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The European Union (EU), China and Africa:

Does Trilateral Development Cooperation Trigger Europeanization?

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Abstract

The international order is in flux. The emergence of new powers are challenging and reshaping the established paradigms paving way for new ideas and practices. Trilateral development cooperation has emerged as a new form of development cooperation, focused on bridging the difference between the traditional and new donors. This thesis will examine how the EU and the member states are adapting to the increased multipolarity and engage with emerging powers. Furthermore, it will look at their practice of trilateral development cooperation to see if it's a "European" adaptation to emerging powers. By employing the lens of Europeanization trilateral development cooperation will be explored on member state level as well as European level, investigating potential mechanisms of adaptation or projection when engaging with emerging powers.

Preface

Working on this thesis has been a challenging quest. My interest has always evolved around politics outside the domestic realm and the complexity of the EU caught my attention years ago. As a subject of study China is undoubtedly intriguing, but my fascination comes mostly from living in Beijing and studying the language. China has a special place in my heart. These two interests resulted in a somewhat uncommon trilateral constellation. I would not have been able to do this on my own. I want to thank my supervisor, Stefan Gänzle, for outstanding guidance and patience it was greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank my ad-hoc supervisor, Dr. Christine Hackenesch, for providing clarity in times of confusion. Finally, I would like to thank my family; they have been indispensable in this process.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AA	<i>Auswärtiges Amt</i> German Ministry of Foreign Affairs
ACP	African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
BMZ	<i>Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung</i> German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
GIZ	<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH</i> German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC	OECD Development Co-operation Directorate
TDC	Trilateral development cooperation

1. Introduction

The distribution of power in the international system has changed over the last decades. Emerging powers such as Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) have expanded their capacity to influence the global arena, including development cooperation as so-called “new donors” (Fejerskov et.al. 2016; De Bruyn, 2013; Udvari, 2014). Whereas the EU’s engagement in Africa dates back to the days of the Treaty of Rome, China has only become an important player in Africa, since the early 2000s, both as a trading partner and, increasingly, emerging or new donor in development cooperation. The EU and its member states have been rather critical to China’s growing presence in Africa – and, more importantly, its practices in providing development assistance. One of the main dividing factors is the different development “models” presented by EU and China, where the Chinese model – from the perspective of many African countries – has proven to be a valid alternative to the EU’s (Swedlund, 2017).

The models are based on different experiences of “development”. The Chinese approach has been more focused on economic infrastructure that has been crucial for China’s own massive growth; the EU on the other hand has increasingly prioritized social infrastructure and conditioned the aid on establishment of democratic institutions and “good governance” for a long time. Further, the colonial history of some of the EU member states and Africa has led to a “donor-recipient” relationship and has been challenging in establishing a partnership, while China as a recipient of development aid itself has emphasized a discourse of “equal partnership” and “win-win cooperation” based on a principle of non-interference in national affairs (Lin and Wang, 2015; Zhang and Chen, 2015).

This dynamic between a “Beijing consensus”¹ and the “western” approach is also evident on the multilateral arena where China has expressed reluctance to cooperate on OECD-based terms and values for allocation of development aid and opted for bilateral formats of cooperation (Barton & Bellefroid, 2015). The fact that China has become “too big to be ignored”², together with the complex nature of development problems and the previous shortcomings of the “western” model, has resulted in a need for traditional donors to find new ways to engage with China and other

¹ Term coined by J.C. Ramo in “*Beijing Consensus*” from 2004, as a challenger and alternative model to

² For example, massive investment in the Belt and Road initiative affects more than 60 countries across several continents, and establishment of AIIB (similar to World Bank) that aims to increase influence in development cooperation.

emerging donors. Trilateral development cooperation (TDC) has emerged as one potential avenue and has been pursued both at the level of the European Union and individual member states over the last decade. TDC is an example of how traditional players are responding to the rise of new powers. The main motivation of this MA project lies in the need to better understand this response. In a nutshell, the project seeks to explore the EU and member states approach to trilateral cooperation and the dynamics between the two levels.

1. 1. Research Question

How do the EU and member states engage in trilateral cooperation? What are the mechanisms for EU-member state convergence or divergence – if at all – vis-à-vis TDC? How did TDC perform?

While the first part of the research question is more descriptive in nature aiming to fully grasp the development of TDC, the second part is explanatory – with a strong emphasis in the mechanisms, which ensure that TDC runs in sync at the level of both the European union and (individual) member states. Although there are numerous publications on trilateral cooperation, research on how it was/is used as a tool of EU foreign policy and as a way to engage with emerging powers is still scarce. Furthermore, in the case of the EU-China-Africa trilateral dialogue, the role of EU member states has been largely ignored. The project will address this using the analytical lens of Europeanization.

The method applied here is qualitative and involves two case studies of member states Germany and the UK and their relationship vis-à-vis the European Union as a collective actor. These countries have been selected because of their engagement with emerging donors and experience in TDC at the member state level. Germany has participated in more trilateral projects than any other member state, while the UK is one of the few traditional donors to engage in TDC with China. They are also quite similar in terms of size and uploading capacity to the EU level. It seems that Germany and the UK should be central to the development of trilateral cooperation at the EU level.

1.2. The EU's role in development policy *vis-à-vis* Africa

The EU is a major traditional actor on the African continent, with instruments like preferential trade, agreements, and development aid. More than half of global ODA in 2017 come from the EU and the member states (57%), and Africa is the most important beneficiary (European Commission, 2018). Apart from aid delivery³, the structure of cooperation between the EU and Africa consists of regional, multilateral, and bilateral activities conducted by the EU Commission or individual member states. Development policy is a hybrid policy field. The overarching EU framework is outlined in The *Joint Africa-EU Strategy* (JAES)⁴ launched in 2007 Lisbon Africa-EU Summit (Joint Africa-EU Strategy, 2007).

The purpose of the JAES is to move beyond traditional donor-recipient model and establish an equal partnership surrounding common values and interest. The partnership rests on the principles of “*the unity of Africa, the interdependence between Africa and Europe, ownership and joint responsibility, and respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, as well as the right to development*” (The Joint Africa-EU Strategy, 2007, para. 6). This is in line with the rhetoric in the *European Consensus on Development* the base for EU development policy, adopted collectively by the EU institutions and the member states two years before JAES (European Consensus on Development, 2006). The EU commits to the principle of ownership, where development policy and programmes should be shaped by recipients' needs.

The Cotonou Agreement from 2000 between the EU and the Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) group is the main legal instrument for the EU-Africa relations. It is a comprehensive partnership with 79 countries within the ACP and marked a change in the EU-Africa relations towards a more equal relationship⁵ (Wu 2012). The main goal of the agreement is “*reducing and eventually eradicating poverty consistent with the objectives of sustainable*

³ Foreign aid is not synonymous with development cooperation, the latter involves more holistic understanding of development. In addition to aid, global partnerships, geopolitical interests, trade, investment etc. are included (Langfelder, 2010).

⁴ It is implemented through multiannual action plans and the joint priorities have been revised three times, the most recent revision took place in 2017 at the 5th Africa-EU Summit.

⁵ The predecessors to the Cotonou (the Lomé Convention and Yaoundé Convention) were rather hierarchical in tone, and scrutinized for this.

development and the gradual integration of the ACP countries into the world economy.”(The Cotonou Agreement, 23 June 2000, art. 1).

The EU as a compound actor

In all the relevant documents concerning the EU-Africa relations, both the EU and Africa are framed as unitary actors and the slogan is “One Europe, One Africa” (Huliaras, 2012). However, both actors are far from unitary, with “*deeply fragmented, unequal and complex network of relationships between a variety of actors.*” (Huliaras, pp. 427, 2012) and while interregionalism exists it is overstated in the rhetoric of the EU. Within development policy this takes the form of subsidiarity, and the failure of coordination between member states and the EU level can be attributed to EU’s inability to present its added value (Holland, 2008; Söderbaum & Hettne 2011).

Furthermore, the EU acts as a scene for donor identity formation, both for the member states and the EU, these donor identities compete and one donor’s identity can be seen as a “threat” to another donor. Coordination by the EU could limit the visibility of single member states (Söderbaum & Hettne 2011). At the same time the EU is working hard towards the asserting its own identity in the international scene. The European Consensus on Development was introduced in 2005 as an important effort to coordinate development policies across levels highlighting that “*working together, the EU is an important force for positive change*” (pp.9). However, given the high internal fragmentation of actors, the results have been limited. Development policy towards Africa is affected by the interaction of different actors with different policy preferences (Hackenesch, 2009). The most important actors that will be considered in this thesis are EU institutions (the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the European Council) and member states.

1.3. The emergence of new actors in global development: the BRICS countries with focus on China

Since the 1950s, “western” actors including governments, NGOs, and multilateral institutions have dominated the development arena. From around the millennium shift a new range of actors have complemented the traditional actors. The emerging powers (non-DAC development

partners⁶ or donors with relatively new development programmes), especially the BRICS, are playing an increasingly significant role in setting the agendas, challenging the existing structures, and re-articulating development relationships between and within the “North” and “South” (Udvari, 2014, Seifert & de Renzio, 2014). More intensive involvement includes participation in global forums challenging the dominance of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD and ability to build coalitions and represent their interests. Additionally, they are regional powers thus; their support could be key to enhancing aid effectiveness in their respective regions. While ignored at first (by DAC and other traditional actors), they have gradually gained recognition. Schmaljohann and Prizzon (2015) refer to the worldwide increase in donors and development mechanisms as indicative of an “age of choice”.

The concept of aid and development cooperation is in flux (Abdenur & Da Fonseca, 2013; Scoones et.al. 2016). This change is rooted in the failure of the traditional aid structure to properly address development challenges like poverty and inequality, difficulties with establishing common standards for effectiveness of aid, problems with tackling global issues like climate change, and emergence of new actors with subsequent intensification of “South-South” cooperation (McEwan & Mawdsley; da Motta Veiga & Polónia Rios, 2016). Furthermore, the foreign policy of the BRICS has become more assertive with motives ranging from wanting to spread their influence to opening up new markets, while openly contrasting their approach with those of the traditional donors⁷, focusing on the discourse of solidarity, complementarity and horizontality.

Given the growth of the BRICS and upgrading to Middle Income Countries (MIC), several traditional donors has phased out their assistance to these countries, for many nations this were the main bilateral ties to the BRICS in-country. The UKs Department for International Development stated, *“from 2009 DFID will no longer have an in-country presence in most of Latin America. This means that innovative ways must be found to continue to capture the important work emerging from the region, and ensure that this is available to the partners (NGO and multilateral) who will continue to be active on the ground in Latin America.”* (DFID ELLA, 2009). These changes requires responses from established donors, like the EU and its member

⁶ Some emerging donors are OECD-DAC members, for example Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland. They are not that prominent in the TDC literature focusing on differences in development/foreign policy approach due to their adherence to DAC standards.

⁷ This is mostly evident in the refusal to integrate in to the DAC framework for development cooperation

states, it is not enough to continue “business as usual”. Established donors has started to rethink their role in international development cooperation, trying out new partner constellations and modes of cooperation, and more importantly finding a place in the new dynamics focused geographically and politically on the “South”⁸ (Abdenur & Da Fonseca, 2013).

The focus on China is justified here by its enormous presence in academic research, media, and international relations that exceeds any other emerging power by far. It is further justified by the massive criticism China received initially as a development actor. After the first wave of disapproval passed, it revealed a much more complex and intriguing reality.

China’s exceptional growth sets the stage for its expanding foreign aid scheme. As a rising power, China is also an emerging donor that is influencing the international aid and development regime. The debate surrounding Chinese influence is mostly concerning impact of aid on recipient countries, and whether China will join or undermine traditional development architecture. China does not categorize its development aid by OECD ODA standards, type of instruments and principles differ from that of a traditional donor. In fact, China has explicitly distanced itself from traditional donor practice. Foreign aid is becoming an increasingly important part of donor’s foreign policies and it’s unclear which implications the rise of China has in the arena of foreign policy (Zhang, 2017).

Following the founding of People’s Republic of China in 1949, Chinese foreign development projects were structured around support to agriculture development in Africa. The 80’s and 90’s were characterized by a shift towards to a business-oriented model of assistance, combining aid, trade and investment (Gu *et al.* 2017). Since the 2000’s China has taken a more central role in development assistance to Africa, which was officially signaled in their first White Paper in 2006. The FOCAC was established in 2000 and evolved in to the primary institutional framework of China-Africa relations it is “*a framework for collective dialogue between China and African countries on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.*” (Beijing Declaration of the FOCAC, October 2000, 2nd preambular; Wu, 2012). While China has focused mainly on infrastructure development in Africa, it has evolved beyond the “hard” sectors of development. One of the main challenges in engagement with Africa is the balance between efficiency and

⁸ While some authors doubt an emergence of an aid regime fundamentally different than DAC – See Quadir (2013) – most still acknowledge the need of traditional donors to include emerging donor strategies in to their approach to development cooperation

quality while perpetuating sustainable development (Gu et.al. 2017). Furthermore, within the literature, the main criticisms of China–Africa relations include concerns about exploitative tendencies in terms of natural resources, lack of transparency and good governance, limited protections for the environment, labor rights and local livelihoods (Gu et.al. 2017).

Initially, Europe’s perceptions of China in Africa were fairly negative, in media, politics and civil society (Tull, 2008). Including the critique mentioned in the previous paragraph, European concerns include that China’s increased involvement on the African continent will undermine European/Western influence and economic benefits and ties and that China might try to change the underlying value structure of the world order (Schoeman, 2008). Furthermore, the Chinese principle of non-interference in other states’ domestic affairs is perceived as irresponsible. China was viewed as a challenger in Africa. However, China is not necessarily a direct economic competitor for Europe, because they mainly target different sectors (Tull, 2008). The next section will examine trilateral development cooperation.

1. 4. Trilateral Cooperation: what it is

“The novelty of TDC lies in its attempt to harness together two historically very different—if arguably complementary—forms of development relationship.” – McEwan & Mawdsley (2012)

“Trilateral”, “triangular”, or “tripartite” development cooperation is an innovative and relatively new mode of cooperation with the main goal of increasing efficiency in development cooperation by combining benefits of North-South cooperation (NSC) with the benefits of South-South cooperation (SSC) while taking in to account the global power shifts and the needs of a multipolar world (Langendorf, Piefer, Knodt, Müller, & Rütther, 2012). This includes primarily technical assistance with the aim of capacity building and covers the areas of agriculture, food security, public health, environmental protection and technical training (Ashoff, 2010). Despite its latest interest, there is no common definition of trilateral development cooperation (TDC). The lack of a clear definition has led to a plethora of interpretations; the answer to what trilateral development cooperation is depends on where one looks⁹.

Nonetheless, some common understandings still exist. It usually consists of one traditional DAC donor (“North”), one pivotal emerging donor (“South”), and a beneficiary country (“South”).

⁹ See Appendix for definitions of TDC

OECD (2016) describes TDC “... as a modality of development co-operation that combines the comparative advantages of the different partners involved. It does this by making use of complementary strengths for creating synergies, learning among all partners and building relationships based on trust.” TDC highlights horizontal partnership as a mode of interaction, with strong focus on learning, capacity building and knowledge-sharing. This is different to the classic “donor-recipient” model, which is inherently hierarchical (Piefer, 2014).

The lack of a established conceptualization mirrors the flexible nature of TDC as well as the different approaches to TDC that have evolved among governments and organizations participating in this type of cooperation (OECD, 2013). Thus, in this thesis two definitions are applied, a “weak” form of triangulation and a “strong” form. According to the weak definition, triangular co-operation “unites the approaches of two donors into one project in which the two different approaches work simultaneously but in a coordinated way”. The stronger definition is “the three parties are united at each step of the project: the planning, financing, implementation, and monitoring” (Li & Bonschab, 2012). Whereas the weaker definition calls for partners to coordinate approaches and exploit complementarities, the strong definition requires alignment of methodologies and values. Li & Bonschab (2012) propose the stronger definition is closer to the core of TDC, while the weaker definition is more politically feasible in real world cooperation.

TDC is not a completely new form of cooperation. Examples exist as far back as the 1970s with Germany and Japan as the most active supporters (Piefer, 2014). Still, the last decade has shown a surge of trilateral model for cooperation, beyond one-off cases (OECD, 2016). The momentum of the recent years is largely owing to the growing importance of emerging economies acting as SSC providers as well as the booming interest from Northern and Southern providers to work together in developing countries (Weigel and Dimissie, 2017). Further, it is a way to mitigate challenges associated with NSC and SSC, namely legitimacy of a traditional donor and insufficient financial resources by Southern donors (Lengfelder, 2010). A number of countries are involved in trilateral cooperation¹⁰, including most OECD/DAC members¹¹. The emerging donor and the recipient country has tended to be from the same region, however the reach of the

¹⁰ See Fordelone (2009)/Schulz (2010) for a comprehensive lists of projects.

¹¹ Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Community, have negotiated, implemented or completed projects in partnership with developing countries.

emerging donors has increased over the past decade. Projects are appearing further from home (Ashoff, 2010).

Most international platforms and forums that shape international development cooperation endorse TDC as a complementary modality, including the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC), the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum (UN-DCF) and the OECD/DAC. TDC is also a part of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and it was highlighted in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Paulo, 2018). Trilateral development cooperation has certainly increased in popularity over the last decade. The next part of the thesis will further briefly explore how TDC emerges, and the central concepts of ownership and horizontality.

How does trilateral development cooperation emerge?

Trilateral development cooperation is initiated in various ways. It can be driven by actors at government level in a “top-down” dynamic, actors from within existing projects and development frameworks can initiate TDC, or the idea can emerge from occasional meetings between experts at all levels. A top-down initiative is discussed in highly visible settings, like summits and other top-level meetings between countries. The bottom-up initiatives start in an informal setting at project level. These initiatives tend to be easier to implement given their natural conception by actors involved “on the ground”. Meanwhile, top-down initiatives for TDC are established faster because of the high level support from the beginning (Langendorf et.al. 2012). It is common to distinguish four basic ways (or models) in which trilateral cooperation is initiated.

In the first model TDC is formed by an emerging donor and a beneficiary country inviting a traditional donor to their horizontal development cooperation, here South-South cooperation is the starting point of TDC. The traditional donor is usually brought in for technical support, specialised expertise, and additional funding. Ideally, the role of the traditional donor should be more than just funding silent partner. While providing some funding is common and shows political commitment, it is also important to participate in the learning process and exchange of knowledge (Piefer, 2014). Germany is a prominent agent of this idea, for example in the German-South Africa trilateral cooperation framework where South Africa has to provide

minimum 30% of the funding and the projects are *jointly* carried out. This is assumed to promote active participation, horizontality, and responsibility from all three parties¹² (BMZ, 2013). Donors like the UK and Japan prefer to provide the funds and leave the emerging donor in charge of the implementation (Seifert & Renzio, 2014).

The second model is based on North-South cooperation as a starting point; TDC is used here for scaling up projects. A traditional donor and emerging donor would replicate a successful solution or project for a development issue in a third country in similar context and are more likely to succeed. The crucial point in this model is that the interest or request for trilateral cooperation has to come from the beneficiary country; of all the models presented here this model is specifically vulnerable to overlook the needs and input of the beneficiary (Langendorf et.al. 2012; Schulz, 2010).

The third model for initiation of TDC involves an emerging donor supporting a bilateral relationship between a traditional donor and a beneficiary country. Many of the development issues encountered by the beneficiaries, are more familiar to the emerging donors than the traditional donors. These issues include malaria control, HIV/AIDS eradication, and tropical agriculture among others, where the traditional donors have little first hand experience. The solutions to these issues are based on experiences gained by emerging donors and assumed to be more fitting (Langendorf et.al. 2012).

The fourth and last model follows a bottom-up dynamic: *“On a technical level, three experts from a beneficiary country, a new development partner and an OECD DAC country might meet at an event and exchange experiences and ideas on a certain topic. From this initial coincidental meeting, concrete project ideas arise and with high-level political backing from all three sides, a joint trilateral cooperation project is initiated.”* (Piefer, pp. 21, 2014). This model is the least observable due to its informal nature.

Since TDC initially is conceived by two partners and setting up a trilateral mechanism would be costly, existing bilateral arrangements are usually used to negotiate the framework of TDC.

¹² The underlying idea is that shared funding will lead to more responsibility and interest in the project by all partners. If only one country is funding the whole of the project, it will become the de facto responsible partner, the opportunities for opting out may increase for the other partners, and the horizontality may become harder to achieve resulting in a more traditional hierarchical donor-recipient model (Langendorf et.al. 2012)

After the terms are negotiated, the framework is usually formalised in contracts between the partners, for example in a Memoranda of Understanding (MoU). Alternatively, TDC is formalised in an umbrella program where two partners agree on cooperating in a triangular formation, then a third country may express interest in cooperation and a specific project would be formalised through an additional contract (Langendorf et.al. 2012).

Some countries use a fund mechanism with specific criteria for cooperation; an example would be the German-Latin American and Caribbean Fund (the LAC Fund), which will be discussed in more detail at a later point. Without formalisation, as most international cooperation, TDC is vulnerable to non-commitment. Finally, joint planning is pointed out to be important at every step of triangulation. It is an opportunity for learning; identify shared interests, to create a common understanding of purpose and objectives, and to ensure as much participation as possible from the beneficiary side (Langendorf et.al. 2012).

2. Literature review

The research on trilateral cooperation is mainly concerned with what it is, TDC's effectiveness as a development delivery modality, and motives for engagement in this type of cooperation, explaining increased interest in TDC and the value of trilateral cooperation as a tool for both development and foreign policy. Thus, the literature is branched in to two primary approaches: the policy oriented and the politics oriented. The policy-oriented direction is concerned with TDC as a way to improve aid effectiveness based on complementarities between NSC and SSC and overcome issues of transaction costs and knowledge transfer. TDC is seen as a tool for development and largely ignores uneven power relations between actors and assertion of seemingly universal norms and values (Lengfelder, 2010; McEwan & Mawdsley, 2012). Based on International Relations (IR) and Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), the politics-oriented strand focuses on the political nature of aid. It involves strategic reasons and power¹³ behind interest in TDC as mode for engagement (McEwan & Mawdsley, 2012).

¹³ Power here is the ability/capacity of one actor to influence another

2.1. Trilateral cooperation in development policy

In development-oriented research, the overarching motivation for TDC is to bring together experiences and strengths of DAC-donors and South-South cooperation providers to enhance effectiveness of development in beneficiary countries. Moreover, TDC might enable capacity building in emerging donors and strengthen relations between all partners (Fordelone, 2009; OECD, 2013).

One of the most critical challenges is high transaction cost. As mentioned earlier, involvement of several stakeholders from different countries increases need for harmonization. Institutions with different procedures, longer negotiations on operational aspects of projects, difficulty agreeing on common standards and guidelines, and unclear division of roles and responsibilities may all lead to problems of coordination and raised transaction costs (Fordelone, 2009, Ashoff, 2010). However, using existing bilateral framework for cooperation can mitigate this increased complexity, for example by replicating existing initiatives in third countries or by third country joining in on an existing project (Fordelone, 2009).

The supporters of TDC have argued that the complementarities of the partners will lower the costs. Importing technologies, policies or legal practices from traditional donors is costly for beneficiaries and traditional donors, personnel and technology are cheaper coming from emerging donors. This pooling of resources has been especially appreciated after the 2008 financial crisis when several traditional donor agencies experienced budget cuts (Abdenur & Marques da Fonseca, 2013; Mah, 2014). In addition, some of the technology and knowledge of emerging donors is believed to be more appropriate for beneficiaries with similar experiences. The beneficiaries are presumably facing similar challenges as the emerging donor did, for example tropical diseases, where the experience of the traditional donor is limited. Here the traditional donor can be seen as a facilitator for South-South cooperation. Thus shared culture, language, geography and experiences may facilitate a more effective and efficient triangulation (Mehta & Nanda, 2005).

The traditional donors have accumulated a large amount of experience over decades serving as aid and development providers. Meanwhile, the emerging donors are just starting to engage in international development cooperation. With limited budgets and capacity, South-South

cooperation has been criticized for lowering the quality standards of development delivery (Ashoff, 2010). Though trilateral cooperation emerging donors can learn best practices, safeguard quality of delivery, and skip the extensive learning processes (Altenburg & Weikert, 2007). For traditional donors TDC presents in this sense a concrete platform to influence the norms and practices of emerging donors.

Lengfelder (2010) tries to clear up this dispute of whether TDC results in higher transaction costs than other arrangements or not, by dividing in to two types of transaction costs: *ex ante* and *ex post*. *Ex ante* costs is mainly related to initial costs of negotiation and setting up a project. *Ex post* costs refer to administrative costs, communication costs, translation costs etc. The authors arguing that TDC is costly, often talk about *ex ante* costs, while the *ex post* costs are lower. Thus, TDC involves primarily high initial costs, but lower costs after a while. Furthermore, not all impacts can be measured by results in beneficiary country; creation of trust and partnership is an important aspect to consider and could make up for higher transaction costs in the long term (Piefer, 2014). Trust can lead way to more cooperation and easier harmonization, lowering transaction costs.

2.2. Trilateral cooperation in IR and FPA

A general critique of the policy-oriented approach to emerging donors have mentioned that the they can undermine progress done by DAC-donors in poverty reduction, aid effectiveness, and good governance. Meanwhile, others have emphasised the instrumental role emerging donors can have in re-balancing development cooperation giving recipient countries more choices. One issue that has been raise concerning TDC specifically is that it might be a way for traditional donors to socialise emerging donors into existing development architecture, rather than learning from each other. McEwan and Mawdsley (2012) state that “*TDC may well act as a vehicle to co-opt the (re)emerging donors into existing hegemonies of development ideology, policy and practice, without a genuine dialogue about different approaches to development.*”.

The main assumption in this argument is that nations follow their national interest in development cooperation, and while the overwhelming focus on effectiveness of TDC has let power-imbalances go unchecked, there is nothing to suggest that TDC in itself will create a horizontal partnership over a hierarchal relationship. Thus, the most powerful actor in the

“partnership” will decide the contents and norms of the cooperation. The shape of the cooperation will depend on the authority and capacity of each actor, and more often than not the traditional donor is in a favourable position.

Furthermore, TDC can be used a traditional donor for strategic engagement with an important emerging power, ignoring the beneficiary (Abdenur & Marques da Fonseca, 2013; McEwan & Mawdsley, 2012). Ashoff (2010) mentions one of the risks of TDC as *“Neglecting the alignment with beneficiary countries’ needs, priorities, and strategies if triangular cooperation is primarily designed to reflect the experiences and preferences of the traditional and emerging donors”*. Given the scaling back of bilateral relationships with the emerging donors graduation to MICs and the differences in development practices, TDC gives an opportunity for cooperation when it’s difficult but necessary (Stahl, 2018). However, ownership by the beneficiary and aid effectiveness might suffer when the strategic focus becomes too strong and the partnership becomes a DAC-donor cooperating with an emerging donor *over* a beneficiary (Langendorf et.al 2012).

Another point of concern is that the policy oriented literature treats the relationship of the emerging donor and the beneficiary as a natural partnership based on shared cultural, linguistic, and shared “developing country” experiences characterizing them both as “South” (McEwan & Mawdsley, 2012). While in reality the differences between an emerging donor and a beneficiary might be immense. The assumption that they are automatic partners neglects the fact that many emerging donors might be perceived with hostility and suspicion of their intentions by beneficiaries, especially if they are regional leaders like Brazil or South Africa (McEwan & Mawdsley, 2012). Some emerging donors might use this assumption to build up an “experience as recipient” narrative while engaging with strategically interesting beneficiaries in terms of for example securing natural resources or seeking consumer markets (Altenburg & Weikert, 2007).

Finally, TDC can be used as an instrument to promote a specific image and improve international standing. Seifert & de Renzio (2014) point out that *“The danger is that Northern as well as Southern cooperation providers will be more interested in showing their good will to engage in Triangular Cooperation – and thereby be seen as moving beyond the North-South divide – rather than actually proving that by doing so they are providing better and more effective development cooperation”*. Traditional donors might gain legitimacy by association

with a donor without a colonial past, and emerging powers might want to build an image of a responsible international actor. Zhang (2017) for example, found evidence of China using TDC for image building in some cases. The lack of real effort to evaluate the effectiveness and added value of TDC over bilateral and multilateral development cooperation might exacerbate this problem. A multitude of definitions and models makes evaluation a challenge.

Based on the two strands of research following motivations can be found amongst the different partners (retrieved from Weigel & Demissie 2017)

Table 1: Motivations for trilateral cooperation

Northern providers	Southern providers	Beneficiary countries
Continuing cooperation with Southern providers that have graduated from “beneficiary country status” through structures and networks built over decades of development cooperation	Broadening and scaling-up of South-South cooperation through additional resources	Increasing external support for meeting development challenges
Nurturing trust at the working level with Southern providers, who will gain more importance and power over the next decades	Higher visibility on the international stage as a responsible member of the international community	Benefiting from the synergy between suitable technical solutions and know-how from the Southern provider and technical and management expertise from the Northern provider
Expanding collaboration with Southern providers as strategic partners to address global challenges, such as climate change	Justifying South-South cooperation to own constituents	Accessing solutions from two different development cooperation approaches and cultural backgrounds
Strengthening development cooperation agencies of Southern providers to enhance response to global challenges, such as climate change		Strengthening own position and asserting more ownership in comparison to bilateral cooperation, where chance of being overruled is more likely
Learning from Southern providers’ practices and experiences regarding development cooperation	Learning from Northern providers’ practices and experiences regarding development cooperation	Advancing harmonization of support within the country by facilitating cooperation of Northern and Southern providers
Integrating Southern providers in to the OECD/DAC agenda		
Maintaining traditional influence in different world regions		
Gaining access to new markets created through South-South cooperation	Gaining access to new markets	

	created through South-South cooperation	
Building on the good image of the Southern provider in the beneficiary country, countering perceptions of a former colonial power	Building on the good image of the Northern provider in the beneficiary country, countering perceptions of a dominating or hegemonic power	

Sources: Weigel & Dimissie 2017, Langendorf et.al 2012, Ashoff 2010

3. Theoretical approach

3.1. European Foreign Policy

The development of “European Foreign Policy” (EFP) is rather recent given the reluctance of member states to transfer control to a supranational level, and concern about the implications for their sovereignty. EFP gained traction with the establishment of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in 1993, and as the EU gained competences the field of EFP grew. In the early 2000’s scholars agreed that to understand Europe’s actions, a broader view has to be applied. Consequently the other aspects of EU’s interactions with the outside world were included, known as “External Relations” (Ruano, 2011). Moreover, member states are still the fundamental actors, entangled within the EU. To be able to fully grasp the EU relations with outside actors, member states and their foreign policies are an essential factor. Thus, this thesis applies a broad definition of what constitutes as European foreign policy, including:

1. Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)
2. External Action, which includes trade, external relations, development cooperation, humanitarian aid, economic and financial cooperation with third countries,
3. National policies (Ruano, 2011; Keukeleire & Delreux, 2014)

The broad definition is relevant here because of the focus on development policy as a foreign policy tool; this is not possible with a narrow definition of CFSP.

Furthermore, the increased multipolarity has led to a global world order “*comprising a multitude of different levels through which a limited number of actors discuss rather specific international issues*” (Stahl, pp. 36, 2018). Three levels will be discussed in this thesis: the bilateral, the

multilateral and the trilateral. Bilateralism refers to the traditional level of interaction between two states. Multilateralism is considered the counterpart to bilateralism, an institutional form that coordinates among three or more states. Trilateralism is the focal point in this project and will be discussed in greater detail throughout the thesis (Stahl, 2018).

3.2. Europeanization

Europeanization has been a fashionable tool in the analysis of European integration for decades, with the most prominent work done in the 90`s (Knill and Lehmkuhl 1999; Börzel 1999). Originally, The main theoretical focus regarded the formation of the EU, it was mainly integration oriented. With heavy functionalist influence, the understanding was that European integration *“follows an ‘expansive logic of sector integration’ in the form of inevitable ‘spillovers’ from one economic sector to the other (functional spillover) which eventually also leads to (European) political integration (political spillover)”* (Vink and Graziano, pp.32 2007). Later contribution from intergovernmentalism stressed importance of the *“enduring presence of ‘rational’ governments which domestically form their preferences and subsequently negotiate at the regional (i.e. European) level”* (Vink and Graziano, pp.33 2007), and realism that concentrated on state power in an anarchic international system. This turn called for a reorientation in Europeanization research and a bottom-up approach (Vink and Graziano 2007).

Despite the existence of a rich literature on Europeanization, there is no widely accepted sense of the term itself, which in turn makes it problematic to conceptualise. It is used to describe a broad spectrum of phenomena and processes of change. Harmsen and Wilson (2000) for example, outline eight distinct Europeanization processes that they could observe: (i) The emergence of new forms of European governance (ii) National adaptation (iii) Policy isomorphism (iv) Problem and opportunity for domestic political management (v) Modernization (vi) Joining Europe (vii) Reconstruction of identities (viii) Transnationalism and cultural integration. Among these senses of the term there is not one common understanding to build a research agenda around, no “grand theory” of Europeanization, but the value of the term lies in that it recognizes change on both national and supranational level and the relations between them (Harmsen and Wilson 2000; Olsen 2002).

The abundance of approaches has led to several definitions that can be divided into two main perspectives on Europeanization. In the first one, it is understood as a top-down process *“translating change from the supranational/European level to the national level in decision-making politics”* (Hil & Wong, pp.136, 2011). In other words, Europeanization is a reaction where the state adapts to the EU. The definition by Radaelli (2003) recognizes this and proposes an understanding of Europeanization as a interactive *“Processes of construction, diffusion, and institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, “ways of doing things”, and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies.”* (Radaelli 2003: 30). In this perspective, Europeanization is not a linear and narrow notion of “impact” but rather interplay of several dimensions.

The bottom-up conceptualization is focused on the nation state as the primary actor, where it is *“pro-active in projecting its preferences, policy ideas and models to the EU”* (Hil & Wong, pp.137, 2011). This conception recognizes the role of the member states (especially the big ones) in “Europeanizing”, their national policies on to the EU level. It is useful in terms of increasing international voice and interaction with third countries on controversial or sensitive issues. This categorization is useful in understanding the different mechanisms that drives Europeanization, since the processes are not neatly divided; they often exist simultaneously and are intertwined. Dividing Europeanization into different mechanisms is necessary for examination (De Flers and Müller, 2010).

3.3. Europeanization of foreign policy

What does Europeanized foreign policy look like? Hill and Wong (2011) present four criteria for a Europeanized foreign policy based on patterns of behaviour by member states:

1. Takes common EU positions, whether formally or informally established, as its major reference point, despite operating in other multilateral forums.
2. Does not generally defect from common positions even when they cause difficulties for the state concerned, whether in its bilateral relations or its domestic politics.

3. Attempts to pursue its national priorities principally (but not exclusively) through the means of collective EU action.
4. Subscribes positively to the values and principles expressed by the EU in its international activity, to the extent of becoming part of a shared image and identity, in the eyes of both other Europeans and outsiders. (Hill and Wong, pp. 4-5, 2011)

These criteria are an ideal type and a guide to assess states' behavior. No state actually conforms to all of them. Together with the criteria they also map different degrees of Europeanization ranging from 1. Significantly Europeanized to 7. Never significantly Europeanized. They identify the impact by specifying "the positions which a country would have been unlikely to have adopted if not in the EU", and ask the question "which positions might the EU not have developed without the impetus from one or more particular states?" The former relates to the concept of downloading while the latter is a question of uploading (Hill and Wong, 2011). How does this (EU foreign policy and Europeanization) apply to development policy?

3.4. Development Policy as a Foreign Policy and Europeanization

Development cooperation is institutionalized on several levels and almost every country is participating in some way or another. This area of research is traditionally the domain of development studies, but it is increasingly a subject in IR and FPA. As outlined in the literature review, the central critique of a development approach does not recognize the importance of politics in development cooperation. Development cooperation is not completely apolitical and technical tool for development; often it is also a foreign policy tool. McEwan & Mawdsley (2012) state that:

"The *politics* of development — the interests of particular states, sectors and institutions within donor and recipient countries, the fundamental disagreements over the nature of development and the right route(s) to achieving it, and inequalities of power and agency — are invariably bubbling away below the surface of these debates, meetings and forums, but are rarely formally acknowledged within official documentation and pronouncements. Recipient resistance to donor plans and agendas continues to be framed as a lack of capacity or will (attributed to corruption and narrow power politics). While these are indeed problems that often inhibit aid effectiveness,

these explanations do not acknowledge the political nature of aid and development, including within TDC arrangements.” (McEwan & Mawdsley, pp. 1196, 2012)

Whether or not TDC is used as a foreign policy tool can be derived from the approach to TDC and the motivations of the actors involved – When national interest is a higher priority than increasing the quality of development in a beneficiary country.

Development policy of the EU has become a prevalent subject for academic research, both in EU integration and international context. The role of member states, however, has attracted limited interest. With clear ties to EU foreign policy, Development policy is a part of EU “external action”. The EU, together with its member states, is the largest contributor of international assistance. This in theory should suggest that development cooperation could be used as an instrument to make changes that are in accordance to EU’s foreign objectives and values, for example good governance, democracy, and rule of law. The development policy’s principal objective of poverty eradication seen from a foreign policy perspective is in the long term interest of the Union and member states, development assistance that elevates welfare and creates stable partners that can be integrated in to the international system (Keukeleire and Delreux, 2014). Europeanization of development policy can also be beneficial for a stronger position on the global arena for the EU and in turn the member states.

Furthermore, it is a shared competence; the 28 member states have their own development policy at the national level. Since it is a “soft law” area, Europeanization might be “shallow” or limited. On the other hand the EU is committed to promote shared goals and actions on the international arena (Orbie and Carbone, 2016). Learning and socialisation are crucial here; the norms and values that are promoted have to be accepted as “normal”, if they are perceived as ineffective or unreasonable, member states are more likely to adopt different norms (Horký, 2010).

According to discussion by Horký (2010) in the previous paragraph, socialization is the most relevant factor for development policy. Further, in relation to development policy towards Africa and EU position on China, external federators and legitimisation of global role are important factors. “External federators” implies a pressure from outsiders for Europe to “speak with one voice”; an outsider could be either a positive promoter (USA) or a negative promoter (Russia with a “divide and rule” tactic). Europeanization through legitimisation of global role conveys if a country decides to act in EU terms or not. Finally, with colonial history still a sensitive matter

in relations to Africa for several member states, it might seem preferable to act through EU or according to EU norms (Hill and Wong, 2011).

To explore Europeanization of development policy and trilateral cooperation in Germany and UK, Reuben Wong's approach will be used in this thesis. This approach is centred around three core dimensions: top-down adaptation and policy convergence, bottom-up national projection, and identity reconstruction. The first concept of "adaptation and policy convergence" is used to explain how states adjust their political and economic systems, over time, to fit EU framework. This top-down form of Europeanization predicts cross-national policy convergence between EU states. The second dimension, "national projection", refers to "projection of national ideas, preferences, and models from the national to the supranational level" (Wong, 2011). The bottom-up approach is complementary to the first concept of national adaptation; the member states are setting up EU institutions that in turn make rules. The third concept, identity reconstruction, describes formation of a European identity that exists alongside national identity. These three dimensions of Europeanization have corresponding expected indicators in national foreign policy:

Aspects of Europeanization	National foreign policy indicators
Adaptation and policy convergence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Increasing salience of European political agenda. b) Adherence to common objectives. c) Common policy outputs taking priority over national domains
National projection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) State attempts to increase national influence in the world. b) State attempts to influence foreign policies of other member states. c) State uses the EU as a cover/umbrella.
Identity reconstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Emergence of norms among policy-making elites. b) Shared definition of European and national interests.

The indicators of Europeanization are as follows:

(i) National adaptation/policy convergence

- Has convergence and/or adaptation of national policy with EU norms and directives taken place? Did EU push for trilateral cooperation?

- Is convergence in substantive policy areas visible in the “indirect” Europeanization where member states learn from one another through transnational cooperation and policy transfer?

(ii) Projection of national policy onto EU structures

- Has the state pushed for its national foreign policy goals to be adopted as EU goals/policy? Did Germany or UK push trilateral cooperation to EU level?

- Has the state benefited from the “cover” of the EU? What are the benefits for UK/Germany of trilateral cooperation at the EU level? Has UK/Germany used the EU as an “umbrella”?

- How indispensable is the EU to the achievement of national foreign policy goals to be adopted as EU goals/policy? Would UK/Germany need to promote trilateral cooperation at the EU level?

(iii) Internalisation of “Europe” in national identities

- Has there been a reshaping or hybridisation of identities which relativises national identities and privileges a European identity?

- What kind of European norms have arisen among national officials and how do they apply to foreign policy?

4. Methodology

4.1 Case Study Analysis

Qualitative method is applied here involving a case study of two cases. The main goal of this thesis is to find out if the EU, China and Africa TDC initiative led to a “European way” of engaging with emerging donors, specifically China. This is explored through the lens of Europeanization. A qualitative approach seemed appropriate to examine the complex relations between the different levels within a focal timeframe from around 2003 to mainly 2015. The bilateral dialogue on China in Africa started around 2003, building up to the TDC initiative in 2008, and finally examining the aftermath.

A case study can be defined as “*An empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon (e.g., a “case”), set within its real-world context—especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident*” (Yin, 2009a, p. 18 retrieved from Yin, 2011).

The Case study is appropriate here to get an in-depth understanding of the broad range of complex conditions and go beyond isolated variables (Yin, 2011). Here, the goal is to go beyond the outcome of the EU, China, and Africa initiative for deeper insight, thus making this approach suitable.

Germany and the UK have been selected for this study. The first criteria applied in case selection is involvement in TDC, several EU member states have participated in this type of triangulation, and the most active are Germany, the UK, Spain, and France. However, the engagement of France in TDC is still in its infancy and resulted in few projects. The second criteria are interest in the “China in Africa” issue in addition to engagement with China. Spain has shown the least interest in the issue of the four member states and its TDC activity is largely focused on Latin America. Additionally, Spain does not have the same upload capacity as the “big three”. Germany and the UK on the other have similar upload capacity, both have engaged significantly in TDC, and shown interest for the “China in Africa” issue.

The data for this thesis has been collected through document analysis.

4.2 Document analysis

“Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Rapley, 2007, retrieved from Bowen, 2009)

The documents analysed in this thesis is mainly primary, and some secondary sources such as papers and news articles. The primary sources include EU documents issued by the relevant institutions, government publications by the member states, and speeches. Secondary sources include peer papers written on the topic and news articles. While the primary sources are assumed reliable, the secondary sources presented here have been checked against information in other sources. Additionally, some of the references in the papers have been checked. News articles are retrieved from widely acknowledged newspapers and tested against other narratives. This has led to certain sources being excluded; some documents reference arguments and events in a circular formation, ending up not providing any additional information. Other documents,

especially news articles provide too narrow accounts of events ending up in “extremes”. The topic at hand is somewhat sensitive for extreme positions based on thin evidence; both Chinese and European newspapers have taken this type of position. Critical narrative is naturally included in the thesis. This is determined by the arguments provided in the articles and whether they are strongly backed by evidence. This is linked to the reliability of the study, which is a central challenge here since it can deteriorate the validity of the study. Reliability refers to the quality of the data, while validity concerns the “truthfulness” of the findings.

5. Empirical Analysis

Before embarking on the analysis of EU, China, and Africa attempt at trilateral cooperation, a short evaluation of TDC as a concept at EU level is in place. A mapping of EU-China and EU-Africa relations in relation to TDC will follow. Germany and the UK will be analysed subsequently. Finally the last part will look at some other examples of TDC involving the EU and its member states.

5.1 The development of the EU’s approach to trilateral cooperation

The EU does not have a joint vision or an operational conceptual framework for SSC or TDC, but this has not deterred attempts to express interest or engage in trilateral cooperation. TDC has slipped in to the rhetoric of the EU on several occasions, for example during the Euro-Arab dialogue in the 1970`s and in relations to India in the end of 1980`s (Allen, 1977). In recent times, one of the first instances of TDC in EU context was within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In the communication “A new partnership with South East Asia” from 2003, the European Commission (EC) notes that there is great variation in the levels of development between the nations in South East Asia. While some countries are on their way out of development assistance others still fight extreme poverty, subsequently proposing to *“introduce new forms of co-operation allowing the EC and member states willing to participate in joining efforts with more developed countries of South East Asia to assist poorer ones. This could be achieved, for instance, through parallel financing of jointly defined modular programmes.”* and to *“involve the richer ASEAN countries at the strategic programming stage of our co-operation and sign Memoranda of Understanding with those prepared to engage in so-called “trilateral co-operation”* (pp. 19).

By engaging the more developed ASEAN countries in the improvement of less developed countries and EC functioning as a facilitator for South-South cooperation, the beneficiaries can develop stronger capacity to engage in the ASEAN. This signifies a regional integration approach to TDC. Furthermore, it represents a holistic view acknowledging the link between development cooperation, political, and economic areas; that *“matters of trade and investment are inherently linked to issues of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, reduction of poverty and the rule of law.”* (pp. 26), and that TDC is a part of a flexible and pragmatic approach, enabling progress (European Commission, 2003).

This link between regional integration South-South cooperation was elaborated in the 2011 Agenda for Change and noted in the Europaid SSC report: *“Regional development and integration can spur trade and investment and foster peace and stability. The EU should support regional and continental integration efforts (including South-South initiatives) through partners’ policies in areas such as markets, infrastructure and cross-border cooperation on water, energy and security. Support will be offered to tackle competitiveness gaps, as part of the EU’s substantial and growing Aid for Trade activities, Economic Partnership Agreements and other free trade agreements with developing regions.”* (European Commission, pp. 8, 2011).

South-South cooperation implies TDC as per definition in the Council conclusions on the EU contribution to the High-Level Event on SSC and Capacity Development, Bogotá (2010): *“Cooperation between developing countries themselves and/or emerging economies is commonly referred to as “South-South cooperation”; “South-South cooperation” supported by one or more developed countries is commonly referred to as “triangular cooperation”.* (pp.2)

The year before, in 2009, the Council endorsed the “Operational Framework on Aid Effectiveness”¹⁴ calling on member states to harmonization of effectiveness agenda and to explore *“South - South cooperation and triangular cooperation between the EU, developing countries and emerging donors”* (pp.2). Arguing that member states and the EU can accomplish more together than individually and acknowledging the need for consolidation of TDC at the EU level, a workshop to explore TDC and exchange knowledge among member states was organized by AECID in March 2010 (AECID Workshop, 2010).

¹⁴ In line with Paris declaration and Accra Agenda for Action.

There is encouragement for SSC and trilateral cooperation in the fragmented approach by the EU, but without any clear practical guidelines for participation in TDC. However, there is a clear preference for using TDC as an instrument for supporting South-South cooperation.

5.1.1. EU-China relations and trilateral cooperation

The EU strategy on China and China strategy on the EU is outlined in several documents. The main objectives for EU's China policy are centred on (i) Engaging China further in dialogue, bilaterally and multilaterally (ii) Supporting China's transition to an open society based upon the rule of law and respect for human rights (iii) Integrating China further in the world economy by bringing it more fully into the world trading system and by supporting the process of economic and social reform underway in the country, including in the context of sustainable development (iv) To raise EU's profile in China (European Commission, 1998).

Meanwhile, China's objectives in the policy on EU include (i) Promotion of EU-China relations' principles of mutual respect, mutual trust and seeking common ground while reserving differences, and contribute to world peace and stability. (ii) Deepening of China-EU economic cooperation and trade under the principles of mutual benefit, reciprocity and consultation on an equal basis, and promote common development. (iii) Expanding China-EU cultural and people-to-people exchanges under the principle of mutual emulation, common prosperity and complementarity, and promote cultural harmony and progress between the East and the West (China's policy paper on EU, 2003).

China-EU political relations have undergone a “honeymoon period”, a period of adjustment and a period of restoration and progressive development in the years 2003–2013. (Men, 2007; Li et al, 2017). The Commission communication “A Maturing Partnership– Shared Interests and Challenges in EU- China Relations” marks the intensification of EU-China relations and “recognises that China is one of the EU's major strategic partners”. Later the same year China issued a EU policy, the first of its kind, stating that “*there is no fundamental conflict of interest between China and the EU and neither side poses a threat to the other*” and “*that China-EU relations now are better than any time in history*”. Both papers recognize the increased global multipolarity and the need for a stronger, mutually beneficial, relationship between equals. At the subsequent China-EU Summit both sides took advantage of the fortunate momentum and

identified several common priorities for future cooperation, including *“further strengthening the exchange of high-level visits and political dialogue, reinforcing cooperation on economic and trade and major international and regional issues, and increasing cooperation at the multilateral level”* (Joint communication EU-China 6th summit). Since 2003, EU-China relations have evolved around their “strategic partnership”.

Around 2005, the EU started to notice China’s growing strength and the relationship entered a period of adjustment, where the EU policies took a more realistic and sober turn. Commission published a communication in 2006 that urged Europe to *“respond effectively to China’s renewed strength To tackle the key challenges facing Europe today – including climate change, employment, migration, security – we need to leverage the potential of a dynamic relationship with China based on our values. We also have an interest in supporting China’s reform process.”* (European Commission, pp.2, 2006). Emphasising the increased responsibility of deeper involvement by China in the international arena would make the Chinese principle of non-interference impossible to follow. The period between 2005 and 2009 was characterised by intensified friction between the EU and China, caused mainly by the EU’s refusal to grant China market economy status and lifting arms embargo¹⁵ (Picciau, 2016; European Council on Foreign Relations, 2010). Additionally, the relationship was affected by contradictions in the human rights dialogue. The heads of state of UK, Germany, and France met the Dalai Lama, making China postpone the 11th China-EU Summit.

After efforts to improve relations made by member states, the EU, and China, the 11th China-EU Summit was held in May 2009 (Li et.al, 2017). In the joint communiqué they *“restated their firm commitment to pursuing the China-EU comprehensive strategic partnership”* (Joint Communication EU-China 11th Summit). In the 12th China-EU Summit half a year later both sides *“agreed that the political mutual trust is enhancing, the pragmatic cooperation in economy, trade and other fields is deepening and expanding, the level of cultural and people-to-people exchanges is on the rise.”* (Joint Communication China-EU 12th Summit).

Establishment of the China-EU high-level strategic dialogue in 2010 marked an expansion of relations between the two sides. A report proposing trilateral cooperation between EU, China,

¹⁵ Included in the sanctions of China after 1989 Tiananmen incident was suspension of high-level exchanges and arms embargoes on China, imposed by EU member states and western allies.

and USA focused on strengthening global cooperation. On the other hand, *“this report still took “freer and more equal access to the Chinese market” as one of the primary goals of the EU’s policy towards China and insisted on the so-called appeals for promoting “democratic governance, rule of law and human rights”, and the other like-minded values. This, once again, showed the dual characters of the EU’s policy towards China, namely its needs for intensifying cooperation with China and its unwillingness to give up some inherent prejudice and suspicion.”* (Li et.al. pp. 39, 2017).

The financial crisis provides an important backdrop for the EU-China relations during the following period, which resulted in new relationships between China and the EU periphery. China recognized Europe’s need for short term financing and proceed to investing and buying up debt of the countries that suffered the most. Greece, Spain, Portugal, and Italy in addition to Central and Eastern Europe benefited from Chinese involvement. Some authors has called this a “scramble for Europe” where Chinese companies would “buy up Europe” including the EU member states (Godement et.al. 2011). China on the other hand argued that improving relationships with individual member states would benefit the EU-China relations as a whole. For this analysis, it is further important to note the increased prominence of economic interest and other issues taking a backseat.

The EU-China relations follow a pattern of ambition for cooperation and what can be achieved followed by disillusionment, and re-building of trust. Both sides see the need to cooperate, but this is challenging due to major differences in values and approaches. The EU stresses the responsibilities that come with becoming a global partner, having high expectations of China. Human rights issues have had especially dividing effect on the relationship although after the financial crisis dialogue on human rights was scaled down from twice a year to once a year (Stahl, 2018)

Institutionalization of the EU-China relations

With the rise of China the magnitude of EU-China relations has grown considerably since beginning of the 2000`s, this is reflected in the expansion of the institutional arrangements and establishment of the strategic partnership. The overall framework of the relationship revolves around the “Strategic partnership” between the EU and China.

The strategic partnership is structured around three pillars: (i) Political dialogue (the High-Level Strategic Dialogue) (ii) Economic and Sectoral dialogue (the High-Level Economic and Trade Dialogue) and (iii) The High-Level People-to-People Dialogue. These dialogues are supposed to function as a platform to identify common approaches and reinforce mutual understanding. The dialogue on Africa is situated under the political dialogue pillar, together with security and defence, human rights, non-proliferation and disarmament, Asia, Latin America, and Cyber Security. Since most of the topics covered are sensitive and within member states competences the dialogue is based on a “soft-mechanism”, it does not produce legally binding decisions. However, it has a stable structure and functions acknowledged by both sides, which can lead to actual effects (Li et. al, 2017). China and the EU interact at several levels within the political dialogue, the highest level is the Summit meetings, followed by high-level strategic dialogue, ministerial meetings, dialogues on special topics (including Africa), and finally expert-level.

The EU-China Political dialogue on Africa

In the context of expanding EU-China relations and enhancing political cooperation, preliminary meetings were held between Chinese officials in charge of Africa and EC, subsequently African development policy was included in to the dialogue in 2006 (Carbone, 2011). The 2006 joint statement of the 9th EU-China Summit stated that “*Meeting the MDGs will require urgent action on all sides, among other more ambitious national development strategies and efforts backed by increased and more effective international support particularly in Africa.*” (Joint Statement of 9th EU-China Summit, 6 September 2006, para. 15). They stressed the importance of including Africa in a structured dialogue and exploring “*venues for practical cooperation on the ground in partnership with the African side*”, preferably through the New Partnership For Africa’s Development (NEPAD).

Furthermore, they laid down the value framework for cooperation with Africa where “*The EU reaffirmed its attachment to the principles of good governance and human rights, as embodied in its Africa Strategy. The Chinese side emphasized the upholding of the five principles of peaceful coexistence, in particular the principle of non-interference into others' internal affairs.*” (The 9th EU-China Summit, 2006, para.15).

The EC communication “*EU- China: Closer Partners, Growing Responsibilities*” released a month later, developed further on the idea of China-EU dialogue for Africa, pointing out that it would be beneficial for both sides and the developing partners. The communication states that the EU and China should:

- Engage in a structured dialogue on Africa's sustainable development. There should be transparency on the activity and priorities of both sides, providing a basis for full discussion;
- Support regional efforts to improve governance in Africa;
- Explore opportunities for improving China's integration into international efforts to
- Improve aid efficiency, co-ordination and opportunities for practical bilateral co-operation on the ground. (EU- China: Closer Partners, Growing Responsibilities, pp.6, 2006)

The communication continues to encourage cooperation in the framework of the UN, working to “*find multilateral solutions to emerging crises, and to combat terrorism and increase regional co-operation, including through involvement by both in emerging regional structures. This common interest, in strong multilateralism, peace and security should also be reflected in closer co-operation and more structured dialogue on the Middle East, Africa and East Asia, and on cross-cutting challenges such as non-proliferation*” (EU- China: Closer Partners, Growing Responsibilities, pp.6, 2006). At the 10th EU-China Summit the following year, the EU invited China to attend the EU-Africa Summit as an observer and China invited the EU Commissioner for Development to visit China. The goal was to find areas for pragmatic cooperation in existing bilateral channels between the EU, China, and Africa.

The Council endorsed the EC communication and stated that “*In support of our common interest and Africa's own commitment to poverty reduction and sustainable development underpinned by peace and security, human rights, good governance, democracy and sound economic management, the EU looks forward to increased cooperation together with China to create new positive realities on the ground. This means working closely with African partners on the basis of national poverty reduction strategies and in accordance with the African Union and New Partnership for Africa's Development principles.*”

The Commission with DG RELEX and DG DEVCO¹⁶ were the main agenda setters for the inclusion of African development policy in to the bilateral dialogue. The Council was not that active at first given the fact that most member states did not prioritize China's increased involvement in Africa (Stahl, 2018; Carbone, 2011). Later involvement of the Council can be attributed to influential member states, Germany, the UK, and France, realizing Chinese growing presence in Africa. The European Parliament (EP) didn't have any major objections to EU-China dialogue on Africa. Although the EP considered China a competitor, it lacked foreign policy instruments to deal with China and saw the Africa dialogue as the only way to influence China's Africa policy (Stahl, 2018).

Most of the documents express the aspiration of closer and stronger cooperation between China and the EU on Africa. However, there are no suggestions for how this is supposed to happen. Furthermore, it is unclear what channels should be utilized to cooperate, the Commission mentions the UN as a possible framework, while the African Union (AU) and NEPAD are mentioned by the Council, NEPAD is also recognized at the 9th EU-China Summit. Of course all of these platforms can be engaged in different sectors and at different times, but there is no concrete proposals to an approach for closer cooperation.

5.1.2. EU-Africa relations and trilateral cooperation

EU-Africa relations have a long history of diplomatic relations, one of the longest in recorded history (Men & Barton, 2011). Over the last couple of decades before the 2000's, European policies towards Africa have been inconsistent and weak. Relations were largely restricted to development policies. Africa lost importance to Asian economic opportunities and European enlargement to Eastern Europe. It was characterized by consistent promotion of human rights and democracy while the issue of socio-economic development of Africa was largely overlooked. Conflict prevention became prominent concept in the mid 90s, member states were reluctant to interfere while the EU institutions lacked common foreign and defence policy and were unable to deal with conflicts in Africa efficiently. Conflict resolution was mainly left for the UN and Africa itself (Tull, 2008). Africa had little strategic importance, "the state of Africa

¹⁶ DG RELEX as a driver of the EU-China strategic partnership, and DG DEVCO for holding expertise on development issues and Africa.

is a scar on the consciousness of the world” (Tony Blair, the Guardian, 2001), and a “Lost continent” (Men & Barton, 2011).

Around the millennium shift terrorism, failed states, and regional wars reoriented EU’s attention towards security issues in Africa. In addition, greater focus on natural and energy resources, rise of China and establishment of AU and NEPAD led attention back to Africa (Hackenesch, 2009; European Commission, 2005). Another reason for the change in EU Africa policy was the promotion of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and its European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in an attempt to position itself as a global player in world politics. The security approach to Africa was doubtfully a sustainable relationship, treating Africa as a subject of concern and arena to prove EU “actorness” (Tull, 2008). This lack of interest in the African continent as more than a “problem area” that requires large amounts of humanitarian aid has led structural differences between Europe and Africa to be unattended and exacerbated. In the last decade Europe has seemingly strived to address this imbalance (Men & Barton, 2011).

A milestone in the EU Africa relationship was the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) from 2007, with the goal of taking the EU-Africa relationship to a *“new, strategic level with a strengthened political partnership and enhanced cooperation at all levels.”* (pp.2), The main areas of focus outlined in the strategy are: (i) peace and security, (ii) governance and human rights, (iii) trade and regional integration and (iv) key development issues. (pp.4). Additionally, the principle of overall policy coherence was to be applied. These areas of focus outline a broad direction by the EU, certainly distinct from previous indifference. The Commission communication “From Cairo to Lisbon – The EU-Africa Strategic Partnership” from the same year opened with the statement that the AU is *“emerging, not as a development issue, but as a political actor in its own right.”* And *“that Africa matters – as a political voice, as an economic force and as a huge source of human, cultural, natural and scientific potential”* (pp.2).

This renewed focus on Africa is central to the context of the EU, China, and Africa TDC proposal. There had been an overall loss of credibility of EU policies towards Africa and lack of trust that the European Union was urging to restore.

5.2. EU-China-Africa trilateral cooperation

The trilateral dialogue was initiated by EC, specifically DG DEV. Member states, especially France, Germany, and the UK, also urged a EU response. The FOCAC Summit serves as a marker for the increased interest in China's activities in Africa¹⁷, with DG DEV Director Stefano Manservigi visiting China during the preparations for the FOCAC Summit. Additionally, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid and the Director-General of DG DEV Louis Michel noting China's increased impact in Africa after the FOCAC Summit in 2006 (Hooijmaaijers, 2018). The institutionalization of China and Africa was an "alarm bell" for European actors (Carbone, 2011). Thus, the dialogue on Africa started with China in 2006 as outlined previously.

The urgency of engaging China in Africa was also a reflection of the tense relationship between the EU and Africa at the time, with the second EU-Africa Summit being postponed over EU's views on Zimbabwe's President Mugabe (EU DOC Cairo to Lisbon; Carbone, 2011). The suspension of the boycott on Mugabe became necessary to hold a long overdue meeting between Africa and the EU, but the views were mixed amongst the EU member states (Retuturs, 2007). Germany stated that Africa was top priority for the EU and with China rising, the relationship with Africa *"should not be hostage to developments in Zimbabwe"* concluding that the German Chancellor Angela Merkel was to attend the meeting. Meanwhile, the UK's Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, declined to attend (BBC October 3rd, 2007; NYTIMES December 9th, 2007). France noted the Chinese presence most of all through Chinese pressure of French businesses in oil and infrastructure. However, France could live with some competition, and some benefit from Chinese investment was identified because it generates more business for their services (Hooijmaaijers, 2018).

Several strategic responses were viable for the EU including confronting China where it undermines European interest, doing nothing and watching the situation evolve, continuing the present EU dialogue with China on Africa, appeal to China to join existing frameworks (OECD DAC), or engaging China in equal cooperation based on common interests (Wissenbach, 2009). The choice of TDC is indicative of preference for the last option. Characterized by resistance and

¹⁷ China presence was evident before this point, the FOCAC meeting attracted an unprecedented mainstream attention

divergences within the EU institutions, the initiative was hard to work out (Stahl, 2018; Hooijmaaijers, 2018, Carbone, 2011).

First, There were initial contentions within the Commission. DG DEV and its director Louis Michel was in charge of the proposal, seeing it as an opportunity to enhance its role in relation to DG RELEX that has previously been in charge of China relations, DG DEV gained a parallel “China expertise” (Stahl, 2018). DG RELEX was “not happy” about this, arguing that DG DEV should concentrate on Africa (Hooijmaaijers, 2018; Stahl, 2018).

Second, the differences between the EU institutions became visible when the Parliament countered the TDC proposal in April 2008 with their resolution on China’s policy and its effect on Africa, where EP urged *“the Chinese authorities to respect the principles of democracy, good governance and human rights in their relations with Africa”* (54) and stressed that *“notwithstanding the importance of principles such as sovereignty, ownership and alignment, China’s “no-conditions” investments in those African countries misgoverned by oppressive regimes contribute to perpetuating human rights abuses and further delay democratic progress and hinder recognition of good governance, including the rule of law and the control of corruption; in this context, highlights the importance of greater EU support to governments, institutions and civil society players that promote good governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights in Africa, namely national parliaments, pluralist party systems, development and human rights organisations, free media and anti-corruption bodies”* (56) (European Parliament, 2008). Taking a more normative stand than the TDC proposal contrary to the pragmatic approach fostered by the EC.

DG Louis Michel tried to mend this during his China visit in August 2008 acknowledging China’s interests in Africa and that *“China’s growing activity on the continent is a positive force for the economic development of Africa, and that is a goal we Europeans share with China and many others”* Further promoting the idea of TDC: *“developing a triangular partnership with China and Africa is the opportunity of this century to tackle more effectively global challenges that affect us all (soaring food and oil prices, climate change, security).”* (Louis Michel in China Daily August 29th, 2008). Human rights and good governance were on the agenda initially but it was agreed to not include this in the TDC proposal because of the existence of a separate human rights dialogue with China (Hooijmaaijers, 2018).

Eventually, The Commission proposed their “The EU, China and Africa: towards trilateral dialogue and cooperation” initiative in October, 2008. In the context of new geopolitics the Commission proposed that *“Africa, China and the EU should work together in a flexible and pragmatic way to identify and address a specific number of areas that are suitable for trilateral cooperation and to link this cooperation where possible with existing commitments in multilateral fora and in particular the UN.”* (pp.5). Four sectors were presented for cooperation: (i) Peace and security in Africa, (ii) Support for African infrastructure, (iii) Sustainable management of the environment and natural resources, and (iv) Agriculture and food security.

The public consultation on the TDC initiative unveiled a concern for the EU capabilities in implementation of TDC. (European Commission, 2008 Public consultation Report). Furthermore, the hearing surprisingly found that some officials favoured a separate institutional structure for TDC. This is highly discouraged in most of the literature on TDC because of the added bureaucracy; it is a structure that would have to exist within the web of established bilateral and multilateral institutions. This would further add costs, and TDC is already tied to high initial costs. However, the interest in a separate TDC institution could be understood from the viewpoint of China. China wouldn't have to engage with a traditional donor through an institution where the rules were set by traditional powers. One of the reasons China is sceptical of engaging with traditional donors is based on that China was not involved in the shaping of the traditional international institutions, like OECD, from the beginning. They didn't make the rules, so they don't feel obligated to follow them.

A separate TDC institution would be a “neutral” ground for all the partners and could be built around the principle of true partnership. Given that a hypothetical TDC institution would be set up successfully, for Africa this could mean easier access to the partners, clear lines of contact, more effective implementation, and in the end better results. In the end the Commission did not opt for this alternative, and proposed using existing bilateral and multilateral ties between the partners to establish a trilateral mechanism. (European Commission, trilateral cooperation 2008 Annex)

The Council stated its support a month after the proposal and stressed good governance and human rights *“This trilateral dialogue will support the efforts undertaken by Africa and by the international community to promote democratisation, political and economic integration, good*

governance and respect for human rights.” (European Council Conclusion, pp.1, 2008); Hooijmaaijers, 2018). The short time between the Commission proposal and the Council endorsement is due to general consensus amongst member states “that something had to be done” and confrontation would be detrimental, in addition to a cooperative French Presidency at the time (Stahl, 2018; Hooijmaaijers, 2018; Carbone, 2011).

China did issue any official response to the proposal. China had limited experience with TDC and a demand-driven approach to development where a beneficiary country would have to ask for cooperation. However some positive feedback was evident in the 12th EU-China Summit held in Nanjing, China on 30 September 2009: “The EU and China welcomed trilateral dialogue between the EU, China and Africa, and agreed to explore appropriate areas for cooperation.” (Joint statement of the 12th EU-China Summit pp.4, 2009). The proposal did not result in any concrete joint action.

First, there was an overarching lack of effort in African involvement by the EU. The Chinese were consulted more extensively than any African stakeholders, “*Commissioner Michel was so focused on getting the Chinese on board that he ‘forgot to lobby the Africans’ for this approach, meaning that the initiative experienced a lack of support from the other partners*” (Interview senior EU official November 2015, retrieved from Carbone 2011), giving the impression of collusion between the EU and China over Africa (Stahl, 2018; Carbone, 2011). Second, the African stakeholders lacked capacity to respond and formulate a common position (Hackenesch 2009). Third, the momentum for TDC was lost after the policy entrepreneurs left their positions, for example the Council Presidency became less Africa focused with the Czech taking over after France. Fourth, China might see this approach as an attempt to “socialize” it in to “western” development standards by the EU (Stahl, 2018; McEwan & Mawdsley, 2012).

These factors together made TDC unachievable. However, given the negativity surrounding Chinese involvement in Africa by proposing a path of “cooperation” the EU made an important statement to not engage in competition over Africa. Furthermore, several member states have shown interest or engaged with China in TDC over the last decade, two of which (Germany and the UK) will be examined further in the next part of the analysis.

5.3 EU member states and trilateral cooperation

UK is a former colonial power with close economic, cultural, and political links to Africa, a relationship going back over 400 years. Over the last decade the UK has tried to update its approach and strengthen the ties to Africa by increasing official trade and infrastructure investment, expanding development programme to include a mix of aid, investment and cooperation. Conditionality has been largely abandoned and the UK focuses their rhetoric around “equal partnership” and “ownership” in their relationship with Africa (Gu et.a. 2017). Since the first China-UK Business Summit in 2009, China and UK has coordinated Africa policies through their bilateral relationship. The two countries hold an annual high-level Dialogue on Africa, in which they discuss trilateral cooperation and how to support African development (Gu et.al. 2017). Germany is an important donor and trading partner that started reaching out to China around 2005 (Stahl, 2018). Germany was adamant at not letting the rivalry between the EU and China get out of control. Member states varied in their view of China:

“85. Professor Shambaugh wrote that perspectives on China varied greatly among the Member States. Some central European countries were quite hostile to China; some Mediterranean countries were naïve about China; France, Germany, and the Netherlands were quite sceptical of China; whereas the UK and the Scandinavian states were much more positive towards China. Only Germany and the UK had national “strategies” for managing relations with China” (European Union Committee, 2009)

5.3.1. United Kingdom

With the emergence of China as a significant force, the UK started to work with China on development issues already in 2004, with the emergence of the “engaging China as a global development player” concept. The issue of China in Africa was identified in the Country Assistance Plan (CAP) and in Beijing, 2006, DIFID initiated the first formal discussion amongst bilateral donors with interest in China and Africa issues (Canada, EU, France, Germany, Japan, Norway, UK, UNDP, and US) (Barr et.al. 2010). The China-UK Joint Statement from 2004 is was the base of the UK China in Africa dialogue, stating: *“Both sides will work together to help developing countries in addressing poverty and other development-related problems so as to better manage challenges posed by globalisation. The two sides place particular emphasis on*

peace and security, the fight against HIV/AIDS and sustainable development in Africa and give their full support to African countries in their efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goals". However China was reluctant at first to engage in trilateral cooperation, as stated by a Chinese interviewee in the Evaluation report 2004-2009: *"The UK has made many requests to us on joint activities on Africa, but for us the message is clear, if Africa wants that, then we will consider them. The request has to come from African countries."* (Barr et.al pp.79).

DFID created in 2011 an "Emerging Powers team" in the agency's Global Partnerships Department, which is responsible for developing relationships with a wide range of development partners, both old and new. The broad objectives of cooperation with emerging donors is outlined in the Global Partnerships Department's Operational Plan 2011—2016; (i) Making development assistance more effective (ii) Enhancing the development impact of investment in poorer countries and regions (iii) Responding better to global challenges (such as trade, climate change, health, food security) (iv) Working to promote a better, more effective international and multilateral system. These goals are operationalized through Global Development Partnerships Programme (GDPP).

Additionally, the UK promotes Chinese engage in multilateral fora, hoping that this would promote Chinese involvement in global issues (Rosengren & Bilal, 2013), stating that *"the goodwill" already established between DFID and China put the Department in a "unique position" to encourage Chinese participation in multilateral processes.*" (House of Commons IDC China, 99)

Trilateral cooperation is one of the tools for practical cooperation with emerging powers within the wider UK Government Emerging Powers Initiative (EPI) from 2010 and DFID's Global Development Partners Programme (GDPP); it is mainly evident as a part of the UK strategy for establishing deeper relationships with emerging powers (BGIPU, 2012). The countries in focus for trilateral cooperation are Brazil, China, India, and South Africa. The DFID evaluation report for China country program 2004-2009 stated that *"Sustaining the gains from the current China-Africa programme, requires further collaboration and coordination from DFID headquarters and DFID offices in Africa. The pathway to future collaboration with the Chinese in Africa is through greater engagement with African partners and trilateral projects"* pp. 79. Here, TDC is

mostly applied as part of a phasing-out strategy, a discontinuance of UK's traditional bilateral aid to countries that have advanced to MICs.

While most aid to China was terminated during the transition phase in 2011, a new fund was established, the Prosperity Fund, to help China and other emerging powers become effective development actors. In 2016 the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) stated in their performance review of UK's exit and transition¹⁸ strategies: *"In China, DFID terminated all assistance on domestic development issues, but continues to spend £8-10 million per year from centrally managed programmes on helping China to become a more effective donor and investor in developing countries."* (ICAI, pp.ii, 2016). Countries like China, India, and South Africa were considered important partners in addressing global issues and continued to receive funding to tackle these issues.

This approach has been criticized for lack of results and justification. While TDC in South Africa and India is still rather limited, TDC with China has been going on for over a decade and it has been the prime purpose of DFID's China office since 2011 (ICAI, 2016). The doubt of China-UK trilateral cooperation lies in the limited scope and capacity of the Beijing office for monitoring projects in third countries and to keep up with Chinese domestic issues which shape the interest in international cooperation (ICAI, pp.ii, 2016). DFID acknowledges the difficulties and shortcomings of the approach; it emphasizes the projects as "learning opportunities" and work in progress – an experimental approach to cooperation with China: *"The exchange of ideas, technology and expertise remain valuable both to China as it continues to address development challenges; as well as to western donors in creating an opportunity to understand, learn from and work with China in other low income countries. It also provides a basis for fostering more direct south-south learning and engagement, something to which DFID's Beijing office has demonstrated commitment."* (House of Commons IDC China, pp.40)

However, while some "growing pains" are expected, starting around 2008 the UK-China trilateral cooperation has reached the ripe age of ten years and several projects completed. To get a better understanding of UK-China trilateral cooperation, two programmes will be further examined.

¹⁸ "Exit" refers to the process of phasing out DFID bilateral assistance, while "transition" implies establishment of a new partnership. For example in Vietnam DFID used a pure exit strategy, while in China the exit was accompanied by establishment of new partnership mechanisms thus making it a transition.

Global Health Support Programme

The China-UK Global Health Support Programme (GHSP) that started in 2012 and concluded in 2018 gives an idea of how TDC is incorporated in to China-UK development cooperation. GHSP is a partnership based on the assumptions that *a) China has experiences to share with other countries; b) that a UK-China partnership will enhance China's effectiveness in the provision of development cooperation for health and increase China's role in global health policy and governance; and c) that the effectiveness of applying Chinese experience could be demonstrated in pilot projects in third countries.* (DFID Annual Review GHSP, 2017).

Governed by a Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with China, the programme includes an annual high-level dialogue to serve as a platform for UK and China to identify issues, common concerns, and share information. The key decision making body in the implementation process is the Strategic Oversight Committee, with support from a Technical Advisory Group, formed by DFID, China's Ministry of Health (MoH) and Ministry of Commerce (Mofcom). China's Ministry of Health was in charge of the implementation. The overall impact objective was to improve global health policy and outcomes, while the outcome is that *"China-UK partnership helps China improve its contribution to global health and achieve the potential of its health cooperation"* (DFID Business Case 2015).

The UK outputs are stated as follows: (i) Increased capacity to distil, disseminate and apply Chinese experience in improving health outcomes and strengthening health systems. (ii) Improved understanding amongst Chinese officials and researchers of best practice in international health development cooperation (including bilateral and multilateral). (iii) Enhanced capacity of Chinese officials and researchers to contribute to global health policy and governance. (iv) Pilot partnerships apply China experience and international best practice in development cooperation in developing countries and including at least one cross border (in an Asian country) (DFID Business Case 2015). The total cost of the programme were set to £12 million and the funding was allocated from DFID's China programme, which draws on funds set aside for DFID's Global Development Partnership (DFID Business Case 2015).

The intent of the pilot projects was to that applying Chinese experience in third countries would improve health outcomes. From requests by beneficiary countries, three pilot projects were launched in Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Myanmar (See table of projects further down for details). While the evaluation of the specific projects is still not concluded, the last annual review of the programme, in 2018, states that *“progress has been slow and many difficulties have been encountered”*. It further focuses on “lessons” learned, first acknowledging the systemic and logistic issues on the Chinese side including weak links to host country government, lack of alignment with national plans and strategies, and not insufficient engagement with other development partners. Second, it is unclear whether Chinese experience actually improved health outcomes or not. Third, while the partnership intended participation by both governments, in practice *“DfID country offices have had very limited involvement beyond the initial design stage and it has not been part of the remit of Chinese Embassies to support the pilots.”* (DFID Annual Review GHSP, 2018).

Agricultural Technology Transfer to Low-Income Countries

As one of the first trilateral cooperation programs between China and UK, Agricultural Technology Transfer to Low-Income Countries (AgriTT), provides a guide for TDC between UK and China, and for UK approach to trilateral cooperation in general. The representatives reached consensus on principles, approaches, and priorities of trilateral cooperation at the first Africa–UK–China Conference on Agriculture and Fisheries in Beijing (Zhou, 2018). AgriTT was announced during the second Africa-Britain-China Conference on Agriculture and Fisheries in Beijing in 2012. The programme included two pilot projects, one in the fishery sector in Malawi and the other in cassava production in Uganda. The base structure was the same as for the GHSP¹⁹ with the goal to *“transfer appropriate Chinese agricultural technologies from production to processing and value addition in order to improve agricultural productivity and food security in Uganda and Malawi.”* by bringing together Chinese technology experience and UK’s understanding of effective aid delivery in an integrated, whole-value-chain approach to technology transfer (Buckley, 2017).

¹⁹ Chinese Ministry of Agriculture was in place of Ministry of Health

This programme has been deemed successful by DFID with an overall “A+” rating in final review (where an “A” equals output exceeding the established objectives)(AgriTT Project Completion Review, 2017), and used as a template for UK trilateral cooperation approach. However, a recent paper by Hang Zhou “*China-Britain-Uganda: Trilateral Development Cooperation in Agriculture*”, points out that the experience of the beneficiary country (Uganda) did not completely match the UK’s experience. Problems of technology compatibility and excessive bureaucracy made it work less as trilateral cooperation and more like a traditional donor-recipient relationship with extra steps. Moreover, the technology incompatibility²⁰ led to delays and difficulties during the project. The UK alone was responsible for the funding of the project, which means that every decision had to be passed on to DFID. While this is not necessarily a problem in itself, DFID was not a part of most of the cooperation on the ground, it was mostly involved in the initiation phase and got more distanced during the project. This system of funding was referred to as “conditions” imposed by DFID that was described as an “invisible hand” (Zhou, 2018). Meanwhile, China’s role was limited to technical assistance and more limited engagement.

The UK approach is characterized by small-scale projects largely outside formal setting, with the ambition of scaling up the successful projects. Small-scale pilot projects are easier to set up and more pragmatic in their ambitions, their purpose is to explore possibilities, learn from partners of their ways, build trust, and improve future cooperation. Evidence from AgriTT point towards a cooperation favoring Chinese involvement, the UK is one of the few traditional donors that have managed to initiate trilateral cooperation with China. By focusing on low visibility a smaller projects, the UK has made it possible for China to engage without risking to damage it’s image, which is in line with other triangulations China has participated in (Zhang, 2017). DFID China elaborated on this approach back in 2008, explaining their technical focus in the forestry and fisheries sector of the bilateral China program: “*Initially focus on issues that China is going to want to work on, then start to introduce more difficult issues once the relationship is established. Thus, less controversial, but nevertheless important projects appear to have played a role in creating the relationships and laying the ground for more critical engagement in illegal fishing and forestry issues.*” (Barr et.al. pp. 76, 2010).

²⁰ Chinese machines used coal as main energy source, it is available and cheap in China, which is not the case in Uganda. Also, the machines used to process cassava plants were just too big to use in Uganda. Finally, Cassava is a staple food in Uganda, while in China it’s used for industrial purposes, making the machines unfit to clean the cassava for food consumption (Zhou, 2018).

In the UK House of Commons International Development Committee's (IDC) first report for sessions 2008-2009, this approach is praised: *"the Department has built, within a unique and sometimes challenging context, what is probably the most respected bilateral aid programme in China. It has used limited resources to maximum effect, building influential relationships and highly effective aid projects from relatively small amounts of money. Central to this approach has been DFID's strategy of introducing small-scale pilot projects and, once their success has been proven, encouraging the Chinese Government to scale them up. DFID has called this approach "modest", but the results have been anything but."* (pp. 12). This statement also reflects the type of involvement DFID has had in China, building up its reputation and trustworthiness as a partner.

Additionally, the UK provides practically all the funding for the projects, which presents two central concerns. First, by providing the funding UK de facto controls how it's spend and the rules governing the spending. As mentioned earlier, this resulted in a relationship similar to a traditional donor-recipient arrangement rather than a trilateral *partnership*. Meanwhile, Chinese contribution was limited to providing technical expertise, experience and other in-kind support. Secondly, this funding system makes it easier for China to opt-out rather than deal with issues in the partnership. An opportunity to leave a partnership is essential to make international cooperation work, but in the case of UK-China-Africa trilateral cooperation it is much harder for UK and the beneficiary to opt-out making it unbalanced. This is a reflection of their earlier approach to cooperation in China: *"Donor funded project pilots also allow the Chinese government to politically be distant from project-driven reforms, and therefore to embrace successes or to step away from developments which are less with the grain."* (Barr et.al. pp.49, 2010)

The motivation for TDC for the UK seems to be driven by the wish to engage with and influence China in the overall framework of sustainable development and poverty eradication. It is weaker form of TDC based on the low formalization of the structure and mechanisms, and limited joint implementation of the projects. Furthermore, there is a lack of impact assessment and evidence on the efficiency and effectiveness of the project by DFID, indicating that the main drive is probably not primarily improving the existing forms of cooperation.

Table 3: Selected projects involving UK-China TDC

Partners	Project	Timeframe/Value	Summary
UK, China, and Malawi/Uganda	Agricultural Technology Transfer: Working in Partnership to Accelerate Technology Transfer (AgriTT)	2012-2017 £10 million	Main Goal: Improve agricultural productivity and food security by transferring Chinese agricultural technologies. Uganda: Cassava value chain development. Malawi: Improve tilapia production.
UK/UNDP, China, and Bangladesh/Nepal	Sharing and Learning on Community-Based Disaster Management in Asia	Phase I: 2013-2015 Phase II: 2015-2017 £ 3 million	Main goal: support regional cooperation on improving resilience to natural disasters in developing countries in Asia.
UK, China, and Ethiopia/Myanmar	Global Health Support Program	2015 – 2017 £ 2.4 million	Main goal: share knowledge, provide services and improve service quality of pilot areas.
UK, China, and Tanzania	China-UK-Tanzania Malaria Control Pilot Project GHSP	2015-2017 £ 1.7 million	Explore suitable control strategy and working mechanism to reduce malaria disease burden and therefore accelerate the malaria control and elimination process in Africa.
UK, Brazil, and Kenya			Enhancement of social protection programmes

Table 4: Selected projects involving UK-India TDC

Project title	Duration	Funding	Main partners	Countries	Project Summary
DFID-TERI Partnership (as part of the India Partnership Framework)	2011-2015	Up to £9M (£8 m from DFID India and £1 m from Global Development Partnership Programme (GDPP) for activities in Africa	TERI – The Energy and Resources Institute	UK, India, Ethiopia, Kenya	The DFID-TERI Partnership for Clean Energy Access and Improved Policies for Sustainable Development supported the replication and implementation of pilot models for clean cook stoves and solar lighting in India and Africa.
Knowledge Partnership Programme (KPP)	2012-2016	Up to £9 m (£7 m from GDPP and £2 m from DFID India)	Collaboration with more than 55 partners including UN organisations, International and national		KPP supports gathering and uptake of evidence, and sharing of knowledge and expertise, on India's impact on global public goods (such as trade, climate change, and food security), and on poverty reduction in third countries (e.g.

			NGOs, academic institutions, Chambers of Commerce etc.		supporting India to share evidence and expertise with LICs).
Strategic Health and Nutrition Partnership (SHNP)	2013- 2018	Up to £15 m (including £12m from DFID India and £3m from the GDPP)	Access Health International		The Health Financing Support Programme of the SHNP supported dissemination of best practices and lessons learnt in health financing in Indian states to other developing countries, e.g. on India's innovative financing reforms (including health insurance) and private sector engagement.
Innovative Ventures and Technologies for Development (INVENT)	2013- 2019	Up to £38 m (£5 m in GDPP grant funding for output 3: Global knowledge sharing)	Various (e.g. Intellectap/San kalp Forum, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry FICCI)		INVENT supports technological and business innovations for the poor in the low-income states of India and in developing countries in Africa and South Asia. The global component includes technical assistance to exchange and adapt proven innovations from India to LICs.
Global Research Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security, Health & Women (GRP)	2013- 2020	£5 m (£3 m SARH; £2 m GDPP); cofounding from UK Research Councils (RCUK) and Government of India	Research Councils in the UK and India; researchers in low-income countries		The GRP creates collaborative trilateral research partnerships between the UK, India and LICs to generate, test and use innovative research products, facilitate crossfertilisation of ideas and build research capacity in LICs. Thematic focus: food security, health, and women.
Supporting Indian Trade and Investment for	2014- 2020	£19 million	International Trade Center		SITA is DFID's first South- South Aid for Trade and value- chain programme. It supports

Africa (SITA Africa)				higher value exports from African countries to India and other countries by using Indian know-how, technology and investment.
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5.3.1.1. The UK, EU, and Europeanization

National adaptation/policy convergence

By the time the initiative on EU, China, and Africa was launched, the UK had already worked towards engaging China in their China-Africa dialogue. The UK has supported the trilateral initiative from the beginning, and at the same time pursuing parallel bilateral relations with China. While the EU, China, and Africa dialogue initiated in 2008 led to no concrete action, the UK and China signed the same year a memorandum of understanding for agricultural collaboration between the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture and the UK's Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs – which led to several trilateral projects spanning a decade. Answering the question “Has convergence and/or adaptation of national policy with EU norms and directives taken place?” in other words, “Did EU push for TDC?” based on the analysis of the EU and the UK, there is little evidence of EU projecting TDC to the UK level. The approach taken by the UK was in large determined by the nation’s termination of bilateral cooperation and influenced by the DFID’s previous work in China based on a technical “piloting” project approach.

Answering the question “Is convergence in substantive policy areas visible in the “indirect” Europeanization where member states learn from one another through transnational cooperation and policy transfer?” or “Has the idea circulated among member states, leading to convergence?” Except for a workshop on the topic of TDC arranged by AECID, it appears to be limited learning amongst the member states, and the meeting in Beijing.

Projection of national policy onto EU structures

The UK, together with France and Germany have overall been the strongest supporters of the EU TDC initiative, while pursuing their own parallel relations with China:

“The UK, Germany and France had tended to take a lead within the EU on policy towards China; they were the biggest investors in China and recipients of investment from China (Q 78). On the other hand Matthew Baldwin (Cabinet of EU Commission President Barroso) thought the EU was increasingly acting as a union though there would always be a parallel set of contacts between the larger Member States and China. The EU was working on a multiplicity of contacts: parliamentary, business-to-business, NGO (QQ 322, 328). (84. Dr Brown, House of Commons IDC, 2012)

The UK certainly facilitated the dialogue on the issue of China in Africa, with DFID arranging one of the first meetings of traditional donors specifically addressing this issue. DFID has also been instrumental in engaging China on the international level, promoting inclusion. However, the evidence of whether the UK has actively promoted its national policy in the case of the EU TDC initiative is unclear. The statement in the House of Commons international committee in their third report of sessions 2008-2009 on DFID and China indicates the UK involvement in shaping the EU TDC initiative:

“The UK supports increased contacts between the EU and China on Africa. The visit by Development Commissioner Louis Michel to Beijing in April 2008 has provided a solid basis for further co-operation. The UK has contributed to the Commission Communication on ‘The EU, Africa and China: Towards trilateral dialogue and cooperation on Africa's peace, stability and sustainable development’. There is scope for China and the EU to engage more closely on both development and conflict resolution issues, in partnership with African countries.” (24 Jun 2008 : Column 295W Mr. Douglas Alexander, House of Commons IDC, 2012).

“The UK continues to seek ways to increase dialogue and engagement, especially on the ground, with the Chinese on African issues, including areas where our views differ, ie security, stability and the rule of law. The UK similarly supports the EU in these aims, notably on the recent EU Commission Communication on trilateral co-operation, which the UK's own approach and information sharing helped inform.” (Memorandum by Bill Rammell MP, Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, House of Commons IDC, 2012)

This “contribution” may be the UK effort to bring together the different stakeholders and put the China in Africa issue as a priority on the agenda, or this may indicate a more active approach in shaping the form of the proposal. Given the analysis of the TDC initiative and the EU-China relations at the time, it does not easily match the UK’s own approach to TDC: small-scale, technical, and build on many years of development engagement building trust. The EU approach was ambitious in terms of trilateral cooperation arrangements and came at a time when the relationship between the EU and China was not at its best. However, the overall notion of TDC as “support for South-South cooperation”, a weak form, is similar to that of the UK

Thus, the answer to the question “Has the state pushed for its national foreign policy goals to be adopted as EU goals/policy?” or “Did UK push trilateral cooperation to EU level?” is that there is some evidence of the UK pushing its foreign policy to the EU level and facilitating the TDC initiative.

While the UK has had more success than most traditional donors in engaging China in TDC, at the point of the EU’s TDC initiative, it had little success in engaging China in trilateral cooperation on its own at the time and at the same time recognizing that TDC should be a part of their China in Africa line. However, TDC at the EU level would obviously not take the form of phasing out of bilateral UK-China development, and a EU approach alone would leave the UK dependent on the EU to influence China in Africa. It is more likely that the UK would use the EU as a “multiplier” of influence and still follow a unilateral approach to TDC with China. The statement in the House of Commons international committee in their sixteenth report of sessions 2010-2012 on EU development assistance also supports this, acknowledging EU potential:

“The EU is a vehicle for addressing key global challenges. The increasingly global nature of development challenges such as climate change, peace and stability, migration, financial stability, food security and communicable diseases, clearly indicate that solutions require new forms of international cooperation with the involvement of emerging developing countries. The EU’s new structures, such as the European External Action Service, offer the potential for joined-up engagement in international development, combining aid, diplomacy, military power and economic tools such as trade policy.” (26)

Thus, the answer to the question “How indispensable is the EU to the achievement of national foreign policy goals to be adopted as EU goals/policy?” or “Would UK need to promote trilateral cooperation at the EU level?” is that the EU was not indispensable, but seen as valuable vehicle for engagement with emerging donors in addition to its own approach. By promoting TDC at EU level, the chances of cooperation in a broader sense of tackling global challenges increase.

And the answer to the question “Has the state benefited from the “cover” of the EU?” or “Has UK used the EU as an “umbrella”?” is that there is some evidence of the UK using the EU as an “umbrella” engaging with China over a sensitive matter; Africa.

Internalisation of “Europe” in national identities

The answers to the questions “Has there been a reshaping or hybridisation of identities which relativizes national identities and privileges a European identity?” and “What kind of European norms have arisen among national officials and how do they apply to foreign policy?” is that overall, the UK approach does not appear to be a “European response”.

5.3.2. Germany

Germany has been one of the most active donors supporting SSC and TDC and the lead provider of trilateral cooperation among the EU member states, with a number of on-going and concluded projects²¹ (OECD 2013; OECD 2016). German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), together with The Federal Foreign Office (AA), is the main agenda-setter for development cooperation. When the strategies, shape of cooperation, and necessary agreements are set, the German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation (GIZ) is in charge of implementation and evaluation of the projects. Trilateral cooperation is mainly dealt with in three policy documents; “Development cooperation with Global Development Partners, Sharing responsibility – Shaping sustainable development” (BMZ, 2015), “Shaping Globalization – Expanding Partnerships – Sharing Responsibility” (BMZ, 2012) and “Triangular cooperation in German development cooperation” (BMZ, 2013). The first and the second document are a broad strategy for global partners and the third is specific strategy for trilateral cooperation.

²¹ See table 4 for an overview of the projects

In “Shaping Globalization-Expanding Partnerships-Sharing Responsibility” from 2012, Germany presented a holistic strategy for engaging with emerging powers conceptualized as “new players”, that are “*economic motors and key regional players, active beyond their own regional boundaries. They also play an increasingly important role in international decision-making processes.*” (pp.5). It recognizes the importance of emerging powers and seeks a place for Germany. The strategy is further elaborated: “*The German Government seeks to work together with partners in order to shape the globalized, interdependent and multipolar world by means of rule-based, multilateral global governance realized through legitimate and effective international institutions.*” (pp.7), outlining broadly the areas for cooperation: peace and security, Human rights and the rule of law, economic and financial policy, resources, food and energy, employment, social affairs and health, development and sustainability. TDC is mentioned as a “promising mechanism for collaboration” (pp.52) within development and sustainability.

The Government’s 14th White Paper comment’s on this new strategy and signals a shift in development cooperation: “*Development cooperation with the major emerging economies has been realigned under this new overarching strategy. It will now be guided by interests to a greater extent, and will predominantly serve the joint protection of global public goods.*” (pp.53). The focus on “interest to a greater extent”, implies a blurring of lines between development, trade, and foreign policy.

This is further expanded two years later in “Development cooperation with Global Development Partners, Sharing responsibility – Shaping sustainable development”, where the “development partners” are Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, and South Africa. The goal of cooperation is to shape global sustainable development through joint action *with* the partners (mainly safeguarding and providing global public goods) and *in* the countries. This approach recognizes the political and economic power while acknowledging that there are still many issues within these countries. The approach is largely bilateral and differentiated, with employment of TDC where it’s appropriate.

German approach to TDC

The implementation of German TDC includes provision of personnel, specialist sectoral knowledge and expertise, or financial resources. The major partners are all located in Latin

America: Brazil, Mexico, and Chile²². Two funds for promotion of trilateral cooperation exist, the Latin America Triangular Cooperation Fund for support of beneficiaries in Latin America and Africa. The second fund is the Triangular Cooperation Fund with South Africa, which supports beneficiary countries in Africa. Some trilateral cooperation exists outside these funds, for example between Germany, Brazil, and Mozambique working on the strengthening of risk management for rivers and coastal regions (BMZ, 2013). The major focus of trilateral projects is on environment, development, and institutional building (Chaturvedi, 2012).

TDC activities of Germany usually falls in to two working models, A and B. Model A follows a strong definition of TDC²³ “as a cooperation project that is jointly planned, financed, and implemented by an established DAC donor (industrialised country), and emerging economy and a beneficiary country” (BMZ, 2013). Model B is trilateral cooperation in a wider sense; here the participants may be two DAC donors, one emerging economy and one beneficiary, two emerging economies and a DAC donor, or two beneficiaries and one established donor. Most of Germany`s efforts for TDC are focused around model A.

This model has a stronger emphasis on shared experience and learning, the idea is that every participant in the triangulation are learning from each other and at the same time transfer knowledge. For example in a trilateral project between Germany, Brazil, and Uruguay that went from 2010 to 2012, the objective was to transfer a successful Brazilian model for an integrated health system to Uruguay. This knowledge transfer was optimized by combining the knowledge of local needs and context (Uruguay) with technical expertise (Brazil) and experience in facilitation, monitoring and evaluation (Germany). In model B this project would take a strictly “pulling of resources and coordination” kind of form rather than the “learning and sharing” form (BMZ 2013, GIZ 2012). This narrow focus is mainly due to the interest in specifically working with emerging donors and to separate TDC from other types of similar programmes. Further, Germany does not track trilateral arrangements as part of bilateral programmes, which is more common in the approach by the UK.

²² Germany operates with the concept of “Anchor countries” in their development cooperation. They are an important target group due to their key economic and political role in shaping regions and in meeting global challenges These include: China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Thailand, Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa, Brazil, Mexico and Turkey. (BMZ glossary).

²³ While the German TDC is largely base don the OECD definition, The UN and OECD operate with wider definitions of TDC as an umbrella for several models. A strong definition is rare to find amongst the different actors.

Procedures and funds for TDC

The general goals for Germany to engage in trilateral cooperation are:

1. Improving the effectiveness of development measures in the beneficiary countries through the complementary use and dovetailing of knowledge, experience and financial resources from emerging economies and from Germany.
2. Establish worldwide development partnerships for sustainable development and exerting a positive impact on regionalisation.
3. Jointly setting global development agendas and promoting the sharing of learning and experience on the principles of development cooperation and the ways in which it can impact.
4. Replicating/disseminating experience jointly gained through bilateral development cooperation with global partners and in other developing countries.
5. Fostering South-South cooperation, regional development, dialogue and networking. (BMZ, 2013)

Three main mechanisms are used to finance TDC; two are especially for trilateral activities and the third is the regular mechanism that is used for bilateral projects. While the guidelines for project design and development are mostly the same, the initiation procedures, planning and budgeting are slightly different to accommodate the difference between bilateral and trilateral projects.

Under normal procedures for bilateral development cooperation any country can initiate a singular trilateral project (beneficiary, pivotal or Germany). Since Germany promotes demand-driven approach, the project is likely to be proposed by a pivotal or beneficiary country, but Germany may perceive an opportunity for triangulation and initiate TDC as well. Furthermore, TDC is more complex in the sense that it requires coordination of more than two partners; additional resources are needed to facilitate discussions and joint platforms for the planning of the project (Paulo, 2018). Usually GIZ will use existing bilateral framework with pivotal/beneficiary country as far as possible. TDC under the regular mechanism can be funded through the general budget allocation for either countries or regions in addition to study and expert funds (SFF) for small scale technical cooperation projects.

Founded in 2011, The Regional Fund for Triangular Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC Fund) is open for all the emerging countries in the region, while the beneficiary countries are not limited to Latin America. Several countries are involved in trilateral cooperation as pivotal partners; the main partners are Brazil, Mexico and Chile²⁴. The activities within the fund are divided between three areas: Promotion & implementation of TDC projects, capacity development and training, and regional dialogue at the policy level.

To initiate a project through this fund, first a pivotal or beneficiary country has to send a request to the German embassy of the respective country, which will in turn deliver the proposal to GIZ and BMZ. The proposal will be decided upon by the BMZ in accordance to predetermined criteria, and GIZ is commissioned with the implementation of the project. All the partners in the trilateral setting jointly agree upon the exact modalities and framework of the project implementation (GIZ, 2016).

The South African – German Trilateral Cooperation (TriCo) Programme was established between Germany and South Africa for promotion of African development projects and strengthening South African contribution to development in the region. Projects can be initiated by any actor in the framework (Germany, South Africa, third country, regional organization) and presented to a joint committee based in South Africa that decides on the use of the fund. Generally projects tends to fall within one of the areas in the bilateral cooperation; Governance and Administration, Energy and Climate, and HIV and AIDS Prevention – and/or should contribute to the protection of global public goods. The TriCo Fund also states that South Africa must provide minimum 30% of the financial support. In other TDC cases Germany usually decides the proportions case-by-case (Honda & Sakai, 20114; GIZ, 2015).

TDC with China

In 2010, Germany formally phased out their bilateral development program in China. Within development cooperation, the focus shifted towards tackling global challenges as outlined earlier, and a bilateral government consultation mechanism involving several areas of interests, for example the first consultation in 2011 was focused on energy, environment, and Climate

²⁴ The rest of the pivotal countries include Bolivia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Peru

(Huotari et.al. 2015). However, economic interests have dominated most of the relationship between Germany and China, characterized by its symbiosis where Germany found an export market and China found technical know-how it need for advancement (Schnellbach & Man, 2015). The relationship has been challenged by the changing geopolitical and geo-economic environment and prompted the Germany-China relations in to diversification of interest areas.

Both Germany and China has advanced the idea of trilateral cooperation. In the framework of G20, China and Germany has made cooperation with Africa a key priority (China Daily, 2017). Furthermore, China`s extensive “Belt and Road Initiative” provides opportunities for TDC (DIE Blog, 2017). Concrete action is evident in the establishment of the Sino-German Sustainable Development Center (SGSDC) in 2017, where TDC is one of the three main pillars together with Partnership with Businesses and Sino-German Dialogue on Development Cooperation (CSD). The CSD`s role is to identify, asses and monitor trilateral cooperation projects in a broader sense (not strict definition), while the business part is focused on involving private investment and industry (BMZ press release, 2017; SGSDC website). The results are still limited to scaling up a Chinese vocational training project in Laos to include GIZ, so this is a small step towards TDC involving Germany and China.

The lack of involvement in TDC can be explained by the strict form of TDC Germany has been promoting since 2013. China has been cautions in it`s attempt at TDC and has limited experience in triangular cooperation with traditional donors (Zhang, 2018). China`s TDC is characterized by small scale/low visibility projects, minor financial contributions. This makes sense given the fact that the budget for development cooperation is still far from a traditional donor, China has to be more selective in it`s choice of projects to engage in. Also, China`s demand driven approach to development based on the principle of non-interference, dictates that the beneficiary country must ask for TDC themselves. The German TDC is demanding and would require quite an effort of China, and Germany has viewed the ability of China to engage in TDC with doubt. The SGSDC is an example of a “neutral” platform for engagement discussed earlier, making it easier to overcome suspicion and set the rules jointly. However, the issue of beneficiary ownership doesn`t seem to be addressed, which could appear as “TDC for the sake of TDC”. It is still to early to say what this cooperation is going to result in and what types of projects are going to emerge.

Overall, the German approach is elaborate, leaning towards a stronger form of TDC. With a clear “top-down” and “bottom-up” mechanism for influence, it is serving as a potential bridge between North-South and South-South cooperation through mutual learning. However, there is again a lack of evidence for the effectiveness and efficiency of trilateral cooperation²⁵. The priority to engage with the emerging donors is explicitly stated as one of the goals. Germany has prioritized development cooperation with emerging economies for over a decade, while several DAC-reviews have urged Germany to shift focus towards Least Developed Countries (LDC) (DAC-review, 2005; DAC-review, 2010). TDC has proven to be a valuable mode of cooperation to strengthen its ties to emerging economies. Furthermore, the use of TDC as a phasing out strategy is not clearly evident in the German case. It is mentioned in the strategy paper on TDC, but it appears to be a much more diverse tool for overall engagement of emerging economies. This is also evident by the time lag between the graduation of some emerging powers and the adaptation of the new strategy, for example in the case of China where graduation was four years before the new strategy.

²⁵ Although, “Trilateral cooperation in German development cooperation” is one of the topics in “The 2018 – 2020 Evaluation Programme of the German Institute for Development Evaluation” that has just started.

Table 4: TDC projects with involvement of Germany²⁶

Partners	Project/Activity	Timeframe/Value	Summary
Mexico and Dominican Republic/Ecuador/Guatemala			Environmental promoter network RED GIRE SOL
South Africa and Tanzania			Fire management coordination project
Brazil and Uruguay			Government and Society: Strengthening of general procedures
South Africa and DRC			Development of a post-conflict reconstruction and development strategy
South Africa and Tanzania/Kenya			
South Africa and DRC			Organisation of a national anti-corruption summit
Singapore and Afghanistan			Human resource capacity development and civil aviation safety
Chile and Colombia	Territorial administration Antioquia		
Chile and Dominican Republic	Youth Employability	400.000	
Chile and Dominican Republic	Youth Poverty	600.000	
Chile and El Salvador	Consumer Protection		
Chile and Guatemala	Consumer Protection	160.000	
Chile and El Salvador	Monitoring/evaluation of social programmes (FISDL)		
Chile and El Salvador	Ecological production		
Chile and El Salvador	Housing		
Chile and El Salvador	Economic competitiveness	240.000	
Chile and Honduras	Monitoring/evaluation of social programmes (PRAF)		
Chile and Honduras	Improvement of integrated waste management	200.000	
Chile and Paraguay	Housing		
Chile and Paraguay	Public-private partnership for economic development		
Chile and Paraguay	Border cooperation		
Chile and Peru	Social integration of young people		
Chile and Peru	Strengthening of accounting offices	675.154	

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This list is based on overviews provided by several sources: Fejerskov, OECD, GIZ. Some projects in the OECD paper are only briefly mentioned based on survey data from the participating countries, and there is no trace of them in other public sources. These projects are excluded. Also, trilateral projects that are outside the focus of the thesis definition/model of trilateral cooperation (Traditional donor/Emerging donor co-financing/cooperating in project in beneficiary country) are also excluded (for example traditional donor and two recipient countries, or traditional donor/NGO, organization and recipient country).

Chile and Colombia	West management	240.000	
Chile and Colombia	Land use planning		
Chile and Nicaragua	Forestation		
Chile and Haiti	“Imagining a joint future”	600.000	
Chile and Colombia/Peru/Ecuador/ Bolivia/Paraguay/Uruguay	Metrology		
Chile (Australia)	Social Policy	4.400.000	
Mexico and Ecuador	Environmental protection		
Mexico and Dominican Republic	Environmental protection	720.000	
Mexico and Guatemala	Environmental protection		
Mexico and Bolivia	Promoting the reuse of recycled wastewater for agricultural irrigation in Bolivia	2014-2016 1.200.000	Sustainable cross-sector and participatory strategies for improving wastewater treatment are developed and implemented, thus helping to improve food security and contain the spread of diseases caused by contaminated water and agricultural produce.
Mexico and Colombia	Monitoring land use change and the impacts of climate change on biodiversity	2013-2015 804.000	With support under a triangular cooperation arrangement with Mexico and Germany, Colombian authorities introduce a monitoring system that rapidly provides informative data about ecosystem interventions.
Mexico and Colombia	Fostering sustainable urban development and housing construction through technical advice and knowledge transfer (INFONAVIT)	2013-2016 600.000	Drawing on Mexico’s experience, Colombia promotes sustainable, energy-efficient housing construction. In return, Mexico benefits from Colombia’s experience in sustainable urban development and spatial planning.
Mexico and Peru	Improving the system for contaminated site management	2014-2017 600.000	Peru has a sustainable, integrated management system for contaminated sites.
Mexico/Panama and Nicaragua	Sustainable Agriculture in the Corredor Biologico Mesoamericano (CBM)	750.000	
Brazil/Mexico and Bolivia/Peru	Natural gas		
Brazil and Paraguay	Environmental protection		
Brazil and Various (Paraguay/ Dominican Republic/ El Salvador/ Uruguay)	HIV/AIDS prevention		
Brazil and Mozambique	Institutional strengthening of quality control (INNQ)		
Brazil and Mozambique	Strengthening of the cooperate credit association	600.000	
Brazil and Mozambique	Disaster prevention	1.100.000	
Brazil and Peru	Support for creating an Centre for Environmental Technology (CTA)	2012-2014 4.400.000	In order to meet Peru’s new environmental standards and the export criteria regulating access to international markets, key branches of industry in the country have a strong need for skilled workers and specialist services in the field of environmental technology, especially consultancy and laboratory services. CTA offers environmental

			technology companies market-oriented training and professional development, along with various other services.
Tunisia and Mauritania	Audit commission and institutional support		
Brazil and Paraguay	Technological center for environment		
Colombia and Costa Rica	Community-based rural tourism		
Brazil and Haiti	Fostering South-South cooperation		
Costa Rica and Bolivia/Colombia	Agroforestal		
Costa Rica and Morocco	Improving the sustainable management and use of forests, protected areas and watersheds	2013-2016 900.000	In Costa Rica and Morocco, a number of different activities addressing the issue of climate change have helped to enhance the sustainable management and use of forests, protected areas and watersheds. To secure long-term funding for protection activities, new sources of income, such as ecotourism, have been developed. Experience is shared with other MENA countries.
Indonesia and East Timor	Democracy, human rights	800.000	
Indonesia and Myanmar	Vocational training		
Thailand and Laos	Water management. 2. Nam Xong Sub-River Basin Management Project	2012-2014 123.655	2. Main goal: Improve water resources management in Nam Xong sub-river basin through practical water protection regulation and technical solutions.
Thailand and Laos	Fostering National GAP Standards. 3. Strengthening National Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in Lao PDR Project	2012-2015 96.017	3. Main goal: Support to develop structures and procedures of Department of Agriculture of Lao PDR
Thailand and Laos	Value chain management. 1. Mulberry Paper Supply Chain Project	2010-2013 183.868	1. Main goal: Enhance rural cross-border economies in Northern Thailand and Lao PDR through the development of mulberry paper (Sa paper) value chain and bark (Posaa) production capacity.
Thailand and Vietnam	Strengthening of rural cooperatives. 2. Strengthening Cooperatives and SMEs in Central Vietnam Project	180.230	
Thailand and Vietnam	Technological service. 1. Advanced Technical Services for SME in Selected Industrial Sectors of Vietnam	187.000	1. Main goal: Increase the productivity and competitiveness of SMEs in sugar, paper and automotive industry through improved services of COMFA. 2. Improve performances and income of the cooperatives/SMEs in Central Region of Vietnam through effective cooperative promotion system with strengthened structure and human resources.
Thailand and Timor-Leste	Sufficiency Economy and	2016-2017	

	Business Promotion in the Agricultural Sector Project		
Malaysia and Cambodia	Corporate social responsibility in the port sector	2012-2014 113.695	Strengthen the capacities of Cambodian ports to develop a culture and policy with increased responsibility towards social, ecological and safety aspects.
Malaysia and East Timor	Capacity building, the fishery sector	180	
South Africa and Several African Countries	Governance and administration (at least 10 projects)	7.000.000	
South Africa and Tanzania	Energy and climate/protection of public goods		

5.3.2.1. Germany, the EU and Europeanization

Germany has been a strong promoter of EU-China dialogue and trilateral dialogue with Africa. However, taken a different approach to TDC and engagement at the national level.

National adaptation/policy convergence

Germany was engaging in trilateral cooperation before the EU TDC initiative. Initially sceptical to China's rise, Germany supported the EU TDC initiative, acknowledging the need for EU to respond in a pragmatic way, rather than spiral in to competition and rivalry.

However, Germany has not used TDC to considerably engage with China (a centre for sustainable development was opened in 2017 to promote TDC between China and Germany, which has resulted so far in a small project with Laos).

TDC is a well-established mode of cooperation for Germany to engage with emerging donors, but TDC with India and China has been minimal, even though they are both key emerging economies in the German strategy. According to the global strategy, trilateral cooperation would be used "when appropriate". Although there is no reflection of the exact case in which TDC would be used, given the strict definition of TDC applied in Germany it happens when there is shared common goals, complementarities, and *common* values within a sector. Thus, TDC with China or India was not perceived as to be the best way to engage and would not necessarily

make sense for *Germany* at the time of the EU TDC initiative. This has changed since 2008 evident in the establishment of the SGSDC.

The base of this argument is also presented in Altenburg & Weikert (2007), that groups China and India together and states, “*Joint implementation of a project is problematic. It is nevertheless especially important to include these countries in the dialogue concerning good donor standards in order to ensure that their practices of development cooperation do not undermine goals of the DAC donor community.*” (pp.2). This assessment was based on lack of basic consensus that existed with for example Brazil, Mexico, Chile, and South Africa (German Coalition Agreement, 2009). Furthermore, they concluded that there are cases in favor of the EU or a multilateral donor being the traditional donor in TDC with China, and that it should be complimentary to the bilateral programs. TDC has evolved quite differently in the EU and in Germany, making it seem plausible that TDC is not regarded as a “EU instrument” for Germany in the case of China.

Thus, the answer to the question “Has convergence and/or adaptation of national policy with EU norms and directives taken place?” or “Did EU push for trilateral cooperation?” is that it is unlikely. It doesn’t seem like the EU altered the German approach to China in Africa in any significant way.

The answer to the question “Is convergence in substantive policy areas visible in the “indirect” Europeanization where member states learn from one another through transnational cooperation and policy transfer?” “Has the idea circulated among member states, leading to convergence?” is that except for a workshop on the topic of TDC arranged by AECID, it appears to be limited learning amongst the member states, and the meeting in Beijing.

Projection of national policy onto EU structures

While Germany expressed the need for a unified approach to China in Africa and supported the initiative, there is no evidence of Germany taking the lead in this case. However, the German stance on the boycott on Mugabe revealed that Germany was devoted to making sure that the strategic relationship between Africa, China and the EU was not deteriorating into antagonistic competition for Africa.

As explained above, while being a strong supporter for EU action and TDC in general, there are concerns tied to TDC with China in particular. It is more likely that Germany followed the general consensus “that something must be done” and that competition would be less favourable than cooperation. Thus, the answer to the question “*Has the state pushed for its national foreign policy goals to be adopted as EU goals/policy?*” or “Did Germany push trilateral cooperation to EU level?” is that there is no indication for German leadership.

The sensitivity of the issues lies within the “China in Africa” narrative, a result of general negativity surrounding Chinese activities in Africa. This was portrayed for example by the EU Parliament resolution from 2008. This is evident in the German Africa department assessment: “*Going by previous experience gained by BMZ, there should be some skepticism, however, as to whether great openness to dialogue can be expected on the Chinese side and whether in particular an individual bilateral actor such as Germany will be able to achieve a great deal in this field.*” Africa department China’s Engagement in Africa – Opportunities and Risks for Development

The “binding of hands” technique falls under a shared competence and thus not effective like for example in FTA negotiations with China²⁷. Thus, the question: “Has the state benefited from the “cover” of the EU?” or “Has UK/Germany used the EU as an “umbrella”?” is closely related to the question “How indispensable is the EU to the achievement of national foreign policy goals to be adopted as EU goals/policy?” or “Would Germany need to promote trilateral cooperation at the EU level?” The answer to this question is the perception of Chinese openness at the time was unclear so Germany identified some benefits of pursuing the “China in Africa” issue at the EU level. In combination with the rather economic focused relationship between Germany and China, the EU could also serve as an additional platform for influence in areas like development.

Internalisation of “Europe” in national identities

The differences in approaches between Germany and the EU, signals that Germany has pursued TDC largely on it’s own after the attempted EU, China, and Africa triangulation. There are also no signs of Germany pushing this further to the EU level. The EU sat an example of cooperation

²⁷ See for example Reilly, J. (2017). Leveraging Diversity: Europe's China Policy.

with China, rather than competition, but this notion has been evident in German foreign policy for years in the idea of “Wandel durch Handel”, or “Change through Trade” – The best way to improve relations to China is through trade (Schnellbach & Man, 2015). The discourse in German strategy concerning development cooperation is largely mainstream international principles, which is also dominates the EU approach.

Thus, the answer to the question “Has there been a reshaping or hybridisation of identities which relativises national identities and privileges a European identity?” is that it does not seem that the TDC approach to the “China in Africa” issue has resulted in any “European” norms or identity reshaping.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

As a result of economic growth, new players have entered the national stage and thus increasing multipolarity in the world order. These emerging powers have engaged in development cooperation and become donors, challenging the traditional architecture of development and aid. Meanwhile, the traditional donors are searching for their place in the new modalities of cooperation and constellations of actors. This thesis has revolved around one specific modality, trilateral development cooperation, in the context of the EU and set out to answer the questions; *How do the EU and member states engage in trilateral cooperation? What are the mechanisms for EU-member state convergence or divergence – if at all – vis-à-vis TDC? How did TDC perform?* The questions were examined through the lens of Europeanization in the framework of a case study, with the selected member states Germany and the UK.

TDC is not a new modality, but has gained momentum over the last decade. Here, it is an arrangement for cooperation between a traditional DAC-donor, an emerging donor, and a beneficiary country although there are many conceptualizations of TDC. The multitude of definitions and approaches reflects a complexity of interactions between very different partners opting for cooperation in spite of these differences. On one hand, it is understood as a bridge between North-South and South-South cooperation, merging in to a new modality. On the other hand, TDC can be seen as a link between a traditional donor and South-South cooperation, a support. Overall, in the light of the critique the traditional aid architecture has received, TDC aims to increase overall aid efficiency through learning between new and old donors and provide new solutions in the framework of a horizontal partnership.

However, there is a lack of evidence of actual “value added” compared to bilateral and multilateral arrangements. This has led many authors and practitioners to doubt the goal of effectiveness, focusing on TDC as a new strategic tool of foreign policy that is used to influence emerging powers and in the process undermining development effectiveness and the ownership of the beneficiary country. This notion of TDC as a tool of foreign policy is central to this thesis, and examined in the case of EU, China and Africa trilateral development cooperation. This initiative was proposed to China by the EU around the time Europe started worrying about Chinese activities in Africa, signalling a cooperative approach of partnership to promote development of Africa in unison. Yet, it didn’t result in any concrete action.

6.1. Why did trilateral cooperation fail?

The EU approach had several issues. First of all, there are fundamental differences in values between the EU and China most evident in China’s adherence to the principle of non-interference and EU’s promotion of good governance, democracy and human rights. There is a discrepancy between the basic understating of the EU-China relations evident in the discussed documents and objectives. While EU talks about integration of China and supporting transition in to an open society with respect for human rights, China’s policy is focused on an equal partnership based on mutual respect and promotion of common development. Which is in line with China’s non-interference principle for foreign policy. In the relations to the Africa dialogue, at the 9th EU-China Summit, 2006 the EU reaffirmed attachment to the principle of good governance and human rights while China reaffirmed its commitment to the five principles of peaceful coexistence, emphasizing the principle of non-interference. These approaches do not converge easily. Given these differences in basic values the proposal for trilateral cooperation by the EU was mostly stripped of contested areas like human rights, which indicates aspiration to engage China. However, it is unclear how the cooperation would have proceeded since neither China nor the EU was going to compromise in a joint approach.

Second, the EU institutions were divided in the formation of the proposal sending a confusing message to China. Some of the division came from within the Commission itself with rivalry between the focal DG’s, but more important was the resolution issued by the Parliament concerning China’s policy and its effect on Africa. The resolution stressed the importance of not

emulating the Chinese approach to development and criticized China's actions in Tibet and Africa. This created an atmosphere of hostility rather than cooperation and sent mixed signals to China. However, the inconsistency of EU institutions are a factor, but it's not something new that any actor dealing with the EU should be surprised about. Besides, China has dealt (and continuous to deal) both with the EU and through bilateral ties with member states, which have been more successful in engaging China on African issues. China has continuously voiced its interest for a "collective EU voice", but is not deterred from cooperating with a "fragmented EU". Moreover, China still expressed a modest interest in trilateral cooperation even after the EP resolution was published.

Third, the EU forgot about Africa. The Commission was so focused on getting China on board that Africa was for the most part ignored. This is not uncommon in the context of the "China in Africa" issue, often workshop, meetings and conferences taking place in Europe and China does not include African participants or they are underrepresented (Stahl, 2018). In the case of the EU, China, Africa, given the differences between the EU and China, it can be explained by the need to coordinate between themselves first. This model of TDC where the traditional donor and the emerging donor initiate the triangulation, as outlined earlier in the thesis, is especially prone to the beneficiary to be neglected. A more active inclusion of the beneficiary from the beginning can mitigate this. However, it is not to say that it's intentional, but it was perceived as possible collusion between the EU and China over Africa by the Africans, which was arguably more detrimental than the divisions within the EU institutions.

The fundamental principle of Chinese approach to development cooperation is non-interference, thus it's highly demand driven – China does not actively seek out beneficiaries. Previous studies of Chinese engagement in TDC mentioned earlier has found that on the basis of the "going out" strategy, one of the most important factors is image building, in other words to be perceived as a responsible actor and a cooperative nation. This might explain why China showed any interest towards cooperating with the EU in the first place. However, the principle of non-interference is a crucial part of their foreign policy, so when Africa showed suspicion towards the EU and China's efforts it was a signal for China to step back to not hurt its image in Africa and be perceived as a "traditional donor".

The underlying factor here seems to be lack of trust. The proposal was developed during a turbulent time in the EU-China relations, and also in a time of transition both within the structure of the EU institutions and the EU-Africa relations. While in theory, TDC is supposed to build trust, the case studies of Germany and the UK showed that substantial trust has to already be in place. This is reflected in the fact that most TDC researchers advice against setting up a triangulation where the beneficiary might experience one of the partners as hegemonic leading to distrust. In case of Germany, the TDC arrangement under the strict definition also would further require shared basic values. Both of the member states that were examined had spent decades building trust within the emerging countries as donors. DFID was one of the most trusted development agencies in China and Germany has build it`s own brand of quality technology and expertise within development cooperation. The EU has no such brand yet in Africa, except maybe as a model for regional integration.

Finally, in terms of TDC arrangements, which are usually concentrated within a specific sector, this is an ambitious proposal by the EU, and at the same time there is no common understanding of what TDC entails. China has yet to officially define the term, while some Chinese scholars have examined triangulation, it is often focused on China`s role within the existing arrangements that are based on “western” definitions. The EU has did not provide a concrete definition for the purpose of the TDC initiative although some traces of a definition exists in a footnote of the Council endorsement of the “Operational Framework on Aid Effectiveness” from 2009, which defines TDC as “support for South-South cooperation”. Thus, it does not recognize it as an independent mode of cooperation, unlike for example Germany. It is a more politically feasible approach similar to the UK.

In summary, EU China relations seem to be characterized by a “give and take” of political trust, both sides see the need for cooperation but there is confusion on how to overcome obstacles for cooperation. Trilateral cooperation can be seen as an experimental attempt at deepening the EU-China relations in a sensitive sector of their relationship, Africa. At the same time it is a tool perceived to appeal to the African continent, however the poor inclusion of African interest in the trilateral dialogue mostly contributed to mistrust and doubt about European intentions. Either that EU was more interested to “socialize” China than actually working on developing a sustainable approach to African issues or that China and EU were colluding over Africa. Given the demand-driven approach of Chinese development cooperation and the importance of image as a “South”, African disgruntlement was a sign for China to step back. Additionally the model

of TDC pursued by the EU (traditional donor and emerging donor initiating triangular cooperation) seems to be especially sensitive to the problem of beneficiary ownership, which in turn is crucial for the success, and sustainability of a trilateral project. While it can be somewhat mitigated by active inclusion of the beneficiary, this was poorly done in the case of EU-China-Africa trilateral cooperation

6.2. Did ideas travel? Trilateral cooperation and [the selected] EU member states

There is evidence of three distinct approaches to TDC. The UK incorporates TDC within a larger framework of bilateral relations within development policy as a phasing out strategy. Overall this approach reflects a weaker form of TDC, it is more politically feasible in relations to emerging powers like China (and India). China is one of the strongest opponents of the existing development architecture, and identify as a “South” rather than a traditional donor. This form of TDC allows the emerging donors to enter cooperation with a tradition donor without being “tied down” too much. The difference between the UK weaker TDC and the German strict TDC might be a factor in why Germany has ha limited success in cooperating in triangulation with China. This is also supported by the approach that Germany and Chine chose to establish TDC through a “neutral” center. This doesn’t mean that it’s value neutral, just that the premises for the values and the operation of the center is jointly decided by both parties. While a weak form of TDC is easier to engage in and far more common globally (Langendorf et.al. 2012), it favors the wants of the emerging power, sometimes over what the beneficiary needs from trilateral cooperation. Without proper mechanisms for ownership, TDC does not automatically results in a novel cooperation form of horizontal partnership. Nevertheless, the UK has managed to successfully engage China in trilateral cooperation projects, which is more than the EU has accomplished.

Overall, the German approach is elaborate, leaning towards a stronger form of TDC. With a clear “top-down” and “bottom-up” mechanism for influence, it is serving as a potential bridge between North-South and South-South cooperation through mutual learning. Yet, there is again a lack of evidence for the effectiveness and efficiency of trilateral cooperation and the priority to engage with the emerging donors is explicitly stated as one of the strategic goals. However, impact evaluation of development cooperation projects take notoriously long time given the difficulty in measuring impact variables and their unpredictability. On the other hand, the literature on German TDC is far richer than any of the other actors examined and a plethora of

successful projects as examples (GIZ, 2017). Germany has prioritized development cooperation with emerging economies for over a decade, while several DAC-reviews have urged Germany to shift focus towards Least Developed Countries (LDC) (DAC-review 2005; DAC-review, 2010). TDC has proven to be a valuable mode of cooperation to strengthen its ties to emerging economies. Furthermore, the use of TDC as a phasing out strategy is not clearly evident in the German case. It is mentioned in the strategy paper on TDC and in relations to South Africa, but it appears to be a much more diverse tool for overall engagement with emerging economies. This is also evident by the time lag between the graduation of some emerging powers and the adaptation of the new strategy, for example in the case of China where graduation happened four years before the new strategy.

The EU approach to TDC is characterized by its erratic nature. Formalization is virtually non-existent, except for MoU signed between the EU and Brazil, in general the deliberation of TDC at the EU level is limited. There is encouragement for SSC and trilateral cooperation in the fragmented approach by the EU, but without any clear practical guidelines for participation in TDC. However, there is a clear preference for using TDC as an instrument for supporting South-South cooperation. This is an approach similar to the UK and different from Germany, which use TDC as a bridge between North-South and South-South cooperation.

The earliest case of TDC unfolded during the EU-Arab dialogue in the 1970's shortly after the oil crisis in an attempt to improve relations between the EEC and the 20 members of the Arab League. The TDC was set up between Sudan, the EEC and Arab funds (Abu Dhabi and Kuwaiti Funds and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development) (COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, Information note, 1979). The TDC here was most likely based on the model developed by Egon Bahr that constrained by finances in developing a new development policy, set up a model of TDC involving Arab money: *“To carry out this programme, bigger funds are needed, but these can hardly be found in the Federal Republic. For this reason, Minister Bahr placed his bets on oil-producing countries to finance a system of trilateral cooperation. With oil-countries becoming investors, the Federal Republic would supply technological know-how for projects and programmes designed to aid particularly deprived developing countries. It is also intended to give technical aid to Third World countries rich in capital resources only against normal payment. However, on the basis of past experience, it is difficult to be optimistic regarding the willingness of oil-producing states to assume this role.”*

(Kebschull, p.198, 1975). For him, development policy was an instrument of foreign policy, peace through cooperation.

In modern approaches, apart from the regional TDC approach in the case of ASEAN, the EU TDC attempts has also focused on China and Brazil within the framework of “strategic partnership”. The focus has seemed to shift from regions to pivotal emerging powers like China and Brazil. This focus is narrow compared to Germany that engages a broad spectre of emerging economies. Overall, the EU approach to TDC seems quite unpredictable, but may be explained by policy entrepreneurs in action and more broadly by the importance of momentum in trilateral arrangements. TDC initiatives are in general terms “a meeting point for different actors and constituencies” (Müller & Langendorf, p.87, 2012), given the fact that the EU is a platform for several different actors, some initiatives might be favoured over other by certain policy entrepreneurs at specific points in time. These entrepreneurs will also be susceptible to events and trends in the international and domestic arena. Egon Bahr would be a policy entrepreneur, in the time of crisis between the EEC and the Arab countries his model of TDC would seem appropriate. While in the case of the EU, China, and Africa initiative, DG Louis Michel could serve as a promoter or facilitator of TDC, given his early recognition of China’s rise in Africa and the overall trend of TDC in the international community. This could be a factor in the erratic nature of the EU TDC over time. However, the evidence of this is limited, and some sources are almost four decades old. In sum, this serves only as a discussion of TDC at the EU level.

Finally, in terms of TDC arrangements, which are usually concentrated within a specific sector, this is an ambitious proposal by the EU, and at the same time there is no common understanding of what TDC entails. China has yet to officially define the term, while some Chinese scholars have examined triangulation, it is often focused on China’s role within the existing arrangements that are based on “western” definitions. The EU has did not provide a concrete definition for the purpose of the TDC initiative although some traces of a definition exists in a footnote of the Council endorsement of the “Operational Framework on Aid Effectiveness” from 2009, which defines TDC as “support for South-South cooperation”. Thus, it does not recognize it as an independent mode of cooperation, unlike for example Germany. It is a more politically feasible approach similar to the UK.

6.3. National adaptation

The UK

Answering the question “Has convergence and/or adaptation of national policy with EU norms and directives taken place?” in other words, “Did EU push for TDC?” based on the analysis of the EU and the UK, there is little evidence of EU projecting TDC to the UK level. The approach taken by the UK was in large determined by the nation’s termination of bilateral cooperation and influenced by the DFID’s previous work in China based on a technical “piloting” project approach.

Answering the question “Is convergence in substantive policy areas visible in the “indirect” Europeanization where member states learn from one another through transnational cooperation and policy transfer?” or “Has the idea circulated among member states, leading to convergence?” Except for a workshop on the topic of TDC arranged by AECID, it appears to be limited learning amongst the member states, and the meeting in Beijing.

Germany

Answering the question “Has convergence and/or adaptation of national policy with EU norms and directives taken place?” or “Did EU push for trilateral cooperation?” It is unlikely. It doesn’t seem like the EU altered the German approach to China in Africa in any significant way.

Answering the question “Is convergence in substantive policy areas visible in the “indirect” Europeanization where member states learn from one another through transnational cooperation and policy transfer?” “Has the idea circulated among member states, leading to convergence?” Except for a workshop on the topic of TDC arranged by AECID, it appears to be limited learning amongst the member states, and the meeting in Beijing.

6.4. National Projection

The UK

Answering the question “Has the state pushed for its national foreign policy goals to be adopted as EU goals/policy?” or “Did UK push trilateral cooperation to EU level?” There is some evidence of the UK pushing it’s foreign policy to the EU level and facilitating the TDC initiative.

Answering the question “Has the state benefited from the “cover” of the EU?” or “Has UK used the EU as an “umbrella”?” There is some evidence of the UK using the EU as an “umbrella” engaging with China over a sensitive matter; Africa.

Answering the question “How indispensable is the EU to the achievement of national foreign policy goals to be adopted as EU goals/policy?” or “Would UK need to promote trilateral cooperation at the EU level?” The EU was not indispensable, but seen as valuable vehicle for engagement with emerging donors in addition to its own approach. By promoting TDC at EU level, the chances of cooperation in a broader sense of tackling global challenges increase.

Germany

Answering the question “Has the state pushed for its national foreign policy goals to be adopted as EU goals/policy?” or “Did Germany push trilateral cooperation to EU level?” There is no indication for German leadership.

Answering the questions “Has the state benefited from the “cover” of the EU?” or “Has UK/Germany used the EU as an “umbrella”?” is closely related to the question “How indispensable is the EU to the achievement of national foreign policy goals to be adopted as EU goals/policy?” or “Would Germany need to promote trilateral cooperation at the EU level?” The perception of Chinese openness at the time was unclear so Germany identified some benefits of pursuing the “China in Africa” issue at the EU level. In combination with the rather economic focused relationship between Germany and China, the EU could also serve as an additional platform for influence in areas like development.

6.5. Identity reconstruction

The UK and Germany

Answering the questions “Has there been a reshaping or hybridisation of identities which relativises national identities and privileges a European identity?” and “What kind of European norms have arisen among national officials and how do they apply to foreign policy?” Overall, the UK approach does not appear to be a “European response”. It is unlikely that the TDC

approach to the “China in Africa” issue has resulted in any “European” norms or identity reshaping.

6.6. Conclusion

This thesis has asked the questions: *How do the EU and member states engage in trilateral cooperation? What are the mechanisms for EU-member state convergence or divergence – if at all – vis-à-vis TDC? How did TDC perform?* There seems to be no significant Europeanization, except for limited national projection by the UK. Germany uses TDC predominantly as a tool for development, leaving small space for TDC with emerging donors like China and India, and engages differently with these donors, although Germany has expressed interest in trilateral cooperation, Germany was never a big player (Like UK/France) in Africa. UK established TDC with China unilaterally, and might not see the need of TDC at EU level, especially after Brexit. Development policy is a “soft” area of Europeanization, and in the case of TDC there is little evidence for Europeanization. Since the big three were important in getting the approval for TDC in the Council, lack of interest from Germany, UK, France would imply lower interest for TDC at the EU level. TDC as a mode of cooperation presumably creates “win-win” relationship (that all partners have something to gain from the triangulation), increase of foreign policy in development cooperation might lead to EU member states pursuing TDC unilaterally to get the most out of it. Easier to establish shared interest, not constrained by EU’s normative agenda.

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Appendix

Various definitions of trilateral development cooperation

	Definition	
Altenburg & Weikert 2007	Cooperation projects which are jointly planned, financed and carried out by an established donor country which is already a member of the OECD-DAC together with a cooperation country which, although itself a recipient of development cooperation and not (yet) a member of the DAC, is emerging as a New Donor, and a third country as the recipient.	
OECD 2016	Triangular development cooperation refers to northern and multilateral support for long-standing and continuing South–South cooperation by ‘traditional’ partners, often under the auspices of the UN. Trilateral development cooperation, however, refers to a formalized North–South–South development relationship. A variety of international organizations, state and non-state actors can be enrolled, but essentially in this register TDC sets up a project or programme between a DAC donor and/or multilateral agency, partnering with a so-called ‘pivotal’, ‘emerging’ or ‘anchor’ country, to work with a third recipient country.	OECD makes a rare distinction between triangular and trilateral cooperation, in most of the literature the two are interchangeable and the two definitions (either as support for South-South cooperation or as bridge between the North and the South) are just considered different models of TDC.
Lengfelder 2010	TCo is a joint operation of mutual learning as well as the recycling of experience between experts from developing countries and their counterparts from middle-income countries in their respective field of specialization. Financial and administrative support for this effort of human capacity building through learning out of differences is provided by high-income countries.	