

EU Battlegroups – “Ambitious but rubbish?”

- Understanding the development of military capabilities within the ESDP from an institutional perspective

Abstract

A substantial development of the EU's military capabilities has occurred over the past ten years, and the Battlegroups form a rapid response element of these capabilities. The Battlegroups are however relatively small and have a limited capability when it comes to combat tasks, they are more suited to peacekeeping missions or assisting in humanitarian operations. They have been active for almost five years but have still not been deployed in any operation and consequently received criticism that they are a waste of resources, especially since NATO already has a similar rapid response element.

I argue that the EU Battlegroups are not a waste of resources and must be seen as a part of the total growth of the ESDP. I have mapped the development of the Battlegroup concept by looking at documentation regarding formal security and defence. Battlegroups are an integral part of the general institutionalisation of foreign policy cooperation, initiated by the will of a few significant EU member states as well as exogenous events like the conflicts in former Yugoslavia. The Battlegroups also have a function as a catalyst for the structural reorganisation of Europe's armed forces since the end of the Cold War.

Key words: EU, ESDP, Battlegroups, military, institutions

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List of Abbreviations

APOD	Airport of debarkation
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
DGExPo	Directorate-General for External Policies of the union
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EC	European Community
EDA	European Defence Agency
EUISS	European Union Institute for Security Studies
EPC	European Political Cooperation
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU	European Union
EU12	European Union with 12 members (1986-1994)
EU15	European Union with 15 members (1995-2004)
EU25	European Union with 25 members (2004-2006)
EU27	European Union with 27 members (2007-present)
EU BG	European Union Battlegroup
FOC	Full operational capability
HG 2010	Headline Goal 2010
HHG	Helsinki Headline Goal
IFV	Infantry Fighting Vehicle
IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
IOC	Initial operational capability
LI	Liberal Intergovernmentalism
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NRF	NATO Response Force
OHQ	Operational Headquarters
PSC	Political and Security Committee
RAF	Royal Air Force
R&D	Research and Development
Ro/Ro	Roll on-Roll off
SAC	Strategic Airlift Capability
SPOD	Seaport of debarkation
TEU	Treaty of the European Union
UN	United Nations
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
US	United States (of America)
WEU	Western European Union
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

1 Introduction

A military dimension within the EU is a fairly new phenomenon since the current institutions and operational capabilities were more or less non-existing ten years ago. This thesis relates to the ongoing debate among politicians and the public as well as scholars on why the EU – originally an organisation for economic cooperation – should engage more and more on the global security arena. The Battlegroups have been active since 2005 but have never been put into action, and due to the EU's significant lack in strategic transport capabilities the ambitious goals set up seem hard to live up to. So why does the union continue to uphold this costly capability?

By viewing the Battlegroup concept as a part of EU foreign policy cooperation – which has developed gradually over time – they appear more credible. By adopting a view of the institutional development of foreign policy cooperation I will give a perspective on the development of the ESDP in recent years.

1.1 The EU BG concept

The ability for the EU to deploy force packages at high readiness as a response to a crisis is an essential aspect of the ESDP and a key element of the EU's military capabilities development and of the 2010 Headline Goal.

This quote is taken from the introduction of the EU Battlegroups factsheet from February 2007 (Glière, 2008, p. 40). What this outlines is the military capabilities of the EU and more precisely those of the Battlegroup concept. This concept was initiated in 2004 and became fully operational in 2007. An EU Battlegroup (EU BG) is defined as the minimum military effectively and rapidly deployable force package capable of stand alone operations. In military terms, a battalion is considered to be the smallest force capable of stand alone operations, which means that it is able to support itself in terms of food, water, fuel supplies, etc. An infantry battalion consists of about 1 500 troops, depending on circumstances and it is therefore often mentioned as the model size of an EU BG.

The Battlegroups as such are not a standardized format, it is up to the framework nation in charge of each Battlegroup respectively to determine the exact number of participants and its composition of land, sea and air assets. Therefore they vary somewhat in size. The Battlegroup can deploy within 10 days and is able to sustain operation up to 30 days on its own, with a provision to extend it up to 120 days if resupplied. An EU BG is intended to execute tasks

listed in Article 17.2 in the Treaty of the European Union (TEU) and those listed in the European Security Strategy (ESS).

Questions referred to in this Article shall include humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking.

(TEU, Article 17:2)

Since January 1 2007 the EU BG concept reached full operational capability (FOC). This means that two separate Battlegroups are on constant stand-by for 6 months every year, each ready to respond to a crisis within 10 days. The stand-by order is organized as follows:

Table 1.1
EU BG Stand-by roster, 2007-2009

Period	Framework nation	Contributor(s)
1st half 2007	<i>France</i>	<i>Bel</i>
	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Hol, Fin</i>
2nd half 2007	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Hun, Slove</i>
	<i>Greece</i>	<i>Rom, Bul, Cyp</i>
1st half 2008	<i>Sweden</i>	<i>Fin, Nor, Est, Ire</i>
	<i>Spain</i>	<i>Ger, Fr, Por</i>
2nd half 2008	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Fr, Bel, Lux, Esp</i>
	<i>United Kingdom</i>	—
1st half 2009	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Esp, Gr, Port</i>
	<i>Greece</i>	<i>Bul, Rom, Cyp</i>

(Source: Lindstrom, 2007; Ainsworth, 2009)

Note: 1st half of the year covers January 1-June 30, 2nd half of the year covers July 1-December 31.

The ‘Framework nation’ is the country responsible for organizing a specific Battlegroup. ‘Contributors’ are countries participating with various other personnel and equipment such as Special Forces, support units, airlift or amphibious capabilities. These 10 Battlegroups will be used to illustrate the capabilities of the EU BG concept in chapter 3.

In addition to the tasks of Article 17.2 there are five “Key Threats” listed in the ESS.

- Terrorism
- Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction
- Regional Conflicts
- State Failure
- Organised Crime

(Source: Missiroli, 2003, p. 324)

Terrorism, and particularly the recent religious fundamentalism, is highlighted since it puts lives at risks and seeks to undermine the open and tolerant European society.

Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) is the building and spreading of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons and is regarded in the ESS as potentially the greatest threat to society.

Regional Conflicts are conflict in places such as Kashmir, the Great Lakes region in East Africa or in the Korean peninsula. These can possibly affect the EU indirectly or directly since they can lead to terrorism, state failure and rise of organized crime.

State Failure is when bad governance, corruption, misuse of power etc. brings a state to collapse or civil war. Notable examples are Somalia, Liberia or Afghanistan under the Taliban regime.

Organized Crime involves trafficking of women, drugs, illegal migrants and weapons. It is an internal problem with an external dimension since a lot of EU's organized crime stretches outside the union's borders.

These threats are concerning the entire union and the EU BG concept is one of the tools available to handle them. The process behind defining many of the elements mentioned above did not happen overnight, it was a process stretched over more than five years of which the ESDP grew in many ways.

Throughout this study I will refer to the 'EU BG concept' as an institution in itself, by adopting a definition of institution as a way of formalized cooperation according to Michael E. Smith (2004, p. 26). The capabilities of a Battlegroup as such existed before the EU BG concept was born, but those capabilities were not coordinated in any military or political sense. What the EU BG concept means is that the coordination of these capabilities are formalised.

1.2 Problem

The Battlegroups have a limited military capability, yet they are the single most significant example of the EU's military cooperation. This study intends to explain what function the EU BG has within the ESDP and how it can be understood from an institutional perspective. As part of this I will consider the military challenges of the EU BG concept and relate this to the political process behind them. Being aware of the military capabilities, and its limitations, of the EU is essential for defence planners, technologists and industrialists of Europe if

they are to understand the complex future for which they must prepare. At least not because of the immense costs states spend on defence technology and related institutions. Given the substantial amounts of money being spent on the Battlegroups they might seem as a waste of resources, on the other hand they can be viewed as an important step towards even closer security cooperation between the EU member states.

Studies of ESDP operations have been made before (Lindstrom, 2007; Grevi et al., 2009) but this study focuses on the development of the Battlegroup concepts in relation to the development of CFSP.

1.2.1 Research question

Without doubt the ESDP today have a military potential. I will explore how this was developed, why did it even occur when there already existed a security organisation in Europe in the form of NATO? By focusing on institutionalisation of cooperation I will look at important landmarks of the development of Battlegroups.

The overall research question for this study will be:

- *How can we understand the quick development of military rapid reaction forces within the ESDP?*

And the specific question of which I will devote my study towards is:

- *What are the main explanatory factors behind the development of the EU BG concept?*

These questions will be framed within the broader discussion of how to understand the development of European foreign cooperation.

1.3 Methodology

I will make a qualitative analysis of official documents regarding defence policy cooperation within the EU. This study is about mapping the development of the EU BG concept. This concept have become somewhat of an institution in its own, in the sense that it is a formalized cooperation. Michael E. Smith distinguishes between institution and institutionalization in the following way.

In general, institutions are the “rules of the game” of a particular social group [...] They define and condition the choices of individuals. Institutionalization is the process by which those norms, or shared standards of behaviour, are created and developed.

(Smith, 2004, p. 26)

This definition will also apply in my study. The “rules of the game” being how the sovereign EU member states chose to create their joint rapid reaction capabilities.

According to research definitions by Alexander George and Andrew Bennett my study could be classified as a *Theory testing* case study as it aims to test the validity and scope conditions of competing theories (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 75). The “phenomenon” singled out for examination is the development of the EU BG concept. Obviously there are no specific theories developed to analyse such a specific event, which is why I will apply theories dealing with EU foreign cooperation in general. The empirical data will be official documents regarding EU military capabilities.

First I will single out the institutional moments of the development of the EU BG concept. The ‘Institutional moments’ are events where decisions have been taken that have been important to the EU BG concept. The typical features of the EU BG concept is its focus on rapid deployability, short sustainability, small size of force and the flexible tasks it is able to perform.

These institutional moments have thereafter been interpreted from my theoretical background in order to find an explanation, or understanding, to what influenced the development of the EU BG concept.

1.3.1 Defining ‘Institutional moments’

Can the EU BG concept best be explained from the internal perspective? Due to the absence of a deployment the EU BG concept has had a very limited effect on the outside world so far, it is perhaps better understood as a motor for more intensified internal cooperation? Or is it best explained from an external perspective as a way to balance the dominant position by the US in world politics and particularly in NATO?

By studying the accessible documentation of declarations, statements and treaties regarding foreign policy we can depict a progress of formalization of military cooperation. These documents will be the empirical data I will analyze in order to show what I call *Institutional moments* of this progress. The EU BGs are a defined resource which has grown into existence from the ESDP.

I define *institutions* in this thesis as formalized cooperation. The EU Battlegroup concept is an institution in the sense that it is a part of the ESDP military capabilities and that its organisational structure is defined in legal documents. Other military operations within the ESDP (like Operation Artemis or EUFOR Tchad) have been put together *ad hoc* and therefore have not been a standing force. Note that the EU does not have any military itself, when I use the term “standing force” I put it in contrast to armed forces that have to be organized when called upon, unlike EU BGs which are prepared, trained and on stand by in case they need to be deployed. It is always the member states which make up the armed forces of the EU.

I will use an institutional perspective to describe the EU BG development because it has proved to be useful in describing EU foreign policy cooperation in

general. As Michael E. Smith argues, that institutionalization helps to promote greater international cooperation (Smith, 2004, p. 38), and that events occurring on the international stage create a motivation for the EU to cooperate.

[E]xogenous events such as enlargements and periodic IGCs have acted as “institutional moments” during which the EU member states reconsidered the ends and means of their cooperation. Indeed, the tendency for the EU to use enlargement decisions as an excuse for institutional development is a defining characteristic of European integration.

(Smith, 2004, p. 240-241)

Mapping the development of the EU BG concept require a study of different kinds of documentation published during the 10 years of the ESDP, with the addition of statements from the TEU. The empirical data provided within core documents of EU security and defence matters will be examined in this section. I have focused on four key elements of a rapid reaction force, as described in the table below.

By focusing on four key elements of a rapid reaction force like the EU BG we can structure a model which helps us to illustrate the development. I have composed the table below in order to make the development of the EU BG concept more apparent, and in order to relate the institutional moments to the theories of cooperation.

Table 1.2

EU BG development model	
Deployability	
Sustainability	
Size of force	
Defined tasks	

Deployability is the time stipulated for initial components of the force (such as a recognition squad) to reach the theatre of operation after a decision to initiate an operation has been taken. Note that the term rapid *response* and rapid *reaction* is used interchangeably in these documents. The deployability is a central feature for a rapid reaction force, and it includes both an operational readiness and a political readiness. When a crisis arises, the political capability for making a decision must exist and after that the force must have the operational capability to deploy to the theatre of operations. Other factors such as vaccination of personnel are also to be valued when judging deployability. Sometimes the definition *readiness* is used instead of deployability, which also refers to the total time of political decision and operational deployment.

Sustainability is the time the force is able to sustain operations if properly resupplied. Note that the sustainability for an EU BG is 30 days self-sustained and 120 days if resupplied, the longest defined time for sustained operations will be used in this comparison. The time set up for a force to sustain operations is important because of the limited size of a rapid reaction force has. It might therefore have to be relieved by other similar forces which take longer time to deploy.

Size of force is the nominal number of troops participating. Note that this number also includes command, logistic and medical personnel and is not to be regarded as the number of combat troops. The time it takes to deploy a force in relation to the size of the force. If a short time of deployment is required a smaller force is easier to deploy, but it might have a more limited capabilities in the theatre of operations.

Defined tasks refer to which tasks the force package should be able to accomplish. The fundamental point of using this aspect is to stress the fact that the EU chooses to develop military capabilities, but also what types of missions these military forces should be able to conduct. Military operations vary in intensity and scale ranging from border control, via peace keeping through peace enforcing up to all out combat tasks. Assisting civil society after a natural disaster require different training and equipment than to separate two fighting militia and sustain order in a conflict zone. What kind of forces to use and what their capabilities should be is decided upon on what tasks they are assigned to accomplish.

These four elements are possible to measure through study of the relevant documents. The combined information should make it possible to compare changes over time and therefore get a picture of the development of the EU BG concept.

1.4 Material and Limitations

The primary sources I have used for mapping the institutional development of the EU Battlegroup concepts have been treaties, declarations, press material and joint statements regarding defence and security issues. Much of this material has been accessible through the comprehensive *Core documents of EU Security and Defence* and *Chaillot Papers* put together by the EU Institute for Security Studies. Secondary sources have been written works about this subject, such as studies made of EU security politics and foreign policy cooperation.

A limitation of this study is that much of the current institutional framework will change or disappear due to the Treaty of Lisbon. I do not intend to make any predictions on how the institutional development of military capabilities will continue. It is also worth noting that this study has a Eurocentric perspective, mainly dealing with EU's relations outwards. Because I have used official statements I am aware of the fact that my conclusions offer no explanation of the informal discussions leading up to decisions.

1.5 Disposition

After this opening chapter I will present the theories which will be used in the analysis of the institutional development of the EU BG concept. These will be applied in my analysis in chapter four. In order to shed light on the capabilities and limitations of the Battlegroup concept I provide an illustrative description in chapter three which cover the main military and political challenges for the EU BG concept. This part is not theory-related and ought to be regarded as an informative part of the Battlegroups capabilities by itself.

2 Understanding foreign policy cooperation

In this chapter I will give a background of foreign policy cooperation within the EU. Theories of cooperation and an elaboration of the meaning of ‘institution’ are given here. Understanding the development of the CFSP is essential to understand its more recent military applications, of which I will devote a more detailed analysis in chapter 4. As part of the theoretical background I will also discuss the realist perception of European security and why I have chosen to follow a specific institutional approach throughout this study.

2.1 Common Foreign and Security Policy

When it comes to origins, the first framework of foreign policy cooperation between the European Community (EC) states took place in 1970 with the European Political Cooperation (EPC). The EPC was a rather weak but yet existing formalisation of cooperation between the then six member states summarized in the Luxembourg Report of October 1970 (Smith, 2004, p. 75). The Maastricht Treaty from 1993, also known as the Treaty of the European Union (TEU), is a turning point in EU foreign policy cooperation. This treaty sets up the framework for the EU with its three-pillar system and part of it is the CFSP, from this stems the ESDP which is a part of the second pillar of the TEU.

With the TEU the CFSP became a clearly formalized policy sector (Smith, 2004, p 180-181) but questions of security was still handled by the Western European Union (WEU), which was a separate organisation. During the following years the CFSP produced a substantial higher amount of cooperation, measured in common positions and joint actions, than the EPC previously had made. Progressively more policy instruments were implemented, for example institutionalised regional political dialogues between EU and the Arab world as well as weapons embargo on Iran and Iraq. What was “missing” was the capability to enforce policy decisions with military force like the UN or NATO have. The CFSP was focused on diplomatic and economic tools to solve conflicts, not by using military means. This was particularly noticed during the conflicts in the Balkans in the in 1990s where the EU lacked means to influence the war. Even though it is doubtful that any international organisation’s influence could have prevented the state failure of former Yugoslavia and the subsequent civil war, it was not until the NATO campaign dominated by US armed forces against the Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999 that aggression against ethnic Albanians came to

a halt (Smith, 2005, p. 171-172). This ‘failure’ for EU crisis management created a political will among the member states to evolve the union’s security and defence cooperation, which led to the ESDP.

2.2 European Security and Defence Policy

At the beginning of the 00-decade there was a huge conceptual and operational gap between “normal” CFSP and its military activities (Smith, 2004, p. 258), however in recent years the military capabilities within the CFSP has evolved greatly and is placed within the ESDP framework. The CFSP can be understood as the institutional framework of the ESDP and the political framework which justifies its development (Penome et al., 2005). The ESDP has existed since 1999 and today it is regarded as an integral part of the CFSP with a similar institutional overlap.

I regard the ESDP as the institutional framework for EU crisis management and security cooperation. My attention will be drawn to the military rapid reaction capabilities, which are one of the crisis management tools available to the EU. Within the ESDP there are other institutions working with foreign policy. Among them the Political and Security Committee (PSC) charged with monitoring international situations and define policies and the European Defence Agency (EDA) working with defence industry coordination and various bodies for civilian crisis management.

[T]he specific operational character of ESDP has triggered the creation of a distinctive sub-set of institutions primarily charged with the planning and conduct of crisis management operations.

(Grevi et al., 2009, p. 19)

This institutional framework has evolved rapidly and parts of it will be subject to my analysis. Utilising an institutional approach I want to explore the development of the EU BG concept.

2.3 Theories of cooperation

Depending on what type of scholar you ask, you get different answers to the question why do EU states cooperate in foreign policy areas? Some have stated that the development from the EPC in the 1970s to the more formalised CFSP in the 1990s was due to integration and internal identity issues as much as it was because of external reasons (Keukeleire & MacNaughtan, 2008). Others emphasise exogenous factors, like external threats to Europe, as the cause of closer cooperation. By looking at analyses made of EU foreign policy cooperation

over time we can see that there have been a steady increase of institutionalisation of cooperation independent of the relationship between the two superpowers during the Cold War and between the EU and the US during the unipolar world we have had since the 1990s (Strömvik, 2005). Therefore we can rule out that EU foreign policy cooperation occurs because of an outside threat like the Soviet Union formed during the Cold War. Another exogenous explanation is that EU foreign policy cooperation since the 1990s increase because of a political will to balance influence from the US in the international stage (Strömvik, 2005). After periods of transatlantic disunity over security matters, countries of the EU have increased their cooperation in order to increase European influence over international affairs.

The CFSP is complex to study because it involves many actors on different levels (such as international organizations and other states apart from the EU member states), but also because it is a ‘moving target’ with a rapidly evolving structure (Smith, 2008). Many institutional changes have occurred in its almost forty year long history since the start of the European Political Cooperation (EPC) in 1970, but the greatest leaps have happened in the past 10 years. The Lisbon Treaty will further change the current procedures of EU’s foreign policy, but because it took effect since December 1 2009, and thus not considered to be fully functioning, it will not be taken into consideration in this study.

2.3.1 Internal vs. External motives

In order to structure explanations concerning CFSP development the subject can be divided into analyzing the *internal* and the *external* motives for cooperation.

- The *internal* refers to institution building within the EU when the motives come from the EU member states themselves. Foreign policy coordination is increased to strengthen internal cooperation. Motives come from inside.
- The *external* refers to the changes made towards the international community, such as the need to unite in order to keep (or increase) Europe’s influence in towards international economic or political powers. Motives come from outside.

These two elements will be used in the following part of this thesis for categorizing different theories, and will be utilized in the discussion if one of them is better than the other to understand the creation of the Battlegroup concept.

Let us not forget the EU is made up of individual member states whereas only the Commission can be said to represent the EU’s “own” will. European foreign policy is by definition the policy of its member states. Unlike issues related to the internal market for example, where the commission has a strong voice as the EU itself, foreign policy is always based on decisions made unanimously by the

European Council (Björkdal & Strömrvik, 2008), that is, the “EU’s” foreign policy is what its members decide it to be.

2.3.2 Why military cooperation?

In 2007 the EU27 spent roughly €204 121 million on defence expenditure making it the world’s second biggest defence spender after the US (Keohane, 2004, p. 103; EDA, internet source). The joint capabilities of the union were however far from those of the US, especially when it came to strategic transport and carrier-borne strike capabilities. This is to some extent explained by the historical development of US and European armed forces respectively, with the US having a long history of waging war far away from their home territory. Another significant difference between the US and European defence spending is the amount put into Research and Development (R&D). As of 2006, the US spent 9 percent of its defence budget on R&D while the combined EU spending reached around 1,5 percent (Toje, 2008, p. 25). The formation of the European Defence Agency in 2003 was a measurement taken to coordinate defence planning and R&D.

The first military operation the EU conducted was *Operation Artemis* in 2003. This was an intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) intended to stabilize security conditions in the Ituri region (Lindstrom, 2007, p. 10-11). The force, which had a UN-mandate, consisted of around 2000 personnel mainly from the French armed forces but other EU member states also contributed to the deployment. The overall time from the Security Council resolution on May 30 to deployment of initial components was only six days and full deployment was reached on July 6. The overall engagement was considered a success and it gave the EU the assurance that creation of standing rapid reaction forces was possible and this gave leaders of the EU confidence that they could take on more responsibilities in the future. Combined with this political will a need for appropriate command structures and military equipment also came up (Lindstrom, 2007, p. 10-11).

There are different ways of understanding why Operation Artemis was initiated. We must recognize the importance of powerful member states and the influence they can have on institutional development. The EU is a gigantic bargaining machine and everything from treaties to statements is the result of negotiations between different actors. The Battlegroup concept is also a result of influence by different actors.

But influence of actors is not everything, previous studies have shown that events or crisis like the 2008 South Ossetia War or the invasion of Iraq in 2003 can affect cooperation between EU members.

Since 1989, and especially since 11 September 2001, ‘events’ have run way ahead of the capacity of politicians – even strong ones – to determine their course. (Howorth, 2005, p. 182)

Events are things like the 9/11 attacks or the 2003 invasion of Iraq. They have both caused the everyday business of ESDP affairs to change directions or speed. Emphasizing events shifts focus away from actors. An institution like the ESDP would have been impossible during the Cold War, and the post-9/11 world we have today have helped to produce the system of security governance like the ESDP and NATO cooperation.

These are all plausible explanations or ways of understanding military cooperation in the EU. They are not necessarily contradictory but still differ enough to contribute to an analysis. In the conclusions at the last chapter I will return to these definition of internal versus external motives and see which perspective is best suited to explain the development of military capabilities in general and the rapid reaction component of the EU BG concept.

2.3.3 A Realist perspective refuted

Realist and neo-realist perspectives, which centre on power in more material terms, also offer explanations to military cooperation, but I do not intend to take on these theoretical perspectives because they offer limited explanations on why a “powerless” actor like the EU can have influence on the global stage.

Realists would easily dismiss the EU’s potential as a global security actor because it lacks the institutional framework and military capacity found in a sovereign state. Few would dispute the fact that the EU as an organisation is very different from a state when it comes to foreign policy and military power but measuring influence in today’s world is done by more parameters than hard core military strength. However, an explanation of the ESDP from a realist perspective would say that the cooperation between the European states exists because of an external threat (Smith, 2008, p. 5). Another possible realist interpretation of the ESDP is that member states have chosen to cooperate in order to increase their own influence, therefore their way of influencing institutional design will have long term consequences for their power in a particular institution. Drawing upon experiences from the UN for instance, we can see that Germany and Japan have little influence over the Security Council today, despite their financial and political authority. This lack of influence is a consequence of that they were kept out of the institutional building of the UN in 1944-45 (Koremenos et al., 2001, p. 761-762).

Realists perceive the realm of international relations to be in eternal conflict, with winners and losers resulting from every bargaining (Wendt, 2001, p. 1048). This does not fit well into an institutional system like the ESDP where decisions are taken in consent to increase cooperation. Indeed member states who did not think that ESDP would suit their interests would not have endorsed its design.

Another problem for realists would be that EU did not develop military capabilities on itself during the Cold War because NATO was already handling those issues. So why does the military cooperation start at a time when there is no imminent military threat within Europe? The answer could be that Europe now focuses on international security, which can be seen in the five threats listed in the

ESS. Territorial defence is not the most important factor for security any more, rather the ability to support stability in other parts of the world.

2.4 The meaning of ‘Institution’

Institutions can vary in meaning; they can be everything from centres of power with strong authorities (such as the UNSC) or just be forums for consultations (like the former EPC). In this study I adopt the perception of institution as formalized cooperation, and that the EU BG concept is an institution within the ESDP. International institutions are today an important part of security politics; it is not surprising then that the study of international institutions have increased.

There is a *functionalist* explanation to institutional development which means that “a particular institution exist because it is expected to serve the interest of those who created it” (Pierson, 2004, p. 105). The *actor-centred* functionalism focuses on what choices the involved actors take in order to influence the development of an institution. Actor-centred functionalism looks at what anticipated effect the institutions will have, rather than the actual effect.

Outcome X [such as the EU BG concept] exists because those who design it expect it to serve the function Y.

(Pierson, 2004, p. 107)

Should this form apply to the development of the EU BG concept we ought to find similarities of the anticipated effect (capabilities) an EU BG has, and the requirement or will of the actors involved in the development. Focusing on actors does have a point when analysing ESDP development due to the strong influence certain powerful member states have had, and because all decisions within the ESDP are taken unanimously, no the Battlegroup concept would have been developed if one member state (of the EU15) would have opposed it. The specified capabilities of a Battlegroup are a result of a bargaining process.

Liberal Intergovernmentalism (LI) is a form of rationalist institutionalism and has been used in studies focusing on European integration (Schimmelfennig, 2004, p. 76-78). LI scholars perceive that actors on the international stage operate in a state of anarchy – where no central authority exists – and that all collective institutions are the result of bargaining between them. One actor calculates its alternatives and chooses the one that will maximize its utility, hence a form of rational choice. The LI-school recognises an institution to be an area for bargaining, but not necessarily a significant power on its own. LI relates to the functionalist explanation but regard actors to be more ‘on their own’, which is not the case in the ESDP where members benefit to act united.

2.5 Summary

Summarizing the concept of what causes institutional change we can roughly divide institutional perspectives in those who focus in actors and those who focus on structures. There is also the dimension of the reasons behind cooperation, if they occur because internal cooperation will benefit from it, or if it is because external factors necessitate cooperation. Two main elements can be used to structure causes for institutional development;

Box 2.1

Explanations of institutional development	
<i>Element 1</i>	Actor $\leftarrow \rightarrow$ Structure
<i>Element 2</i>	Internal $\leftarrow \rightarrow$ External

The Actor/Structure perception relates to different understanding of influential actors in the process of institutionalisation and the Internal/External perception relates to general explanations of what motivates EU foreign policy cooperation.

These are the two elements I will be using when analyzing the institutional moments in chapter 4. Most of the Institutional moments of the EU BG concept development can be related to either of these elements.

3 EU BG capabilities and challenges

In order to get a grip of the Battlegroups capabilities, or perhaps lack of capabilities, to deal with its specified tasks I will illustrate some of the challenges that exist among the Battlegroups which has been active between 2007 up to and including the first half of 2009. Initial Operational Capability (IOC) was achieved in January 2005 when the first EU BG became active, at that time only one of the desired two EU BGs was on stand-by. Gustav Lindstrom of the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) presented an extensive assessment of the challenges facing the Battlegroups at the time they reached Full Operational Capability (FOC) in 2007. He categorizes these challenges in two dimensions:

The first challenge is the *operational* one, dealing with practical issues of deployability and standardization.

The second deals with *political* issues, namely the political process required to deploy an EU BG given a possible will occur (Lindstrom, 2007, p. 27).

3.1 Operational challenges

A key issue of operational capacity is deployability, and particularly the strategic airlift capability (Ibid., p. 31). Deployability refers to the total time it takes for the force to reach the theatre of operations. This includes the political decision process, preparation of troops including vaccinations if necessary and loading of equipment on to the designated form of transportation. The stipulated distance for an EU BG is to operate up to 6 000 km from Brussels, and in order to reach this full distance within 10 days coordinated airlift is essential. Another potential way of transporting the vast amount of materiel needed is by sealift (cargo ships), which is suitable if a shorter distance is in question.

Historically the armed forces of Europe have been adapted to territorial defence on their own continent against a conventional aggressor such as Warsaw Pact countries (Howorth, 2005, p. 184). Armies of European countries therefore relied mostly on conscript personnel equipped with relatively simple weapon systems of artillery and tanks mobilized in large numbers. This meant that the ability to transport vast amounts of personnel and material over great distances was not significant, contrary to the armed forces of the United States which have been reliant on distant force projection involving strategic transport from the homeland to different theatres of war overseas. The fall of the Soviet Union and lead to a new reality for Europe's armed forces which are still adapting to this new profile of using rapidly deployable forces in different locations around the world.

3.1.1 Strategic airlift

Lindstrom sets out to analyze the strategic airlift capability of the Battlegroups by looking into what resources the participating member states can put together. Table 3.1 below is used to illustrate the types of strategic transport aircraft available, their respective payload, maximum troop capacity, range and the number of the respective type available for the EU25. The strategic airlift capability of the Battlegroups can therefore be studied by looking into what resources the participating member states can pool together.

Military terminology classifies transport aircraft to be *tactical* or *strategic*. Tactical transport is conducted *within* areas of operation whereas strategic transport is *between* areas of operations or a home base. Strategic distances are longer and usually require powerful jet transport aircraft whereas tactical transport can be performed by helicopters or smaller propeller driven fixed wing aircraft. Some aircraft, like the Boeing C-17 Globemaster III and the new Airbus A400M are designed to fulfil both tactical and strategic transport putting emphasis both on heavy lift and long range as well as being able to operate from short and unprepared landing fields.

The EU has already recognized its deficit in the area of strategic airlift (Brimmer, 2007; Lindstrom, 2007) and I will use some of the existing analysis to inform the reader about the circumstances.

Table 3.1
EU military airlift capabilities (selection)

Aircraft type	Payload (mt)	Maximum troop capacity	Range (km)	Total EU25
A310 MRTT	35	190	8900	12
C-130B/E/H	19.3	92	7800	115
C-130J	19	128	7800	50
C-160	16	93	5100	133
C-17	41	102	8700	4
TriStar	44	160	9800	9

(Source: Lindstrom, 2007, p. 32)

This data stems from 2006; hence the combined aircraft from the EU25 is displayed. Since the entrance of Romania and Bulgaria to the Union in 2007 the transport capabilities of their air forces should also be accounted for. Their contribution however limits itself to three Lockheed C-130B and one C-130H (AFM, September 2009, p. 13). I have made a selection of the most frequent used transports (the C-130 and the C-160) and transport aircraft with capacity for strategic airlift. The air forces of the EU also possesses several other types of smaller transport aircraft, including heavy lift helicopters, but these are not suited for deploying equipment up to 6 000 kilometres. They are however well adapted

for deployments at distances ranging from Western Europe to the Balkans for example. The most numerous transport aircraft within the EU capability is the C-130 Hercules, a plane constructed in the 1950s and in service with more than 10 of the EU's member states and numerous other countries world wide. It is a four engine turboprop, generally designated as a tactical transport. The other common tactical transport aircraft is the Transall C-160 twin engine turboprop aircraft. As it is described in Table 3.1, both of these are capable of lifting weights of 16-19 metric tons, this is however insufficient for some of the heavier equipment like modern Infantry Fighting Vehicles (IFV) used by many of the Battlegroups. A typical weight of a modern IFV is between 20-25 metric tons. In order to carry these outsized or outweighed weapon systems heavier transports are utilized. The Lockheed TriStar of the Royal Air Force of the UK has a capability to transport both cargo and troops as well as being a aerial tanker, but since it is a converted from a civilian airliner it lacks a proper cargo door like the C-17 has, and two of the TriStars available are not equipped with a cargo door at all and only used for troop transport (RAF, internet source). Purposely designed transport aircraft like the C-17 has large cargo doors enabling vehicles to roll on and off (Ro/Ro) when loading and unloading. A Ro/Ro-cargo port is essential for transporting larger military equipment and vehicles since an IFV cannot be lifted in an out of a cargo door in the side of the hull, as found on the TriStar.

Certain measurements have been taken to fill this gap in strategic airlift capability. The joint project of the Airbus A400M military transport aircraft is one of them. The A400M is a four engine modern tactical transport which can reach global distance with aerial refuelling, thus being capable of strategic transport. The system is very rugged and can operate from unpaved airfields, very suitable for conditions in third world countries (Airbus Military, internet source). The payload of the A400M is around 37 metric tons which places it between the C-130 and the C-17, well suited for transporting IFVs. The problem is that the A400M has been seriously delayed, it will not be operational until 2012 as earliest and its first flight took place in December 2009 (BBC, internet source). This is considerably later than the intended test flights taking place in 2008.

Another action taken besides the A400M project is the NATO Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC) program. This is a program initiated by 16 countries, 14 of them being NATO members, of acquisitioning three Boeing C-17s to use for strategic airlift. Each participating country by a certain amount of flight hours each year, and the aircraft can then be used at their respective service (AFM, October 2009, p. 10). The purpose of the SAC is to provide European countries with heavy airlift capability that they cannot afford on their own. It is possible that this capability might be used by EU members under the Berlin-plus agreement.

The EU airlift capacity remains heavily reliant on the C-130. Table 3.2 is used to give an impression of how many sorties a C-130 has to do to deliver a given amount of cargo over a distance of 2 500 nautical miles (4630 km).

Table 3.2
C-130E sorties needed to transport varying cargo 2 500 nautical miles

Transport weight	Notional number of C-130 sorties required			
	Percent of weight airlifted			
	30%	40%	50%	60%
2 400 tons	59-72	79-96	99-119	119-143
5 000 tons	123-149	164-199	205-248	246-298
8 000 tons	197-238	263-317	328-396	394-476

(Source: Lindstrom, 2007, p. 40)

A Battlegroup-sized operation is estimated to consist of up to 8 000 tons of equipment, whereas the Operation Artemis in 2003 consisted of around 2 400 tons.

3.1.2 Strategic sealift

The main advantage of strategic sealift is the sheer weight a single ship can carry. An EU BG is estimated to consist of 150 sea containers and require about 17 000 m² of deck space (Lindstrom, 2007, p. 40-41) requiring large Ro/Ro-ships. There are significant economical benefits as well. According to a study by Center for Strategic and International Studies it would cost about \$20 million to transport 72 000 tons of cargo 4 000 nautical miles (7 400 km) over 36 days by using airlift. Using sealift over the same time and budget over 3.96 million tons of cargo could be transported (ibid.).

These parameters have to be weighed against the increase in time to transport equipment via sea, not to mention that some countries where operations are likely to occur are landlocked and far from all conflict areas are located next to a harbour. This would require a costly reloading of equipment onto vehicles or tactical air transport compromising the 10-day requirement of deployment. Even if a sea convoy would average around 15 knots, it would barely reach the coast of North Western Africa if it departs from Rotterdam. And added to this time comes the procedure of preparing and loading all the equipment onto ships, which is a lengthy process.

When relying on sealift, the location of the seaport of debarkation (SPOD) becomes more important than if one would rely on airlift, due to the fast cruising speed of aircraft compared to ships. For a Battlegroup launched from Rotterdam (which is probable in the case of the German-led Battlegroup of 2007) the distance to a possible conflict zone varies considerably compared to one launched from Athens (as in the case of the Greek-led Battlegroup of 2007).

The 'SPOD problem' is to some extent equal to airlift since not all airports in the theatre of operations are suitable for larger strategic transport aircraft like the C-17. The C-17 requires a minimum runway length of 915 meters to land and up

to 2285 meters for takeoff. Airfields of these dimensions are obviously not to be found everywhere.

3.2 Political challenges

When it comes to using EU military assets several political challenges are involved in ESDP decision-making. The Battlegroup concept is intended to be somewhat simpler than previous *ad hoc* deployments since the forces available are already active, unlike the military deployment in Chad 2008 (EUFOR Tchad) for example, where significant time had to be invested into organizing troops from various participating countries.

Despite a prepared rapid reaction force, a unanimous decision by the Council still has to precede a deployment which could be one of the reasons that a Battlegroup has not been used yet. There is a certain difference between member states on exactly where the EU BGs could or should be used, as for example the Polish minister of defence Bogdan Klich has hinted at the informal meeting of defence ministers in September 2009.

They should be prepared, not only for expeditionary missions but mainly for the situation of the threat coming from our neighbourhood, from local crisis to the territory of the European Union.
(Klich, 2009)

For a country like Poland with its history of strained relations with Russia the EU BG concept might also be seen as a tool to influence crises within the EU territory. A deployment within the EU would certainly be subjected to an intense political debate. Nevertheless it is essential that the EU BG capability remains an intergovernmental issue because no country would like to send their armed forces under EU-flag if it is not supported by its political support on a national level.

Another political issue concerning deployment of an EU BG is the relationship with NATO.

3.2.1 EU-NATO relations

The US has always kept a somewhat suspicious eye on the development of security cooperation within the EU, especially since the Saint-Malo declaration in 1998. This is mainly because the US fears that it will lose much of its influence over security planning in Europe if the primary institution dealing with security related issues would shift from NATO to the EU. Yet, the US is supportive to the EU taking more responsibility in global military operations, not at least because of the great costs involved in keeping US troops located overseas.

The response from the US after the Saint Malo declaration can be summarized as a 'yes but' policy, meaning that the US would support the effort to create an

institution for security cooperation but at the same time warning of the potential negative consequences (Sloan, 2003p. 164-165). The secretary of state at the time, Madeleine Albright, stated that there was to be no *duplication* of existing forces or capabilities within the EU that already existed within NATO, no *decoupling* of the United States from Europe in security matters coordinated by NATO and no *discrimination* of non-EU NATO members. These so called “three Ds” were in fact a paraphrase to the US ambassador to NATO William Taft IV made in 1991 (ibid.) and come to portray the US position.

The so called ‘Berlin-plus agreement’ launched in 2003 is a formal agreement letting the EU use NATOs planning and command resources, such as operation Headquarters (Toje, 2008, p. 13). These resources are however only available if NATO approves of it and it is argued that the ‘Berlin plus’ is not to be regarded as a legally binding treaty due to the fact that it is formulated as a declaration (Reichard, 2004).

NATO also has its own rapid reaction forces, the NATO Response Force (NRF) which is similar to the EU BGs in that the NRF is deployable within 10 days and is trained to perform similar tasks. The NRF is also, partially, made up of countries who also contribute to EU BGs and therefore measurements have to be taken in order to prevent the same forces being assigned to both EU BG and NRF. Matters concerning the NRF will be further discussed in chapter 4.

3.3 Summarizing capabilities

As I have shown there are certain challenges facing deployability of EU BGs. Two of the essential challenges for the EU BGs is to improve the strategic airlift capabilities and accelerate the decision making process preceding a deployment (Lindstrom, 2007, p. 73). With these capability deficits in mind one might draw the conclusion that the Battlegroups are a waste of resources having a somewhat complicated political process prior to a possible deployment and facing an even greater operational challenge if the political decision is taken.

A concrete initiative to improve the strategic airlift deficit is the A400M project which is run by Airbus Military. From the start it was intended produce an aircraft to replace the C-130 and C-160 and is a good example of how European defence industries cooperate to come up with more effective solutions to common problems.

4 Analysis of EU BG development

At a glance, the ESDP military capabilities are quite limited. When the ESDP was formed ten years ago it could have been directed into dealing with civilian operations and crisis management, which it has partially done. What is interesting from a scientific point of view is why the ESDP also came to involve a military dimension when an existing institution for military operations already existed, in the form of NATO.

The following chapter will mainly be compiled of a qualitative text analysis set out to map the development of the EU BG concept. The other section of this chapter will illustrate NATO's relationship to the increasing institutionalization of EU military capabilities.

4.1 Institutional moments of the EU BG development

After assessing documentation of relevant EU foreign policy decisions I have will now present those that are relevant for the EU BG concept. The institutional moments I describe below are each combined with a table (the EU BG development model) which respectively states the defined capabilities, in order to make a comparison of the development easier. Because of the size of complete texts subjected to the analysis, I have chosen only to include citations which relate to the elements in the table, these quotes have in some cases been reproduced with emphasis on certain formulations in order to clarify to the reader what is essential.

Box 4.1

Institutional moments of the EU BG	
Petersberg tasks, June 1992	<i>Declaration to make military forces ready for humanitarian, peacekeeping and combat tasks</i>
Amsterdam treaty, October 1997	<i>Developing CFSP, Including Petersberg tasks in TEU</i>
Saint-Malo declaration, December 1998	<i>UK-French declaration on establish military capabilities</i>
Helsinki Headline Goal, December 1999	<i>Force catalogue presented, rapid response forces discussed</i>
Franco-British summit, February 2003	<i>Deployability of 5-10 days mentioned, rapid reaction capability emphasised</i>
Operation Artemis, May-June 2003	<i>First autonomous EU military operation</i>
Franco-British summit, November 2003	<i>Force size of 1500 mentioned</i>
'Food for thought' paper, February 2004	<i>Battlegroup concept introduced</i>
Headline Goal 2010	<i>Further tasks added to EU BG</i>

4.1.1 Petersberg tasks, June 1992

At a WEU summit in June 1992 the organization came up with a number of tasks they declared their readiness to make military contributions to. These tasks were to become a fundamental part of military capabilities within the CFSP and later the ESDP. The WEU countries declared their willingness to employ armed forces under WEU authority to solve the following tasks:

- humanitarian and rescue tasks;
- peacekeeping tasks;
- tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking.

(Source: WEU, Council of Ministers, June 1992)

The Petersberg tasks were later to be incorporated in the TEU by the amendments of the Amsterdam treaty, but during negotiations for the Maastricht treaty Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal and the UK were all opposed to include the term 'defence' in the treaty (Smith, 2004, p. 182). Hence a declaration by the WEU was attached at the end of the TEU and did not form an integral part of it. Note that the proportions of peacekeeping tasks etc. are not

defined. If we are to find an embryonic stage for the EU BG concept this is where we can look. The Petersberg tasks are the statement that the EU12 recognised the need to be able to execute interventions in the future.

Table 4.1

Petersberg tasks	
Deployability	<i>TBD</i>
Sustainability	<i>TBD</i>
Size of force	<i>TBD</i>
Defined tasks	<i>According to declaration</i>

By placing the Petersberg tasks into the EU BG development model we can see the first step of the EU BG requirements.

4.1.2 Amsterdam treaty, October 1997

The Amsterdam treaty is amending the TEU and is vital in the meaning that it included the Petersberg tasks into the treaty and further stressed the need for the EU to develop its defence policy.

Resolved to implement a common foreign and security policy including the progressive framing of a common defence policy, which might lead to a common defence in accordance with the provisions of Article J.7, thereby reinforcing the European identity and its independence in order to promote peace, security and progress in Europe and in the world.

(Treaty of Amsterdam, Substantive amendments, Article 1)

Article J.7 was kept from the TEU, but with the difference that the word *eventual* is replaced by *progressive* in the Amsterdam amendment and addition of the tasks from the Petersberg declaration. The use of such word indicates that the speed of framing a common defence policy ought to be higher.

The common foreign and security policy shall include all questions relating to the security of the Union, including the *eventual* framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence.

(TEU, Article J.4:1, emphasis added)

This can be put in contrast to the equivalent section from the Treaty of Amsterdam:

The common foreign and security policy shall include all questions relating to the security of the Union, including the *progressive* framing of a common defence policy, in accordance with the second subparagraph, which might lead to a common defence,

Questions referred to in this Article shall *include humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping tasks* and tasks of *combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making*.

(Treaty of Amsterdam, Article J.7:1-2, emphasis added)

The acceptance of the use of the word ‘defence’ and a use of military assets for the EU can illustrate the will to integrate the WEU into the EU, thereby integrating the defence institution into the entire EU.

The Union shall accordingly foster closer institutional relations with the WEU with a view to the possibility of the integration of the WEU into the Union, should the European Council so decide.

(Treaty of Amsterdam, Substantive amendments, Article 1)

The Amsterdam treaty did not generate any specific text stipulating the composition of military capabilities. The EU BG development model therefore remains unaltered.

Table 4.2

Amsterdam treaty	
Deployability	<i>TBD</i>
Sustainability	<i>TBD</i>
Size of force	<i>TBD</i>
Defined tasks	<i>Petersberg tasks</i>

4.1.3 Saint Malo declaration, December 1998

In early December 1998 France and the UK met in the French port city of Saint Malo to discuss security and defence issues. The joint declaration between the two countries is notable because it identifies the need for EU to be able to take on autonomous action on the international stage, according to the Petersberg tasks.

To this end, the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises.

(Rutten, 2001, p. 8)

The affirmative position of the UK is essential here since it has a long history of being an allied to the US. The Saint Malo declaration showed the UK's ambition to *involve itself* in European security politics as well as to *evolve* European security politics. Having the support of one of Europe's major military and political powers was somewhat of a necessary condition to start any formal security cooperation. The position by the UK at this time has been related by some to the introduction of the Euro currency which the UK took no part in. The new Labour government of Tony Blair wanted to express its dedication to European cooperation in other ways than in economic cooperation.

The Saint Malo declaration does not declare any specific capabilities. Nevertheless, this was the start of the institutional framework which would evolve into the ESDP.

Table 4.3

Saint Malo declaration	
Deployability	<i>TBD</i>
Sustainability	<i>TBD</i>
Size of force	<i>TBD</i>
Defined tasks	<i>Petersberg tasks</i>

The Saint Malo declaration is important because it involves a direct initiative taken by both the UK and France. Influence of strong actors has proven to be important in the process of institutionalisation, as we will see later on as well. Saint Malo was a case where actors played a big part, and their motivation came from a need to increase the cooperation within the Union.

4.1.4 Helsinki Headline Goal, December 1999

At the European council meeting in Helsinki in December 1999 the presidency published the following conclusion, which was to be called the Helsinki Headline Goal (HHG, sometimes referred to as the Headline Goal 2003). They included a defined number of desired military capabilities by 2003. The European Council agreed on:

- cooperating voluntarily in EU-led operations, Member States must be able, by 2003, to *deploy within 60 days and sustain for at least 1 year* military forces of up to *50,000-60,000 persons capable of the full range of Petersberg tasks*;
- new political and military bodies and structures will be established within the Council to enable the Union to ensure the necessary political guidance and strategic direction to such operations, while respecting the single institutional framework;
- modalities will be developed for full consultation, cooperation and transparency between the EU and NATO, taking into account the needs of all EU Member States;
- appropriate arrangements will be defined that would allow, while respecting the Union's decision-making autonomy, non-EU European NATO members and other interested States to contribute to EU military crisis management;
- a non-military crisis management mechanism will be established to coordinate and make more effective the various civilian means and resources, in parallel with the military ones, at the disposal of the Union and the Member States.

(Source: Helsinki European Council, emphasis added)

The goal of 50 000–60 000 troops deployable within 60 days sustainable for at least one year was ultimately found to be a promise too big to handle for the present EU member states. A force of this size is more or less impossible to deploy in a short amount of time, however the rapid reaction capability was not considered at this stage so this was not a big problem. The experiences from the conflicts in former Yugoslavia seem to have influenced these kinds of requirements. Since then, few conflicts in Europe or in its adjacent regions have had the need for a military operation of this size and thus the goal has shifted to smaller more qualitative units.

Table 4.4

HHG	
Deployability	<i>60 days</i>
Sustainability	<i>1 year</i>
Size of force	<i>50 000-60 000</i>
Defined tasks	<i>Petersberg tasks</i>

Now we can see a big leap in specified capabilities, or more precisely *goals* of capabilities. A force according to the HHG is not primarily a rapid reaction force. This particular institutional moment is related to structure-centred explanations and external reasons for increased cooperation. The events in former Yugoslavia were external factors which contributed to the HHG, therefore it can be said that the EU increased its cooperation due to an external event.

4.1.5 Franco-British summit, February 2003

At the Franco-British summit in Le Touquet in February 2003 the idea of a rapid reaction force was discussed (Quille, 2006). This force was to be considerably smaller than the forces described in the Helsinki Headline Goal.

Numerous events had occurred since the HHG, and the development of the ESDP was evident. The first ESDP operations had taken place (EUPM in Bosnia and Herzegovina) and 10 new states were about to enter the Union in the following year. This changed the discussion on EU's security strategy. A shorter time for deployment is mentioned compared to the 60 days of the force in the HHG.

In order to meet the requirements of immediate reaction forces, our two countries are convinced of the need to improve further European capabilities in planning and deploying forces at short notice, including initial *deployment of land, sea and air forces within 5-10 days*.

(Missiroli, 2003, p. 39, emphasis added)

Despite the ongoing debate over the imminent US invasion of Iraq both France and the UK stressed that they wanted to accelerate the development of ESDP military capabilities.

The UK and France regard developing the capacity for rapid reaction as a European priority. Progress here will enable the EU to meet its own objectives and to strengthen the European contribution to the establishment of a NATO Response Force and to ensure compatibility between the two.

(ibid.)

Table 4.5

Franco-British summit, Feb. 2003	
Deployability	<i>5-10 days</i>
Sustainability	<i>TBD</i>
Size of force	<i>TBD</i>
Defined tasks	<i>Petersberg tasks</i>

A shift towards a readiness timeframe of 5-10 days meant a step away from the large sized force of 50 000-60 000 we saw discussed in the HHG. This is also represents a shift from larger quantitative forces to smaller qualitative forces. Still, no new definition of size of force or sustainability of the new rapid reaction force had been reached. The Franco-British summit of February 2003 illustrates the importance of actors for the development of the EU BG concept. The reasons for France and the UK to speed up the development can be explained by internal

reasons. Both countries had common interest in cooperating in areas where they agreed on security policy, this was important at a time when they did not agree in other areas, like the issues over Iraq.

4.1.6 Operation Artemis, summer 2003

The operation carried out in the summer of 2003 was not so much as an institutional moment as it was to become a framework for how a Battlegroup was to be organized, deployed and commanded. The operation was set up by France functioning as a framework nation and contributing to most of the 2000 personnel deployed, but in total 14 member states contributed in some form together with 5 non-EU members (Grevi et al., 2009, p. 181-185). France had at an early stage shown interest in leading the operation.

The UN Secretary General Kofi Annan sent a request to the French President on May 10 regarding a deployment to the Ituri region in eastern DRC, particularly in the town of Bunia, in order to stabilize the region. The UNSC passed a resolution under the UN Chapter VII and on May 19 work on the Crisis Management Concept started. The operation was a success with the objectives for each part of the UN mandate which required stabilization of the town and improvement of the humanitarian situation. It was the first time the EU had taken autonomous military action. This happened in a remote area in a relatively short period of deployment. It also required coordination with the civilian aid workers on the scene.

Table 4.6

Operation Artemis	
Deployability	<i>approx. 3 weeks</i>
Sustainability	<i>approx. 3 months</i>
Size of force	<i>approx. 2 000</i>
Defined tasks	<i>UNSCR 1484</i>

This composition came to shape the requirements of the Battlegroup concept later on. The numbers of Operation Artemis are reflected in the Battlegroup composition which followed shortly after this operation was over. I classify this as an external event influenced by one important actor (France). An event occurred where the EU had the ability to act. France could possibly have conducted an operation like this on their own but it was essential to involve more EU members as well. Despite the fact that a concept for organizing an operation like this did not exist, Artemis was successful. Because of this success, the possibility of organizing future operations like this was met with much enthusiasm.

4.1.7 Franco-British summit, November 2003

In November 2003 France and the UK met in London to discuss further cooperation within security and defence. The meeting resulted in a joint declaration where the rapid reaction force was mentioned.

Once again the axis between France and the UK is central to enhancing military capabilities within the EU. Note that this occurred after the US-led invasion of Iraq in March the same year. Despite the political disagreement between EU members over US support they still pursued the development of ESDP rapid reaction capabilities. The declaration also promotes an alteration of the force composition, shifting from the larger size force package from the Helsinki Headline Goal.

In order to improve its ability to undertake the full range of missions envisaged under the draft Union Treaty, to conduct concurrent operations and to develop further its rapid reaction capacity, France and the UK consider that the Union should *refine its quantitative targets* and set demanding new *qualitative objectives*.

(Missiroli, 2003, p. 282, emphasis added)

With the experiences from Operation Artemis fresh in mind it became clear that a force the size set in the Helsinki Headline Goal was to be too expensive, too crude and too complicated to deploy. The size of an operation like this is in the scale of what the United Kingdom deployed to Iraq during the invasion in 2003. Hence the EU should focus on a smaller force packages with greater flexibility and quality.

[W]e propose a new initiative, in which the EU would focus on the development of its rapid reaction capabilities to enhance its ability to support the UN in *short-term crisis management* situations;

(Missiroli, 2003, p. 280, emphasis added)

Regarding the size of the rapid response force the number of 1 500 troops is reaffirmed. No direct reference to the Petersberg tasks is made. This does not necessarily mean that it is of no importance. A UN mandate is noticed as possible tasks and UK and France note that they are still committed to the Saint-Malo declaration (where the Petersberg tasks are included).

The aim should be coherent and credible battle-group sized forces, around *1 500 troops*, offered by a single nation or through a multinational or framework nation force package, with appropriate transport and sustainability. These forces should have the *capacity to operate under a Chapter VII mandate*.

(Missiroli, 2003, p. 281, emphasis added)

Table 4.7

Franco-British summit, Nov. 2003	
Deployability	<i>"within 15 days"</i>
Sustainability	<i>"short-term"</i>
Size of force	<i>1 500</i>
Defined tasks	<i>UN Chapter VII mandate (+Petersberg)</i>

The Franco-British summit of November 2003 led to the specification of small, flexible rapid response force packages. As France and the UK had opposing views on the US invasion on Iraq we can relate this institutional moment to the internal element of explanatory factors behind the development of the EU BG concept. Despite the wide gap in some areas of foreign policy it was cooperation grew closer in other parts. It seems as cooperation increased due to the lack of consensus over the Iraqi question.

4.1.8 'Food for thought' paper, February 2004

The most explicit paper defining the Battlegroup concept stems from a proposition from the UK, France and Germany who in February 2004 presented the so called 'Food for thought' paper at a Brussels meeting on February 10, 2004.

This document refers back to the agreements between the UK and France from 2003 (summarized in 4.6 and 4.8), but also mentions the BG concept as the main instrument of rapid response operation for the ESDP (EUISS, 2005, p. 11). Specific numbers regarding readiness is now added to the Franco-British summits of 2003.

BG formations will need to be fully manned, equipped and trained, and held at high readiness (typically *10 days notice* (or less)) to be deployed.
(EUISS, 2005, p. 12, emphasis added)

The time set for being able to carry out operations in the designated area is 15 days. The term 'Deployability' refers to the operational time limit whereas 'Readiness' is referred to the time required for the BG to disembark from its main location. The total time for deployability is the sum of readiness together with the time of transportation in order to be deployed.

Member states offering BGs will need to ensure that their bid includes appropriate strategic lift assets, pre-identified, earmarked and available to meet the *15-day target*.
(EUISS, 2005, p. 12, emphasis added)

The ‘Food for thought’ paper have defined time for readiness, sustainability, size of force and the tasks a BG should be able to execute (which stems from previous documents). The sustainability of 120 days is also defined, which might come from the experiences from the deployment of Operation Artemis as well.

BGs will need to be capable of sustained operations through to mission terminations or until relieved by UN peacekeepers or regional organisations acting under a UN mandate. The identification of such a follow on force will take time. As a planning basis BGs should therefore be sustainable for 30 days initial operations extendable to at least 120 days.

(EUISS, 2005, p. 13)

With these definitions put in the development model we can determine that these elements more or less overlap with the EU BG concept we have today.

Table 4.8

'Food for thought' paper	
Deployability	<i>10 days</i>
Sustainability	<i>At least 120 days</i>
Size of force	<i>1 500</i>
Defined tasks	<i>Petersberg, ESS, UN</i>

A brief conclusion of this is that the cooperation between three of the most influential (and powerful) members, UK, France and Germany led to the creation of a draft which later was accepted throughout the union. The first EU BG started to be organized. IOC was achieved less than a year after the ‘Food for thought’ paper with a French Battlegroup on stand-by in January 2005. Yet again the actor-centred perspective provides a suitable way of understanding the development of the EU BG concept as France, UK and Germany all were strong initiators of the ‘Food for thought paper’.

4.1.9 Headline Goal 2010

The Headline Goal of 2010 (HG 2010) comes from a session of the European Council in June 2004, when heads of states and governments met in Brussels to discuss security matters. Besides confirming their commitment to “fight terrorism” emphasis was put on implementing the European Security Strategy.

The Headline Goal of 2010 states five scenarios of military operations of which the Battlegroups have to be able to solve these are:

- Separation of parties by force
- Stabilisation, reconstruction and military advice to third countries
- Conflict prevention
- Evacuation operation
- Assistance to humanitarian operations.

(Source: EU Council Secretariat-ESDP)

This would further add to the list of tasks a Battlegroup has to be able to handle. The tasks from Helsinki Headline Goal are noted as well as formulations dating back to the Petersberg tasks.

Building on the Helsinki Headline and capability goals and recognising that existing shortfalls still need to be addressed, Member States have decided to commit themselves to be able by 2010 to respond with rapid and decisive action applying a fully coherent approach to the whole spectrum of crisis management operations covered by the Treaty on the European Union. This includes *humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking.*

(HG 2010, part 2, from Missiroli, p. 111, emphasis added)

The HG 2010 settled the timeframes for crisis management operations. They are by principle the same as in the ‘Food for thought’ paper.

[T]he ambition of the EU is to be able to take the decision to launch an operation *within 5 days* of the approval of the Crisis Management Concept by the Council. On the deployment of forces, the ambition is that the forces start implementing their mission on the ground, *no later than 10 days* after the EU decision to launch the operation.

(HG 2010, part 4, from Missiroli, 2003, p. 112, emphasis added)

The member states recognise certain ‘milestones’ of ESDP cooperation within the 2010 horizon, among them the rapid response capability in the shape of Battlegroups.

[T]he complete development by 2007 of *rapidly deployable battlegroups* including the identification of appropriate strategic lift, sustainability and debarkation assets;

(HG 2010, part 5e, from Missiroli, 2003, p. 113, emphasis added)

The council report containing the HG 2010 also recognises the significance Operation Artemis had to prove that the EU possesses concrete military capacity to influence events outside the European continent.

Real world experience, with the successful termination of operation ARTEMIS in the Democratic Republic of Congo, has shown the potential for the EU to conduct operations in support of UN objectives.

(HG 2010, part 10, from Missiroli, 2003, p. 114)

To sum up the picture, when looking at the HG 2010 we can clearly see that the rapid response capability in the shape of the EU BG concept have started to be widely recognised among its members as a primary tool for crisis management.

Table 4.9

Headline Goal 2010	
Deployability	<i>10 days</i>
Sustainability	<i>Up to 120 days</i>
Size of force	<i>1 500</i>
Defined tasks	<i>Petersberg, ESS, UN, HG 2010</i>

The inclusion of tasks from the ESS indicates a structural change in security policy as the EU also commits itself to fight terrorism. Although a Battlegroup as such is not a very useful tool for counter terrorism it is interesting to note that the EU seems to be influenced by the threat of terrorism. The Madrid train bombings in March the same year had perhaps affected this decision.

4.2 Similar instruments – NATO Response Force

The world is a different place today than twenty years ago and to further illustrate the changes in global security politics we can look at the creation of the NATO Response Force (NRF), which is a similar type of rapid reaction force like the EU BG. The fact that NATO also has developed a rapid response capability is an indication to the changing nature of modern warfare. Without giving a too detailed assessment of the NRF capabilities I find it vital to compare the reasons behind the creation of the NRF concept in comparison to those reasons behind the EU BG because it illustrates the changes in global security politics.

The initiative for the NRF concept came about at the NATO Prague summit in November 2002 and it was declared operational at the summit in Riga in late November 2006. Since then one NRF has always been on stand by ready to deploy at all time (Mölling, 2007; Toje, 2008). The force is larger than an EU BG, with around 25 000 troops from land, sea and air components, but has similar elements of deployability and sustainability, set out to deploy within five days and sustainable for 30 days.

Just for the sake of comparison we can look at the NRF in the EU BG development model:

Table 4.10

NATO Response Force	
Deployability	<i>5 days (initial elements)</i>
Sustainability	<i>30 days (self sustained)</i>
Size of force	<i>17 000- 25 000</i>
Defined tasks	<i>According to NATO decision</i>

(Source: NRF fact sheet; Mölling, 2007)

At the Prague summit in November 2002 the intentions of the NRF to balance a separate European security structure was put on paper as it can be read in the first section of the declaration.

[W]e commit ourselves to transforming NATO with new members, new capabilities and new relationships with our partners. *We are steadfast in our commitment to the transatlantic link*; to NATO's fundamental security tasks including collective defence; to our shared democratic values; and to the United Nations Charter.

(Source: Prague Summit Declaration, 2002, emphasis added)

By endorsing this statement the NATO members reaffirm that the security structure between Europe and North America must remain, meaning it should not be *replaced* by a separate institution in Europe. No identical institutions are to be created even though both NATO and the EU recognise similar strategic goals.

In today's evolving security environment, we confront complex, sometimes inter-related threats such as *terrorism*, increasingly global in scale and lethal in results, and the *proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction* and their means of delivery, as well as challenges from instability due to *failed or failing states*.

(Source: Riga Summit Declaration, emphasis added)

Here we can see a threat assessment much like the one we find in the ESS. Both the NATO and the ESDP have similar goals and not surprisingly similar means to achieve them, with the ESDP albeit smaller in scale. Both NATO and ESDP have similar strategic interests and, as I have shown, similar institutions for their military capabilities. From a European point of view the EU BG concept can be interpreted as a way of balancing a US influence when speaking of rapid reaction forces, but the similar institutions might also be used a motor for transition of the armed forces.

Section 4a and 4b of the Prague Summit Declaration respectively refers to the motives to develop the NRF. I have emphasized the sentences stipulating the need for NRF as a motor for transition of armed forces.

[...]Create a NATO Response Force (NRF) consisting of a technologically advanced, flexible, deployable, interoperable and sustainable force including land, sea, and air elements ready to move quickly to wherever needed, as decided by the Council. The NRF will also be a *catalyst for focusing and promoting improvements in the Alliance's military capabilities*.

(Source: Prague Summit Declaration, 2002, 4a, emphasis added)

The structure will enhance the transatlantic link, result in a significant reduction in headquarters and Combined Air Operations Centres, and *promote the transformation of our military capabilities*.

(Source: Prague Summit Declaration, 2002, 4b, emphasis added)

The use of a rapid response force as a motor for military transition is evident within NATO, but it is not as clear in the case of EU BG. Among official documents regarding the purpose of EU BGs, its role as a catalyst for military transition is not defined. However when looking at individual members position we can see that the Battlegroup concept indeed can be viewed from this perspective, as in the case of the Swedish minister of defence Sten Tolgfors stated at the informal meeting of defence ministers in September 2009. The Swedish position is that the development of the Battlegroup concept can be understood as an incentive to reform armed forces from conventional territorial defence towards rapid reaction forces with global reach.

It stood model for the modernization of the entire force structure in Sweden, [the] defence reform of my country, so we had good use of the money.

(Tolgfors, 2009a)

When two institutions with similar strategic goals fighting for influence it is possible that a delinking between them is to occur. The fact that their cooperation remains strong might lie in the fact that the institutional structure is similar and membership is very much overlapping.

I argue that because both NATO and the EU have developed similar structures for rapid response capabilities (though much different in size) it indicates the big changes in global political security that has happened in the past 20 years.

4.2.1 Institutional overlap

There is a resemblance between the institutional structure of NATO and the ESDP respectively. We can see that there is a large membership overlap between the ESDP members and NATO members. 21 countries are part of both organisations, six out of 27 EU members are not NATO members (however out of these, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Austria and Malta are part of the 'Partnership for Peace'-cooperation) and five out of 26 NATO members are not part of the EU, (including US and Canada on the American continent). When the operational structure of the ESDP was set up much of the institutional arrangements was copied from NATO

standards with a political body, a military body and international civilian and military staff (Hoffman, 2009).

Box 4.2
EU-NATO membership overlap

USA			
Canada	France	Poland	Ireland
Norway	Germany	Hungary	Sweden
Turkey	UK	Czech Rep.	Finland
Iceland	Italy	Slovakia	Austria
	Spain	Estonia	Malta
	Belgium	Latvia	Cyprus
	Luxembourg	Lithuania	
NATO	Netherlands	Slovenia	
	Portugal	Romania	EU
	Greece	Bulgaria	
	Denmark		

The EU has recognised the importance of NATO and that the two institutions must have compatible security and defence policy goals.

[The policy of the Union] shall respect the obligations of certain Member States, which see their common defence realised in NATO, under the North Atlantic Treaty and be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within that framework,

(Treaty of Amsterdam, Protocol on Article J.7)

Currently 21 out of the EU's 27 members are also NATO members. By looking at the contributing Battlegroups we can get a picture of how many countries are "double members":

Table 4.11
EU-BG contributors

Period	Framework nation	Contributor(s)	Both	EU only	NATO only
1st half 2007	France	Bel	X		
	Germany	Hol, Fin	X	X	
2nd half 2007	Italy	Hun, Slove	X		
	Greece	Rom, Bul, Cyp	X	X	
1st half 2008	Sweden	Fin, Nor, Est, Ire	X	X	X
	Spain	Ger, Fr, Por	X		
2nd half 2008	Germany	Fr, Bel, Lux, Esp	X		
	United Kingdom	—	X		
1st half 2009	Italy	Esp, Gr, Port	X		
	Greece	Bul, Rom, Cyp	X	X	

As we have seen in declarations made by the EU and NATO respectively, both the ESDP and NATO recognises each others importance and the need for mutual cooperation. There are no Battlegroups composed by sole EU members, the *discrimination* criterion of the three Ds is taken into consideration. 4 out of the 10 Battlegroup active between 2007 and the first half of 2009 are composed of a member state which is an EU but not a NATO member. The Swedish-led Battlegroup is unique in that it is composed of both EU-only countries (Sweden, Finland and Ireland), the sole ‘NATO-non-EU country’ (Norway) and a country member of both the EU and NATO (Estonia).

5 Conclusions

After assessing the institutional moments of the EU BG development I conclude that several institutional moments were influenced by actors. The institutional moments which can be related to the actor-centred element are the Saint Malo declaration, Franco-British summits of February and November 2003, Operation Artemis and the 'Food for thought' paper of 2004. All of these summits involved initiatives by France, the UK and Germany, who are major political and economic powers in the EU.

Institutional moments that can be understood by looking at structural changes are the Helsinki Headline Goal and the Headline Goal 2010. The HHG reflects the need for the EU to be able to intervene in regional conflicts in Europe, such as the Balkan conflicts in the 1990s. The HG 2010 refers to the European Security Strategy which highlights the global security threats of today and a typical feature of this is that common threats should be met by common efforts.

We all agree that the realm of security politics is different today compared to twenty years ago. This has affected the organization of armed forces in Europe. During the Cold War the main objective of the armed forces of European countries was to defend their own territory against an invasion. Forces were based on conscription and relied heavily on quantities of conventional weapons. The main institution for security matters was NATO, where strong ties between Europe and the US were upheld. After the fall of the Iron Curtain the need for defence against a conventional aggressor more or less disappeared. There has been a reduction in defence expenditure throughout Europe in the past ten years with shift from quantitative towards qualitative forces. This is a major structural change underlying the development of the EU BG concept, and it is partially an explanation to the deficit in strategic transport capabilities the EU suffers from today.

Regarding external motives for increased cooperation we can look at the Helsinki Headline Goal. The HHG was in many ways a consequence of the conflict in the Balkans in the 1990s where the EU lacked much political as well as military power to affect the conflict. It was not until NATO commenced its bombing campaign in 1999 when the war came to an end. This created a need for the EU to develop similar capabilities, and therefore the military capabilities in discussion in the subsequent years after the Kosovo conflict were of a significant size (as found in the Helsinki Headline Goals). Another significant external event was Operation Artemis, which gave the EU a tangible experience of conducting an autonomous military operation; it was a boost of confidence for the EU. The experiences of the operation's composition, tasks, endurance and reach seem to have formed something of a model for the composition of the EU BG concept, as

we can see when looking at the force structure before and after Operation Artemis.

There are examples where the development of the EU BG concept can be understood by looking at internal motives; the invasion of Iraq left the EU without a common foreign policy in this matter due to internal disunity. Maybe it is because of the disagreement over Iraq that the cooperation intensified in other areas, such as the development of rapid reaction forces. The fact that the UK and France met to discuss these issues in particular (Franco-British summit, February 2003) is a proof of this.

Both actor-centred theories and structure-centred theories offer explanations to the rapid development of the EU BG concept. The development of military capabilities within the ESDP can also be understood as a balance to NATO. I would argue that the relevance of NATO still prevails much because the lack of resources and capabilities which still exists within the ESDP, making it an insufficient organization to cover all aspects of crisis management operations (civilian as well as military) required of a security institution with proclaimed global reach. The importance of NATO as an institution for security cooperation in Europe can also be justified by the fact that non-EU members on the European continent (Turkey, Norway and Iceland) are included in NATO. The NATO Response Force (NRF) indicates that possessing rapid response capabilities is an expression of military influence in today's world.

6 Executive Summary

In this study I have mapped the development of the EU Battlegroup (EU BG) concept within the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The Battlegroups are a vital part of the ESDP and fulfils a meaning to European security politics, but not in a traditional way of providing hard power in order to implement a policy or decision; instead they provide a tangible military resource as part of the overall institutional framework of the ESDP. The fundamental assumption I have taken with me when assessing the EU BG concepts is that the Battlegroup concept can be understood as tool which gives the EU credibility on the global stage. I define institutions to be formalized cooperation and that the EU BG is an institution within the ESDP.

My research questions have been;

- How can we understand the quick development of military rapid reaction forces within the ESDP?
- What are the main explanatory factors behind the development of the EU BG concept?

The development of this particular rapid response force has been studied from an institutional perspective, which combines the institutionalization of EU foreign policy cooperation in general with its more recent military development. A plausible explanation to the quick development of a rapid response capability within the ESDP seems to be a mix of structure- and actor-centred explanations.

First of all we must recognise the global structure of security politics with its asymmetric threats. It is very different from the bipolar world we saw during the Cold War, and institutions dealing with global security have to use different means to influence an area or a conflict today. Power is no longer measured in purely military hardware but also in the flexibility of forces and the capacity of civil-military interaction. Battlegroups in the context of the Cold War are about as pointless as only relying on nuclear submarines and armoured divisions in today's conflicts.

Within this structure of asymmetric threats, several events during the 1990s and the 2000s have shaped the EU's desire to develop rapid response capabilities. The most important one is probably the conflict in former Yugoslavia. Several drawn out and violent conflicts occurred in Europe's "backyard" and the EU countries had no substantial capacity to influence the situation. The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) relied on economic and diplomatic tools but lacked a military dimension. The NATO bombing campaign in 1999 was a

demonstration of how military means finally put an end to much of the troubles in the region. In the years following the end of the civil war in the Balkans, discussions on establishing EU military forces were taking place. Initially these military forces were of considerable size. But it was soon clear that the countries of Europe were struggling to transform their military from quantitative forces trained to fight on European territory against an invader, to more qualitative flexible forces able to deploy over the entire globe. The technical challenges were extensive for these new types of forces and to deploy the 50 000-60 000 troops initially discussed seemed difficult. In 2003 another event occurred that came to shape the institutionalization of EU's armed forces; the first autonomously lead EU military operation – Operation Artemis – in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This was an operation composed of around 2 000 troops deployed in central Africa during a few months in the summer under a UN mandate. Operation Artemis succeeded in stabilizing the city of Bunia in the Ituri region, and gave the EU confidence that it could and should develop capabilities to perform similar operations in the future.

The influence of a few important actors is vital to understand the fast development of the EU BG concept. Particularly the cooperation between France and the UK has resulted in big leaps forward. France and the UK are two of the most important political and military powers within Europe and their combined efforts have shaped much of the political will of the entire Union in defence and security matters. Both of these countries are internal actors who both benefit from increased cooperation within the EU. An external actor is the United States, which have had a big influence over European security politics through its strong position within NATO. The decline of NATO's legitimacy after the fall of the Soviet Union also led to loss of US influence over European security matters, relatively speaking. The US maintains a large influence on the global stage, and the EU seeks to balance this influence by developing its own military resources. This has led to a somewhat more complicated relationship between the EU and NATO, which also has its own rapid response force, particularly since there is a large membership and institutional overlap between the two organizations.

EU BGs cannot be understood on their own, more likely as part of the total ESDP cooperation. I feel the need to highlight the Battlegroup concept's part in the institutional framework of EU foreign cooperation; this will depict the Battlegroup as more useful than by looking at it from a traditional power-centred perspective. Both actor-centred and structure-centred institutional theories can be applied to the understanding of EU BG institutional development. Without doubt the massive transformation of global politics that followed the end of the Cold War has also affected EU security politics. An evidence of the transition that goes on for Europe's armed forces is the fact that both NATO and the EU have chosen to develop rapid response capabilities (The EU BG and the NATO Response Force respectively) during almost the same time. This transition is not as formally recognised within documents regarding the EU BG concept as it is in documents regarding the NRF, but individual EU states like Sweden have expressed the

importance of Battlegroups for their national transition. It is likely that EU BGs can work as catalysts for transition, just like the NRF does.

Let alone that the NRF is quite larger than the EU BG, it still shows that possessing rapid reaction forces capable of force projection well away from one's home territory is an important measurement for military influence today. By looking at the specific military capabilities, the EU BG concept is quite weak. Bearing in mind that the EU is the world's second largest spender on defence, its coordinated military capabilities are limited. The Battlegroups as such are relatively small forces and have, potentially, severe logistical problems if they are to be deployed over long distances. The cost of training and keeping a Battlegroup on stand-by for the stipulated amount of time is counted in hundreds of million of Euro. One of the pressing issues of the EU BG concept is its deficit in the area of strategic airlift capability, which is an essential component for a rapid reaction force since a fast transport is needed to reach a distance of up to 6 000 km within the 10 days set up as a goal.

Since their full operational capability in 2007 none of the 10 Battlegroups have been deployed, and this might seem as a waste of resources. But keeping in mind the rapid development we have seen so far, it is not unlikely that the military capabilities of the ESDP will continue to evolve. The EU BGs we see today are a part of this development and they will look different in the future. The ambitious project is far from complete.

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