhood. While the explanatory power of threat perception implies that regional prioritisation is dependent on the *crisis type* (i.e. threatening or not), the findings on Europeanness also suggest that the *target region type* (i.e. European/non-European) also plays a role. While it remains encouraging that non-Europeanness was not used by any of the studied speakers as an explicit justification for exclusion, its increased occurrence in the post-2022 sample and likely impact on regional prioritisation indicate that deeper-rooted racialised perceptions of the European neighbourhood persist within EU institutions, potentially rendering one region (white, Christian, European) more deserving of aid and prioritisation over the other, in the eyes of policymakers. Subsequently, the findings corroborate perceptions of the ENP as a non-cohesive policy, with different standards applying to different regions of the neighbourhood.

Nonetheless, the thesis maintains a series of limitations that further research can amend. First, while extensive and based on a thorough engagement with existing academic

contributions, there is no way to guarantee the exhaustiveness of the list of potential mediating factors used to draft the study's frames. Hence, further studies can expand their scope to consider alternative explanations, perhaps ones yet not identified in the literature, that could offer a better account of the discrepancy in post-crisis regional prioritisation. Similarly, further studies can expand the number of geopolitical crises they select to investigate to increase the generalisability of their findings, compared to the two that this thesis was able to compare. Generalisability can also be ameliorated by expanding the number of speakers and the type of actors whose rhetoric the thesis chose to study. Furthermore, although studying EU rhetoric has many benefits, it cannot indicate hidden motives such as material interests as determinants of EU action, hindering this thesis's ability to exclude them as potential mediators. As such, further research can experiment with alternative methods and types of data to amend this flaw. Lastly, the present study falls short of making any causal claims, as while it can quantify and describe the occurrence of each frame/factor in EU crisis rhetoric, frame analysis does not permit it to draw an explicit causal link between them and regional prioritisation. Subsequently, further research can use methods more compatible with causal claims to offer more concrete insights into the relationship between the identified factors and regional prioritisation.

To conclude, the thesis has engaged with existing literature to situate itself within historical institutionalist debates on EU issue reprioritisation in times of crisis, applying such models to regional prioritisation. Upon identifying a potent literature gap and empirical puzzle pertaining to unexplained differences in EU regional prioritisation after the 2011 Arab uprisings and the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, the study has engaged with the key factors identified in the literature that can amend the flaws of Hernández and Closa's model. Subsequently, it has drafted a research design employing frame analysis to compare the two cases and study EU institutional rhetoric to compare the quantity and quality of the factors'/frames' occurrence, concluding that threat perception and, to a lesser extent, Europeanness hold explanatory power for the relationship the thesis intends to study. The study has concluded with a discussion of its limitations as well as academic and real-world implications, including what it can signal for the future of the ENP, with the neighbourhood's two regions being increasingly treated differently by EU institutional actors, amid an unprecedented geopolitical context rendering such policy incoherence perilous.

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Appendix A. Coded Documents per Case

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Appendix B. Coded Quotations per Frame and Subcategory (Russia's Invasion of Ukraine)

■ Europeanness ■ Threat Perception ■ Temporal Contingency ■ Political Leadership & Bur. Politics

● E1_racereligion 0 Quotations

● E2_geography

p 3 in Michel, 2023b

Are we in a position to take the decisive decisions required to ensure that peace and prosperity are the values that inform the European project and European soil in the coming decades?

p 1 in Michel, 2023d

The war in Europe — on Ukrainian soil — has shown that peace and democracy cannot be taken for granted.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022b

When we started preparations for this first European Humanitarian Forum, no one could have imagined that it would coincide with the worst humanitarian crisis in decades on European soil.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022i

Never before has this Parliament debated the State of our Union with war raging on European soil.

p 4 in von der Leyen, 2024d

And of course, it will require the political and moral courage to stand with Ukraine here on European soil for as long as it takes.

● E3_history

p 1 in Michel, 2023f

The Maidan uprising is a landmark in our shared European history.

p 4 in von der Leyen, 2022g

After all, I always think, when I listen to President Zelenskyy and all our Ukrainian friends, – and the last days I met many young people from Ukraine, young delegates from Ukraine – Ukraine's longing and its aspirations are basically a reflection of what we have achieved together over the past 77 years.

p 4 in von der Leyen, 2022g

And this should be our motto, supporting Ukraine on its path towards the European Union: It is not a burden, it is our historic responsibility.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023c

A solidarity born out of the lessons of the great conflicts of the 20th century.

● E4_other

p 1 in Borrell, 2022c

The Europe of tomorrow will emerge from the battlefields of Ukraine.

p 2 in Borrell, 2023a

The situation in Ukraine today is dramatic, but the Ukrainians look towards Europe, as did the people of so many countries, including my own, and see a promising future.

p 2 in Borrell, 2023a

Rather, we must ensure that the Ukraine that emerges victorious from this war finds the future it needs in our European family, to which it belongs de facto.

p 9 in Borrell, 2023a

I have never seen any country like Ukraine where the idea of Europe offers such an existential hope.

p 9 in Borrell, 2023a

But I have never seen a country where belonging to the EU is such an existential question, as it is for Ukraine.

p 9 in Borrell, 2023a

And it is for that reason that we must support this European promise, without forgetting that it will be a long and difficult road to follow.

p 2 in Borrell, 2024a

Ukraine is part of Europe, and we will stand by our fellow Ukrainians now, while the war is raging, and once the peace has been achieved.

p 1 in Borrell, 2024b

In this city, which for the last 10 years has been more conscious of its Europeanness than any other capital on the continent.

p 8 in Borrell, 2024b

You make the European choice over and over again

p 8 in Borrell, 2024b

Today, I see, your European choice among political forces, among civil society, and businesses.

p 10 in Borrell, 2024b

He will never understand, but it is important that we Europeans make this our absolute difference between the democratic and authoritarian regimes.

p 1 in Michel, 2023a

Because you exercised your rights as free Ukrainians, you stood up to choose your own path and your own destiny, you chose democracy, you chose Europe.

p 1 in Michel, 2023a

So today, I have come to Ukraine to tell you: "We are all Ukrainian."

p 2 in Michel, 2023a

Ukraine is the EU and the EU is Ukraine.

p 3 in Michel, 2023a

My dear Ukrainian brothers and sisters, you have embraced freedom, democracy and the values we share as Europeans.

p 4 in Michel, 2023a

Our future is bound together.

p 3 in Michel, 2023b

The European Union is Ukraine.

p 3 in Michel, 2023b

Ukraine is the European Union.

p 3 in Michel, 2023b

The European Union is our common home.

p 1 in Michel, 2023f

Ukrainians said loud and clear: "We are Europeans" and this historic message is guiding Ukraine through its challenges and towards a better future.

p 2 in Michel, 2023f

Your European path is our shared journey.

p 1 in Michel, 2024c

Second, the future of Ukraine is within the EU.

p 1 in Michel, 2024c

We are on the same side, share the same dreams and the same values

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022a

Nobody in this hemicycle can doubt that a people that stands up so bravely for our European values belongs in our European family.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022e

Thus, the future of the European Union is also written in Ukraine.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022e

And eventually, it will pave the way for Ukraine's future inside the European Union.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022f

Ukraine belongs in the European family

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022g

And they want to be part of our European family.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022i

And all of this progress has been achieved because the people of Ukraine have Europe in their hearts and their minds

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022i

Jacques Delors was referring to the need to open up our Union to all European countries.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022i

I am talking about the wind of change that once again blows across our continent.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022i

They are telling us that they want Europe.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022i

And this is why it deserves the European perspective and candidate status, again on the understanding that the country will carry out a number of further, important reforms.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022i

And the next chapter is being written today by the brave people of Ukraine, and by all of us, who must accompany them on their European path

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022j

Their vision of a free Ukraine that is part of a democratic Europe.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022j

I believe in Ukraine's European future.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022j

Your passion for Europe

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022j

Your desire to live the European dream in your beautiful country

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022j

As President Zelenskyy said in his first speech in front of this parliament: 'Europe is not somewhere else

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022j

Europe is here, in your mind.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022j

And when Europe is in your mind, then Europe will come to your country too.'

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022j

A sovereign Ukraine that is finally reunited with our European family.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022k

Our people have never been closer.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022l

Glory to a country of European heroes

p 5 in von der Leyen, 2022l

You are part of our family, your future is in our Union, and our Union is not complete without you!

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023a

And indeed, today, you see that we are one family; we have one vision.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023a

And family members help each other.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023a

Not only free, democratic and European, but also fair, green and prosperous.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023a

Let us turn their Ukrainian dreams into reality, into the European way of life

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023a

For one year, for a good purpose, we always add 'Slava Ukraini' to the words 'long live Europe'.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023b

Third, to build Ukraine's European future together.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2023b

It is the firm conviction that the future of their country and of their children lies in the European Union.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2023b

They are making this progress because they are striving for Europe with all their heart and soul.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2023b

And Europe is one of these dreams.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023c

So it is very fitting to be here in Kyiv to commemorate and to celebrate the 9 May, dear Volodymyr

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023c

And let me warmly welcome your decision to make the 9 May Europe Day also in Ukraine.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023c

Kyiv as the capital of Ukraine is the beating heart of today's European values

pp 1 – 2 in von der Leyen, 2023d

We have chosen a path to Europe, but Europe is not somewhere out there.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023d

Europe is here [in the mind] and after it appears here, it will be everywhere, all over Ukraine

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2023d

It is thanks to President Zelenskyy – thanks to the people of Ukraine – thanks to all of us sticking together – that Europe's face is changing once again.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2023d

Ukraine incarnates everything the European idea is living for: the courage of convictions, the fight for values and freedom, the commitment to peace and unity.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2023d

This is why I am convinced that Ukraine will prevail, it will win peace and make its European destiny come true.

pp 3 – 4 in von der Leyen, 2023e

Huge crowds are waving European flags in Moldova and Georgia, where the yearning for a place in the European Union burns resolutely.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023f

Because we are home

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023f

On that day, that Ukrainian mother, felt that Europe was her home.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023f

And the people of Ukraine could trust their fellow Europeans.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2023f

The future of Ukraine is in our Union.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2023f

The future of Moldova is in our Union.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2023f

In a world where some are trying to pick off countries one by one, we cannot afford to leave our fellow Europeans behind.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023g

The citizens of countries that want to join are Europeans – just like those of today's Union.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023g

Because we all know that geography, history and common values bind us

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2024a

This is what it means to be European and believe in a destiny that is built on the everyday desire to leave behind a future in which our children flourish.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2024a

Ukraine is a future member of our European Union.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2024a

Ukraine is Europe, because Europe is in the hearts and minds of Ukrainians.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024b

The dream of a free and prosperous Ukraine, that takes its place at the heart of the European family.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024b

And the battle of Hostomel Airport will no longer be remembered as the darkest hour in our history, but as the beginning of a new era for Ukraine and for all of Europe.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2024e

And this is where your country belongs.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2024e

Kharkiv is Europe

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2024e

Ukraine is Europe

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2024e

And our Union is your home.

• **T1_physical**

p 7 in Borrell, 2022a

Le moment où nous prenons conscience que, pour la première fois depuis la fin de la Seconde guerre mondiale, un pays envahi un autre et ce pays possède l'arme nucléaire, ce qui augmente sa capacité d'intimidation

p 9 in Borrell, 2022a

We need to think about the instrument of coercion, retaliation and counter-attack in the face of reckless adversaries because all we need to understand is that to make peace, we need to be two, but to make war, it is enough to be one.

p 9 in Borrell, 2022a

We'll need to increase our deterrence capacity in order to prevent war

p 16 in Borrell, 2022a

Cuando un potente agresor agrede sin justificación alguna a un vecino mucho más débil, nadie puede invocar la resolución pacífica de los conflictos

p 16 in Borrell, 2022a

Nadie puede poner en el mismo pie de igualdad al agredido y al agresor.

p 20 in Borrell, 2022a

Las fuerzas del mal, las fuerzas que pugnan por seguir utilizando la violencia física como una forma de resolver los conflictos, siguen vivos y frente a ellos tenemos que demostrar una capacidad de acción mucho más poderosa, mucho más consistente y mucho más unida que la que hemos sido capaces de hacer hasta ahora.

p 40 in Borrell, 2022a

It goes to make his war machine more powerful.

p 40 in Borrell, 2022a

Tout l'argent qu'on paie pour le gaz, le pétrole russe, ne sert pas à améliorer le bien-être du peuple russe, ça sert tout simplement à augmenter sa capacité militaire.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022b

Il en faut un, seulement un, pour faire la guerre.

p 4 in Borrell, 2022b

Que la culpa es nuestra por intentar empezar lo que ya llaman – la llaman así - la Tercera Guerra Mundial.

p 6 in Borrell, 2022b

Y si no queremos que la jungla invada nuestro jardín, tenemos que invertir, no solo en cuidarlo, sino en defenderlo.

p 6 in Borrell, 2022b

Los europeos necesitan que el ruido de las bombas a las 5 de la madrugada de hace 15 días al caer sobre Kyiv, les despierte de su sueño de bienestar y les permita enfrentar los desafíos que no hemos buscado, pero que el mundo proyecta sobre nosotros.

p 1 in Borrell, 2022c

Indeed, the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has shown the need for a stronger and more capable European Union in the field of security and defence.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022c

The Russian unprovoked aggression against Ukraine and wider threats to European and global security made it even more evident.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022d

It has already left tens of thousands of dead and over 5 million refugees – the fastest growing refugee crisis since World War 2.

p 3 in Borrell, 2022d

No one can live safely in a world where the illegal use of force is normalised or tolerated.

p 3 in Borrell, 2022d

Military risks to commercial navigation in the area inevitably drive up the cost of insurance and transport further fuelling the current crisis.

p 4 in Borrell, 2022d

While war has returned to Europe, it has not stopped anywhere else

p 2 in Borrell, 2022f

Regrettably, President Putin is continuing along the dangerous path of escalation.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022f

At stake is the protection of weaker states from the more powerful ones.

p 2 in Borrell, 2023a

It has been our wake-up call to a new reality: war, something that we had taken off our intellectual radar.

p 3 in Borrell, 2023a

If we stop providing military support to Ukraine, the peace that we achieve will not be peace: it will be a Russian victory, which would pose a terrible threat to our security.

p 8 in Borrell, 2023a

And war has returned, and we have to deal with it.

p 9 in Borrell, 2023a

Let me tell you: we are at war.

p 9 in Borrell, 2023a

But it is a war that affects us, because our security is dependent on its outcome

p 2 in Borrell, 2023b

If we do not condemn and stop Russia's actions in Ukraine today, this will increase the risk for any other country, elsewhere in the world, to face a similar aggression.

p 2 in Borrell, 2023b

No one can feel safe in a world where the illegal use of force would be normalised.

p 2 in Borrell, 2023d

Russia does not want to stop fighting.

p 2 in Borrell, 2024b

A Ukraine that prevails against Russia's war of annihilation would be a huge contribution to the security of Europe as a whole.

p 2 in Borrell, 2024b

The security of Ukraine is a huge contribution to the security of Europe as a whole.

p 3 in Borrell, 2024b

That is also a reason why many Europeans mainly had forgotten that the world can be a terrifying place where force prevails.

p 3 in Borrell, 2024b

We [made] peace among us and we believed that peace was a natural state of things– and that is not true, unhappily.

p 3 in Borrell, 2024b

This has been an awakening moment for us to understand how vibrant and dangerous is our world.

p 4 in Borrell, 2024b

And he has clearly said that his war is against the entire West.

p 7 in Borrell, 2024b

And it is also part of building a world that prevents “might makes right”, where powerful countries change borders at will, and the weak fall prey to the strong.

p 7 in Borrell, 2024b

If it was successful, it would embolden Russia and other autocracies to pursue their imperialist agendas against their neighbours.

p 7 in Borrell, 2024b

Until this question of Russia's identity will not be solved, it will remain a threat to all its neighbours in Europe.

p 7 in Borrell, 2024b

If a country does not know where it begins and where it ends, it is a serious challenge to their neighbours.

p 11 in Borrell, 2024b

Because – and this is the most important message that I will tell you: we know well that our own security is being defended by you on the Eastern borders of Europe.

p 2 in Borrell, 2024d

By helping Ukraine, we are also building up our own security.

p 3 in Borrell, 2024d

Let me stress that this extraordinary assistance is an investment in the European Union's future: Ukraine

has to be able to successfully defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity, also for our own security.

p 3 in Borrell, 2024d

And a serious consequence for Europeans and global peace and security

p 3 in Borrell, 2024d

It sends a clear message: Russia is not sincerely interested in a just, comprehensive and lasting peace, but is escalating and directly seeking support for its war.

p 4 in Michel, 2023a

There can be no independent and safe Europe without an independent and safe Ukraine.

p 4 in Michel, 2023a

There can be no free Europe without a free Ukraine.

p 1 in Michel, 2023b

That meeting, on 24 February last year, probably marked a turning point in the history of Europe, because there was an immediate realisation on the part of European citizens – as well as the 27 European leaders – that we were facing a new chapter in the history of security at European level, and this led us very quickly to understand that unity was more important than ever before.

p 1 in Michel, 2024a

This full-scale war is more than an attack on the security of Europe, on the idea of Europe.

p 1 in Michel, 2024a

This is an attempt to drag us all back to a darker past, a world of nuclear confrontation and major food insecurity, with all the ensuing economic consequences.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022a

War has returned to Europe

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022c

The consequences of this war on Europe's security architecture will be far-reaching.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022f

This is not just an issue of European security.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023d

President Putin aims to destroy the Europe, created by Charlemagne Prize winners such as Gyula Horn and Vaclav Havel, François Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl and many others.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024c

The illusion that Europe on its own was doing enough on security – be it economic or military, conventional or cyber

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024c

As a result, the world is as dangerous as it has been for generations.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024c

We are seeing the potency and the dangers of a rising and disturbing league of authoritarians.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024d

And, once again, we meet here today in a world more precarious and more menacing than it was 12, or 6 or even 1 month ago.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2024d

As the world gets more dangerous, it is now time to build on this and take the next leap forward on security and defence.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2024d

The threat of war may not be imminent, but it is not impossible

p 6 in Borrell, 2022b

Porque desde Gibraltar hasta el Cáucaso, nuestro entorno está rodeado por un círculo de fuego alimentado, entre otros, por Rusia.

p 3 in Borrell, 2022c

With war at our borders, we need to be more determined and more united in our efforts than ever.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022d

In a globalised world, there is no 'faraway'.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022d

Everything is close to everyone.

p 3 in Borrell, 2024b

Nearby our cities.

• **T2_value/norm**

p 9 in Borrell, 2022a

And we are showing him that we will never sacrifice our freedom, and the freedom of others, on the altar of our wellbeing and prosperity.

p 10 in Borrell, 2022a

"We are not going to change human rights because of your acts".

p 10 in Borrell, 2022a

We will not share, we will not abandon the defence of human rights and freedom because we are more or less dependent on Russia.

p 31 in Borrell, 2022a

Y este tremendo conflicto solo puede concluir positivamente con un regreso de Rusia a las normas y a los principios internacionales básicos.

p 40 in Borrell, 2022a

But from now on, we have to face a confrontation between us, democracies - people who believe in freedom, in multi-party systems, where citizens choose their governments, where we live in a free market economy, trying to put together economic efficiency and social cohesion - with autocratic regimes, which are supporting themselves with a “clique” of people who take advantage of the system, while the great majority of the people don't improve their living conditions.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022b

Et maintenant on fait face à une guerre, parce que [le président de la Russie Vladimir] Poutine a une vision de l'histoire complètement différente de la nôtre.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022b

Son univers mental est différent du nôtre.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022b

Desde luego, no lo es frente a aquellos que no comparten nuestros valores de la democracia liberal.

p 4 in Borrell, 2022b

Porque no todo el mundo tiene la misma clara conciencia que nosotros sobre lo que está pasando en Ucrania.

p 6 in Borrell, 2022b

Pero ahora, con los desafíos que tenemos enfrente, sería realmente negar la realidad si no hiciésemos el esfuerzo pedagógico necesario para explicar a nuestros ciudadanos que nuestro sistema de vida tiene un precio.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022d

The hard truth is that the multilateral system is under pressure like never before.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022d

This is an attack on the foundations of the UN and this Security Council, by a permanent member of the Council.

p 1 in Borrell, 2022f

As it has been said by many here today, this is a frontal attack on the United Nations Charter and the international rules-based order.

p 1 in Borrell, 2022f

It is a chemically pure attack on the United Nations Charter.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022f

Do we want the global rule of law, or do we want the law of the jungle?

p 2 in Borrell, 2022f

Do we believe in spheres of influence or in the free choice of sovereign states?

p 1 in Borrell, 2023b

A blatant violation of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter.

p 1 in Borrell, 2023b

We need a peace grounded in the principles of the United Nations Charter, that is why we are [here] in this very hall.

p 1 in Borrell, 2023b

Territorial integrity: these are the principles that Russia is attacking in Ukraine, every day.

p 3 in Borrell, 2023b

But peace in line with the United Nations Charter and international law

p 3 in Borrell, 2023c

No, we want a just peace, based on international law and the United Nations Charter.

p 2 in Borrell, 2024b

The real border today of Ukraine with Russia is the frontline, not only in the battlefields, it is the political frontline between a world governed by law, and freedom, and one where powerful people impose their will inside their society and with no respect to third countries.

p 2 in Borrell, 2024b

It is the frontline between democracy and authoritarian rule.

p 7 in Borrell, 2024b

It is a war in defence of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and it is a war in defence of the principles of the United Nations Charter.

p 2 in Borrell, 2024c

Their protection and the humane treatment are fundamental principles we all have committed to uphold through the Geneva Convention, as the global community, including Russia.

p 2 in Borrell, 2024c

In addition, the intentional execution and the torture of prisoners of war are considered war crimes under the Rome Statute.

p 2 in Borrell, 2024c

Russia's executions and torture are thus yet other examples of the Kremlin's disregard for

international law in general and most specifically, international humanitarian law.

p 2 in Borrell, 2024c

The European Union calls on the Russian Federation to uphold its expressed and long-standing commitments to international humanitarian law, to ensure that the brutal executions and torture of Ukrainian prisoners ceases.

p 3 in Borrell, 2024d

In addition, the transfer of arms and millions of artillery shells from North Korea to Russia, is yet another blatant violation by Russia of international law, including the United Nations Charter, as well as several United Nations Security Resolutions adopted with Russia's support.

p 1 in Michel, 2022b

It is also the dignity, the freedom and the democracy of the whole of Europe that is under attack, and that you are defending.

p 1 in Michel, 2022b

A rising tide of nations and leaders, all standing up in defence of international law.

p 1 in Michel, 2023a

So by firing missiles at Ukraine, Russia is firing missiles at all that the European Union believes in.

p 1 in Michel, 2023a

Attacking the very bedrock of our Union, a Union we have forged from the tragedy of World War II, anchored in human dignity, freedom and solidarity — in an area of peace and prosperity.

p 1 in Michel, 2023b

Such resistance also extends to standing steadfast and resolute in support of the values which have lain at the heart of the EU project ever since its inception: freedom, democracy and the dignity of every human being.

p 1 in Michel, 2023c

And we know that the war against Ukraine is not merely a war against a country, against a people, but also a war against values, democratic values which include freedom, dignity and human rights, and which bring our two institutions, the European Union and the Council of Europe, together.

p 2 in Michel, 2023d

The Kremlin is attacking all that we believe in — freedom, democracy, prosperity, and cooperation.

p 1 in Michel, 2023f

Russia is also attacking the global rules-based order, and all that we believe in - freedom, democracy, cooperation, dignity.

p 1 in Michel, 2024a

This war is an odious attempt to replace the force of law with the law of force.

p 1 in Michel, 2024a

This war is a direct attack on the global rules-based order; we therefore need a global response.

p 1 in Michel, 2024b

It shows that we are determined to support our common democratic values and principles.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022a

It is a clash of two worlds, two polar sets of values

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022a

This is a clash between the rule of law and the rule of the gun; between democracies and autocracies; between a rules-based order and a world of naked aggression.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022a

But they are also fighting for universal values and they are willing to die for them

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022d

This will also define how we globally treat such violations of international law in the future.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022f

This is putting our whole international order into question

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022f

They have stood for their own freedom but also for our values and for humanity.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022k

This brazen violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity and international law marked the beginning of Putin's deplorable attempt to deny Ukraine its freedom.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022l

This is about autocracy against democracy.

p 5 in von der Leyen, 2022l

It's a deliberate attempt to discard them.

p 5 in von der Leyen, 2022l

What we saw in the streets of Bucha, in the scorched fields of grain, and now at the gates of Ukraine's largest nuclear plant – is not only a violation of international rules.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022m

The illegal annexation of four Ukrainian regions by Russia brings the challenge against the international system to a completely new level.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022m

This is an attack against the entire UN Charter.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022m

Russia's failure alone will not save the rules-based global order.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022m

The so-called no-limits partnership declared by Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping is also a clear challenge to the post-war order, built on the core values of the UN Charter.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023a

Your fight is a fight for independence, for democracy and for a free Europe.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023a

They are fighting for the respect of our common values.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023c

Ukraine is on the front line of the defence of everything we Europeans cherish: our liberty, our democracy, our freedom of thought and of speech.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023c

Courageously, Ukraine is fighting for the ideals of Europe that we celebrate today. I

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023c

They fight for our European values, while the invaders have been dragged out of prisons and picked off the streets to be sent to the front line.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2023c

Ukraine has been fighting for the ideals of Europe that we celebrate today, to create lasting unity and peace, to represent the values of freedom, diversity and humanity that Europe is built on.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023d

They are literally fighting for freedom, humanity and peace.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023d

And in doing so, they are also fighting for our own freedom and our values.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023d

That is what Ukraine is fighting for – and that is what President Putin is trying to extinguish.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023d

President Putin is destroying the work of peace that we have built together since the end of the second world war and later the fall of the Iron Curtain.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023e

It is of course a blatant attack against the principles of the UN Charter

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023e

But it is also a war against our values, and a war against the idea of a united and free Europe.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023e

And in doing so, they are also fighting for our freedom and our values; democracy and the rule of law, free speech and the freedom to determine your own destiny. T

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023e

That is what Ukraine is fighting for, and that is what President Putin is trying to extinguish

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023g

In times where we see the rules-based international order increasingly called into question, of course a larger and stronger European Union gives us a stronger voice in the world.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024a

Against the values they share with us.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024a

Against everything that we have stood for more than 70 years.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024a

But also for us and for everything that we believe in.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024a

Our freedoms, our democracy, our hard-fought rights and aspirations.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024c

We all know there is so much at stake here – our freedom and our prosperity.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2024c

It is about our ability but also about our willingness to defend our interests and values ourselves.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2024d

Because there is so much at stake here – our freedom and our prosperity depend on our security, and we have to bring our actions in line with this changing security environment.

● **T3_other**

p 7 in Borrell, 2022a

Cela me rend malade que de penser à l'analogie historique avec les événements du début de la deuxième guerre mondiale.

p 8 in Borrell, 2022a

But, it is really the return of tragedy, to which Europe is being confronted today.

p 8 in Borrell, 2022a

The return of tragedy, far from frightening us, should galvanise us.

p 8 in Borrell, 2022a

This reminds us that the evil, the tragedy and the war never fade away.

p 22 in Borrell, 2022a

Y este acto, este momento parlamentario donde ustedes con sus aplausos quieren dar ánimos a las instituciones europeas para seguir en el camino que hemos aprendido, puede ser el momento en que los europeos entiendan que el mundo en el que viven es un mundo peligroso y para hacerle frente hace falta que refuercen su Unión.

p 23 in Borrell, 2022a

Este momento trágico debe impulsarnos a unirnos más para hacer frente a aquellas acciones humanas que amenazan también la vida, la seguridad y la prosperidad de todos.

p 1 in Borrell, 2022b

We are going to face the problem of gas supply, of refugees, changing above all what we understand by Security and Defence Policy of the European Union, and the fragmentation of the world economy that will certainly result from the weaponisation of interdependence, which is no longer something to be discussed in academic circles

p 1 in Borrell, 2022b

It is not an abstract concept, it is a reality: weaponisation of interdependence.

p 6 in Borrell, 2022b

Pero que fuera la jungla crece.

p 6 in Borrell, 2022b

Y Ucrania es el primero.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022c

This is an attack also to Europe and the whole democratic world.

p 3 in Borrell, 2022c

We share your sense of urgency.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022d

I fear the situation has only worsened since.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022d

Russia's war against Ukraine has come on top of these structural problems and amplified them.

pp 2 – 3 in Borrell, 2022d

We can see it from the shockwaves Russia's war against Ukraine is sending around the world, exacerbating a global food and energy crisis.

p 3 in Borrell, 2022d

And these compound a pre-existing food crisis with yields suffering because of climate change.

p 3 in Borrell, 2022d

Until such time, we will all have to deal with the global consequences of Russia's war.

p 6 in Borrell, 2022d

This would only bring greater insecurity.

p 6 in Borrell, 2022d

And the next step of this drama is a big wave of hunger in the world.

p 6 in Borrell, 2022d

And this is going to happen if Russia continues to block the exports of wheat from Ukraine.

p 7 in Borrell, 2022d

So I call here on everyone, and in particular the private actors, to do whatever they can in order to avoid the dramatic situation that millions of people could be suffering in the next months - a big wave of hunger.

p 1 in Borrell, 2022e

it is Russia's aggression - not Western sanctions - which is aggravating the food and energy crises.

p 1 in Borrell, 2022f

It is more than 6 months now into this illegal, senseless and brutal war.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022f

In addition to the terrible casualties and the destruction caused in Ukraine, Russia is dragging the world into an economic recession and a global food crisis.

p 6 in Borrell, 2023a

That the price of truth is being paid by Ukraine, that the price that we have to pay is small in comparison and that it would be much higher if Putin won the war.

p 9 in Borrell, 2023a

Because that would be the end result if we stopped providing military support to Ukraine.

p 1 in Borrell, 2023b

No, this illegal war concerns everyone: the North, the South, the East, the West.

p 2 in Borrell, 2023c

Mais les effets de la guerre sont aussi planétaires, avec une insécurité alimentaire et énergétique entraînant des hausses de prix dont les effets sont dramatiques pour les populations les plus vulnérables.

p 2 in Borrell, 2023c

L'augmentation du prix des produits alimentaires et des biens essentiels a ajouté un fardeau additionnel aux difficultés de la vie quotidienne dans beaucoup des pays autour du monde.

p 2 in Borrell, 2023c

C'est pour ça que cette guerre touche tout le monde.

p 1 in Michel, 2022a

By its unprovoked and unjustified military actions, Russia is grossly violating international law and undermining European and global security and stability.

p 1 in Michel, 2023a

This is an attack on us all — our common European values, our European security, our common European dream.

p 2 in Michel, 2023a

The fate of the European Union, too, was at stake, the future of our continent and all that the EU's founding fathers believed in.

p 1 in Michel, 2023d

It has a profound impact on the future of our continent and on global security.

p 2 in Michel, 2023d

And when Putin launched an 'energy missile' at us, we responded with a powerful energy shield — a true 'energy defence system'.

p 1 in Michel, 2023e

After Ukraine, who will be next?

p 1 in Michel, 2023e

Who will be next to satisfy Putin's fantasy of the past?

p 1 in Michel, 2023e

And if Russia succeeds in Ukraine, what other countries would be tempted to copy its actions?

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022a

The destiny of Ukraine is at stake, but our own fate also lies in the balance.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022a

Yes, protecting our liberty comes at a price.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022a

We simply cannot rely so much on a supplier that explicitly threatens us.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022a

At the same time, the Ukrainian people are holding up the torch of freedom for all of us.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022c

But also energy security, and even food security are at stake.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022c

They are also disrupting vital food supplies and driving food prices up.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022d

And to this aim, we must also protect ourselves from the knock-on effects of this war.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022f

But instead, we must address the costs and consequences of Putin's war of choice. T

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022f

It is putting new burdens on businesses and households, and it has created a thick fog of uncertainty for investors across the globe.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022f

And Russia has tried to put pressure on us, for example, by cutting off the energy supplies, the gas supplies of Bulgaria, Poland, and now lately Finland.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022h

The Russian invasion of Ukraine reverberates around the world.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022h

This is a cold, callous and calculated siege by Putin on some of the most vulnerable countries and people in the world.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022h

And therefore, Honourable Members, food has become now part of the Kremlin's arsenal of terror.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022i

Not just for Ukraine – but for all of Europe and the world at large.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022i

This is a war on our energy, a war on our economy, a war on our values and a war on our future.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022m

The war in Ukraine is not only a European war, it is a war for the future of the entire world.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023e

President Putin is trying to destroy the work of peace that we have built together since the end of the Second World War and later the fall of the Iron Curtain.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024a

Quite simply, against both modern reality and the strong tides of European history.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024a

And in doing so, Putin started a fight against all of us – and against freedom, self-determination and democracy at large.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024b

You saved all of Europe.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024c

And we are also seeing the continued rise of aggressive economic competition and distortion, which brings with it some very real European security risks

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2024d

Many have been the mornings in which we have woken up to a new, more dangerous reality.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2024d

The new league of authoritarians is working in concert to tear up the international rules-based order to redraw maps across different continents and to stretch our democracies to the breaking point.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2024d

So, Ladies and Gentlemen, the point is that the world is as dangerous as it has been for generations and Europe is in the middle of it.

● **C1_pastevents**

p 33 in Borrell, 2022a

Cuando Rusia toma Crimea, el 87% de sus reservas están en dólares y euros.

p 40 in Borrell, 2022a

What is happening today in Ukraine, reminds me Budapest, May 1956.

p 40 in Borrell, 2022a

This reminds me 1988, The Prague Spring

p 8 in Borrell, 2024b

I wanted to be in the European Union, [like] you, most visibly, 10 years ago on the Maidan square

p 1 in Michel, 2022b

Since Maidan, you, the Ukrainian people, have made the brave and free choice of liberty, democracy and rule of law.

p 1 in Michel, 2023a

With the Maidan uprising, 22 years after gaining your independence, you, Ukrainians said: "We are European".

p 2 in Michel, 2023b

You made the choice, which is the choice of the Ukrainian people, a free and sovereign choice, which had in fact already been expressed in blood on the Maidan, to turn towards democracy, towards freedom and towards the European Union.

p 1 in Michel, 2023f

Ten years ago, on Maidan Square, the people of Ukraine spoke out for freedom, for Europe and for democratic principles.

p 1 in Michel, 2023f

Ten years ago, Ukrainians took to the streets to defend their country, their European future and our shared values against Russian aggression.

p 1 in Michel, 2023f

First, in 2014, and now against Russia's full-scale invasion.

p 1 in Michel, 2023f

The 'Revolution of Dignity' shows the power of solidarity and freedom.

p 2 in Michel, 2023f

Today, the 'Revolution of Dignity' shows the power of European values and principles.

p 2 in Michel, 2023f

Ten years ago, EU membership seemed a distant dream, and Ukraine was under huge pressure from Russia.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022a

Almost thirty years after the Balkan Wars, and over half a century after Soviet troops marched into Prague and Budapest, civil defence sirens again went off in the heart of a European capital.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022c

Our continent is being rocked by a tectonic shift not seen since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022i

From the early days of the Maidan on, Ukraine has bravely resisted against Russia's aggression.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022i

It went through repression and uprising.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022i

It went through territorial annexation, and now outright war.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022i

It is the only country where people got shot because they wrapped themselves in a European flag.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022j

It acknowledges the immense progress that Ukraine's democracy has achieved since the Maidan protests of 2014

pp 1 – 2 in von der Leyen, 2022j

You reached out to thousands of experts from civil society and academia, to showcase everything Ukraine has achieved since the Revolution of Dignity.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022j

And a victory for the whole movement that started eight years ago on the Maidan.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022k

In February and March of 2014, Russia carried out its annexation of the Crimean peninsula through brutal force.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022k

It was a direct response to Ukraine's Revolution of Dignity, in which brave Ukrainian citizens demanded justice, democracy and the right to choose their own future in Europe.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023g

The protests on Maidan started now ten years ago.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2024a

Back then, a pro-Russia regime in Ukraine was passing authoritarian laws and killing protesters on the streets.

● **C2_pastfailure**

p 9 in Borrell, 2022a

And it's clear that our deterrence has not been strong enough to stop Putin's aggression

p 36 in Borrell, 2022a

But I have been listening for the last 20 years that we have to decrease this dependence, and this dependence has been increasing during the last 20 years.

p 37 in Borrell, 2022a

Because we pay \$700 million for the world, for gas, and oil, and coal imports from Russia.

p 40 in Borrell, 2022a

On both cases, we did nothing because we couldn't do anything.

p 1 in Borrell, 2022b

But, certainly, it is not enough, and we should have done it quicker.

p 2 in Borrell, 2022c

Between 2009 and 2018, the EU has accumulated an under-expenditure of around €160 billion and an under-investment of about €44 billion.

p 2 in Borrell, 2023a

We had lowered our guard, as clearly evidenced by our very low military stocks and our defence industry's poor capacity to replenish them.

p 6 in Borrell, 2023a

Some of you have said that we failed to react after Crimea.

p 4 in Borrell, 2023d

It was a risky dependency, and we made a strategic mistake on letting this dependency grow so big

p 4 in von der Leyen, 2022l

We should have listened to the voices inside our Union – in Poland, in the Baltics, and all across Central and Eastern Europe.

● **C3_isolated**
0 Quotations

● **P1_dutytoact**

p 6 in Borrell, 2022a

I think this is the moment in which the geopolitical Europe is being born.

p 7 in Borrell, 2022a

Ça, c'est l'acte de naissance de l'Europe géopolitique

p 7 in Borrell, 2022a

Le moment auquel l'Europe doit faire face à ses responsabilités.

p 9 in Borrell, 2022a

Europe must amplify its reflexion on security issues and the European Parliament has had an important role to play in this regard.

p 31 in Borrell, 2022a

Esta es una ocasión que tenemos, desde la Unión Europea, que aprovechar para elaborar mecanismos y tratados que establezcan garantías de seguridad más firmes y mecanismos que permitan verificar su puesta en aplicación.

p 35 in Borrell, 2022a

And, on that, I can assure you that I, as High Representative, all my colleagues Members of the Foreign Affairs Council, all our Delegations and all

our embassies will be strongly working in order to get a result on the vote at the [United Nations] General Assembly.

p 34 in Borrell, 2022a

And now we have to work diplomatically all over the world, reaching out to all countries, in order to build a state of the mind to condemn the aggressor.

p 38 in Borrell, 2022a

Call it the way you want, but we have to be more responsible

p 38 in Borrell, 2022a

We have to take our responsibility more in our hands

p 39 in Borrell, 2022a

We have to be prepared to act, in the long term, with a clear understanding of which are our challenges and our capacities.

p 6 in Borrell, 2022a

A policy which is still in the hands of the Member States but cannot be implemented efficiently without the strong cooperation of the Commission competences.

p 6 in Borrell, 2022d

We are not a military Union, but certainly we cannot be indifferent to what is happening in our neighbourhood and the aggression of one of our most important partners – Ukraine - is suffering.

p 7 in Borrell, 2022d

But among all of us, there is the responsibility to avoid what may happen if things continue the way they are.

p 2 in Borrell, 2023a

It has been wake-up call for Europe, a geopolitical wake-up call

p 2 in Borrell, 2024a

Ukraine is our top priority, and it will remain so as long as it takes.

p 1 in Michel, 2022b

That is why we in the EU have a political and moral duty to rise to this historic challenge.

p 1 in Michel, 2024a

It is our collective duty to protect a world based on the laws that govern how countries should live together.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022a

This is a moment of truth for Europe.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022a

We have to carry our fair share of the responsibility.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022b

This is a moment for all those who share a humanitarian spirit to join forces.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2022b

Europe will stay committed and do its part.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022e

And we, as Team Europe, will also do our share.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022e

Europe has a very special responsibility towards Ukraine.

p 4 in von der Leyen, 2022g

I think that it is not only in our strategic interest, but it is our moral duty to make it possible that they join our European Union, and that we pave the path towards our Union.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022i

We have a responsibility towards them, but we also have a responsibility towards ourselves to make the right choice.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2022i

Again, this is Europe's moment.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2022i

And I stand here with the conviction that with courage and solidarity, Putin will fail and Europe will prevail.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023d

That obligation is for a strong Union of Europeans – quote – “to defend the highest earthly goods – freedom, humanity and peace – and safeguard the future of their children and children's children.”

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023d

And just as the courageous freedom fighters changed the face of our continent a little more than 30 years ago, today it is we, who will decide what our Europe will look like in the future.

p 1 in von der Leyen, 2023f

We have seen the birth of a geopolitical Union – supporting Ukraine, standing up to Russia's aggression, responding to an assertive China and investing in partnerships.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2023f

This was Europe answering the call of history.

p 3 in von der Leyen, 2024c

This is why it is time for Europe to step up.

p 2 in von der Leyen, 2024d

So, this is why it is time for the European awakening on defence and security.

- **P2_dutyneutral**
0 Quotations

Appendix C. Coded Quotations per Frame and Subcategory (Arab Uprisings)

■ Europeanness ■ Threat Perception ■ Temporal Contingency ■ Political Leadership & Bur. Politics

● E1_racereigion 0 Quotations

● E2_geography 0 Quotations

● E3_history

p 2 in Ashton, 2011e

Where relevant, we can draw on our own history of building democracy and reconciliation including from those among us that have gone through these transitions recently.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011j

The first is that we in Europe know how long and painful the journey towards liberty can be.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011j

The EU itself was born in the ashes of conflicts that remind us how terrible life can be when democracy breaks down.

p 4 in Ashton, 2011i

It is interesting for us in the European Union because within the 27 member states we have a number of countries who themselves have been through a revolution and change – who saw walls come down.

p 3 in Barroso, 2011a

We remember our own experiences in Europe, when we were fighting for democracy – in Southern Europe, in Central and Eastern Europe, where some were saying that the fight for democracy will not be successful.

p 3 in Barroso, 2011e

We fought for freedom in our country and later to become members of a peaceful and democratic Union of nations, today the European Union

p 3 in Barroso, 2011e

It was a similar story in post-Franco Spain and Greece after the colonels' regime.

p 1 in Van Rompuy, 2011d

Europe was built on reconciliation.

p 1 in Van Rompuy, 2013a

We are also fully aware of the challenges and difficulties of such transitions – which many European states went through only recently themselves.

● E4_other

p 2 in Ashton, 2011f

Tunisians, Egyptians, Libyans and others are demanding respect for those values that are at the heart of the European ideal

p 1 in Barroso, 2011e

For many centuries Europeans and Egyptians have connected through art, literature and trade.

p 2 in Van Rompuy, 2012a

Lastly, a general comment on the Arab Spring movements: we contemplate them with confidence and vigilance because a number of the principles upon which they are founded are principles that we hold dear: democracy, free and transparent elections, respect for human rights, the establishment of the rule of law, and respect for women and women's rights.

p 1 in Van Rompuy, 2012b

I believe that this is a true reflection of the importance of the relations between the European Union and Egypt, founded on common history and culture.

● T1_physical

p 1 in Van Rompuy, 2013c

They affect directly our security and our interests.

p 1 in Van Rompuy, 2013d

I have also expressed the EU concerns for recent events, including the attack to the French Embassy in April, that expose the serious security challenges that Libya is facing today, but the Prime Minister reassured me of measures taken aimed at improving the security situation

- **T2_value/norm**

p 4 in Ashton, 2011q

The indivisibility and universality of human rights is increasingly being challenged globally.

p 6 in Barroso, 2011c

It is about us, in Europe, and the world we want to live in.

p 3 in Barroso, 2011g

We have everything to gain from this, both in promoting and defending our economic and trade interests and in promoting and defending our values.

- **T3_other**

p 5 in Ashton, 2011j

Because if we don't, then the failure of the economies in our neighbourhood will have a direct impact on all of us.

p 2 in Barroso, 2011b

I am happy to see that the European Council endorsed this approach of solidarity among Member states because some of them will probably be more affected.

p 1 in Barroso, 2011f

The Arab Spring is a profound transformation which will have lasting consequences not only for those peoples but also for Europe.

p 3 in Barroso, 2013c

That's why we need to pay special attention to preventing the spread of conflict and reduce tensions between host communities and refugees.

p 2 in Barroso, 2013d

We also have a pragmatic stake in the fate of so many millions of refugees and displaced people right on our doorstep.

- **C1_pastevents**

p 3 in Barroso, 2011a

Furthermore, it is clear that the current uprisings were also due to the dire social situation in these countries with high levels of unemployment, an uneven distribution of wealth and a lack of opportunities.

p 6 in Barroso, 2011e

The Arab Spring has been a momentous chain of events.

- **C2_pastfailure**

p 2 in Barroso, 2011e

In the past too many have traded democracy for stability.

p 2 in Barroso, 2012d

It is fair to conclude that our model has revealed inefficiencies that need to be corrected.

p 2 in Barroso, 2013d

I am sure that if we could have that focus, the decisions could have been much more ambitious.

- **C3_isolated**

p 1 in Barroso, 2011g

Well, I guess most of us have had their fair share of surprises in recent times that few of us would have dared to predict.

p 1 in Barroso, 2011g

Who would have predicted that the winds of freedom would blow from Tunis to Yemen and Syria?

p 1 in Barroso, 2011g

Who would have predicted that the European Union would be opening a delegation in Tripoli, in a free Libya?

p 2 in Barroso, 2013d

So, my appeal to all the leaders in Europe is the following: if one year ago we knew how it would be today, what could have been the decisions then?

p 2 in Barroso, 2013d

If we don't recognise the really exceptional nature of this crisis, one year from now it will be a much worse situation.

- **P1_dutytoact**

p 4 in Ashton, 2011a

EU is a union of democracies – we have a democratic calling.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011c

Our job – my job – is to be ready to help in any way that we can

p 4 in Ashton, 2011f

We cannot afford to think small.

p 1 in Ashton, 2011h

But I've always said that the neighbourhood is the test for the European Union; how we respond to events in our own neighbourhood determines the effectiveness of this Union and of course of the new External Action Service.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011h

And I believe – and I think we can demonstrate – that at the heart of what we do is this idea that we're here to resolve conflict, to build peace and democracy, to support people's desire for their rights to be respected and for the freedoms they want to enjoy.

p 3 in Ashton, 2011h

I often say that the European Union is there for the long term, that our job is to build deep democracy, to support countries in transition and change, to develop effectively the civil society, the politics, their economics so they have long term democratic institutions, long term economic prospects, and we need a service that can achieve that.

p 3 in Ashton, 2011h

If you like, it's like a big tanker which is a service which is the EU, which is the institutions, but it needs a speed boat that can also manoeuvre in difficult circumstances to try and put support on the ground.

p 4 in Ashton, 2011h

Again, I go back to the role of European Union, which I believe passionately is about enabling countries to build for their future, led by the people of those countries for the country that they wish to have.

p 3 in Ashton, 2011j

I say to them this - in the last weeks and months we've seen how far we have come in some ways, but in this, how far we have to go.

p 4 in Ashton, 2011j

And in all this, human rights are the silver thread that runs through our actions.

p 4 in Ashton, 2011j

The European Parliament has a big role to play in supporting those opportunities for young people to gain the benefits from Europe's knowledge.

p 6 in Ashton, 2011j

But I have always said the External Action Service is a force to prevent and resolve conflict.

p 6 in Ashton, 2011j

And it is why, too, we play the role we do in the Middle East Peace Process.

p 7 in Ashton, 2011j

Some of the things I describe are down to member states, some to the Commission, and many need the support of the European Parliament - we have to decide that we will all play our part

p 2 in Ashton, 2011k

So now is the time for all of us – EU institutions and Member States – to deliver on our shared objectives.

p 5 in Ashton, 2011k

I have worked tirelessly for this possibility – working closely with President Abbas, Prime Minister Fayyad and Prime Minister Netanyahu and with many others in the region; and with our Quartet partners and with the Arab States to look for a strong and ambitious way forward, in which the EU plays the leading role this Parliament wishes us to.

p 6 in Ashton, 2011k

Honourable Members, this Parliament is unique in what it can offer to those in search of democracy.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011l

I have always believed that the EU needs to take more responsibility for what it has to do in its own neighborhood and that as we get better at doing that, our relationship with the US changes to being collaborative partners in solving problems rather than perhaps relying on you.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011l

When I became the High Representative, which was a little bit of a shock to me, as you may have read, I said that there were three things that I needed to do in my mandate.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011l

Secondly, I said we should be judged as the EU by our effectiveness in our own neighborhood.

p 5 in Ashton, 2011l

To be effective in our neighborhood is the proof of the European Union foreign policy project.

p 6 in Ashton, 2011l

So as I began, Europe should be judged by its ability to operate in its own neighborhood and my determination is to make sure that the judgment is a positive one.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011m

It is clear, honourable members that these efforts have succeeded in demonstrating the EU role - a player and a payer.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011m

I've said before that my vision of the European External Action Service is a conflict prevention and resolution approach – we need now to put this vision into practice.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011m

I believe that the EU, including this Parliament, should play a central role in that process.

p 3 in Ashton, 2011m

Europe's response to these events will speak more than any form of rhetoric about its real commitment to democratic principles.

p 4 in Ashton, 2011m

Here the European Parliament is unique in what it can offer to those in search of democracy, in Tunisia and beyond, particularly now that Constituent assemblies will become the key institutional actors.

p 3 in Ashton, 2011n

The European Parliament is unique in what it can offer to promote these values and well placed to offer a forum of dialogue.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011o

Just to recap, I said from the beginning that I thought how we operate in our neighbourhood, the effectiveness of what we did, would define the European Union into the future.

p 5 in Ashton, 2012d

I also want to stress once again that the EU's involvement in the region is also defined by its commitment to human rights which must be respected by both parties.

p 1 in Ashton, 2012e

They are a silver thread that runs through all our external policies.

p 1 in Ashton, 2012e

With the coming into force of the Lisbon treaty and the creation of the External Action Service we now have the means to make human rights an even more integral part of our foreign policy making.

p 2 in Ashton, 2012e

His mission is to give more coherence and consistency, more effectiveness and visibility to the EU Human Rights policy and carry the message for human dignity around the world.

p 2 in Ashton, 2012e

At the heart of our efforts lies a simple truth: that each man, woman and child has a valuable contribution to make; that every citizen is of inherent worth in our societies.

p 5 in Ashton, 2012e

These motivated men and women have the desire and will to effect change

p 5 in Ashton, 2012e

They turn common interests into common action.

pp 3 – 4 in Ashton, 2013b

We are determined to play it.

p 2 in Barroso, 2011a

The Commission is ready to do it.

p 2 in Barroso, 2011a

I want to thank her for her dedication to this task and the very important work she is doing.

p 2 in Barroso, 2011a

Commissioner Malmström is very much engaged on these actions and I also want to praise her work.

p 3 in Barroso, 2011a

I also believe the EBRD can do more, and be more active in the South.

p 6 in Barroso, 2011c

We have a lot of expertise in this area.

p 2 in Barroso, 2011d

But EU expertise with political transitions can play a key role: for instance support in the organisation and supervision of free and fair elections; hands-on help with the creation of an effective administration and judiciary; support to the organization of the civil society and free media, all of which are vital for a stable country.

p 5 in Barroso, 2011g

Whether in our delegations around the world or in the Brussels headquarters, thanks to you and your colleagues, Europe is making a difference in world politics today.

p 6 in Barroso, 2011g

Your role is key in contributing to shape our own European destiny and not let others dictate it for us.

p 9 in Barroso, 2012d

But I also sincerely believe that the effectiveness of our foreign policy also depends on a credible defence capability.

p 10 in Barroso, 2012d

The EEAS is an important element in this approach and is one of the best creations of the Lisbon Treaty.

p 10 in Barroso, 2012d

You are the builders or the founders of a new very important construction that is the External Action Service.

p 2 in Barroso, 2013a

Let me be very clear, our external credibility will be largely judged by our capacity to act with our partners in the region to jointly shape the common neighbourhood.

p 3 in Barroso, 2013a

This is a joint endeavour that can only be successful if the European institutions, this Parliament and the Commission, together with the European External Action Service work hand in hand with our Member States.

p 3 in Barroso, 2013d

And at this occasion, I would like to also praise Kristalina Georgieva's work - not only the extremely

committed work but also the competence and professionalism in which Kristalina, her team and ECHO have been mobilising at European level.

● **P2_dutynneutral**

p 2 in Ashton, 2011a

Not in order to impose our views or ideas, but to offer our help and to work together.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011d

We will not dictate outcomes or impose solutions.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011d

We are only here to support you if you request so.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011e

My trips to the region have confirmed my belief that we should offer help but not to dictate outcomes or impose solutions.

p 3 in Ashton, 2011e

Supporting pluralism and inclusiveness, not dictate outcomes or impose solutions.

p 2 in Ashton, 2011f

These two principles should guide our actions: the democratic transitions have to be home-grown.

p 3 in Ashton, 2011f

Not dictating outcomes but supporting pluralism, accountability, deep democracy and shared prosperity.

p 3 in Ashton, 2011n

How exactly that transition goes forward is for the Yemeni parties themselves to work out.

p 4 in Barroso, 2011a

It is not up to us to tell them what to do.

p 4 in Barroso, 2011a

They will of course follow their own road and make their own choices.

p 2 in Barroso, 2011d

Let me stress, though, that it is of course for our Libyan partners to define what they see as priorities.

p 2 in Barroso, 2011e

To listen, not to lecture.

p 2 in Barroso, 2011e

European Union has no wish to interfere in Egypt's internal decisions.

p 1 in Van Rompuy, 2011b

I agreed with Mr. Jibril that Libyan leadership and ownership remain vital.

p 2 in Van Rompuy, 2011c

Reconciliation and transition must be a Libyan-led process.