

The resilience of resilience – a shift in European Union identity?

EU foreign policy through the prism of the resilience turn

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the EU's use and understanding of the concept of resilience, as it was presented in the EU Global Strategy of 2016. By comparing the understanding of resilience found in the Global Strategy to the use of the concept found in earlier strategies, the thesis argues that an evolution of the EU's understanding of the concept can be detected. The thesis argues that this changed understanding of resilience can be used to identify a shift in the EU's perception of itself as a foreign policy actor. More specifically, by turning to a more pragmatist approach, the EU presents itself as less ambitious and more realistic in its ability to spur change in the Neighbourhood. Finally, this thesis argue that this shift in identity does not need to come at the expense of the notion of the EU as a normative power.

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1 INTRODUCTION

When the Global Strategy for the European Union (EUGS) was presented in 2016, the concept of resilience was made one of five key priorities of the EU's external action. Resilience has been hailed as the answer to the problem of governing in spite of uncertainty (Walker and Cooper 2011: 146). Based on the political environment in which the EUGS was written, the Union's choice to focus on this concept seems a natural one. However, the decision to emphasise strengthening the resilience of both EU Member States and the surrounding regions, reflects a much deeper shift regarding the EU's identity as a foreign policy actor. By turning to resilience building, the EU acknowledges the limits of its foreign policy and its ability to spur change in the Neighbourhood. Through the focus on resilience, it can be argued that the EU has turned into a less ambitious and more realistic actor in foreign policy.

Liberal values have had a challenging decade. The repercussions of the global financial crisis, civil unrest resulting in waves of refugees fleeing war and insecurity, the rise of violent extremist groups in the Middle East and Africa, the rising threat of climate change, declining democracies all over the world, and the rise of right-wing populism in Europe has shattered the sense of security and prosperity previously enjoyed by the European Union (EU). The Eurozone crises, increasing Euroscepticism, and the United Kingdom's decision to leave the Union have led to an existential crisis within the EU and a questioning of the entire European liberal project (Juncos 2017: 8). The ground which the EU has been standing on for so long is shaking, following the decline of the geopolitical environment to the Union's East and South.

The turbulent years led High Representative and Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini to conclude that *"peace and stability in Europe are no longer a given"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 33). In order to protect itself and its population, the EU would have to find a new approach. The increased insecurity caused by these global threats and internal issues forced the EU to respond strategically. The Union's answer to the threats came in the shape of the EUGS. Published in 2016, the Strategy was to act as a new guiding principle for the EU in its external relations. Central to the Strategy was

the concept of resilience, referred to as one of five key priorities the Union would pursue (Juncos 2017: 1). Against the background of a complex and contested world, resilience was to work as a way to counter the harmful effects of crises (Tocci 2017: 71).

The EU has since its inception been regarded as a paragon for liberal values and the promotion of democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. However, ambitious liberal projects are becoming increasingly hard to implement. This has been experienced by the EU in recent decades (Biscop 2016: 1). Spreading good governance and liberal values to the Neighbourhood proved to be hard, but the lack of these values was felt when they invoked crises. This understanding resulted in a pragmatic approach to the surrounding regions, as the EUGS contended that *"principled pragmatism will guide our external action in the years ahead"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 8). This includes more emphasis on the Union's interests than has been given in a Strategy before. Caught between the wish to achieve stability in the surrounding regions and the wish to promote universal norms to aid other states towards democracy and prosperity, the EUGS marks a new turn in the policy of the EU. This has sparked some controversy, as the EU has been accused of hypocrisy, as there can be discord between the Union's pragmatic, interest-based actions and the normative values its foreign policy is built on (Juncos 2017: 11). Such ambiguousness in EU foreign policy could create some problems for the Union, as the *"EU's legitimacy as a normative actor hinges on its credibility as a values-driven actor and on the effectiveness and consistency of its policies"* (Adolfsson 2018: 6). At the same time as liberal values are threatened in international politics, one of the liberal pillars seems to be stepping down.

The aim of this thesis is twofold. First, I will unpack the concept of resilience in the context of EU foreign policy. The focus will be on the way the Union's understanding of the concept has changed since its introduction in 2012 to the way it is understood in the EUGS of 2016, and what the possible reasons for this change can be. Second, I will explore the way this changed understanding can be used to say something about the Union's identity as a foreign policy actor and normative power. I argue that, through the changes in the resilience agenda, we can trace a shift in the EU's identity towards a more careful, realistic and modest actor. Additionally, I argue that this change does not mean that the EU has neglected its understanding of itself as a normative power. The question of this thesis thus becomes: to what degree has the EU's understanding of the concept of resilience changed, and how does this changed understanding reflect a deeper shift in the EU's identity as a foreign policy actor and normative power?

Following these aims, the thesis will contribute to the resilience research in two ways. Despite its continued use, the concept of resilience is rarely unpacked (Wagner and Anholt 2016: 418). Additionally, in order for the EU to fully utilise the resilience turn, the concept has to be given more attention than has been afforded in the past (Korosteleva 2018: 13). This will thus be the first contribution. To my knowledge, comparing the understanding of the concept in relation to EU foreign policy has never been done before. Second, I will bridge the gap between principled pragmatism and resilience, suggesting that the newfound emphasis on interests in EU foreign policy does not have to conflict with the Union's long-term agenda of promoting norms.

Sceptics to the resilience agenda warn that resilience is no more than a 'buzzword', which can join the ranks of previous attempts of the EU to create a new jargon. Such cases are often just seen as old wine in new bottles. However, as the full effect of the resilience turn is yet to be seen, the use of the concept should not go unexplored. Additionally, the discourse of the EU has a political effect, as policies made based on the resilience agenda will spread from the EU into both member and non-member states.

The outline of the thesis is as follows: first, I wish to give a thorough overview of the literature regarding the concept of resilience. As we will see, resilience is a flexible concept which is hard to pin down, and which has been used in a variety of ways. However, exploring the concept thoroughly is necessary, as I will go on to explain how the EU's understanding of resilience has changed. Then I will illuminate the theoretical framework of the thesis, focusing on power, norm diffusion, and the framing of the EU as a normative power. Promoting resilience is closely linked to the promotion of norms. As such, the EU's ability to promote these norms is dependent on its power as a normative actor and the legitimacy of the norms. Then, I will explain why the EU emphasise strengthening resilience in the neighbourhood, and I will argue that this is related to an increased sense of uncertainty in the Union. Finally, I will explore the differences in the EU's understanding of resilience between 2012 and 2016 and argue that this changed understanding reflects a deeper shift regarding the EU's identity as a foreign policy actor.

1.1 METHOD

The purpose of this study is to explore the development of resilience within the EU, as well as to ask what sort of impact resilience has had on the EU's role as a normative actor in world politics. One way of doing this is to compare how the EU has perceived resilience at two

points in time and compare them. I chose to focus on 2012, as this was the first time resilience appeared as a strategy in an EU documents, and 2016, as this was the first time resilience was identified as a key priority in EU external action. Additionally, as the EUGS is mainly focused on developing resilience in the EU and in the immediate, this will partly be the geographical limits of the thesis. In regard to the initial introduction of resilience, it will be necessary to explore resilience building around the Horn of Africa and in the Sahel.

The previous section made it evident that resilience is a complex and multi-faceted concept, and that scholars have not managed to agree on what resilience means or how it is to be understood. Part of the methodological approach will thus be comparative case study, the cases being the concept of resilience itself in different points in time. The analysis will be conducted based on strategies, documents, and communications published by the EU, other scholar's work, and semi-structured elite interviews. The EU's documents might carry with them organisational biases, as they were written by people working for EU institutions. To make up for this, several critical scholars have been included.

Some scholars have studied the impact of resilience on the EU by counting the number of times resilience has been mentioned in documents or strategies. While this can certainly give us a picture of whether or not resilience is considered a key concept, counting the number of instances tells us nothing of how resilience is understood or how the strategies aim to enhance resilience building. A more intensive case study is required in order to get a better grasp of the EU's use and understanding of resilience. Hence, quantitative analysis was not chosen for this thesis, as I consider qualitative analysis to be better suited to lay down the foundations understanding the various uses and perceptions of the concept. After all, qualitative analyses are better suited for describing phenomena and the context in which they operate (Justesen and Mik-Meyer 2010: 17). A problem still occurs when writing about such a vague concept as resilience, and that is that it is hard to gauge the authors understanding and use of resilience. Each author's individual understanding of the concept can have repercussions and shape the text. In order to control for this, I have focused on the authors who have been the most transparent with regard to their understanding of resilience.

Comparative case study was chosen to bring attention to the ways in which the concept of resilience has changed within EU discourse from the initial introduction of the concept in 2012 to the use of it in the EUGS from 2016, where resilience was identified as one of the five strategic priorities of the EU. Analysing the understanding of resilience in 2012 versus 2016 will in turn give a sense of the way the concept has moved through the

Union, which again can be used to say something about the EU's identity as a foreign policy actor over time.

The EU's strategies and documents used in the analysis are all found on the EU's website. With regard to these documents, it is worth reflecting on who has written them and for what purpose. They are all written by EU officials with the purpose of shedding a positive light on the Union and its external policies, and this could have had an effect on the phrasing and words used in the document. There is a lot of focus on what the EU will do in the future, and what the EU has done successfully in the past. However, instances of institutional hindrances and problems or disagreements are often overlooked. This may give the impression that the EU works as a unified body in foreign policy to a more significant extent than it actually is or has the possibility to be.

In addition to a comparative case study and document analysis, this thesis is conducted on the basis of semi-structured elite interviews. The reason for this choice is that semi-structured interviews, while operating out of a list of pre-determined questions, also allow for detours (Adams 2015: 494). The opportunity to diverge from the questionnaire is valuable when dealing with a vague and flexible concept such as resilience, as the questions hinge on the interviewee's understanding of the concept. I conducted two interviews for this thesis. The interviewees were chosen based on their expertise in the field, and I sought to highlight different perspectives of the concept and the use of it. I will conduct a third interview, but unfortunately the interviewee were not able to speak until after the thesis' deadline.

The interviewees' background and expertise had an impact on the questions they were asked. Because of the COVID-19 restrictions, the interviews were conducted online. While this provided an opportunity to speak to the interviewees face to face, it may have affected my understanding of the interviewees' answer. For instance, the use of internet restricts the use of body language, which could have told me more about the interviewees' thoughts on a specific subject.

Through the methods of analysis and the theoretical framework presented in this chapter, I hope to shed some light on the development of resilience and the EU's use and understanding of the concept. The next chapter will explain the creation of the EUGS and the context in which it was written. It will also explore the ways resilience is understood in EU documents from 2012 and 2013 and documents from 2016 and 2017.

2 MAPPING RESILIENCE

The concept of resilience has slowly, but surely, found its way into the academic discipline of political science. It has been taken up by various international organisations, initially in the field of humanitarian aid and development policy. Institutions such as the United Nations (UN)¹, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)², and the World Bank (WB)³, has taken up the concept as *"the main solution to past intervention failures"* (Juncos 2018: 564). Although being frequently of use, both researchers and politicians continue to debate the usefulness of the concept. While some scholars argue that the new concept should be dismissed as merely a 'buzzword', others argue that resilience *"might have the effect of mobilising action in particular directions"* (Juncos 2017: 1). In any case, as long as important actors, such as the EU, use the concept as a new strategic priority with policy implications, it will remain important to scrutinise very carefully from a scholarly perspective. EU foreign policy has an impact which reaches far beyond the borders of the Union and is expected to have consequences for a broad range of actors. It would be naïve to think that turn towards a concept such as resilience would have limited or no impact, as there is power in the Union's discourse. The recent focus on resilience should, therefore, not be overlooked.

Using resilience as a framework for policymaking has become increasingly dominant. Since its introduction, resilience has *"infiltrated vast areas of the social sciences, becoming a regular, if under-theorized, term of art in discussions of international finance and economic policy, corporate risk analysis, the psychology of trauma, development policy, urban planning, public health and national security"* (Walker and Cooper 2011: 143). The EU is no exception to this. However, it would be a mistake to regard resilience as merely a tool for policymakers. This is because *"the key aspects that define resilience approaches to policy-*

¹ See for instance the development programme by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Bank (WB), and the World Resources Institute (WRI): *Roots of Resilience – Growing the Wealth of the Poor* (2008). Or see the UNDP's strategy on disaster risk and recovery, titled *Putting Resilience at the Heart of Development: Investing in Prevention and Resilient Recovery* (2012).

² See for instance Roepke and Thanky: *Resilience: the first line of defence* (2019)

³ See for instance World Bank-reports such as *Social Resilience and State Fragility in Haiti: A Country Social Analysis* (2006) or *Climate Resilient Cities: A Primer on Reducing Vulnerabilities to Climate Change Impacts and Strengthening Disaster Risk Management in East Asian Cities* (2008).

making are methodological assumptions about the nature of the world, the complex problem of governance, and the policy processes suitable to governing this complexity" (Chandler 2014: 3). 'Resilience thinking' is, from that angle, much more than an instrument – it is a concept which carries with it the perception of the world as uncertain.

This chapter traces the origins of resilience and the way it is used and understood in various fields of research. Its objective is to provide an overview of the concept of resilience. Before resilience can make a genuine difference in world politics, it has to be explored and understood thoroughly. Getting an extensive insight into the different uses of resilience, is a necessary precondition in order to be able to take full advantage of the concept. This chapter shows the roots of resilience, the etymology and genealogy, as well as the leading uses and understandings of the concept, notably socio-ecological resilience and resilience as neo-liberal governmentality. Finally, the main critiques against the concept of resilience is explored.

2.1 DEFINING RESILIENCE

Resilience is relatively new to the academic discipline of political science. In a short period of time, the concept has seeped into sub-disciplines, such as urban planning, development policy, national security, public health, and psychology – to name but a few (Walker and Cooper 2011: 143). The vagueness and malleability of the concept of resilience allows it to tie together otherwise separate fields of study. This was partly the goal of the EUGS. The strategy was intended to be 'thematically global', spanning fields such as security, development, climate, and diplomacy (Tocci 2020: 178). The multi-faceted conceptual background of resilience has allowed it to be a part of a variety of fields and strategies. However, it has also made it hard for researchers and policy officials to determine what resilience *really* is (Malkki and Sinkkonen 2016: 281). This is not necessarily a problem, as the conceptual flexibility allows it to be applied in a broader context. The vagueness, moreover, might also spark a debate, which again might lead to further exploration of the concept, as well as conceptual clarity (Furedi 2008: 648). Similarly, Bourbeau concurs in that political scientists often use highly contested terms such as 'democracy', 'power', and 'governance', and that one should not be discouraged from utilising a term simply because it lacks a clear and uncontested definition (Bourbeau 2018b: 12-13).

One of the simplest ways to define resilience is to conceive of it "*as the ability of societies and people to withstand and recover from shocks*" (Joseph 2019: 11). This definition

is similar to the one propelled in the EUGS, which states that resilience is *"the ability of states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 23). In an earlier approach to resilience, the EU defined resilience as *"the ability of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to withstand, adapt, and quickly recover from stresses and shocks such as drought, violence, conflict or natural disaster"* (European Commission 2014a: 2). This definition, is more specific than the one presented in the EUGS, indicating clearly which levels are to be made resilient. Additionally, rather than referring to the vague notion of 'internal and external crises', the 2014 definition emphasise natural disasters.

Some definitions of resilience stipulate an ability to return to a previous state of stability. For instance, Leena Malkki and Teemu Sinkkonen define resilience as *"the ability of a system to "bounce back" after disruption"* (Malkki and Sinkkonen 2016: 282), clearly indicating a wish to return to a *status quo*. That was precisely the understanding which underpinned the first EU document actively promoting resilience, presented in 2012. Thus, the communication, *The EU Approach to Resilience: Learning from Food Security and Crises* (European Commission 2012), introduced an understanding of resilience which focused on the ability to bounce back and return to a previously defined state. Resilience was understood to have two dimensions. One stressed the ability of an entity to withstand and resist shocks, while the other focused on the capacity to bounce back rapidly after such a shock had occurred (European Commission 2012: 5).

Problems occur when returning to the *status quo* is no longer an option, because rapid changes in the surrounding conditions would not allow it. For instance, a population living in an area damaged by a mudslide will be unable to return to life as usual. Thus, other definitions, including the one given in the EUGS, focus instead on the ability to adapt to a changing environment. 'Bouncing back' is not always an option, as change and adaptation might be required to ensure the survival of the resilient subject. This follows a general trend in resilience literature. As such, Joseph states that *"thinking on resilience has evolved from an initial emphasis on coping, or restoring functioning, to the view that adaptation is necessary, to the more radical argument that social and agential transformation is required in the face of global change"* (Joseph 2019: 11). Resilience can thus be said to have three different aggregates: (1) resilience as persistence or recovery, (2) as adaptation, and (3) as transformation. This approach stresses the importance of time in relation to the shock or stress an entity experience. This relation between resilience and time will be explored in greater detail below. For now, suffice it to say that the more persistent and long-term the stress

experienced by an entity is, the more likely the entity is to transform to adapt to the stressful environment (Chelleri et al. 2015: 6-7).

Towards that background, Furedi has offered an alternative definition of resilience. He argues that resilience is mostly defined by its absence. It is a condition that needs to be actively pushed for, as it will not exist by itself. This is especially the case when it comes to public responses to terrorist attacks. Governments usually expect the population to respond to terrorism with panic and defeatism (Furedi 2008: 648). Resilience in the population would have to be constructed, and this is done through strategies and policies. This makes resilience a social construct, as well as a counter-trend to the natural state of vulnerability. Such a premise, that vulnerability is the natural state of populations and societies, has produced vulnerability-led policy responses that articulate a sense of fatalism.

2.2 THE ROOTS OF RESILIENCE

Over the years, resilience has not only entered the vocabulary of the social sciences, as described above, but also a vast number of other research fields, such as ecology, biology and others. Because of its flexibility, the concept lends itself towards inclusion in strategies and policies created by a wide variety of fields. However, this can also lead to conceptual stretching, as the concept has been used in and moved between disciplines to the extent that there is no agreement on what resilience is (Juncos 2017: 4). The vagueness of the term might also lead to a situation where the term *"has become so over-used and generically applied that the very qualities it seeks to express are clouded"* (Walklate et al. 2014: 409). This makes it necessary to understand where resilience comes from in order to know how to use it (Bourbeau 2018a: 24). After all, *"understanding the multiple and multidisciplinary paths through which resilience has percolated into world politics is an essential first step to conducting an analysis of the application of resilience in international politics"* (Bourbeau 2018a: 20). This turns our attention to the etymology and genealogy of resilience.

2.2.1 THE ETYMOLOGY

Etymologically, *resilience* has roots in the Latin word *resilientia*, which can be translated to either 'a fact of avoiding' or 'an action of rebounding' (Rogers 2017: 14). The Latin word *resilio*, meaning 'to jump back' is also a word frequently cited as the original root of resilience (Juncos 2017: 4). According to Rogers, there are certain variations in the understanding of the

term, making resilience polysemic. For instance, some use resilience as a way to describe the ability to resume one's shape after having been stretched or compromised. Thus, to be resilient denotes the ability to be bent or pulled in different directions, and still manage to return to one's original shape – in other words, being elastic. Others use resilience as a way to measure the amount of strain or pressure a material can be subjected to without breaking, suggesting a sense of resistance instead. Both uses of the concept can be found in the resilience literature. In general, resilience is viewed as a response to something negative, making it a quality of "*speedy or easy recovery from, or resistance to the effects of a misfortune, shock or illness*" (Rogers 2017: 15). This understanding of resilience combines both the sense of elasticity and the resistance found in the previous meanings of resilience.

2.2.2 A GENEALOGY OF RESILIENCE – A LINEAR VIEW

Most research that has been done on the concept of resilience argues that the beginning of the concept can be traced back to C.S. Holling's influential article *Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems*.⁴ When resilience was first introduced to ecology, the concept "*tended to emphasise the ability of systems to return to an equilibrium ex ante*" (Juncos 2017: 4). In his article, Holling shifts focus away from equilibrium as an ecosystem's core, towards a focus on persistence. Where previous research had focused on the ecosystems ability to return to a 'balance of nature', Holling sought to destabilise this notion (Walker and Cooper 2011: 145).

Holling separates stability from resilience. Stability is the ability of a system to return to a state of equilibrium, after having experienced a disturbance or a shock. This understanding resonates with what we earlier called elasticity or the ability to return to one's original shape. Resilience, however, "*determines the persistence of relationships within a system and is a measure of the ability of these systems to absorb changes of state variables, driving variables, and parameters, and still persist*" (Holling 1973: 17). A system may have a low degree of stability, but still persevere if it has a high degree of resilience. In fact, a low degree of stability may seem to spur a high degree of resilience (Holling 1973: 17-18). Holling presents an example of insect populations living under extreme climatic conditions. The populations may fluctuate widely, thus being unstable. However, they show a high capability of adapting to these climatic conditions, making them resilient. Insects living in

⁴ See for instance Juncos (2017): *Resilience as the new EU foreign policy paradigm: a pragmatist turn?*; Joseph (2017): *The Resilience Turn in German Development Strategy and Humanitarian Intervention*; Methmann & Oels (2015): *From 'fearing' to 'empowering' climate refugees: Governing climate-induced migration in the name of resilience*; or Walklate, McGarry & Mythen (2014): *Searching for Resilience: A Conceptual Excavation*

more benign areas show a lesser ability to absorb climatic extremes, although they usually have more constant populations, making them more stable but less resilient (Holling 1973: 18). In short, *"the more homogeneous the environment in space and time, the more likely is the system to have low fluctuations and low resilience"* (Holling 1973: 18). Maintaining flexibility seems like the best strategy to ensure survival (Holling 1973: 18), and Holling's perspective thus *"seeks to open up a management approach capable of sustaining productivity even under conditions of extreme instability"* (Walker and Cooper 2011: 146).

The understanding of resilience, as developed from ecology, has become accepted by several authors. Accepting that resilience began to develop in the ecology literature usually leads to a linear understanding of the genealogy of resilience. This is what Walker and Cooper argued for in their influential article *Genealogies of resilience: From systems ecology to the political economy of crisis adaptation* (2011). Here, they propose that there is only one genealogy of resilience, where the concept moved *"from its first formulation in ecosystems science to its recent proliferation across disciplines and policy arenas loosely concerned with the logistics of crisis management"* (Walker and Cooper 2011: 144). In this view, resilience has moved through the ecology literature, with regards to Holling, to the literature of crisis management and international relations. From here, resilience's success in 'colonising' areas of governance *"is due to its intuitive ideological fit with neoliberal philosophy"* (Walker and Cooper 2011: 114). This genealogy of resilience has structured much of the literature surrounding the concept.

Walker and Cooper argue resilience works as a concept both in ecology as well as in neo-liberal philosophy because of an increased understanding of the lack of predictability in the world. Holling showed how populations living under severe insecurity were able to adapt to the changes their environment offered them, and thus survive as a species. How to prepare for and adapt to uncertainty is essential to the resilience of an ecosystem. This is the same for the economy, as argued by neo-liberalists. For instance, this was the case for the neo-liberal economist and philosopher Friedrich Hayek. He was sceptical of the Keynesian welfare state, arguing that market was so complicated that *"no centralized authority could hope to predict, much less control, the precise evolution of individual elements"* (Walker and Cooper 2011: 149).

2.2.3 A NON-LINEAR VIEW OF RESILIENCE

Philippe Bourbeau has argued against the linear genealogy of resilience presented by Walker and Cooper. His critique of Walker and Cooper's genealogy of resilience is based around their presentation of a deterministic and uni-directional narrative. By claiming that their genealogy is the *only* genealogy, they simultaneously exclude all other paths resilience might have travelled. Similarly, by claiming that resilience is merely a logical process towards neo-liberalism, they turn a blind eye to expressions of resilience not dominated by neo-liberalism. Finally, Bourbeau shows how resilience did not solely emerge in the ecology literature in the 1970s, as Walker and Cooper suggest. Resilience has been widely used in the psychology and psychiatry literature since World War II (Bourbeau 2018a: 22-23).

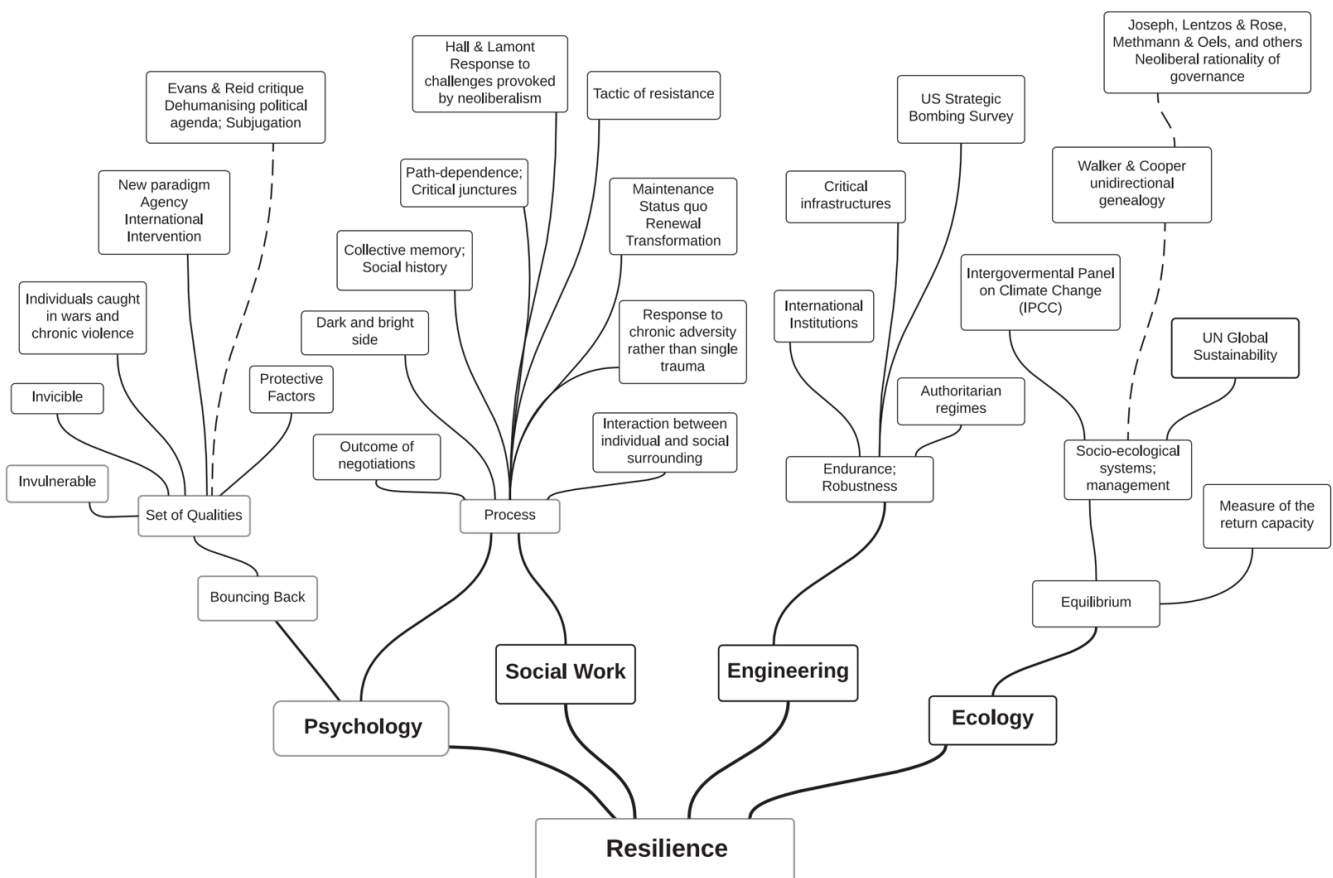


Figure 2.1: A genealogy showing four possible trajectories of resilience (Bourbeau 2018a: 25)

Instead of seeing the genealogy of resilience as linear and deterministic, Bourbeau proposes that a genealogy of resilience should be seen as a tree with many branches, as a *"fractal, multileaved structure"* (Bourbeau 2018a: 21). He argues that the emergence of resilience can be traced to at least four different fields, ecology being one of them. The other fields are psychology, social work, and engineering (see Figure 2.1). Each field has provided new ways

of looking at the concept, and only focusing on one of them leaves much out of the debate. For instance, the understanding of resilience in engineering defined resilience in terms of endurance and persistence. Following this line, the focus is mainly on the resilience of a material, specifically how much strain a material could endure before it broke. This has in turn been applied to institutions and authoritarian regimes, as a way to describe the way such regimes resist democratic influences. This form of resilience can also be found in the literature on critical infrastructures (Bourbeau 2018a: 28). The problem with this understanding of resilience is that it ignores the aspects of resilience which focus on adaptability and ability to transform better to fit the environment (Bourbeau 2018a: 28).

The ecological understanding of resilience measures the time it takes for a system to return to a fixed point of equilibrium could be found again in the literature of climate change (Bourbeau 2018a: 29). Here, the focus is on the resilience of an entire system, asking under which conditions a system can be displaced from an equilibrium, and still be able to return to an equilibrium. Scholars have later linked ecological systems to social systems, arguing that resilience is *"the capacity of linked social-ecological systems to absorb recurrent disturbances... so as to retain essential structures, processes, and feedbacks"* (Agder et al. 2005: 1036). In such systems, populations interact with, are dependent on, and have to successfully adapt to a changing environment in order to survive (Chandler 2014: 7).

Arguably, one of the most important contributions to the resilience debate comes from the fields of psychology and social work. Here, resilience is understood as the avoidance of a negative response to a traumatic event or condition (Joseph 2019: 12). Earlier works in these fields stressed resilience as a personal trait, something one either does or does not have. Such a subject-based understanding of resilience is what David Chandler calls 'classical' resilience. For this type of resilience, the focus is on *"an isolated individual withstanding the severe tests and pressures of nature"* (Chandler 2014: 5). In this view, the subjects overcome oppressive conditions or harsh natural or social environments because of their inner strengths and capacities to cope with trauma. There is thus a sharp division between the subject and the object (Chandler 2014: 6). However, this idea of resilience has a tendency to 'blame the victim', as a lack of resilience will be the fault of the individual. New approaches in the fields highlight that instead of viewing resilience as an individual trait, it should be viewed as a process, making resilience *"the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress"* (Southwick et al. 2014: 2). By linking this processual perspective of resilience to world politics, authors have shown how resilience building in local communities may work as a strategy against conflict (Bourbeau 2018a: 30).

The assumption is that resilient local communities will be better equipped at handling a shock when it occurs, decreasing the impact of the crisis.

Following resilience as a process, Bourbeau goes on to suggest a typology of resilience – *"resilience as maintenance, resilience as marginality, and resilience as renewal"* (Bourbeau 2018a: 31). Resilience as maintenance seeks to return to a *status quo* after a disturbance. This form of resilience can be understood as a 'bouncing back' in the face of challenges, relating to the ecology literature. Resilience as marginality, however, indicates a version of resilience *"characterised by responses that bring changes at the margins but that do not challenge the basis of a policy (or a society)"* (Bourbeau 2018a: 31). Finally, resilience as renewal captures the idea of transformation, or 'leaping forward'. Resilience as renewal aims to change or remodel social structures (Bourbeau 2018a: 31). In this typology, Bourbeau shows how resilience can be understood as a scale, going from standing still or going back to a previously fixed point, or making small or significant changes to society, as a way to adapt to an unstable environment. By doing this, he manages to unite an inherent contradiction in the resilience term, as resilience can mean both being able to resist change by being robust and enduring, and simultaneously encompassing the ability to adapt to an unstable environment by being flexible.

2.2.4 RESILIENCE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS – A TYPOLOGY

Now that we have unpacked the concept of resilience, we need to ask at which level of society it is to be applied? Is it enough for societies to be resilient at the state level? Following Walklate, McGarry and Mythen, the answer to this question would be no. They argue that defining resilience is not enough. To actually be able to use resilience, the concept *"needs to be broken down, both in terms of the capacities it describes and the levels at which it is mobilised"* (Walklate et al. 2014: 410). Thus, they propose a typology with multiple levels, namely the individual, familial, communal, institutional, national, regional, and global.

The particular levels in this typology do not operate alone. They all related to and are usually dependent on one another (Walklate et al. 2014: 412). For instance, the national level often creates strategies, showing how individuals and communities can plan and prepare for an emergency (Walklate et al. 2014: 416). A supportive family creates more resilience in individuals, and communities in turn foster resilience in families by connecting the people who live there together, making them more likely to help one another. The state level, through giving responsibilities to official, private and third-sector organisations and institutions, are

able to create a 'security blanket', creating more resilient communities through the use of institutions. By building resilience at these various levels, the goal is to increase the likelihood of 'a better tomorrow' (Walklate et al. 2014: 412).

Globally, resilience building has mainly been focused on the sustainability of resources, the climate, and preventing the damages made by climate change (Walklate et al. 2014: 418). At the global level, resilience is understood as *"integral to the co-evolution of societies and ecosystems as a total complex system"* (Walklate et al. 2014: 419). Here, nature and societies are inexorably linked together, creating a cyclical and complex relationship. This theory is borrowed from Holling. He put forward a model *"that describes the ways in which complex systems of people and nature are dynamically organized and structured"* (Allen et al. 2014: 578). This understanding of resilience emphasises resilience as a process with no discernible end. This interpretation poses a problem when resilience is translated into the social sphere, as it *"requires a capacity to imagine alternative futures rather than a capacity to bounce back to some preexisting state"* (Walklate et al. 2014: 419).

Based on this typology of resilience, Walklate et al. argue that there is more than one resilience. As resilience is such a multi-layered and multi-faceted concept, it makes more sense to talk about resiliences, rather than one, uniform understanding of resilience (Walklate et al. 2014: 419). Additionally, they emphasise the need to take context into consideration when building resilience. Depending on which level is targeted, building resilience *"can pose different questions in different circumstances with different answers"* (Walklate et al. 2014: 419). Thus, specifying which level is the focus of concern, is the first step in creating a resilience building policy.

From the discussion above, it seems evident that the concept of resilience has a multitude of meanings and aspects related to it. On the one hand, resilience indicates the ability to adapt to external and internal shocks and stresses. This understanding is intrinsically linked to change, suggesting that unyielding societies will cave under pressure from the outside. On the other hand, resilience also indicates the ability to absorb challenging conditions and remain the same in spite of it. It seems unrealistic to develop a definition of resilience that will encompass both of these sides at the same time, as they are contradictory. Instead, it would be better to view resilience as a scale, ranging from resistance to transformation. The goal of policymakers is rather to be aware of these distinctions and the possible repercussions they may have in the implementation of said policies.

2.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPLEXITY, INSECURITY, AND INSTABILITY

Resilience opens up the possibility of governing in the face of uncertainty. This has been an underlying assumption since Holling introduced his version of resilience, as his *"perspective seeks to open up a management approach capable of sustaining productivity even under conditions of extreme instability"* (Walker and Cooper 2011: 146). Resilience thinking is based on an underlying assumption that we cannot have all the knowledge in the world and will have to make do with limited information.

Resilience thus becomes an attempt to handle and prepare for unpredictability. Such unpredictability is again rooted in an understanding of life as complex and incalculable. A consequence of this is that resilience has moved into the field of emergency preparedness, crisis response, security, and strategies such as the US *National Strategy for Homeland Security* (US Department of Homeland Security 2007: 25). As the world became more complex and more interconnected, the time-old assumption that we live under a set of fixed and universal laws no longer hold (Chandler 2014: 22-23). Achieving democracy, peace, and security is no longer perceived as being part of a linear process of cause and effect, where one can easily predict the outcome of a strategy or policy, or imagine a linear model of development. Having a world order influenced by multiple and interconnected causes and dimensions makes it hard to predict when and where a crisis will strike, and which form it will take. This has become evident after the COVID-19 crisis hit a Europe which was not fully prepared of such a pandemic. Such interconnectedness and interdependencies create a world of uncertainty. A consequence of this changing understanding of the way both human and non-human life operates is that planning for the future becomes nearly impossible – *"how complex life works is held to be beyond the planning, control or comprehension of any individual, no matter how clever they are or what position of power they might occupy"* (Chandler 2014: 23). However, although the future is unpredictable, it is still possible to govern life in a certain way.

Chandler argues that order still can emerge from interactions, even though they are not obeying by universal laws (Chandler 2014: 23). Human interactions always take place in a particular context, and contexts can change. Thus, small variations in the surroundings may have a significant effect on the outcome of the interaction. Causation is no longer straight forward – it can take any direction. Still, Chandler argues, such interactions still create order (Chandler 2014: 23). In this way, *"complexity approaches of resilience-thinking enable life to*

order governance by insisting that reality – life itself – contains an immanent process of emergent order which can inform the aims and practices of its governance" (Chandler 2014: 23).

2.4 FOUR ISSUES WHEN CONCEPTUALISING RESILIENCE

No matter which strand of resilience-literature one chooses to follow, whether it is the ecology-literature, the psychology-literature or the engineering-literature, there are still some characteristics which the various understandings of resilience share. These characteristics may turn into problems when policymakers attempt to translate resilience into policies, as these characteristics build on certain ontological assumptions about the resilience concept. First, the previous definitions of resilience all see it as something inherently *good*. The premise for most resilience-research is that the disturbances or shocks experienced are negative and that the ability to resist or adapt to such an event is positive (Bourbeau 2018: 9; Malkki and Sinkkonen 2016: 284). This positive outlook may have kept the social science-literature from fully accepting resilience, as the tendency to see stability and resilience to change as something positive, has downplayed the importance of social change. While it is understandable that resilience is something good when it is linked to how to respond to terrorist attacks or floods, this assumption can make it hard to conceptualise resilience accurately, as the promotion of resilience may have dark sides (Malkki and Sinkkonen 2016: 284). By continually focusing on resisting change, resilience can also stand in the way of positive change. Thus, it would be considered counter-productive only to see resilience as something inherently positive, and scholars should instead pursue resilience as a normatively open concept (Bourbeau 2013: 9).

The second characteristic we can find in most uses of resilience is the tendency to view resilience as a binary concept, as an all-or-nothing. This leads to an understanding of some states as resilient, without looking closely at what they are resilient against. No state, society or system is entirely resilient to all kinds of shocks or disturbances, but some systems may be more resilient to a certain kind of disruptions than others. Resilience to one kind of adversity does not make a system able to cope with all kinds of adversities. Instead of picturing resilience as something you either do or do not have, it is more productive to view resilience as a matter of degree. Treating resilience as a binary concept might also risk ignoring the fact that there is more than one type of resilience, or that resilience should be seen as a process. This binary view creates a disconnection "*between the complexity of*

contemporary world policy and the analytical framework proposed to make sense of the different patterns of response that international events inspire" (Bourbeau 2018: 10).

Additionally, an attempt to increase resilience in one area might lead to a weakening of the resilience in another area (Malkki and Sinkkonen 2016: 285).

The third problematic element is the focus many definitions give to what the system or the society was like before the disruption occurred. In the ecology literature, this would be a previous state of equilibrium that the system seeks to return to. However, in the social sciences, it is never clear what this previous state was, as *"the state of social "equilibrium that a human population might exist in and return to is hard to envision and articulate"* (Bourbeau 2018: 10). What would such an equilibrium entail? Would it not be regarded as a mistake to seek to return to the same conditions which made you vulnerable to the experienced crises in the first place?

Finally, Malkki and Sinkkonen request that one final aspect of resilience should be considered, and that is the question of whether resilience occurs before, during or after the shock. Usually, resilience has been linked to the period after the disturbance. The assumption is that something has happened, and that resilient communities handle the aftermath better than non-resilient societies. Organisation theory, on the other hand, perceives resilience as a more permanent characteristic, and not as something that takes effect only as a response to a crisis (Malkki and Sinkkonen 2016: 285). The authors thus suggest a broad understanding of the temporal element of resilience, which covers the whole process from the strategy-making in preparation for disturbances to the aftermath of the disturbance.

2.4.1 ABSENCE OF A CONSENSUS – BOTH A HINDRANCE AND AN OPPORTUNITY

Several authors agree that the absence of an agreed definition of resilience is not necessarily a problem. However, this does not mean that one should take an unclear and vague concept such as resilience for granted if it is to be used analytically. The lack of a common understanding might lead to further research and debate on the concept, which might, in the end, lead to an agreed definition. The EU has used resilience as a way to promote cooperation and bridge the gaps between different branches of the EU foreign policy. This has been made easier through a flexible definition, which has allowed for a general programme of action (Interview 1). It might also be that resilience is a concept that does not allow itself to be defined appropriately, like so many other concepts in the political science literature.

The discussion from earlier in this chapter poses some questions. It has become evident that resilience is not something that can easily be pinned down or summed up in one sentence. Malkki and Sinkkonen suggest it would be better not to see resilience as a monolithic concept, but rather to focus on either *general* or *specified* resilience. This distinction is taken from the social-ecological resilience literature. General resilience does not identify any specific dimension or type of disturbance – it refers to the ability to withstand all kinds of shocks. Specified resilience, on the other hand, takes context into consideration. The focus is placed on particular aspects of a system or a particular set of disturbances. The typology presented by Walklate et al. earlier in this chapter is an example of various forms of specified resilience. In short, specified resilience further defines resilience by asking the questions 'of what' and 'to what' (Malkki and Sinkkonen 2016: 285). Although such narrow and particular versions of resilience might make us lose sight of the big picture, it is still important to acknowledge the different types and dimensions of resilience if the concept is to be used constructively. Such an understanding of resilience works around the problem of not having a single, shared understanding of the concept.

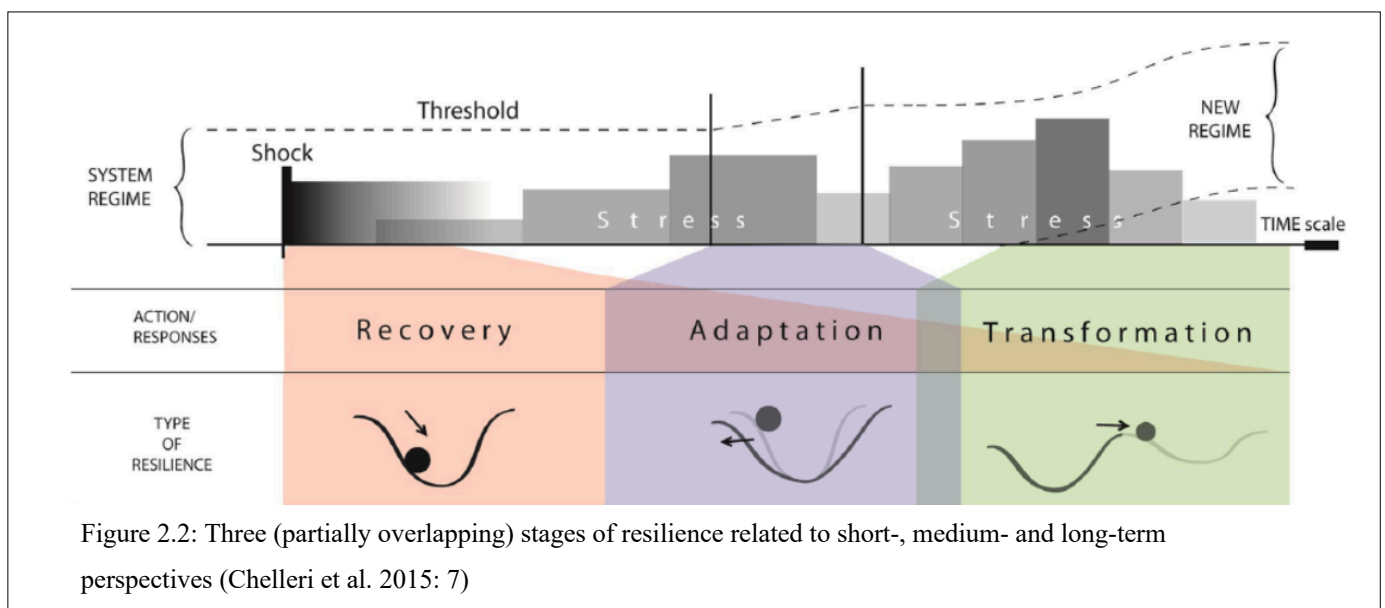
2.5 SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL RESILIENCE

In the previous section, we encountered a classical understanding of resilience, as proposed by Chandler. Here, the focus was on individuals surviving harsh environments because of their personal ability to withstand pressure and cope with deprivation. It also included a sharp division between the resilient subject and the environment (Chandler 2014: 5-6). In his book *Resilience: the Governance of Complexity* (2014), Chandler proposes a post-classical understanding of resilience. In this framing, the focus is placed on the relationship between the subject and the environment in which it operates. As Chandler argues, in this understanding of resilience, "*the subject survives and thrives on the basis of its ability to adapt or dynamically relate to its socio-ecological environment*" (Chandler 2014: 7). In other words, survival is no longer only based on a personal ability to control or conquer the environment, but rather to adapt to and co-exist with it. Adaptation to the environment is a process, meaning that the post-classical understanding of resilience reflects Bourbeau's view of resilience as a process. A consequence of this is that there is no longer a 'normal state', no stable equilibrium, to return to (Malkki and Sinkkonen 2016: 284).

This version of resilience, where the focus is on the subject's ability to adapt to the environment around it, is linked to what has been called social-ecological resilience. This

version follows Holling and the ecology literature on resilience, while simultaneously linking ecological systems with social systems, creating complex social-ecological systems (Walker and Cooper 2011: 147).⁵ This perspective attempts to bridge the gap between social and natural dimensions of sustainability (Olsson et al. 2017: 49).

Earlier in this chapter, the importance of time in relation to resilience thinking was mentioned. Here, it was said that three different resilience approaches could be distinguished: resilience as either maintenance, marginality, or renewal. Which approach is chosen is dependent on the persistence and longevity of the stress which an entity undergoes and can be illustrated through a ball-and-cup representation (see Figure 2.2) (Lade et al. 2017: 3). Such an illustration shows how a system, the ball, is embedded in a regime, the cup. It can move within this regime but will remain within the regime limits and return to more or less the same area, which is the bottom of the cup. Through incremental adaptation, the landscape in which the ball moves can be changed to make the fluctuations less dramatic. However, a strong enough impact can force the ball over a critical juncture, and into a new regime, resulting in a regime shift.⁶ This approach mirrors Bourbeau's typology of resilience as either maintenance, marginality, or renewal.



The first approach is that of persistence or recovery. An abrupt shock which only lasts for a short time may lead to recovery and return to *status quo* once the shock has passed. Even

⁵ This perspective has in recent years been brought together within the Stockholm Resilience Centre, a think-tank that promotes resilience theory in environmental and development projects

⁶ A regime shift can be defined as "large, abrupt, and persistent shifts across thresholds into different attractors in social-ecological systems" (Lade et al. 2017: 4). They are often hard to predict and costly to reverse.

though the shock may be a challenge to the system, it does not call into question the thresholds of the system. This first aspect thus refers to *"the time needed for a system to return to a stable equilibrium state"* (Chelleri et al. 2015: 4). However, if the shock turns into continuous and persistent stress, return to *status quo* is no longer an option, especially if the stress starts to challenge the threshold of what the system can survive. The entity will have to adapt in order to remove the stress. Adaptation, understood as *"the processes of adjustment to actual or expected changes and its consequences"* (Chelleri et al. 2015: 7), means moving the threshold, making the system able to cope with the experienced stress by decreasing fluctuations, while simultaneously staying within the same regime. However, if the stress becomes too much, larger changes become necessary. Longer-term structural adjustment, transformation, *"usually happens once the system is approaching dangerous thresholds"* (Chelleri et al. 2017: 8). When such a transformation happens, the ball moves over a tipping point and into a new regime. Such a transformation can take a very long time, and the change might be so slow that it is hardly noticeable. However, once such a tipping point has been reached, reverting to the previous regime will be next to impossible. Think, for instance, of the development that has happened in transportation. After the introduction of the car, it took a long time for it to be available to the general public. Today we more or less take cars for granted, and any attempt to bring back the horse and cart would be sure to fail. The tipping point has been reached, and we have moved into a new regime.

As the world becomes chaotic and unpredictable, and the systems within this world become complex and non-linear, states and societies are forced to adapt to the changing and unstable environment. Historically, the most successful societies, organisations or species are the ones who have been able to change in order to better fit with their surroundings and conditions. This does not mean that stability is never the answer. However, the social-ecological version of resilience forces us to accept that there are no *one* stable equilibria. Instead, there are several.

What this version of resilience shows, is a way to combine the two seemingly contradictory characteristics of resilience, namely that resilience is both resisting changes while at the same time being the ability to change in the face of severe stress. The factor that has to be taken into account is time. If the stress does not diminish over time, or if it threatens the capacities of the system, change becomes necessary. Viewing resilience as a scale like this can be seen partly as an answer to one of the critiques against resilience, namely that resilience might stand in the way of positive change.

2.6 RESILIENCE AS NEO-LIBERAL GOVERNMENTALITY

Several authors have made the connection between resilience and neo-liberalism. Walker and Cooper argue that the success of resilience lies in its *"intuitive ideological fit with neoliberal philosophy of complex adaptive systems"* (Walker and Cooper 2011: 144). Similarly, Joseph has called resilience 'embedded neoliberalism' (Joseph 2013). Central to this argument is the work of the economist Friedrich Hayek who, like Holling, was concerned with authorities limited ability to predict and plan for the future (Walker and Cooper 2011: 149).

Joseph has called resilience a form of neo-liberal governmentality, and argues that resilience has some ontological commitments which makes resilience and neo-liberalism an ideal fit. Governmentality is here understood as a form of power which *"works form a distance through a liberal rationality of governance"* (Joseph 2013: 41). By appealing to the freedom and the self-governance of the governed, neo-liberal governmentality seeks to curb direct forms of governance. It works indirectly and from a distance, and seeks to influence others to take specific actions (Joseph 2014: 287). Following this, neo-liberal governmentality can be seen as related to the second or third face of power, by attempting to make others want the same things as the EU without having to force them.

Taking a version of resilience similar to the one presented by the social-ecological resilience literature, Joseph claims resilience provides complex systems, such as economic systems, organisations, and institutions, with *"the ability to withstand and survive shocks and disturbances"* (Joseph 2013: 39). By combining the rationality of neo-liberal governmentality and a social-ecological understanding of resilience, Joseph proposed a perspective where it becomes the responsibility of the individual, not the state, to resist or adapt to disturbances. This is to happen through a process of learning, awareness and adaptability (Joseph 2019: 3-4). Thus, neo-liberalism shifts the focus from the government to the governed, making the people responsible. If we recall the psychology-literature on resilience, this idea of resilience being an individual's responsibility or characteristic is exactly what scholars criticised, as failing to be resilient would be the individual's fault.

According to Joseph, contemporary theories of society provide a certain ontology, which sees the world as increasingly complex and interconnected, characterised by networks of actors who have to *"show their own initiative as active and reflexive agents capable of adaptive behaviour"* (Joseph 2013: 39). The agency and initiative of actors is central to neo-liberal ideals, as is the introduction of competition and certain competitive rules of conduct. In addition, by shifting the responsibility onto the governed, the ability of societies to protect

themselves is no longer dependent on adopting the right set of policies. In this view, responding to crises and shocks are about learning, adaptation, and self-reflection (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 997). Such processes only underpin the understanding of the world as complex and no longer governed by fixed structures, as societies will respond differently to various kinds of crises. How is it possible to govern under such circumstances?

According to Joseph and Juncos, we can understand resilience as a form of governance by examining policymaking processes. Governments seeking to build resilient communities often promote "*strategies of learning and adaptation, making communities and individuals more reflexive and self-aware and fostering individual and community self-governance, self-reliance and responsibility*" (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 997). By teaching populations how to govern themselves better, as well as by re-defining crises so as to make them less about vulnerability and more about an opportunity for learning, governments seek to govern their populations 'from a distance', through what Foucault has called 'the conduct of conduct' (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 997). Following this, the neo-liberal understanding of resilience can be said to be about placing the responsibility onto the subjects. Building resilience at the social level is encouraged through learning and adaptation. This is facilitated, pushed for and monitored by the government from a distance. Crises are opportunities for growth and enterprise. This understanding of resilience also places a strong emphasis on liberal-market ideas, civil society and the private sector (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 998).

2.6.1 CRITIQUE OF THE NEO-LIBERAL PERSPECTIVE

Much of the critique has been focused on the neo-liberal framing of resilience presented earlier. More specifically, some authors have argued that resilience is linked to neo-liberalism, not because of its good ideological fit, but because resilience is an answer to issues caused by neo-liberalism (Schmidt 2015: 404; Korosteleva 2018: 2). This has led to a polarisation in the IR-literature when it comes to resilience (Mavelli 2019: 225). On one side we have the understanding of resilience as it was led out above, where "*neoliberal governments reinforces and normalizes the idea that individuals are ultimately responsible for their social and economic security*" (Mavelli 2019: 225). The focus is on the individual and the community, and the government's role is to facilitate and advocate for growth and innovation.

On the other side, others argue that just looking at resilience as a neo-liberal product is too simple, as resilience is a complex and multi-faceted concept. This side argues that a neo-

liberal understanding of resilience places too great a burden on the governed while simultaneously taking away the responsibility of the government. Such an approach follows the psychological understanding of resilience, which saw resilience as a characteristic that individuals either did or did not have. This means that, if a society were to fail in being resilient, the blame would not be placed on the government, it would be placed in the individual. This could again create frustrations in the governed, which would again lead to resistance (Korosteleva 2018: 2).

The entire resilience agenda is based on the possibility of either resisting or embracing change. As shocks and crises appear to have become the norm, and as states and societies seem to be seen as naturally vulnerable, it seems irresponsible to not focus on resilience.

2.7 CRITIQUE OF RESILIENCE

The concept of resilience has received a fair amount of critique from scholars who claim that the flexibility and vagueness of the concept make it more or less useless. The often normative 'goodness' applied to resilience, the more or less universal basis of which it has been applied, and the abstract way resilience has been conceptualised, certainly makes it seem like an example of what Pollitt and Hupe have named 'magical concepts'. Such concepts are usually broad, normatively attractive, imply a consensus despite conflicting interests, and they are globally marketable (Pollitt and Hupe 2011: 643). Such concepts have their advantages, linked to their ability to mobilise and legitimise certain lines of action and ways of looking at the world. However, they are not "*clear-cut scientific, technical or operational terms*" (Pollitt and Hupe 2011: 643), and are instead part of a general narrative of progress. The EU's attempt to overcome these issues has been to apply context-specific strategies of resilience building, acknowledging that there is no one-way of increasing resilience in a society.

The evasiveness of the resilience concept has been criticised for presupposing that policy approaches will never fit completely. As there is no agreement on what the result of a resilience approach will be, there will always be a deficit between the goals of the resilience agenda and the policies made to achieve resilience, which gives rise to new attempts and new policies. This had made scholars warn against an understanding of resilience as 'failing forward'. By accepting that resilience will always be more than what policies will be able to provide, one also accepts that no policy response will ever be good enough. A consequence of this acceptance of permanent failure could be that programs or policies seem overwhelming

and unnecessary, which in turn may lead to scepticism and idleness (Bargués-Pedreny 2020: 279).

Brad Evans and Julian Reid are among those who have been most prolific in their critique of the resilience agenda. In fact, their disdain for the concept has been so great that they have vowed *"to never write, publicly lecture or debate the problematic again"* (Evans and Reid 2015: 157). Their critique mainly concerns what they call *"the necessity and positivity of human exposure to danger"* (Evans and Reid 2013: 84). Following the definition of resilience presented by Holling, they argue that in order to become resilient, one would have to accept one's own fundamental vulnerability. The only hope such fragile subjects have is to attempt to manage the dangers through a continual process of adaptation. Consequently, the resilient subject can never resist change or attempt to secure themselves against threats.

The danger of resilience lies in this neglect of security and the acceptance of a life in continuous uncertainty. When the resilient subject accepts that they cannot safeguard themselves from danger, they also sacrifice *"any political vision of a world in which we might be able to live better lives"* (Evans and Reid 2013: 95). In other words, we become less politically dangerous, as we give up the search for freedom from threats. Resilience is thus a way to promote the retreat of the state (Interview 1). This new focus on adaptability places the responsibility and the subject's welfare on the shoulders of the subject, making the state unaccountable. As there is no possibility of escaping vulnerability, the state no or limited responsibility for securing its own populations. This becomes especially important when it comes to fragile and at-risk communities, as the effects of being non-resilient will be greater than for more protected communities (Evans and Reid 2013: 92). Bourbeau's answer to this critique is that Evans and Reid follow an understanding of resilience as an individual trait which one either does or does not have (Bourbeau 2018a: 26). As was mentioned earlier, this train of resilience thinking has already been abandoned. Thus, the resilience concept is more complex and multi-faceted than in the understanding provided by Evans and Reid.

3 POWER, NORMS, AND DIFFUSION

That the EU acts as a power in international politics is not to be denied. However, scholars are uncertain of what sort of power the EU really is. Many would argue that the EU is a novel form of power, less eager to rely on military means than civilian means of influence (Diez 2005: 613). Others have argued that the EU should be regarded as a transformative power, capable of changing others (Börzel and Risse 2009: 14).

One of the most influential characteristics of the EU's power is the image of the EU as a normative power (Manners 2002). Some suggest that this notion of the Union's power is based on limited military capabilities. Others argue that normative-power Europe is a result of the identity of the Union in foreign policy – *"the discourse of the EU as a normative power constructs a particular set of the EU [...], while it attempts to change others through the spread of particular norms"* (Diez 2005: 614). According to this view, the power of the EU lies in the attractiveness of its norms and its ability to diffuse these norms to other states.

Resilience building, as it was presented in the EUGS, is closely linked to the promotion and spreading of such norms. In fact, resilience building partly happens through the spreading of norms. Following the EUGS, the strategy chosen by the in order to strengthen the resilience of other regions is through promotion norms and values. The aim of the EU is *"to promote a set of universal values through resilience-building and portrays a world driven by universal laws"* (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1001). Building resilience and the diffusion or spread of norms are two closely linked processes.

This chapter will set out the theoretical framework of the thesis. First, there will be a general introduction to power theory, especially how it has been used by Joseph Nye. Then, the notion of normative-power Europe will be explored in greater detail, as well as the various mechanisms through which the EU spread its norms to other states. Finally, there will be an evaluation of the methods employed when writing this thesis. These theoretical frameworks can help in understanding the role of the EU in world politics, and its identity as a normative actor. Through norm diffusion, we can gauge which norms will be the focus in regard to resilience building, as well as which mechanisms the EU will employ.

3.1 POWER

The question of power needs to be taken into the analysis of resilience. Authors have argued that resilience can be seen as a way in which Western powers ensure their continued influence in developing countries while simultaneously avoid the implication of being neo-colonialist (Juncos 2017: 6). The emphasis on local ownership and civil society shifts responsibility to the governed, giving them 'responsibility without power' – *"far from giving power back to civil society, the government is constructing a sphere of governance which it oversees from a distance through the use of power"* (Joseph 2013: 44).

Power is a contested concept, like resilience. There is no universal understanding of what power *really* is. According to Joseph Nye, *"any attempt to develop a single index of power is doomed to fail because power depends upon human relationships that vary in different contexts"* (Nye 2011b: 10). This is because the preferred definition of power is heavily reliant on the context, the values, and interests of those who use it. Context is also important when analysing power, as what works in one setting will not necessarily work in another. When we talk about power, it is also important to specify *who* is involved in the power relationship, as well as *what, how, where, and when* (Nye 2011a: 7).

When it comes to power, policymakers are usually only interested in influencing others in order to achieve preferred outcomes (Nye 2011a: 7). Achieving outcomes is more dependent on unforeseen consequences of actions and on the intentions of other actors rather than yourself. The amount of resources or intentions a policymaker has will become irrelevant if she cannot produce the outcomes needed. However, others' intentions and unforeseen consequences are not evident until after an action has been taken. This creates uncertainty about which path to take. From a policy point of view, questions of intentions and motivations are often seen as too unpredictable and vague, which is why most policymakers seek answers about potential consequences before they take action. The result of this is that power is defined in the simplest ways possible, which is *"in terms of the resources that can produce outcomes"* (Nye 2011b: 12). By resources, we mean military capacities, a good economy, a large population, natural resources, and stability – things that are easier to measure and make power seem more tangible.

However, having this form of power does not guarantee the desired outcomes. In fact, the states which are considered the most powerful when it comes to resources are often those unable to produce the outcomes wanted. This is because they are still dependent upon the other actors in the power relationship, who can deceive or outsmart them. As such, actors

need to be able to convert their resources into preferred behavioural outcomes – what Nye calls power conversion (Nye 2011b: 12). Successful power conversion does not come easily and requires proficient leaders and strategies.

3.1.1 HARD, SOFT, AND SMART POWER

The understanding that those who often hold the most powerful resources also are the ones less likely to achieve their preferred outcomes has led to a re-definition of what power is. Since the latter part of the twentieth century, power has mostly been analysed through a behavioural or relational approach. This approach *"judge power by outcomes that are determined after the action [...] rather than before the action"* (Nye 2011a: 8). The focus of this approach is thus more on the relationship between actors. According to Nye, relational aspects of power can again be broken down into three different aspects: hard, soft, and invisible power.

Hard power, also called coercive power, is one of the most intuitive ways of thinking about power. Hard power concerns the ability to make others go against their initial preferences and strategies. Through coercion, usually by military or economic means such as sanctions, one actor can make other actors turn away from their original plans and instead compel them to change their behaviour. This version of power is often effective. However, it is not very subtle, and does not intuitively fit with the identity of the EU in foreign policy.

Pushing and shoving others to do what you want is undoubtedly an effective demonstration of power, but it is not the only one. Sometimes you can make other actors do as you want them to without forcing them, but instead by making them want to do what you want them to. This second face of power, soft power, can be defined as *"the ability to get preferred outcomes through the co-optive means of agenda-setting, persuasion, and attraction"* (Nye 2011a: 16). In other words, soft power puts emphasis on the importance of ideas and institutions. By making their own norms or ideas seem legitimate or compelling, actors can influence others to follow their example without having to use coercive means. This face of power is not always visible, and one might not always be aware that one is being exposed to it. For instance, if a powerful actor keeps issues off the table, one's ideas about what may be the most reasonable choice are based on incomplete information. In other cases, those who are subjected to soft power might inadvertently accept the discourse or the legitimacy of institutions, without thinking about why issues were framed the way they were

(Nye 2011b: 14). In both cases, the rules of the game are set out before the discussion even starts.

The final face of power, also called invisible power, takes the power discourse one step further by focusing on the formation of the initial preferences. Now, power is not about changing the situation in order to make others do what you want, either through force or through influence. Instead, the third face of power is about shaping the very wants of an actor – *"if you can get others to want the same outcomes as you want, it will not be necessary to override their initial desires"* (Nye 2011b: 15).

The line between these aspects of power is not always clear-cut. Resources need not only be used coercively and can, in some cases, contribute to soft power. In an attempt to distinguish between the two, Nye writes that *"hard power is push; soft power is pull"* (Nye 2011b: 19). It seems like which aspect of power is utilised, in part depends on the way those on the receiving end perceive it. For instance, a state's soft power rests in part on the attractiveness of its norms. The more attractive the EU's norms seem to non-EU member, the more power the Union receives. A problem with the soft-power aspect is the lack of a normative dimension. Having norms that are compelling to a range of actors does not necessarily make those norms morally right or wrong; it just makes them attractive. The receiving actors are thus the one's deciding the amount of soft power an actor has. If they no longer see the norms as attractive, the actor's soft power wanes. In an attempt to overcome this, Nye proposes the term *smart power*, which can be seen as strategies that combine soft and hard power. Smart power is both evaluative and descriptive and has an inherent normative dimension. As it was said earlier, having a large amount of resources does not necessarily mean that they are able to translate this into wanted outcomes successfully. Smart power seeks to convert resources into effective strategies by giving a full outline of available power resources while simultaneously being aware of the contexts into which these resources are being translated (Nye 2011b: 20). When it comes to hard or soft power, it is not an either-or question: it is always better to have both.

3.2 NORMATIVE-POWER EUROPE

In 2002, political scientist Ian Manners published the article 'Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?'. The article has been widely cited and is seen as one of the decade's most influential academic EU works. Before Manner's article, a state's power was usually seen as either military, related to military capabilities, or civilian, which is related to pursuing

interests by non-military means. In this article, he argued that, due to the changes in international relations seeing the EU as either a civilian or as a military power was insufficient (Manners 2002: 236). For one, the concept of normative-power EU is an attempt to refocus the debate away from civilian power or military power understandings of the EU, because such understandings are too keen to view the EU as a state (Manners 2002: 329). Few would argue that the EU is a military power, although the Union possesses military capabilities. However, the EU as a civilian power has been defended by several scholars (Keukeleire and Delreux 2014: 21). However, the EUGS itself contends that *"the idea that Europe is an exclusively "civilian power" does not do justice to an evolving reality"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 4), as the EU deploys both military and civilian operations.

Manner's work has placed the EU on the outside of the traditional debate about power, and instead helped frame the EU as something completely new, by arguing that the EU has *"a normatively different basis for its relations with the world"* (Manners 2002: 252). Not only is the EU built upon a normative basis, but this basis also leads the EU to act in a normative way in its foreign policies. This contrasts with the understanding of the EU as either a civilian or a military power. Following this thread, scholars have written that according to EU documents, the EU's intention has been to emerge from the political turmoil of the 1990s, *"as a normative leader at the global level, in contrast to other powers, notably the United States"* (Sicurelli 2016: 193). Today, *"the promotion of liberal values constitutes the raison d'être of the EU's foreign policy"* (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1001). Additionally, the EUGS sees the importance of norms in regard to security, and states that *"without global norms and the means to enforce them, peace and security, prosperity and democracy – our vital interests – are at risk"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 39).

The creation of a normative-power Europe is undoubtedly linked to the EU's identity in international politics. Identities do not occur in a vacuum – they require someone against which the identity is constructed. Inherent in identity building is thus an 'us versus them'-mentality. The EU's identity naturally means that there is something which is *not* the EU (Diez 2005: 627). Such identity construction cannot occur before the EU finds something to compare itself to, which means that there is no identity existing prior to the clash with another actor. This makes foreign policy *"not the representation of the nation to others as a pre-given object, but a construction of the nation in the very moment of representation"* (Diez 2005: 627).

Through diffusion processes, the EU spreads its norms and ideas to other parts of the world, as well as increasing integration among the Member States themselves. The question

then becomes to what extent the unrolling of EU norms has changed the administrative, social, political, economic, and cultural institutions within and outside the EU. The focus is not so much on the EU's policies, but rather on the effect they have had among Member States, in the Neighbourhood, or globally (Diez 2013: 195). As we shall see, the EU's power is largely dependent on the attractiveness of its norms, which makes the diffusion process a central part of EU foreign policy. Additionally, diffusion is dependent on the willingness of the receiving states and societies. As such, diffusion may occur through what Manners calls the *cultural filter*, "*which affects the impact of international norms and political learning in third states and organizations leading to learning, adaptation or rejection of norms*" (Manners 2002: 245). The cultural filter occurs in the intersection between the social and political identity of those who are affected by the diffusion and the construction of knowledge. In short, it can be seen as the creation of an EU-inspired norm with a local taste.

According to Juncos, traditional conceptualisations of the EU's power has placed too much emphasis on EU institutions and instruments, at the expense of the Union's end goals (Juncos 2011: 84). Manners attempted to include a cognitive process into the debate on what kind of power the EU is. By viewing the EU more as an ideational actor who sought to diffuse its normative values beyond the borders of Europe, the EU's power "*would derive from what the EU is [...] and not necessarily from what the EU does*" (Juncos 2011: 84). What the EU does will again affect how the Union is viewed by other actors – if the Union's actions collide with the values they aim to project, the Union's legitimacy as a foreign policy actor will be questioned.

The notion of the Union as a normative power has sparked debate. According to Diez, the promotion of EU norms sometimes contrasts with the EU's actions. For instance, the EU has been criticised for exporting arms to countries known for neglecting human rights, or for concealing geostrategic interests behind humanitarian aid (Diez 2013: 197). He has also questioned the effectiveness of the normative approach, as well as the discrepancy between the norms the EU promotes and the actions of the Member States. Finally, he argued that claiming that the EU is a normative power is the same as saying that the EU is a hegemonic actor. As normative-power EU is able to shape conceptions of what is normal, the Union applies a sense of power, not related to "*domination by means of force, but of consent by means of political and ideological leadership*" (Diez 2013: 200).

3.2.1 THE NORMATIVE BASIS OF THE EU

The changing global context of the 90s provided the EU with an opportunity to consolidate its role in the international arena. The end of the bipolar world-order, coupled with the growing process of globalisation, allowed the EU to build its regional and global status. This has led to a foreign policy based on the ability to promote its values and principles. Instead of using what Sicurelli calls 'traditional foreign policy instruments', the EU has been able to promote a foreign policy *"in line with the objective of supporting democratic values, protecting human rights, and ensuring good governance at the global level"* (Savorskaya 2015: 68).

In addition to the push for a common defence policy, the Treaty on European Union also constitutionalised the centrality of the norms first agreed upon in the 1973 Copenhagen declaration on European identity. Manners writes that *"the EU is founded on and has as its foreign and development policy objectives the consolidation of democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms"* (Manners 2002: 241). He further argues that the EU's external relations to a large extent, is based on these norms. What is more, these norms are to be pursued in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the European Court of Human Rights (Manners 2002: 241; Savorskaya 2015: 68).

Manners writes that in the EU's normative basis, there is possible to identify five 'core' norms which the EU operates on. The first, and undeniably the most central one, is *peace*. After all, the rationality behind the pooling of resources in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was to make war *"not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible"* (Foundation Robert Shuman 2011: 1). The other core norms of the EU are *liberty, democracy, the rule of law*, and the respect for *human rights* and fundamental freedoms. Additionally, the normative power of the EU can be found in four more contested 'minor' norms, namely *social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development, and good governance* (Manners 2002: 242-243). In relation to the EU's use of resilience, most of these norms are mention in regard to resilience building (High Representative of the EU 2016: 24; European Commission and HR 2017: 3).

There are two reasons why we should consider the EU to be a normative power. First, this allows the EU to affect what is to be considered 'normal' in international relations. In this line, Manners argues that to have the power to define what is 'normal' in the world *"is, ultimately, the greatest power of all"* (Manners 2002: 253). This version of normative power parallels what Nye referred to as the third face of power, or invisible power. By having the power to shape international norms, the EU is able to shape world standards in its own image, by moulding the wants of other actors. The second reason has to do with the context in which

the EU was formed, and the shape the Union has taken. Manners writes that, as the EU has evolved into a hybrid political system, consisting of both supranational and international forms of governance, it has taken on a novel political form. This form, which emphasises *"principles which are common to the member states"* (TEU, art. 6), coupled with the norms set out in the treaties, as well as the historical context in which the foreign policy was created, *"accelerated a commitment to placing universal norms and principles at the centre of its relations with its Member States and the World"* (Manners 2002: 241).

According to the EU, *"resilience aims at achieving and sustaining the ambitious set of objectives for the EU's external action"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 3). One of these ambitions is to strengthen the capacity of states both in the Neighbourhood and beyond. This is to happen through the promotion of liberal values. Following the general normative basis of the EU, four universal, liberal values have been identified, which are respect for democracy, rule of law, human and fundamental rights, and inclusive long-term security and progress (European Commission and HR 2017: 3). Thus, the resilience agenda and the promotion of liberal values go hand in hand.

3.3 NORM DIFFUSION

Researchers have been interested in the way EU policies, institutions, norms and ideas 'travel', both within the EU machinery itself, as well as outside the Union. 'Diffusion' describes *"a process through which ideas, normative standards, or [...] policies and institutions spread across time and space"* (Börzel and Risse 2012: 5). In recent years, the diffusion literature has become a central research theme in disciplines such as political science and sociology. The process of European integration promotes the spread of ideas both within old, new, or even soon-to-be member or partner states. In addition, the Union has systems in place in order to promote its values and ideas both to the Neighbourhood and to the world beyond (Börzel and Risse 2009: 5).

Applying a wide understanding of institutions, which includes social structures and formal and informal systems of rules, Börzel and Risse seek to trace the impact of EU norms and policies in member states, accession states, European Neighbourhood countries, as well as regions further away from Europe.

When it comes to the diffusion of ideas, there are two particularly relevant dimensions. The first is the cognitive dimension, which includes causal beliefs, and common views about cause- and effects-relationships. The second dimension is the normative

dimension, which concerns collective views about what is deemed appropriate behaviour and shared expectations (Börzel and Risse 2009: 6). Ideas do not operate in a vacuum – they are *"part and parcel of how actors think of themselves and others"* (Börzel and Risse 2009: 6). The link between resilience and norms had already been made. The concept of resilience includes several norms and ideas, from the ontological views of the world as complex to the idea of the governing of the self. Building resilience requires the promotion of norms, as a resilient state is a stable and democratic state. As such, the diffusion of norms can be a valuable tool for exploring the spread of resilience. Additionally, in the context of the EU as a normative power, the diffusion of norms is inextricably linked to the power of the Union.

Ideas do not only spread across space – they also spread across time. In this regard, it is essential to keep in mind the historical and social context norms are spread into. These contexts often require a translation of the norms, either in the form of reinterpretation, appropriation or resistance. If norms are deemed unfit for the existing context, the norm recipient may either choose to ignore the attempted spread of the norm altogether or mould the norm into a shape more in line with the existing context. In some cases where the norm fits intuitively with the already existing context, it can be diffused without any discernible changes (Börzel and Risse 2009: 8).

3.3.1 MECHANISMS OF NORM DIFFUSION

The concept of diffusion emerged as a way to deal with the critique of the Europeanisation literature. Europeanisation research studies the impact that the EU had on domestic policies and institutions in both the Union's own member states, as well as in countries beyond the EU's borders. The Europeanisation approach has been criticised for applying a top-down perspective of domestic change, as well as over-emphasising the domestic compliance for change. This would indicate that it is the EU, not the nation states, which is the main provider of change in domestic policies and institutions, ignoring the effects of domestic cultures or other causes (Börzel and Risse 2012: 2). Consequently, Börzel and Risse argue that the Europeanisation literature should be integrated into a more extensive research field, namely the diffusion literature.

The process of diffusion is not always unproblematic or straight-forward. As the spread of EU norms and ideas collide with domestic structures of member states or non-member states, they often encounter contestation and protests from the public authorities, private actors, and citizens alike (Börzel and Risse 2009: 5). As a result, the most influential

ideas are the ones which intuitively fit with the receiving country's existing cultural, social, political and economic conditions. If the norms and values do not resonate with the recipient's domestic structures, the diffusion process may suffer. Additionally, it is worth noting that the diffusion mechanisms will never be as clear-cut in practice as they seem in theory. The mechanisms overlap, and often more than one of them are used. Still, the following typology is useful with regard to further discussion.

Two types of overlying diffusion mechanisms can be distinguished, namely direct influence and indirect influence, also referred emulation. Beginning with the indirect model, emulation begins at the receiving end, where actors seek to solve a problem and will then look for institutional designs and policies that could be applied to their own issues (Börzel and Risse 2012: 5). Such diffusion could thus *"be completely independent from any effort by the EU to promote certain norms or regulations"* (Börzel and Risse 2012: 9). As this thesis places the EU, not the receiving states, as the focal point of diffusion, it will not explore the indirect influence of EU norms. This is not to say that indirect influence does not happen, but diffusion would then have to be explored from the point of view of the receiving states.

Direct influence, on the other hand, is characterised by an agent of diffusion actively promoting policies or institutions to a group of actors or an individual actor. Following the direct influence model, we can again discern four mechanisms of diffusion: coercion, manipulating utility calculations, socialisation, and persuasion. The receptor of either one of these mechanisms is never just passive. Receiving agents have to undergo a process consisting of interpretation and incorporation of these new norms into already existing domestic structures and policies, making diffusion an active affair (Börzel and Risse 2012: 8).

The first mechanism, relating to either legal or physical coercion, is strictly speaking limited to EU member states or accession states, as the EU rarely uses coercion in its external relations (Börzel and Risse 2012: 6). The second mechanism, however, manipulating utility calculations through the use of negative and positive incentives, has been widely used. It is the countries that are part of the European Neighbourhood Policy in particular that have been subject to incentives, as a way for the EU to pursue its own interests, such as stability. Incentives can take the shape of conditionality, where a non-member is asked to fulfil specific criteria or measures in order to get a trade treaty signed, receive financial support, or similar benefits. Such conditionality has been widely used as a way to ensure influence in the Neighbourhood (Noutcheva 2015: 27). Incentives can also come in the form of capacity-building, such as technical or financial assistance, which *"provides target actors with additional resources enabling them to make strategic choices"* (Börzel and Risse 2012: 7).

These mechanisms are expected to have a lesser effect the further we move away from Europe.

The third mechanism in the direct model of diffusion, socialisation, is driven by normative rationality and a wish to meet social expectations. In short, actors seek to do 'the right thing', rather than attempting to maximise their own interests. In this regard, Börzel and Risse characterise the EU as a 'gigantic socialisation agency', and a 'teacher of norms', "*which actively tries to promote rules, norms, practices and structures of meaning to which member states are exposed and which they have to incorporate into their domestic structures*" (Börzel and Risse 2012: 7). This requires a large degree of willingness from the states, and socialisation is therefore mainly relevant for countries and regions who intend to become part of the liberal community (Börzel and Risse 2012: 8). Actors who go through a socialisation process, often end up changing their social practices, interests and identities (Börzel and Risse 2012: 7).

The final mechanism, persuasion, is based on the logic of arguing. It has to do with persuading actors of the legitimacy or appropriateness of a norm or an institution. Persuasion, eventually, has been a much-used tool for the EU in the Union's promotion of human rights, the rule of law, and democracy. As many of the other mechanisms of diffusion get less effective the further we move away from the EU, persuasion often becomes one of the most fruitful ways for the EU to make its case in other regions of the world (Börzel and Risse 2012: 8). In the context of the EU as a normative power, we can expect socialisation and persuasion to have a significant impact on surrounding states.

In the political science literature, the focus of diffusion has often either been on 'policy diffusion' or 'policy convergence'. While the former emphasises the process of diffusion of policy ideas and the way various entities have adopted the same policy, the latter focuses on the whether or not diffusion has had any effect (Radaelli 2005: 928). It is assumed in the diffusion literature that the diffusion of norms will make states or institutions more like each other. In contrast with this idea, it has been argued that, because of the different contexts in which norms spread, diffusion might not necessarily lead to convergence. As norms trickle into states or institutions, local conditions play in, and the norm is translated in a way which makes it fit better into the local context. The result is a variety of semi-similar policies.

3.3.2 NORM DIFFUSION AND POWER

The spreading of norms and ideas through diffusion processes can be seen as a form of power. More specifically, the ability to spread ideas about what is considered 'normal' gives the EU the power to shape other parts of the world in its own image. This form of power is closely linked to what was previously called soft power and invisible, where an actor's norms were seen as attractive to others, or by shaping other actors' initial interests. By being able to define what is considered 'normal', the EU is able to convince other actors that by mimicking EU norms, others will achieve the same level of stability and prosperity enjoyed by the Union.

The idea of the EU's normative power is linked to the diffusion of EU norms, both within the EU proper and in diffusion processes toward the external world. However, the EU is not only an exporter of norms – after all, *"European integration is itself embedded in and responds to larger global diffusion processes – economically, politically, and culturally"* (Börzel and Risse 2009: 5). Diffusion can thus be seen both as a process and as an outcome.

The ability of the Union to influence other states through the diffusion process has in later years been criticised for neglecting the role of power and for turning a blind eye to the potential consequences of diffusion (Börzel and Risse 2009: 11). As already mentioned, the way the EU acts will have significant implications for how the rest of the world construct an image of the Union. This may also give attention to the negative impacts of norm diffusion. The resistance and contestation with which diffusion has been met, contrasts with the image of the Union as a normative power, as the EU has been accused of undermining endogenous region-building projects (Börzel and Risse 2009: 11). Additionally, the Union has been accused of neglecting certain normative values, such as democracy-promotion in the Neighbourhood, in favour of stabilisation projects or security matters (Noutcheva 2015: 22). It could seem that in the process of spreading norms and good governance, the EU might run the risk of behaving against its own normative framework. As such, norm diffusion is a *"two-sided process, involving both emancipation from domination and unfreedom and new forms of subjection"* (Merlingen and Ostrauskaite 2006: 16). Although the spread of the EU's norms might help states achieve universal norms such as democracy and human rights, it might also be a way to discipline and affect the conduct of other populations.

4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND THE EUGS

Before we delve further into the EU's use of resilience, and how the EU came to focus on it, we need to have a closer look at the document which introduced resilience, namely the EU Global Strategy. It started out as a mandate given to HR/VP Mogherini by the European Council in 2013, which was to develop a strategic assessment on the challenges and opportunities posed by a changing global environment (Tocci 2016: 463). The assessment was finished by the summer of 2015 (Tocci 2017: 35). Producing the strategic assessment became an exercise in strategy-making, as Mogherini and her team were able to *"test a working method, understand what was necessary and what was not, do a trial run before the real thing began"* (Tocci 2016: 463). The goal was to obtain a mandate for a new strategy, and after presenting the strategic assessment, Mogherini was given the mandate (Tocci 2017: 35). About a year later, three days after Britain announced its decision to leave the Union, the EUGS was presented.

The EUGS was written during a time where it was necessary for the EU to reconsider their place in world politics. Some have gone so far as to say the Strategy was the result of a 'soul-searching Union' (Grevi 2016). Compared to its predecessor, the European Security Strategy (ESS) from 2003, the international context of the Strategy was a bleak one. While the ESS proudly proclaimed that *"Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure, nor so free"* (High Representative of the EU 2003: 1), the EUGS stated that *"we live in times of existential crisis, within and beyond the European Union. Our Union is under threat"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 13).

This chapter will provide a thorough understanding of the environment in which the EUGS was written, as well as the reason for the focus on resilience. Through this background, we can find evidence of a shift in the EU's understanding of itself. For instance, through the focus on principled pragmatism, we can see a clear turn towards a more interest-based Union. This suggests a move away from the normative basis on which the EU has been standing for years. The chapter will also explore some of the main dynamics which have helped shape the resilience agenda in the EUGS.

4.1 THE RATIONALE, CONTEXT, AND CONTENT OF THE EUGS

In 2015, the year when HR/VP Mogherini started working on the EUGS, the context in which the EU operated had changed. The Union had lived through the financial crisis of 2008 and the following Eurozone crisis of 2009 and 2010. In addition to the economic turmoil, Europe's immediate neighbouring states experienced political chaos. The protests later known as the Arab Spring began in 2011, Syria and Libya were both plunged into civil war, Egypt experienced a military coup, and Israel and Saudi-Arabia attacked their neighbouring states Palestine and Yemen. These tumults, combined with the weakening of Al-Qaeda, resulted in the rise of ISIS, who has since then been responsible for terror attacks in EU Member States. To the east, the EU's relationship with Russia had worsened considerably after the latter's annexation of Crimea (Tocci 2017: 13-14). While EU-Russia relations had already deteriorated as EU's enlargement process had brought the Union closer to Russia's borders, the Crimean crisis *"the illusion of partnership between the EU and Russia dissolved"* (Tocci 2017: 13).

Simultaneously, tensions were on the rise in Asia, as China's assertiveness and economic growth has led to greater competition with the USA. The rise of several of the smaller Asian states, such as Japan, Taiwan and the Philippines, has raised a certain degree of uneasiness in the EU. As Asia is an important economic partner to the EU, the Union has a definitive interest in the actions of the East (Tocci 2017: 15). Similarly, the Union has an interest in the development of Africa. Questions of food insecurity, climate change and old and new conflicts in Africa affects Europe as well, as Africa has a *"huge potential for trade, energy and investment, which at the same time is what the continent needs"* (High Representative of the EU 2015: 12).

According to Tocci, there were *"three main reasons to produce the EUGS: to promote policy direction, to strengthen political unity and to boost the effectiveness of external actions"* (Tocci 2017: 11). The Strategy was not intended to be a master plan on how to deal with the problems of the future. Rather, the intent was for it to serve as a navigational chart which would showcase the EU's goals (Tocci 2017: 16). At the same time, the Strategy sought to bridge some of the internal cleavages in the EU. The Eurozone crisis had exposed deep-seated distrust in the North towards the South. Disagreements concerning Russia further made visible the divide between the western and southern Member States, as well as between the northern and eastern states. As Russia has been treated with a certain degree of distrust by most central, eastern and northern European countries, they responded to the Russian

annexation of Crimea by increasing their suspicion. The western and southern states did not share this view, as they mainly viewed Russia as a serious commercial partner. Thus, *"a heightened threat perception in the east, coupled with a lack of empathy in the south towards the east's predicament, generated another scarring divide in the EU"* (Tocci 2017: 19).

The title of the EUGS, the European *Global Strategy*, was a way for the EU to move away from old ways of thinking about foreign policy. The name suggests a broader focus, which looks beyond the immediate East and South. Although, as Tocci suggests, the Neighbourhood is were *"the EU will make or break its reputation as a global player, developments closer to home are also shaped by dynamics further afield"* (Tocci 2017: 57). This underscores the connectivity of the world, which is one of the main points made in the EUGS. Policies targeted towards one region or one state do not operate in a vacuum and are intimately connected to other regions or other states.

As is the case in most foreign policy, the EU has to continually walk the thin line between interests and values. In general, the Union has been more comfortable with stating its values rather than its interests, as *"the very word "interests" is somewhat of a dirty word in the EU vocabulary and has long been juxtaposed to values in literature in the EU foreign policy too"* (Tocci 2017: 59). Thus HR/VP Mogherini specifically sought out to define the Union's interests in foreign policy, as a way to show that the two need not be seen as a dichotomy. This view is evident in the EUGS, which states that *"our interests and values go hand in hand. We have interests in promoting our values in the world"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 13). The interests are states to be fourfold: peace and security, prosperity, democracy and a rules-based global order (High Representative of the EU 2016: 13). These interests are not just internal, as their fulfilment can only be achieved if they are followed by similar external interests. Security and prosperity in states and regions surrounding the Union are paramount for the security and prosperity of the EU.

4.2 THE EU'S UNDERSTANDING OF RESILIENCE

It was made evident in chapter two that resilience is a complicated and multi-faceted concept, and that finding one, shared definition of it is next to impossible. What is possible, however, is to explore in greater detail the way resilience has been understood by the EU. Before comparing the version of resilience which was used by the EU in 2012/2013 with the one used in 2016/2017, I will explore in greater detail the understanding of resilience promoted in the EUGS.

The definition provided in the Strategy defines resilience as *"the ability of states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 23). Even though this is not the first time resilience has been mentioned in an EU document, it is the first time the concept has been picked out as a key concept for the Union to focus on. According to the EUGS, the goal is not only to build resilience in the states around Europe, especially to the East and South, but among the Member States of the Union as well. The resilience of EU Member States had not been part of the resilience agenda before, but as the HR/VP writes, the Union has *"learnt the lesson: my neighbour's and my partner's weaknesses are my own weaknesses"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 4). Strengthening the resilience of states in and around the Union is an attempt to collectively strengthen the resilience of the entire region.

According to Tocci, resilience was chosen as a key priority for three reasons. First, it was believed to fit well with the idea of a joined-up EU, which was one of the main rationales for writing the EUGS in the first place. As resilience was already employed by a wide variety of strands of academia and policy communities, it seemed a good choice (Tocci 2020: 177-178). Second, resilience seemed to fit well with the principled pragmatism-approach also promoted in the EUGS, providing a middle ground between the pragmatist focus on stability and the over-ambitious peacebuilding which had characterised previous interventions (Tocci 2020: 179). Finally, resilience was chosen because of the *"inherently dynamic nature of the concept, capturing the complexity of reality"* (Tocci 2020: 180-181). Resilience can be seen as a way to govern through complexity and given the EU's changing conditions, focusing on resilience seemed natural.

4.2.1 A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO RESILIENCE

In a Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council (2017), the European Commission put forward the EU's approach to resilience. In this Communication, the Commission lays out the Union's understanding of the concept, partly based on earlier EU approaches to the concept. The 2017 Communication lists ten 'guiding considerations' for the EU's approach to resilience (European Commission and HR 2017: 23). From these guiding considerations, we can map out how the Union understands resilience.

First, following Bourbeau, resilience is to be seen as a process without any conceivable end. The Communication states that *"development, and progress towards democracy, peace and security, is not a linear process"* (European Commission and HR 2017:

23), and that the Union would have to work together in order to ensure sustainable results. Next, resilience requires tailor-made approaches, as resilience is context-specific. Not only does resilience call for a proper understanding of the *"linkages between different parts of the complex systems that govern and sustain states, societies and communities"*, it also requires that *"local actors develop context-specific working definitions"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 23). In order to create a sustainable approach, there is a need to include local knowledge. This has by some been dubbed 'the local turn' in EU foreign policy (Korosteleva 2020).

Further, the Communication acknowledges the need to identify and build upon *"existing positive sources of resilience"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 23). Already existing sources of resilience, such as cultural norms, organisations or systems, exist not only at the state level, but also at the level of societies and communities. The EU thus promotes a multi-level approach to resilience, as the one presented by Walklate et al. (2014). Following from this comes an understanding that resilience comes from the bottom-up, as *"local governments and civil society are often the basis on which resilience can take root and grow"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 23). Here, the Commission points out the special role women play in the resilience turn.

Chapter two showed how the resilience literature simultaneously focused on resisting change and sticking to the *status quo* while also seeking adaptation and transformation when necessary. The EU places its emphasis on the transformative dimension of resilience, arguing that resilience is not about preserving the *status quo*, but instead about *"ensuring [states, societies and communities] ability to adapt and reform to meet new needs"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 23). Promoting such transformation is primarily the responsibility of the governments of each country. In this way, the EU is able to govern 'from a distance', by promoting norms and supporting the implementations of resilience, while simultaneously giving most of the responsibility to the receiving states. Thus, focusing on internal capacities are the best solution when it comes to dealing with stress and the necessary transformations, instead of relying on intervention from the outside.

Further, *"resilience requires risk-informed programming"*⁷ (European Commission and HR 2017: 24). Even though the EU understands that states and societies cannot prepare for all kinds of shocks, there should still be a focus on addressing the causes of fragility, as

⁷ According to UNICEF, risk-informed programming *"aims to strengthen resilience to shocks and stresses by identifying and addressing the root causes and drivers of risk, including vulnerabilities, lack of capacity, and exposure to various shocks and stresses"* (UNICEF 2018: 17).

well as applying risk management measures, which could make crises more manageable once they arrive. However, this is costly and not always possible to do. Building flexibility and adaptability thus also becomes important, as the weakening of one part of a system can have unexpected repercussions. If these measures are taken, the states would be able to get an early warning, which again could lead to early action. Avoiding all kinds of risks is impossible, as not all risks are possible to foresee and prepare for, but early action is usually seen as a prerequisite for good crisis response. As the EU contends, this is not just about abrupt and short-term shocks, such as floods, but also includes *"slow-onset crises, recurrent pressures, or cumulative long-term pressures that can reach a tipping point"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 24). Examples of the latter include climate change and environmental degradation.

Finally, the EU argues that the starting point for further action is *"a broader analysis of strengths, vulnerabilities and pressures"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 24). Such an analysis is to be taken at multiple levels, including regional, state, organisational, community, and individual level, as the complex interdependencies between these levels makes them vulnerable. If one level suffers, the others are likely to suffer too. In addition, a crisis which hits one state might affect an unknown number of others. The result is a need for an 'all-hazard' approach, where *"any given outcome, risk – and the ability to cope – needs to be analysed at multiple levels, particularly at the points at which one factor of resilience, or one set of actors is dependent on the resilience of others, or where power relations between different levels of society play an important role"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 24). From here, each state can create their own responses to pressures and increase their resilience.

4.2.2 A LIBERAL APPROACH

Liberal norms, such as the fight for democracy and human rights, as well as the wish to promote long-term security and progress, are central aspects of the EU's approach to resilience building (European Commission and HR 2017: 3). These liberal values have not only shaped the Union's foreign policy, but also the translation of resilience. This is seconded by Joseph and Juncos, who argue that *"the promotion of liberal values constitutes the raison d'être of the EU's foreign policy and this shapes the way the EU understands resilience. As such, the EU's resilience turn continues to be liberal rather than post-liberal"* (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1001). Similarly, the EUGS states that *"living up consistently to our values internally will determine our external credibility and influence"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 15).

A problem occurs when the liberal values of the EU encounter the characteristics of the concept of resilience. As we recall, resilience is about adapting and responding to change, non-linearity, the empowerment of local societies and the ability to handle uncertainty. Promoting democracy and human rights is not among the resilience characteristics. Nevertheless, this is what the EU is trying to make it by promoting universal values through building resilience. This marriage of resilience and democracy is made possible by arguing that democracy is a necessary condition for resilience. According to the EUGS, *"a resilient society featuring democracy, trust in institutions, and sustainable development lies at the heart of a resilient state"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 23).

Central to the promotion of such values is the EU's understanding of itself and the Union's identity as a foreign policy. More specifically, the promotion of liberal norms underscores the EU's normative and liberal power (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1001). As the resilience paradigm has sought to shift responsibility from the EU to the states in question, it can be argued that resilience *"imposes a degree of restraint on Western international actors by acknowledging that external imposition through coercion and/or conditionality as a way to spread universal (liberal) recipes cannot solve complex emergent problems"* (Juncos 2017: 4). However, calling the resilience-shift a 'restraint' on Western actors seems to miss the mark, as this would suggest that the West is stepping down against their will. Instead of calling it a restraint, it is better to see it as a more humble and realistic view of what the EU is actually able to do in its external relations. A more cautious approach to the EU's abilities can be found in the entire resilience-agenda, as it is based on a belief that states and societies cannot eradicate crises entirely. Similarly, there is no perfect response to a crisis. This reflects a more modest view of the Union's role in world politics. Rather than taking an optimistic view of the future, the Union seeks to build the capacities of both its own members as well as the surrounding states (Wagner and Anholt 2016: 424).

4.2.3 NEO-LIBERAL ASPECTS OF RESILIENCE IN THE EU

The introduction of resilience into EU foreign policy can be said to constitute a shift away from the intervention paradigm, which characterised previous decades. The goal of the EU now is to 'govern from a distance' by appealing to local ownership, monitoring, capacity building and the empowerment of local communities. The focus is on the freedom of the governed and the ability of societies to govern themselves. However, this shift does not mean that all of the Union agree on how to proceed. In fact, the institutionalisation of resilience

discourse into EU foreign policy has been characterised 'very limited' and 'shallow'. The reason for this is partly because the EU's existing institutional architecture staggers the implementation, and partly because the Member States cannot seem to agree on what resilience means (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 999). As a result, the implementation of resilience has been of varying success.

According to Joseph and Juncos, there are several aspects of the EU's approach to resilience that are in line with a neo-liberal governmentality framework, as it was presented in chapter two. In fact, they argue that the neo-liberal character of current approaches to resilience is one of three dynamics which has shaped the emergence and implementation of resilience in EU discourse (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 996). The two others, which relate to the EU's understanding of itself as a normative actor and the multi-level character of the Union, will be clarified later in this chapter.

Where can we detect traces of neo-liberal aspects in EU resilience? Examples can be found in the EUGS, especially with regard to the surrounding regions of the EU. After claiming that the Union will follow a multi-faceted approach to resilience in surrounding regions, the goal is stated to be to build "*inclusive, prosperous and secure societies*" (High Representative of the EU 2016: 25). The EU acknowledges that reaching this goal requires tailor-made policies, as building inclusive and secure societies can be done in different ways. A common aspect of these policies, however, seems to be the engagement with local actors. For example, when it comes to advancing human rights protection, the EU will "*pursue locally owned rights-based approaches to the reform of the justice, security and defence sectors, and support fragile states in building capacities*" (High Representatives of the EU 2016: 26). This is based on the understanding that "*positive change can only be home-grown*" (High Representatives of the EU 2016: 27).

Similarly, Joseph and Juncos argue that the focus of recent EU strategies has been on benchmarking, setting standards and finding the most cost-effective solutions. Such strategies work by "*attempting to tighten up mechanisms and procedures, while also appearing to be more laissez faire and distant in their manner of intervention*" (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1000). As such, neo-liberal discourses and the thought of governing from a distance can be seen as central tenets to the EU's approach to resilience at the global level.

The EU is not alone in following such an approach, as similar strategies can be found among the UN and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). There seems to be a trend among international organisations to place emphasis on resilience. Seen from this perspective, it can be argued that resilience is a way for the EU to maintain its

legitimacy as an international actor on the global stage (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1000). If resilience is seen as something serious international actors should be promoting, it becomes essential for the EU to stimulate resilience. It is important that others perceive the Union's policies as legitimate, as lack of legitimacy would hurt the EU's foreign policy.

4.3 PRINCIPLED PRAGMATISM

In addition to an increased focus on resilience, the EUGS places emphasis on a new operating principle which is to guide the Union's external action, namely 'principled pragmatism'. The principle promotes a combination of the Union's *"idealistic aspiration to advance a better world"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 8), and a realistic assessment of the current environment. This approach has been critiqued, as it seems like principled pragmatism seeks to *"act in accordance with universal values (liberal ones in this case), but then follow a pragmatic approach which denies the moral imperatives of those universal categories"* (Juncos 2017: 2). This seems like an impossible goal. However, it can also be said to be a realisation that promoting values alone will not give the EU the security and prosperity it wants. The Union also needs to promote its interests, as well as be more realistic in terms of what other states need. This can be done through principled pragmatism.

The last decades have been marked by a shift towards pragmatism, both when it comes to practice and theory. Part of the reason for this shift is the complications and problems that the world has had to endure. As a result, politicians and organisations have opted to take a more pragmatic approach to policymaking and social life. Pragmatism rejects the existence of universal laws and places the focus on local practices (Juncos 2017: 5). This does not mean that liberal values are neglected. As Jessica Schmidt argues, pragmatism sees this lack of certainty and complexity as an opportunity for democratic growth (Schmidt 2015: 405). This view of the world is found in the EUGS as well – *"in a world in which the West could no longer be the unchallenged hegemon, the EU's own approach had to be reassessed"* (Tocci 2017: 62). The EU has to deal with the world as it is, not as the Union would like it to be.

As we have seen, resilience is an answer to the perceived lack of objective and universal laws. As there is no linear causality, states and societies have to prepare for several different outcomes of their actions. This gives the local context and practices a central role when it comes to preparing for the future, which again can stimulate learning practices among the population. This view of pragmatism is evident both in the EUGS as well as in the

strategic assessment from 2015. Both documents stress the importance of local context knowledge and local inclusion and call for tailor-made and reflexive approaches (High Representative of the EU 2015; High Representative of the EU 2016: 25).

The EUGS also sets out four principles: unity, engagement, responsibility, and partnership (High Representative of the EU 2016: 16-18). The principles will help steer the Union through increasingly stormy waters. The shocks which have struck the West in the last decades and the following shifts in global governance have made it evident that the EU might not be able to lead the way towards democratisation and liberalisation the way it might want to. The shocks also showed how the rest of the world affected the internal aspects of the EU – *"far from spreading its norms and values to the world, nationalists and populists, nativists and violent jihadists were spreading their ideas to the EU"* (Tocci 2017: 62). The principles can be seen as a response to this changing global context, as the EU grapples with its place in a transformed context.

Even though one might understand the EU's response and its rising focus on pragmatism, the turn towards principled pragmatism has not been unproblematic. The problem with principled pragmatism is that it might drive the EU to take actions which might contrast to the norms the Union simultaneously tries to project. This was what happened with the Union's response to the Arab Spring of 2011. According to Noutcheva, the EU's support for democracy in the Neighbourhood has either been absent or inadequate (Noutcheva 2015: 23). The focus has rather been on stability, especially with regard to containing the migration flows. This neglect of democracy is incompatible with what the EU has set out as the ultimate goal, namely a 'deep and comprehensive democracy'. As the notion of the EU as a normative actor means that no Member State *"will never oppose 'deep and comprehensive democracy' as an aspiration and goal for the neighbourhood [...] they may do little to advance it"* (Noutcheva 2015: 24). Such discord between what the EU seeks to do and what it does will have an effect on the EU's legitimacy as an international actor.

Sven Biscop has argued that the turn towards principled pragmatism indicates a shift towards Realpolitik. His understanding of Realpolitik differs from the Machiavellian idea that the end justifies the means. Rather, Biscop imagines Realpolitik as *"a rejection of liberal utopianism, but not of liberal ideals themselves"* (Biscop 2016: 1). The fact that the EUGS is the first EU document to promote the Union's interests reflects this new approach. Additionally, the promotion of the five strategic priorities, one of which is the promotion of resilience. The turn towards resilience signifies a collective turn away from democratisation. While the EU will continue to support new democracies, they are no longer as concerned with

attempting to change the regimes of the Neighbourhood. The priority is instead placed on decreasing fragility (Biscop 2016: 2). The additional priorities emphasise the security of the Union, an integrated approach to conflicts and the promotion of global governance. These can all be seen as stepping stone towards democracy, implying that democratisation is still a part of the EU's agenda.

4.4 TRANSLATING RESILIENCE INTO EU FOREIGN POLICY – THREE DYNAMICS

From the previous excavation of the concept of resilience, it seems clear that a policy document cannot focus on all aspects of resilience at once. The creators of the document will have to make some choices. The EU is no exception. Resilience was introduced into EU policy even before the publication of the EUGS, which means that the EU already had an understanding of the concept. As the concept was diffused and translated into other institutions and Member States, certain characteristics of the EU and the Member States shaped the way resilience was understood in EU foreign policy.

According to Joseph and Juncos, three dynamics have been key when it came to the translation of resilience in EU foreign policy. The first dynamic is the neo-liberal approach to resilience. The second dynamic involves the EU's conception of itself as a normative actor, the power the EU exhibits, and the Union's lack of a common foreign policy. Finally, the last dynamic has to do with the multi-level and complex institutional system of the Union.

The first dynamic, the neo-liberal approach, was covered in chapter two. Seeing resilience as a form of neo-liberal governance means *"making communities and individuals more reflexive and self-aware and fostering individual and community self-governance, self-reliance and responsibility"* (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 997). This is what Chandler called 'governing through complexity' (Chandler 2014). The neoliberal understanding promotes governance from a distance and does so through various monitoring and facilitation techniques. It emphasises the importance of civil society and local knowledge, while also promoting neo-liberal ideas such as enterprising behaviour and resourcefulness in the face of a crisis (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 997-998).

The second dynamic concerns the role and power of the EU's discourse. More specifically, Joseph and Juncos argue that the Union's identity, institutional features, organisational properties, and path-dependency result in decoupling. Combined, these aspects make it harder for the EU to properly adopt and implement a shared resilience approach, as

the various interests and goals of institutions and Member States will be mirrored in their understanding of the concept (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1000).

First, the liberal character of the EU's foreign policy has shaped the EU's translation of resilience. The EU views itself as a champion for liberal values and promoting democracy, human and fundamental rights and the rule of law lay close to the Union's heart. This understanding is based on a linear time-scape of transformation, with clear causal relations. However, this does not line up with the assumptions inherent in the resilience agenda, which sees change as complex and non-linear. This leads to decoupling between EU foreign-policy and resilience thinking. Additionally, the promotion of these values is not necessarily part of the features of resilience. In contrast, resilience promotes adaptation, the importance of context, and bottom-up approaches. As such, the resilience agenda does not automatically lend itself to be combined with the universal values of the EU. In order to answer to this problem, the EU opts to see resilience as a process which follows a liberal strategy, as a way for the Union to *"secure progress towards its own liberal goals"* (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1001).

Resilience is for many seen as a comprehensive approach which dismisses silo-mentalities and brings together different perceptions. As the EU is in need of a more coordinated strategy, combined with the focus on an integrated and comprehensive approach to foreign policy, the reason for the Union's interest in the concept becomes evident. While bringing together humanitarian, development, security and environmental policies, resilience seeks to bridge crisis responses and long-term development. However, the institutional configuration of the EU works against this notion of comprehensiveness (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1003-1004). For example, DG ECHO and DG DEVCO both have their own goals, organisational cultures, and institutional incentives, which again lead to differences in focus. Even though resilience is an attempt to create a more comprehensive approach, it might also have the opposite effect, pitting different institutional understandings against each other (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1004).

Finally, the last dynamic which has helped shape the translation of resilience in the EU has to do with the multi-level character of the EU. The national projects, interests and identities of the EU's members might intervene with the EU's foreign policy goals. This is especially the case when the Neighbourhood is concerned (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1006). As much of the EU's understanding of resilience is inspired and influenced by the UK, other member states are *"divided over neoliberal strategy and what are perceived as Anglo-Saxon methods of governance"* (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1006). As a result, there exists a discord

among member states regarding the understanding of resilience as well as what the aims of the resilience strategy should be. For instance, the Baltic states usually promote resilience with regard to infrastructure, cyber-security, and geopolitics. The Nordics, on the other hand, speak more of resilience related to humanitarian aid and development policy (Interview 1; Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1007). The different understandings and sometimes conflicting goals of the Member States make a common use and understanding of resilience complicated and may slow down the implementations process. The differences in understanding are linked to differences in interests. The Baltics, being closer to Russia, would naturally seek to incorporate a geopolitical element into the resilience-agenda (Interview 1). The Nordics, being among the biggest aid donors, would instead focus on the effective use of this aid (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1007).

4.5 THE SITUATION NOW

A consequence of these diverging interests linked to the resilience agenda among the Member States, is that there has been a lot of effort put into thinking about and discussing resilience, but not so much regarding implementation on the ground (Interview 1). For resilience to have an actual effect in the neighbourhood, there needs to be more focus on how the concept should be operationalised, and how resilience building will work in practice. Additionally, the lack of a shared understanding between the EU and the Member States means that every actor has their own ways of promoting resilience. Unless a shared understanding which every actor will accept is developed, the resilience agenda will continue to face problems with regard to implementation (Interview 1). As such, it is important to not overstate the effect the resilience agenda has had. It is a common goal everyone can get behind and support, but underlying tensions in EU foreign policy are still present. Although the resilience agenda was chosen in part because of its ability to promote coherence in EU foreign policy, the strategy for implementation will still require more work before we can expect to see any real changes in the Neighbourhood. A challenge here, as suggested by one of my interviewees, could be that, according to him, resilience only works on the abstract plane, as a framework for action. It does not lend itself to concrete strategies (Interview 2). However, the EU has succeeded in diffusing norms to the Neighbourhood and to Member States before. There is little reason to expect it will not achieve the same with regard to the resilience agenda.

5 TRACING RESILIENCE

Now that we have established that resilience has evolved into a key focus among EU institutions concerning foreign policy, we can now explore how the concept has evolved since its initial introduction in the Union. In order to do this, I will look at the different uses of the concept of resilience in documents from two different periods. Resilience was first introduced to the EU in 2012 when it appeared in the document *The EU's Approach to Resilience: Learning from Food Security Crises*. This document led to the *Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries, 2013-2020* (2013). Related to this are the EU's two flagship operations, which focus on specific regions in Africa, namely the Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience (SHARE) (2012) and the Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR) (2012). These documents mark the beginning of the EU's resilience adventure. Resilience discourses thus moved into EU policy, especially in development and security policies. The concept has been central to the work of DG for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) and DG for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). The DG's combined focus is on poverty reduction, development, the promotion of good governance, and disaster response (Keukeleire and Delreux 2014: 74).

This early adoption of resilience can be compared to recent documents, such as the EUGS (2016) and the Joint Communication (2017). The understanding of resilience used in these early documents differs markedly from the understanding found in the EUGS. For instance, the version of resilience presented in the EUGS places more focus on adaptability and the security of the Union. This chapter will explore these differences in detail. Later, the changes in understanding of the concept of resilience will be used to say something more general about the EU's identity.

5.1 INITIAL IMPACT – RESILIENCE IN 2012/2013

The first time resilience was actively used in EU discourse was with regard to African livelihoods and the rural poor. The first document to use resilience opens by stating that recurrent food crises in the Sahel region and in the Horn of Africa *"have underscored the*

need to work on a long-term and systematic approach to building the resilience of vulnerable countries and populations" (European Commission 2012: 2). With these words, resilience has made its way into EU discourse. Here it has stayed since. However, to assume that the resilience presented in the 2012 Communication is the same as the one presented in the EUGS of 2016 would be to neglect the impulses the EU has received from the outside during those years.

About four years before the EU became conscious of resilience, in 2008, four major international organisations had come together to create a report on how resilience can be enhanced in the rural poor. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Bank (WB), and the World Resources Institute (WRI) published *Roots of Resilience: Growing the Wealth of the Poor* in 2008. This report focuses on how the poor can use their ecosystems to gain empowerment and increase their livelihoods. It argues that enterprises can *"create economic, social and environmental resilience that cushion the impact of climate change, and help provide needed social stability. Increased resilience must be part of the response to the risks of climate change. The efforts that foster resilience chart the first steps on the path out of poverty"* (UNDP, UNEP, WB, and WRI 2008: vii). This is to happen through three elements: ownership, capacity, and connection. With ownership, they refer to local ownership of the resource management process as well as the ability to benefit from this management. By increasing local capacity, the poor are better able to utilise their environment and increase income. Lastly, connections need to be made, both between local organisations and between local and state organisations. The impact of this report is to be felt in the EU's initial understandings of resilience.

In the beginning, resilience was mainly considered an issue for humanitarian aid and development assistance. The background for this was the major food crisis which followed a drought in 2011, which was one of the worst droughts the region had experienced in 60 years (European Commission 2012: 6). The food crisis affected more than 30 million people in Africa. As such, DG ECHO and DG DEVCO have played a central role in the shift towards a resilience paradigm. This focus is explicitly stated in the 2012 Communication, which argues that *"strengthening resilience lies at the interface of humanitarian and development assistance"* (European Commission 2012: 5). This restriction of resilience into humanitarian and development policy helps explain the EU's initial focus, which was on the resilience of societies in regard to natural disasters, weather-related events, and the effects these crises have on communities.

5.2 A CONTINUED AGENDA – RESILIENCE IN 2016/2017

The EUGS and the Joint Communication has already been explored quite extensively in the past chapters. However, not every question has been answered. Between the initial introduction of resilience in 2012, the EU had itself undergone a series of shocks and stresses, both internally and externally. The full impact of the Eurozone crises and the following aftermath had been experienced. The Union had seen a rise of populism and nationalism within the Member States, which resulted in the decision of Britain to withdraw from the Union in 2016, as well as rising authoritarianism in Hungary and Poland. Hundreds of thousands of migrants fleeing from war had found their way over the EU's borders in search of peace and better opportunities. Globally, the Union saw the continued rise of Russia, as well as a US which reinstates protectionist trade policies. Closer to home, the EU had recently undergone a strategic review of the European Neighbourhood Policy, which explored the changes in the EU's relationship with its neighbours.

These changes did undoubtedly have an effect on the EU's view of its role in the world. Additionally, it changed the EU's understanding of the concept of resilience. A Roadmap published in 2017 contends that *"since 2012, both within the Commission and in international discourse, the concept has resilience has evolved"* (European Commission 2017a). The focus of the resilience agenda has broadened and encompasses now contexts such as energy and climate change, economic policy, the prevention of violent conflicts, and the response to hybrid threats. The broadened scope of resilience is reflected in the increase of EU institutions now concerned with resilience. Rather than being the dual focus of humanitarian aid and development policy, resilience *"concerns EU development, humanitarian, foreign, security, climate change, and other sectoral policies with an external dimension"* (European Commission 2017a). In addition to this, the EU's linear understanding of the previous humanitarian-development approach has been neglected in favour of a non-linear approach to resilience (European Commission 2016: 6).

5.3 A CHANGED UNDERSTANDING

In order to understand how resilience has changed, we can explore the way the different documents have answered five questions. The first question investigates which version of resilience is being used. As it was made clear in chapter two, which version of resilience one chooses to base its strategy on will have consequences for the outcome of the strategy. For instance, if an organisations views resilience as bouncing back to a previous state, the

adaptable aspects of resilience will be neglected. The second question asks who should be made resilient. The typology presented by Walklate et al. (2014) suggested a multi-level approach to resilience, which spanned from the individual to the global level. The second question thus inquires which level or which levels should be made resilient. The third question looks into what an actor should be made resilient against. As we know, shocks can be extreme, but short-lived, or they can be less violent and more long term. The question then becomes which of these shocks or stresses should be put into focus, the short-term or the long-term? In addition to this, it is worth asking when resilience should be achieved. While a lot of research focuses on the aftermath of a crisis, others would argue it would be better to focus on building resilience, in order to be able to withstand and prepare before a crisis even hits. Finally, we ask the question of how resilience can be achieved. More specifically, is resilience something that has to emerge from within the community or state itself, as an internal capacity, or can it emerge in a society through external intervention?

In short, the evolution of resilience in EU documents can be traced through these five questions: 1) How does the document understand resilience? 2) Which level of society should be made resilient? 3) Is the focus on resilience against short-term shocks or long-term stresses? 4) Should resilience be achieved before, during, or after the shock? 5) Is resilience best achieved through internal or external processes? As the version of resilience found in the EUGS in part builds on previous understandings of the concept, the changes should not be expected to be extreme. However, that does not mean they are not present.

5.3.1 WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

The *Action Plan for Resilience* promotes a version of resilience, which is integrated into the EU's overall goal in reducing poverty. In other words, resilience "*shall not be understood as an isolated objective*" (European Commission 2013: 3). In the 2012 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, resilience is defined as "*the ability of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to withstand, to adapt, and to quickly recover from stresses and shocks*" (European Commission 2012: 5).⁸ It goes on to suggest that resilience contains two dimensions: the entity's inherent strength and ability to withstand shock and stress, and the entity's capacity to bounce back once a shock has

⁸ The definition of resilience presented in the factsheet published in 2014 includes a focus on particular types of shocks, namely drought, violence, conflict and natural disaster (European Commission 2014b)

occurred. Increasing resilience either means increasing the strength of the actor in question or decreasing the impact of the shock or both. This suggests an understanding of resilience more in line with the ecological version, as well as the psychology understanding of resilience, which underscored a system's ability to absorb shocks and still return to a previous equilibrium.

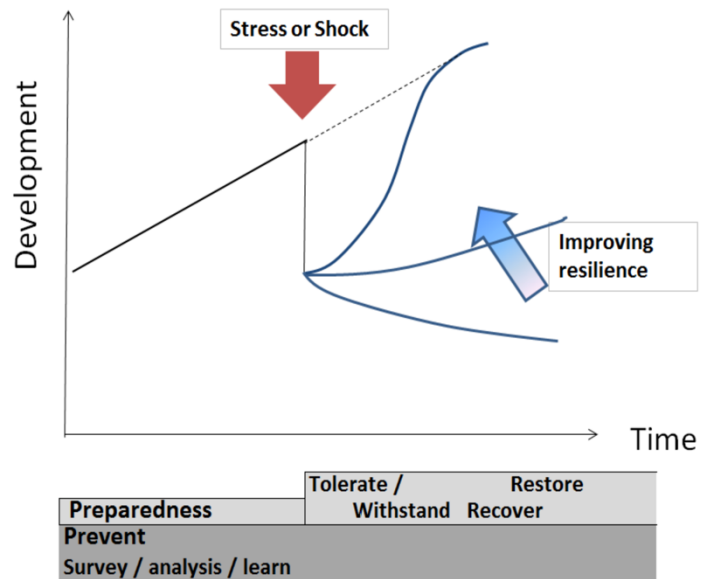


Figure 5.1 showing how increased resilience can help to return societies to *status quo* (European Commission 2012: 4)

Figure 5.1, found in the 2012

Communication, shows the return to a

previously accepted *status quo*. The focus on the early ecological version of resilience is understandable considering the EU's initial focus, namely food crises. The focus could also be the result of imitation, as the focus of the 2008 *Roots of Resilience* had also been on ecological resilience and using the environment to increase the livelihoods of the poor, as well as building resilience against climate change. Additionally, the focus on the entity's strength suggests inspiration from the engineering literature, as the definition includes an emphasis on the inherent strength of an entity, and suggests that strong entities are better able to withstand shocks.

The EU's earliest approaches were, for the most part, concerned with building resilience in states far from the EU's borders. The continued focus on resilience building in what the EU calls the "*most vulnerable countries*" (European Commission 2012: 2) provides an understanding of where the EU placed its initial geographic attention – far away from the Union's own borders. EU initiatives such as the SHARE⁹ and AGIR¹⁰ initiatives show this geographical focus. Interestingly enough, several of these countries became the focal point of resilience building strategies emerging in other institutions, such as the British Department for International Development (DFID) as well as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) (Department for International Development 2011; US Agency for International Development 2012). This broad focus is also found in the Action Plan, which also stresses

⁹ The SHARE initiative encompasses Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, and Somalia

¹⁰ Original name is *Alliance Globale pour l'Initiative Résilience* and encompasses Burkina Faso, Chad, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal

that *"the priority will be given to vulnerable countries that face recurrent crises and that are risk prone"* (European Commission 2013: 2).

Contrasted to this, the definition of resilience provided in the EUGS frames resilience as *"the ability of states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 23). This definition is different from the definition from 2012. For one, the definition presented in the EUGS ignores the entity's ability to remain unchanged in the face of a crises. Where the definition given in the 2012 Communication emphasised the inherent strength of an entity when it came to withstanding shock, the EUGS understands that for the entity to be able to withstand a shock at all, reform is essential. Rather than seeing resilience as an opportunity to 'bounce back' after a disruption, this later version of resilience resembles the one Bourbeau called 'resilience as process' (Bourbeau 2018b: 50). While this is not stated explicitly in the EUGS, the 2017 Joint Communication states that *"strengthening resilience is a means not an end"* and that *"resilience is about transformation not preserving the status quo"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 23). This does not mean that the version of resilience presented in 2012 neglected change. Rather, adaptation was seen as a possibility, not as necessary.

In addition to this, the global focus of the EU has changed. Previously, the main emphasis had been to enhance resilience building in African states and local communities. The EUGS, on the other hand, stresses the need to foster the resilience of the democracies of the EU's own Member States (High Representative of the EU 2016: 15). In addition, the EU places more of an emphasis on the states closer to the EU's border, notably in the Neighbourhood (High Representative of the EU 2016: 9). Resilience has, in a sense, been brought home again. This does not mean that the regions which were previously the focus of the EU's resilience strategies have been neglected, and the EUGS states that *"it is in the interests of our citizens to invest in the resilience of states and societies to the east stretching into Central Asia, and south down to Central Africa"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 23). The EU's continued focus on the Global South is also evident in reports, such as *Operationalising the EU Strategic Approach to Resilience* (European Commission 2017b), which showcases some of the initiatives the EU has taken to implement resilience, while also including the new approaches to resilience.

5.3.2 WHICH LEVEL SHOULD BE MADE RESILIENT?

The definition presented in the 2012 Communication promoted a broad understanding of which levels of society should be made resilient, from the individual to a whole region. In this regard, the Communication also emphasise *"the role of women in building resilience in households and in communities affected by crises"* (European Commission 2012: 5). The level of society most vulnerable to natural hazards and weather-related crises are the local communities. They are usually the ones first to experience the effects of floods, droughts, or failed crops. In addition to this, it is usually the poorest households which are struck the hardest – *"around 80% of those requiring emergency humanitarian aid in a crisis come from the 20% of the population who are the poorest of the poor"* (European Commission 2014b: 3). Demographic challenges, limited access to land, political instability, and resource pressures meant that these poor communities had a harder time than others in recovering from the droughts. This creates a demand for resilience building all the way down to the lowest levels of society. The combination of not being able to recover properly from the past shock and the increased impact of the droughts led to a downward spiral, where *"each shock sends the communities into deeper vulnerability and further erodes their means to prepare for the next crisis"* (European Commission 2014b: 2).

The EUGS definition when it comes to which levels should be the focal point of resilience building, is narrower than the definition presented in the 2012 Communication. Where the previous resilience strategies had emphasised the need to build resilience at next to all levels of society, the 2016 version reduces this emphasis to states and societies in general. The EUGS later acknowledges that *"resilience is a broader concept, encompassing all individuals and the whole of society"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 24). However, admitting that resilience also affects individuals, is not the same as emphasising the need for resilience building at this level. The Joint Communication also refrains from mentioning the need for individual resilience, and instead claims that *"resilience has to be addressed at multiple levels – state, society and community"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 23). Individual resilience building seems to be neglected in the 2016 understanding of resilience.

In contrast to the initial introduction of resilience, the EUGS itself does not place a special emphasis on the role of women when it comes to building resilience. However, the Joint Communication emphasise the role women can play is restricted to societal resilience by claiming that *"women and girls can also play an active and important role in contributing to societal resilience that can underpin peace"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 8). Additionally, the EUGS and the 2017 Joint Communication both stress the ability of local

communities when it comes to building resilience – *"local governments and civil society are often the bases on which resilience can take root and grow at community level"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 23).

5.3.3 RESILIENCE AGAINST LONG-TERM OR SHORT-TERM SHOCKS AND STRESSES?

The 2012 Communication states that *"building resilience calls for a long-term approach, based on alleviating the underlying causes conducive to crises, and enhancing capacities to better manage future uncertainty and change"* (European Commission 2012: 5). However, this focus on long-term efforts does not mean that the shocks the state or community needs to be resilient against necessarily need to be long-term. The Communication provides several examples of hazards that have increased the risk-exposure of vulnerable communities, such as the effects of economic shocks, demographic pressures, climate change, natural hazards, and land tenure systems incompatible with the demand to increase livelihoods (European Commission 2012: 2). Some of these challenges, such as climate change, have taken decades to manifest, and are thus long-term stresses. Such challenges require a thorough and extensive transformation of society if it is to survive. Natural hazards, on the other hand, are usually short-lived, although their effects can be felt for years. The focus could thus be said to be on both long-term and short-term risks.

The EU aspired to help societies deal with crises. Additionally, the 2012 Communication also sets out an aspiration to understand and address the root causes of resilience as a way to prepare vulnerable societies for similar future crises. The goal of the Union is thus to focus both on immediate crisis response, as well as *"fostering longer-term food security and on increasing the population's ability to cope with future droughts"* (European Commission 2014b: 2). The Action Plan is even more ambitious, suggesting that resilience building is an opportunity for transformation *"in terms of adaptation to changing environments, empowerment, improved livelihoods and economic developments"* (European Commission 2013: 3). The focus is thus on both short-term shocks and long-term stresses, which is in line with the socio-ecological understanding of resilience presented in chapter two. However, the ultimate goal of this early understanding of resilience is still to remain within the same regime. The early understanding of resilience does not call for complete transformations of the societal structures, just adaptations of the entity within this structure.

The EUGS, on the other hand, is more willing to accept that in the long-term, transformations are necessary. Earlier in this chapter, I argued that the understanding of resilience presented in the 2012 Communication combined aspects of ecological, engineering, and psychology versions of resilience. We also recall Figure 2.2, which showed the three stages of resilience, as presented by the socio-ecological understanding of resilience. Here, the effects of long-term stresses were complete transformations of the entity – the ball was pushed out of its cup and into a new regime (Lade et al. 2017: 3). To compare, the effect of short-term shocks was recovery, return to *status quo*, while medium-term stresses would create incremental changes to lessen the fluctuations, while still remaining within the same regime. As the EUGS presses resilience as reform and the Joint Communication explicitly states that resilience is *not* about preserving the *status quo*, the EU's understanding of resilience has evolved. Where the earlier conceptions of resilience promoted adaptability within the same regime, the new understanding advocates the need to evolve beyond critical hurdles, into a new regime. The world changes fast, and the pressing issues of for instance climate change necessitate a transformation of the system itself. The EUGS acknowledges this. As such, the 2016 version of resilience can be said to combine resilience against both long-term and short-term stresses and shocks. The EU recognises that "*long-term work on pre-emptive peace, resilience and human rights must be tied to crisis response through humanitarian aid, CSDP, sanctions and diplomacy*" (High Representative of the EU 2016: 51).

5.3.4 RESILIENCE BEFORE, DURING, OR AFTER THE SHOCK?

The EU documents do not explicitly state whether societies and communities should achieve resilience before, during or after a crisis hit. However, the EU's focus on understanding the root causes of crises suggests an intent to prepare vulnerable societies for future shocks. This would mean they are resilient before the event even happens. This view is mirrored in the EU's emphasis on disaster risk reduction, which requires resilient communities in order to lessen the impact of the disaster. This is underscored in the *Action Plan*, which states that the goal of the EU's emphasis on resilience was "*to help vulnerable communities in crisis-prone areas build resilience to future shocks*" (European Commission 2013: 1). This suggests that resilience is to play its most important part before a shock or crisis emerges. This is understandable, as the vulnerability of the communities makes it evident that a crisis is going to hit eventually. Making the communities resilient means they will be prepared for it when it comes.

With the EUGS, the EU seeks an integrated approach to conflicts and crises. What this means is that *"the EU will act at all stages of the conflict cycle, acting promptly on prevention, responding responsibly and decisively to crises, investing in stabilisation, and avoiding premature disengagement when a new crisis interrupts"* (High Representative of the EU 2017: 9-10). During and after a crisis, the EU will ensure access to humanitarian aid and basic goods and services. It is easier to prevent or limit the impact of a crisis than it is to engage after it has broken out. As such, the focus is placed on building resilient communities capable of withstanding and adapting to shocks once they hit. This does not mean that the aftermath is neglected. The transformative aspect of resilience *"strengthens the ability of current and future generations to meet their needs and withstand crises"* (European Commission 2020). Consequently, resilience covers all the stages of a crisis. It is acknowledged that the different stages require different approaches.

5.3.5 AN INTERNAL OR AN EXTERNAL PROCESS?

According to the Action Plan, the focus of building resilience at the individual level reflects the Union's commitment to bottom-up approaches, *"and the inclusion of individual (life-cycle) risks, which must be addressed if people are to exit poverty and vulnerability"* (European Commission 2013: 3). It goes on to provide key characteristics of the EU's approach to resilience, highlighting the need for country-owned and country-led. The EU will take a people-centred approach, and *"actions must be sustainable, multi-sectoral, multi-level, multi-partner and strategically and jointly planned by the people at risk, communities, governments [...] and civil society"* (European Commission 2013: 3). Context is essential when it comes to building resilience, and the Action Plan sees this.

The AGIR initiative emphasises the need to build upon and strengthen existing regional strategies. As a result, the responsibility to draw up a regional Plan of Action to build resilience was given to West African regional organisations, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The donor community was to support the creation of this Plan. This suggests an understanding of resilience as something which comes from inside the communities themselves. However, the EU will facilitate and push for resilience, suggesting that it is partly an external process as well. That the EU sees itself as a central actor, becomes evident when the 2012 Communication states that the SHARE and AGIR initiatives demonstrate *"the commitment of the EU to address the root causes of food insecurity in the longer-term"* (European Commission 2012: 7).

The continued focus on the EU as a facilitator for non-EU regions' development becomes even more evident after the 2012 Communication presents its 10 steps to increase resilience in countries prone to food insecurity and disasters. Granted, the first step acknowledges that resilience is a bottom-up process, and that the leading role in this development is to be given to the partner states (European Commission 2012: 11). However, the EU stresses its own involvement in resilience building by stating that *"the EU will seek to replicate existing initiatives such as SHARE and AGIR"* and *"the EU will work with host governments, other donors, regional and international organisations and other stakeholders to create platforms at country level for ensuring timely exchange of information coordination"* (European Commission 2012: 13). This suggests a clear understanding of the centrality of the EU's role when it comes to resilience building.

The EUGS and Joint Communication agrees that including the local governments and civil society in resilience building approaches is most effective. The emphasis placed on the importance of local knowledge and local involvement, combined with the continued view of resilience building as a bottom-up approach, underscores the internal dimension of the resilience agenda. However, the EU also recognises how internal and external peace and security are intertwined: *"our security at home entails a parallel interest in peace in our neighbouring and surrounding regions"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 14).

The resilience of the EU is dependent upon the resilience, stability, and peace of the surrounding regions. The opposite holds true as well. What this entails is that resilience building becomes both an internally and externally driven approach. While not neglecting the need for local involvement and the responsibility of non-EU members in building resilience within their own borders, the EU recognises that resilience building is a two-way street. Stable and resilient neighbours increase the likelihood that the EU itself will be resilient and vice versa. In fact, the 10 guiding considerations for a strategic approach to resilience, presented in the 2017 Joint Communication, there is a call for a broad analysis of strengths and vulnerabilities as the starting point of any resilience approach. This is because it is recognised that *"any given outcome, risk – the ability to cope – needs to be analysed at multiple levels, particularly at the points at which one factor of resilience, or one set of actors is dependent in the resilience of others, or where power relations between different levels of society play an important role"* (European Commission and the HP 2017: 24).

However, a state's dependence upon another state's resilience, does not mean that resilience is not an internal process. The EU pursue resilience approaches that are context-specific, tailor-made, and which build upon already existing sources of resilience. The role of

the EU in these approaches *"is to support this process and to foster societies better empowered to identify and solve their own problems"* (European Commission and HR 2017: 23). As with the 2012 understanding of resilience, the EU is still to act as a facilitator.

Through this comparison, it is evident that the EU's understanding of resilience has changed. The change is not radical, and the concept used is still the same. However, as resilience is such a flexible concept, it allows for different uses and understanding of the same concept. The EU still uses resilience, but with a broader focus on which policy fields should be incorporated into the resilience approach, as well as a more limited understanding of which levels of society should be made resilient. The most significant change, however, is the focus on adaptability, which is more prominent in the EUGS than in previous documents. This is a consequence of the EU's enhanced understanding of the world as more uncertain and complex. As the environment in which states operate does not lend itself to rigorous planning, the best strategy is to be adaptable. What can this changed understanding of resilience and of the world further tell us about the EU's identity as an international actor and its role as a normative power?

6 A UNION OF NORMS AND INTERESTS

We recall the two aims presented in the introduction of this thesis. The first was to unpack the concept of resilience in the context of EU foreign policy. The second was to ask what the use of resilience could tell us about the EU's identity in foreign policy and understanding of itself as a normative actor. After comparing the two time periods in the previous chapter, it became evident that there has indeed been a change in the EU's understanding of resilience. Building on this, I will argue that through this changed understanding, we can distinctly see a less ambitious EU. The Union's focus has shifted to emphasising the security of its own population. Additionally, the understanding of resilience has become broader and increasingly linked to tailor-made approaches to resilience building. This change in the discourse of resilience, combined with the introduction of the principled pragmatism-approach, can be seen as a consequence of the EU's understanding of itself as a more limited actor than previously thought. However, this does not mean that the EU has neglected its role as a normative power. Rather, it suggests a more realistic view of how the Union should proceed in order to get the normative results they seek.

6.1 DEVELOPING RESILIENCE IN THE EU FRAMEWORK

How can the EU's changed understanding of resilience be used in order to trace a shift in the EU's identity as a foreign policy actor? The last chapter left little doubt that the way the EU understood resilience in 2012 differed from the way the EU understood resilience at the time of the EUGS. What more can this shift in understanding tell us? In this chapter, I wish to argue that the different understandings of resilience in the documents from 2012 and 2016 can be used as a prism to see a change in the Union over time. Between 2012 and 2016, the EU adapted to its surroundings and turned into a more careful, modest, and realistic foreign policy actor.

The documents explored above show us that a change has, in fact, taken place in the EU's understanding of resilience between 2012 and 2016. When resilience was first presented, it was in the context of bridging humanitarian aid and development policy. By 2016, the

concept had spilled into any number of policy fields, such as economic policy, the response to hybrid threats, and the prevention of violent conflict. The understanding of resilience in 2012 clearly resembles the idea of 'bouncing back' to a previous equilibrium. Given the context of the strategy, this definition is understandable. Resilience was introduced as a way to deal with a critical food crisis. Quick decisions had to be made, and the main goal was to get the affected nations back on their feet with minimum loss of life.

In comparison, the 2016 EUGS version of resilience argues that adaptability needs to be more included in the resilience discourse than before. This is not to say that the 2012 version of resilience completely neglected the adaptive aspects of resilience, as being able to return to a previously defined equilibrium was only part of the Communications definition of resilience. However, the definition presented in 2016 shows a more explicit turn towards the adaptive approach, as it states that resilience *"is the ability of states and societies to reform"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 23). Change is necessary in order to withstand shocks. This became evident in the 2017 Joint Communication, which neglected the idea of returning to a *status quo* altogether (European Commission and HR 2017: 23).

When it comes to the question of who should be made resilient, by 2016, the focus is less on building individual resilience, and more about building the resilience of civil society. As the local governments and civil society are regarded as the best places in which resilience can take root, this level becomes a natural focal point. Resilience has also proven itself to be a problematic concept in regard to the question of which level should be made resilient, as building resilience at one level can have negative repercussions for another level. As Walklate et al. argued, the different levels of society are all interlinked (Walklate et al. 2014: 412). While the strengthening of resilience at any one level might increase the resilience of others, the opposite situation could just as easily occur. This is especially an issue in authoritarian regimes. As we know, the EU has worked with non-democratic regimes in order to preserve stability and help protect the population of these states. This is also in line with the principled pragmatism-approach. The question then becomes how the EU can hope to increase the resilience of such a state, without also increasing the resilience of the repressive regime. How can the Union avoid increasing the power of such a regime? Strengthening resilience at the state level could have a negative impact on the resilience of the population, as it is *"often against their own governments that people have to be resilient"* (Biscop 2016: 3).

6.1.1 THE EU'S IDENTITY – A MORE REALISTIC AND MODEST UNION

The EUGS emphasise tailor-made approaches to resilience building. This, combined with the introduction of the principled pragmatism-approach, shows that the EU has become a more realistic foreign policy actor, as both of these approaches downplays the universality of EU norms. This is what Biscop called "Realpolitik with European characteristics" (Biscop 2016: 2). By focusing more on what the EU is *actually* able to achieve in the Neighbourhood, we can see a lowered normative ambition in the EU. This can be seen as a way for the EU to come to terms with its shortcomings in foreign policy. After all, "*The EU cannot democratize Egypt, so it should not pretend to*" (Biscop 2016: 2). Instead, by turning to resilience, the EU rather attempts to 'govern from a distance', through the promotion of norms and local ownership. What this suggests is a more modest Union, acknowledging a more limited capacity to transform the Neighbourhood.

The EUGS also introduced an increased focus on the security and resilience of the EU itself, particularly its democracies. As the world is understood as increasingly more complex and unpredictable, the Union realised this would affect the security of the EU as well. This was exacerbated by the rise of turmoil within the EU, such as the rise of Eurosceptic parties and the eventual decision of Britain to leave the Union, as well as the rise of right-wing populist parties. While the Union had focused on making non-EU members resilient against crises, the EU had lost sight of the resilience of the EU's own institutions and democracies. The EUGS placed the resilience of EU-members back on the agenda. Building resilience, as consequently enhancing stability in the Neighbourhood, can be seen as an attempt by the EU to safe-guard themselves against this instability.

This turn towards emphasising the security of the EU is also evident in the fact that Mogherini chose to include the EU's interests as part of the Global Strategy. By declaring to the world what the EU's interests were, Mogherini showed that the EU is more than just a normative actor. In order to ensure the stability and the goals of the Union, simply promoting values is not enough. As a result, the promotion of the Union's interests, as well as an increased focus on military capabilities and what has previously been called hard power, underscored the EU's increased focus on showing itself as more than a soft or normative power.

This is not to overstate the importance of the focus on the Union's interest, nor an attempt to see values and interests as a dichotomy. After all, the EUGS states that for Europe, both values and interests, as well as hard and soft power, go hand in hand (High

Representative of the EU 2016: 13; 4). It is not a question of either being a soft power or a hard power, or between promoting interest or values. The EU is trying to do both.

The EU's focus is in line with what Nye called smart power. We recall that smart power was a way for states to incorporate both hard and soft power into their strategies, as a way to ensure successful power conversion, and achieved their preferred outcomes. Having resources does not mean that you will be able to convert these resources into your preferred outcomes. Smart power seeks to convert resources into effective strategies by giving a full outline of available power resources while simultaneously being aware of the contexts into which these resources are being translated (Nye 2011b: 20). Smart power combines both hard and soft power, arguing that utilising both is better than focusing on only one. As such, it could be argued that the EUGS is a strategy based on smart power. It seeks to combine both hard and soft power, while simultaneously being aware of the context into which the strategy is to be implemented. This is evident in the bottom-up approach to resilience, and the focus on tailor-made strategies to resilience building.

The most notable change between the 2012 use of resilience and the 2016 use of resilience, is that the resilience which has sprung from the EUGS and the 2017 Joint Communication, is more confident that the world in which the EU acts is uncertain and rapidly changing. It seems like the outside world has finally penetrated into the EU's interior. EU institutions understand now that they cannot safe-guard themselves or their members against the events which are happening in other parts of the world. It is this view we encounter in the first sentence in Mogherini's foreword in the EUGS. She writes that *"the purpose, even existence, of our Union is being questioned. Yet, our citizens and the world need a strong European Union like never before"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 3). This is far from the understanding of the EU's role as a foreign policy as it was promoted in the 2003 ESS, which opened by stating that *"Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free"* (High Representative of the EU 2003: 27).

As there is no one-way for the Union to secure itself against all kinds of threats, it chooses to opt for building resilience, both among the Member States, the Neighbourhood and states beyond the Neighbourhood. Additionally, through the understanding of the world as more complex, the EU also acknowledge that there is no one-way of doing development. Context is essential, and the increased focus on tailor-made approaches to resilience building emphasise this point.

Finally, it could be argued that through the use of resilience, the Union is trying to promote itself as a more unitary actor than it is (Interview 1). By projecting resilience

building as a shared goal, the Union might attempt to neglect the various understandings of resilience which still exist between the Member States. As such, the resilience agenda could be linked to problems of coherence and fragmentation within the Union itself. Resilience would then function as a wrapper, concealing the diverging interests of the various actors in the Union. They promote the same word, but not the same understandings of the word.

6.2 RESILIENCE AND NORMATIVE-POWER EUROPE

Following from the discussion above, what sort of effect does this more realistic and less ambitious Union have on the normative power of the EU? Has the EU forsaken its promotion of norms such as human rights, democracy, the rule of law, and good governance?

The short answer is no. As resilience is still intrinsically linked to normative values, such as the promotion of human rights and democracy. After all, the EUGS states that "*a resilient state is a secure state, and security is key for prosperity and democracy*" (High Representative of the EU 2016: 23). The EU's understanding of resilience is based on the liberal values of the Union (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1001). The Joint Communication identifies the need to ensure respect for democracy, rule of law, and human and fundamental rights in relation to strengthening the capacity of the state (European Commission and HR 2017: 3). Resilience is to be built on a foundation of liberal values, and the "*EU's resilience turn continues to be liberal rather than post-liberal or pragmatic*" (Joseph and Juncos 2019: 1001). If this is the case, then how come the EU in tried times chose to turn its back on its normative values?

6.2.1 WHAT THE EU IS AND WHAT THE EU DOES – NORM DIFFUSION IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

By spreading resilience to the Neighbourhood, the Union is simultaneously spreading its normative and liberal values. This diffusion of EU norms is not new and has not started because of the resilience agenda. Norm diffusion has been a part of the EU's relationship with the Neighbourhood since the beginning. However, since the resilience agenda has not reached the Neighbourhood yet, there is no way of knowing for certain exactly how the promotion of norms on which resilience is to be built will occur (Interview 1). When the time comes, however, we can assume that the norms most likely to be promoted by the EU will be peace, democracy, rule of law, and human and fundamental rights. These are four of the five core

norms on which the EU is built. Additionally, we can assume that good governance and sustainable development will be promoted.

These six norms are all mentioned in the EUGS and in the Joint Communication. According to the EUGS, "*a resilient society featuring democracy, trust in institutions, and sustainable development lies at the heart of a resilient state*" (High Representative of the EU 2016: 24). The EU is determined to promote the Sustainable Development Goals. Additionally, the Joint Communication stresses the need to promote democracy, rule of law, human and fundamental rights, and foster long-term security and progress (European Commission and HR 2017: 3).

When it comes to the mechanisms of norm diffusion, three could be seen as particularly dominant. As coercion is rarely used with regard to the EU's foreign policy, this mechanism is expected to have a limited effect. However, what Börzel and Risse called manipulating utility calculations, either through conditionality or capacity-building, can be expected to be central (Börzel and Risse 2012: 7). Conditionality is already a widely used mechanism in regard to the Neighbourhood, and there is no reason to suspect that the EU will seek a different approach. As resilience building is mainly focused on norms, capacity-building through financial and technical assistance can be expected to play a lesser role than conditionality. Additionally, socialisation, which follows a normative rationality. However, socialisation requires some willingness on the part of the receiving states, as they will have to incorporate the norms into their own domestic policies. For the EU to achieve this, they will have to make their norms seem attractive. This is thus also linked to the mechanism of persuasion, which has already been used extensively by the EU (Börzel and Risse 2012: 8). Following the EUGS, a way to do this is through tailor-made approaches, which will ensure a better fit between the norms and the receiving state (High Representative of the EU 2016: 25-26). The EUGS acknowledges the importance of context with regard to resilience building and the promotion of norms. As such, when diffusing EU norms to the Neighbourhood and to states beyond, taking the circumstances of that state or society will be of importance. However, because of these differing contexts, the EU might risk achieving what Radaelli called 'diffusion without convergence' (Radaelli 2018: 55). The implementation of the resilience agenda in various contexts will be multi-faceted and may thus lead to a variety of results. This is not necessarily a problem, as the EU now acknowledges that the importance of already existing conditions, and the fact that development is not a linear and universal process. Additionally, supporting 'diffusion without convergence' might make the EU's norms more attractive to Neighbourhood states that do not share the wish of looking like the EU.

Much of normative-power EU presupposes that the other nation states wish to look like the Union. However, this is not always the case, and the introduction of principled pragmatism and a careful, bottom-up approach when it comes to norm diffusion acknowledges this.

Does this focus on non-universal resilience building undermine the normative power of the EU? Not necessarily. In fact, by making the tailor-made approach to resilience building the norm, the EU is able to uphold its normative power. Additionally, the Union promotes resilience building based on an already determined set of values. Accepting the resilience agenda also means accepting these values. Not only does this mean that the promotion of the EU's values is inextricably linked to promoting resilience, the EU is also able to define the *way* such resilience building is to be done. In short, when it comes to resilience, the EU has the ability to define what is considered normal, both in terms of what resilience entails and the way resilience is to be strengthened. This is exactly where the power of the EU as a normative actor lies. It works from a distance, by guiding the conduct of others. This view also gives impetus to the view of the EU as a soft or civilian power, which also emphasise ideas, persuasion, and attraction (Nye 2011a: 16).

However, it was warned earlier that seeing resilience as something inherently good could neglect the potential adverse effects of resilience building. During the excavation of the resilience concept, it was also written that the understanding of resilience used in the engineering literature had been applied to institutions and authoritarian regimes, as a way to describe the way such regimes resist democratic influences. Resilience as the ability to withstand change does resemble the understanding of resilience presented in the EUGS. Nevertheless, such an understanding of resilience is still part of the resilience literature. The question then becomes what sort of hope the Union has in promoting a version of resilience that relies heavily on liberal values. There is no answer to this question, but it can be assumed that promoting norms and incremental changes will, in time, make a difference.

In chapter three, there were noted some problems with the idea of normative-power EU. For instance, it was argued that the normative approach had limited effect, even in the Neighbourhood (Diez 2013: 198). Much of the reason for these problems is a discord between the EU's norms and the context into which these norms are being diffused. The EU recognises that, although they see their norms as universal, the implementation of these norms will not be the same for all. This understanding is evident in the tailor-made approaches which the EU now applies to resilience building.

There is one embedded problem in the EU's combination of promoting liberal values and resilience building the way it has been discussed above. Resilience building is based on

the notion that universal values do not exist, while normative power Europe attempts to build resilience through promoting exactly such norms. A potential consequence of this could be that the EU gives up the entire liberal world order, acknowledging that it will never occur as the EU might want it to. This mirrors Biscop's view of the EU disposing of the notion of the liberal world order, while still holding on to the idea that universal values exist. The EU attempts to curb this problem by referring to tailor-made approaches to resilience and suggesting that there is more than one way to becoming a resilient society. Nevertheless, there still remains the problem that, according to the resilience agenda, the universal norms which will help states and societies achieve resilience do not exist.

6.3 BRIDGING PRINCIPLED PRAGMATISM AND RESILIENCE – THE IMPORTANCE OF TIME

The EU has previously been accused of acting in ways that are inconsistent with the norms they aim to project. For instance, Juncos writes that during the EU's involvement in Bosnia in the mid-90s, the programmes the EU used involved *"the promotion of universal norms such as democracy, human rights and rule of law, but at the same time [...] [carried] practices of domination and exclusion"* (Juncos 2011: 85). Additionally, as already mentioned, the EU chose to turn a blind eye to the problems sometimes caused by norm diffusion, such as neglecting the role power plays in the spreading of EU norms. On the one hand, the promotion of what the EU considers to be 'good' or 'universal' norms springs out of a desire to help other states achieve the prosperity and peace which EU-members have enjoyed for decades. Simultaneously, by spreading values to the Neighbourhood the EU may also contribute to domination-practices. By spreading resilience, the EU *"will seek to promote their interpretation of what is considered normal"* (Juncos 2011: 96).

The introduction of principled pragmatism in the EUGS has led to questions regarding the EU's legitimacy as a foreign policy actor. As already mentioned, the EU has faced criticism concerning its support and cooperation with states deemed to be un-democratic, focusing on the Union's interest in promoting stability in the region rather than a focus on norms and values. Additionally, the legitimacy of a foreign policy actor hinges on the attractiveness of the norms it promotes.

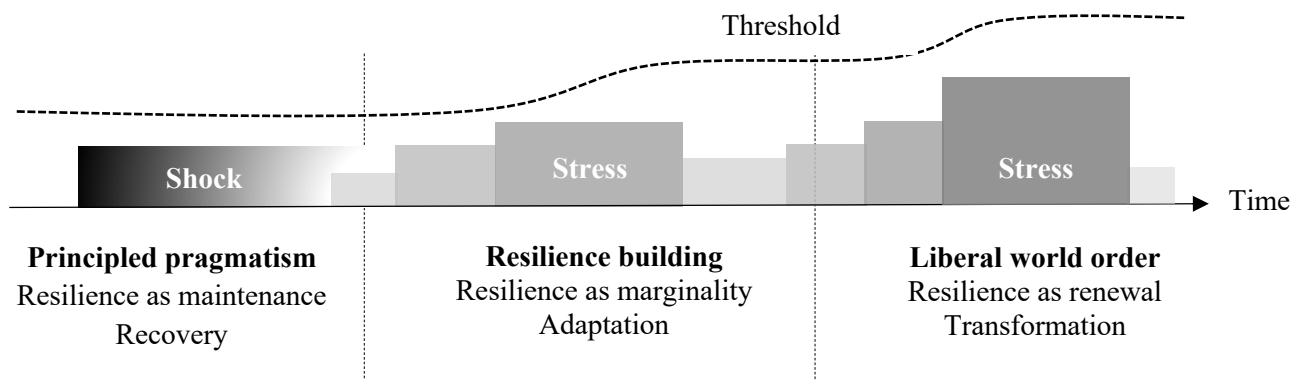
How can the EU hope to square the circle when it comes to principled pragmatism and resilience? On the one hand there is a Union that has decided to focus its attention on

pragmatist and realist approaches in foreign policy. This could mean neglecting the promotion of universal, liberal values on the basis of achieving stability. On the other hand, there is a Union attempting to spread the same values through being a normative power. These seemingly contradictory approaches have been summed up by Juncos: *"By adding 'principled' to its pragmatic turn, the EU has sought to square the circle between the promotion of universal values and doing so on the basis of practical consequences. However, the EU cannot have it both"* (Juncos 2017: 13).

The final point I wish to make in this thesis is that the EU can, in fact, have it both. What many scholars seem to miss in regard to the EU's resilience approach is the time aspect linked to it. A consequence may be that they expect too much from the EU and what they are able to achieve in a short period of time. As we have seen, the EU now considers itself a more cautious and realistic actor. The certainty that the Union would be able to democratise the Neighbourhood has faded and been replaced by a strategy of resilience, which promoted governing from a distance. However, this more pragmatic approach does not mean that the EU has given up on its liberal ambitions. Rather, it means they are more realistic when it comes to achieving said goals. Biscop argued that the turn towards Realpolitik, which was signified by the turn towards principled pragmatism, meant *"a rejection of liberal utopianism, but not of liberal ideals themselves"* (Biscop 2016: 1).

Borrowing from the model provided by the socio-ecological literature (Figure 2.2), it is possible to create a model where principled pragmatism and resilience are both incorporated without losing the way they have been understood by the EU. The model relayed three ways of looking at resilience: as recovery, as adaptation, and as transformation. The amount of stress experienced by the subject and the time scale determines which version of resilience to focus on. Following this model, a subject is more inclined to transform in order to adapt to its environment if it experienced a continual stress or pressure over a long period of time. This entails moving into a new regime, which signifies a significant change. Where the conditions are experienced as less stressful or where the temporal scale is shorter, adaptation is more likely. If the shock or stress is short-lived, recovery is the best option. In cases of adaptation and recovery, the subject remains within the same regime as before (Chelleri et al. 2015: 4-8). We recognise this typology in Bourbeau's literature on resilience. He claimed the process of resilience had three aspects: resilience as maintenance, resilience as marginality, and resilience as renewal (Bourbeau 2018a: 31).

By combining this model with resilience thinking and the principled pragmatism approach, it becomes evident that the EU can combine pragmatism and resilience building, and as such, also manage to combine the focus on interests and the focus on norms:



Principled pragmatism combines the Union's idealistic goal to promote a better world with a more realistic assessment of the current political environment. During a conflict, promoting norms such as democracy and human rights is not always an option. This was shown in the EU's response to the Arab Spring. The conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa escalated quickly, and the EU had to act fast to find a suitable strategy. In this case, the Union chose to focus on stability and control over migration, rather than democracy. Some crises happen so fast and hit so unexpectedly, that they do not allow for the EU to formulate a long-term strategy. The focus is on what the EU is able to do with the limited resources and time available. Sometimes, this translates into a strategy based on limited knowledge, quick decisions, and a focus on regaining control over an already chaotic situation. The best solution to such issues, following the principled pragmatism approach, is to attempt to return to the previously defined equilibrium, to stability, or what Bourbeau called "resilience as maintenance", which was also characterised the ability to bounce back after a shock (Bourbeau 2018a: 31). The problem with this approach is that it presupposes that there is indeed a previous, stable equilibrium to return to. However, in regard to societies, this is rare.

This view of how to deal with crises might have implications for the promotion of norms, as achieving such stability might come on at the expense of norm diffusion. For instance, in cases such as the EU's response to the Arab Spring, the Union chose not to focus on democratisation and instead cooperate with authoritarian regimes in order to maintain stability. The migration influx forced the EU to act fast, which again "*activated the member states' instinct to seek the cooperation of the new authorities in the Arab countries to help*

curb the flow" (Noutcheva 2015: 20). According to the EU, the response was supposed to be short-term, but acknowledges *"its security preoccupations and lack of genuine support for democracy"* (Noutcheva 2015: 20). Principled pragmatism allows the EU to make quick decisions based on the environment in which the Union operates. In a pressing situation, this is deemed more necessary than the promotion of norms. In a situation of crises such as this, the focus is on recovery, rather than adaptation or transformation. The goal is to get the situation under control, making the subject experiencing the shock able to go back to its normal functions as quickly as possible. In retrospect, it could be that neglecting values in favour of interests might, in the long run, help the implementation of normative values, as it could ensure that a situation does not get completely out of control. As such, principled pragmatism does not necessarily get in the way of the promotion of values. The principled pragmatism approach does not safe-guard the EU against critical reactions to their actions, but it does allow the EU some leverage, as the EUGS now clearly states that the EU will be more pragmatic in its foreign policy (High Representative of the EU 2016: 8).

However, principled pragmatism mainly works in relation to short-term shocks. After a while, once control has been regained again, the uncertainty of the situation will recede. This is when the EU can begin building resilience. If the stress is persistent but kept under control, the receiving state will be better able to adapt through slow and incremental changes, in order to deal with the stress. The state still remains within the same regime, but small changes open up the possibility of dealing better with pressures. This is what Bourbeau referred to as resilience as marginality, characterised by *"responses that bring changes at the margins but that do not challenge the basis of a policy (or a society)"* (Bourbeau 2018a: 31). For the EU, following the EUGS, this would be the best time to promote norms in order to build resilience. As the understanding of resilience promoted by the EUGS underscores the importance of adaptability, changes will have to occur. Simultaneously, the EU recognises that it is not the Union's place to change the regime of the neighbouring states, as this is a bottom-up process that should come from the states themselves. However, the EU can help through facilitating and promoting norms. If a state in the Neighbourhood is not experiencing any critical situations, but still has the wish to improve democracy, liberalise the market, or enhance focus on human rights, this would be the most effective time to do so.

Resilience building is a response to the uncertainty of the world. Following the EU's understanding of resilience as a process that encompasses several levels and many aspects of society, it is also understood that building resilience takes time. The EU seems to have finally understood this. Many of the liberal values embedded in the resilience agenda are values the

EU have already been promoting for years, with various degree of success. There is no reason to assume that these values will be easier to implement now, simply because they are part of a more comprehensive strategy. However, there might be an impetus for the EU to have a more realistic view of resilience building. By acknowledging that helping neighbouring regions adapt to the changing environment is a long-term endeavour, as well as lowering the level of ambition related to the EU's involvement in these adaptations, the EU comes forward as a more modest actor. Following this model, it would be wrong to see principled pragmatism as a way for the EU to neglect norms or to accuse the EU of hypocrisy. The norms are not forgotten. Principled pragmatism is rather a symptom of the EU's new understanding of itself as a more limited actor – in the face of severe, short-term pressures, the promotion of liberal values will sometimes have to wait in order for stability and security to be reached.

This way of looking at resilience building is evident in the EUGS, which states that *"positive change can only be home-grown, and may take years to materialise. Our commitment to civil society will therefore be long-term"* (High Representative of the EU 2016: 27). Resilience building and the implementation of liberal values is a slow process that requires continued dedication on both sides. The need for quick, pragmatic action prompted by a sudden, short-term shock, does not neglect the need for norm diffusion. Rather, the EU understands that implementing norms during a crisis is not the best way to get the crisis under control. A pragmatic approach is a better response to short-term shocks. Once the shock has passed, the EU can continue to push for norms again, and in that way, prepare the state for the next shock. Hopefully, through the process of adaptation, the state will now be better equipped to deal with the crisis.

The final stage, the liberal world order, is achieved only after a transformation. In order for this stage to be reached, the subjects will have to pass a critical juncture and enter into a new regime, and into a new, stable equilibrium. However, entering a new regime does not mean that resilience becomes obsolete. On the contrary, as resilience is understood as a process with no discernible end, shocks and pressures will eventually start building in this new regime as well, forcing the subject again to either recover or adapt to the new environment. This creates a continuous loop of recovery, adaptation, and transformation. This is a consequence of the continually changing world all subjects operate in. Remember, resilience is a process with no clear end in sight. As such, the resilience agenda acknowledges that a stable, liberal future will not be reached.

This notion is not new. During the course of history, transformations have occurred, lasted for a while, only to be challenged and replaced after a new transformation. This is not a

problem, as the resilience agenda allows for several equilibria to exist, rather than just one. An example of such stable conditions is the multiple powershifts which occurred during the 20th century. The multipolar world, which ended after the Second World War, was replaced by a bipolar world order. A transformation had occurred, spurred by the mounting pressures the world order experienced. This bipolar world order was replaced with a unipolar world order after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Today, the hegemony of the US is again threatened by rising powers, such as Russia and China. It seems like the world is again moving towards multipolarity.

6.3.1 THE STABILITY-RESILIENCE NEXUS

Holling separated stability and resilience. He argued that stability was the ability of a system to return to a state of equilibrium. This is what was termed recovery above, and in the face of short term and extreme situations, this can be seen as the best solution. This is partly what the initiatives SHARE and AGIR sought out to do. Through their definition of resilience, which stressed the ability of a system to bounce back to a previous equilibrium once a shock had occurred, the EU attempted to handle the food crises which had left thousands of people starving. However, the EU's understanding of resilience is not the same as it was in 2012, and the Union now stresses the importance of being able to adapt to a changing environment. This mirrors what Holling called resilience, which measured the ability of systems to absorb changes (Holling 1973: 17). However, Holling contended, systems that are less stable might also be more resilient, as the harsh conditions which they live under force them to routinely adapt to the fluctuations in the environment. Following this, it is not impossible to assume that populations living under authoritarian regimes or facing severe challenges because of the rapid changes of the climate, will be more resilient than stable populations living under heterogeneous conditions. After all, populations in fragile states have shown themselves to be remarkably resilient and adaptable in the face of extreme conditions such as war, migration, and natural disasters. Perhaps, in the end, it is the EU which should be taught how to be resilient from the neighbouring states, not the other way around.

6.3.2 POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

The introduction of a temporal scale in relation to the discord between norms and values does not guarantee that the EU will not be facing criticism. The problem is it can be hard to see the changes which occur through a process of adaptation. It is easier to criticise the EU based on

their actions, rather than their long-term strategy of resilience building. However, we can assume that when a crisis hits, the changes which have occurred thanks to the strengthening of resilience will help reduce the fluctuations and the effects of the crisis. Additionally, the various understandings of resilience in the Member States may undermine the legitimacy of the resilience agenda. As we know, a foreign policy actor's legitimacy is in part based on the coherence and consistency of its norms. If the resilience promoted by the EU and by the Member States vary greatly, this can make the EU seem less like a unified foreign policy actor.

An argument could be made that the resilience agenda is still a top-down approach, and that it is not very different from past liberal intervention attempts. After all, the states in the Neighbourhood did not have a say in the formation of the EUGS. They experience the effects of the Strategy, but in effect, the EU is still holding the reins. The emphasis on local ownership could thus be seen as a way for the EU to maintain influence in the neighbourhood, without also having to be critiqued for being imperialistic. The norms which the resilience agenda is based on are still considered to be Western norms, although they are followed by states all over the world. The power to define what is normal is still within the EU. Following this argument, resilience building could be seen as giving the states of the neighbourhood responsibility, but not – *"far from giving power back to civil society, the government is constructing a sphere of governance which it oversees from a distance through the use of power"* (Joseph 2013: 44). However, in an interconnected world such as this, almost every part of the world will in some way be affected by the foreign policy strategies of other actors. Through the resilience agenda, the EU provides the Neighbourhood with the option of deciding more how they want to be affected.

7 CONCLUSION

The European Security Strategy of 2003 opened by claiming that "*Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free*" (High Representative of the EU 2003: 27). By 2016, this statement was far from the truth. By then, the insecurity and complexity of the world had been felt among the Member States and within the EU's institutions to such a degree that the Union needed a new strategy in order to handle the changing environment. This understanding of the world as more uncertain led to a newfound focus on resilience. Through building resilience, the aim of the EU has been to promote both interests and values in the Neighbourhood.

This thesis has explored the concept of resilience as it has been used by the EU. This concept has then been used to say something more general regarding the EU as a foreign policy actor. First, I unpacked the concept of resilience in the context of EU foreign policy. Here, we discovered that the EU's understanding of resilience had in fact changed. Initially the focus had been on helping states far from the EU's borders with recovering quickly from natural disasters, such as floods or food crises. By 2016, the resilience agenda had been brought home. The focus was placed on building resilience both among the Member States, in the Neighbourhood, and in states beyond the Neighbourhood. The focus of resilience was not on bouncing back or recovering from stress – rather, resilience was now understood as a process of adaptability. In a continually changing world, the subjects in it would have to change in order to survive.

The second aim was to explore the way this changed understanding can be used to say something about the Union's identity as a foreign policy actor and normative power. Here, I argued that, through the changes in the resilience agenda, we could trace a shift in the EU's identity towards a more careful, realistic, and modest actor. The thesis has shown that the EU can indeed be regarded as a more realistic actor. By focusing more on pragmatism and tailor-made approaches, the EU acknowledges that the diffusion of its norms is not a universal process. The norms will have to be incorporated into already existing contexts. This will require cooperation and inclusion with the receiving states. It will also require that the EU acknowledges that parts of the world has no intention of or wish to look like the Union.

The EU has come to the realisation that building peace and prosperity in the neighbouring regions cannot be achieved through norm diffusion alone. Although the resilience agenda prompts the spread of many of the EU's most common norms, this alone will not ensure the liberal utopia the EU previously sought. In fact, the EU seems now to understand that this liberal utopia will never occur. As the world is constantly changing, we will never reach one stable equilibrium and remain there. After a while, stress and pressure will build, and resilience building will again be necessary. However, through resilience building, this adaptations becomes easier every time a crisis comes around.

It could be expected that the turn towards a more modest and realistic actor, would have an impact on the EU as a normative actor. After all, following the pragmatic approach means that the EU will sometimes have to make choices which go against the promotion of liberal norms, which is the basis of the Union's foreign policy. Despite this pragmatic turn, the EU can, however, still be considered a normative power. This is because of the time scale related to resilience building. Principled pragmatism is mainly concerned with short-term, quick responses to stressful situations. Resilience building is acknowledged to take time. By incorporating this temporal scale, it becomes possible for the EU to focus on interests and values at the same time. Promoting and implementing liberal norms does not invoke change overnight, and sometimes setbacks occur. This means that the promotion and diffusion of norms sometimes would have to be forsaken in order to achieve stability and control. However, the liberal goals of the EU remain the same – the Union is just more realistic when it comes to the question of how to achieve these goals, and what the world might look like when or if these goals are reached.

Following this analysis, it becomes evident that there is still a lot of work to be done with regard to fully utilising the resilience agenda. So far, there has been a lot of talk regarding the strengthening of resilience, but not much action. Four years have passed since the EUGS was presented, but we have yet to see changes regarding the EU's relationship with the Neighbourhood. So far, the focus has mainly been on finishing old strategies. For instance, the Action Plan is set to finish this year. Additionally, there are uncertainties regarding the focus resilience will receive from the new Commission and the new HR/VP. As every new Commission wants to put its mark on the EU's foreign policy, it will be interesting to follow the further trajectory of resilience. If there is one thing the COVID-19 situation has taught us, it is that a crisis can occur suddenly and take unexpected forms.

There are still things to be said regarding this topic. The EU's use of resilience has only just begun, and actual effects of the EUGS are yet to be seen. The focus on context when

it comes to norm diffusion and the turn towards pragmatism could lead to greater divergence between the states of the Neighbourhood. As the EU is to promote tailor-made approaches, the focus of each approach will be varied, depending on what is needed in that particular state. This divergence may lead to distinct differences between the EU and the neighbourhood, or it could lead to a greater degree of convergence over time.

In any case, the introduction of resilience into EU foreign policy is not expected to be replaced any time soon, and each experienced crisis makes it more evident why building resilience is necessary. As we now know, resilience building takes time. And in a rapidly changing world, event may occur which will either foster the adoption of resilience or delay it. It is impossible to plan for this future entirely, but we do know will have to adapt to the changing conditions. The resilience building process *"requires a capacity to imagine alternative futures rather than a capacity to bounce back to some preexisting state"* (Walklate et al. 2014: 419). And this is, after all, much more exiting.

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NON-WRITTEN SOURCES

Interview 1

Interview 2