A humble servant or an agenda-setter?

The role(s) of the European External Action Service as chair of Council Working Groups on EU´s Common and Foreign Policy

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Abstract

Since 2010, the EU`s External Action Service (EEAS) is the permanent chair of the Council working groups on the EU´s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), thus terminating the procedural rule of EU member states alternatingly holding the presidency of such working groups for a period of six-months. This thesis aims therefore at exploring the consequences of the EEAS taking over the chairmanship of CFSP Council working groups, with special focus on the bearing it has had on EU Member states´ abilities to influence decisions taken in such areas.

Using the theoretical framework of role theory, this thesis will highlight the importance of the interplay between role conceptions from EEAS officials and role expectations from EU member states´ delegates in order to understand how such abilities have been affected. The concepts of role conflict and role conformity will have a particular significance in this matter. The material that forms the base of this study is produced through semi-structured interviews, and will be analyzed through the lenses of mixed methods, with both quantitative and qualitative tools. The outcome of this study shows that EU member states´ abilities to influence CFSP decision-making has decreased for roles related to two fundamental dimensions, "management" and "strategic guidance", but has not been affected for roles related to the dimension of "brokerage".

Key words: European External Action Service, Council working groups, Role theory, EU´s Common Foreign and Security Policy, Semi-structured interviews.

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1   Introduction

1.1.   The Lisbon Treaty: a new era for the EU´s Common and Foreign Policy?

Since the introduction of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), as one of the EU´s three pillars laid out in the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 (Treaty on European Union, 1992), a significant number of national politicians argued that it was high time to establish a position of "Union Minister for Foreign Affairs", assisted by a "Union Ministry for Foreign Affairs", which should represent "the institutional embodiment of […] the […] ambition that the EU should be a diplomatic heavyweight" (Hemra et al., 2011). With such new arrangements, the EU – it was thought – would be better equipped than its member states to cope with an increased number of geopolitical challenges and become a more coherent global actor in the world´s stage (Vimont, 2015). Consequently, the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, although rejected by France and the Netherlands in 2005, contained the very ideas of a common EU foreign and security policy, of a EU foreign minister and of the External Action Service (Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe, 2004).

After the French and the Dutch rejection, a long negotiation-process tried to revive the idea of a common CFSP, a "Union Ministry for Foreign Affairs" and its minister (Rehrl, 2014). Article 27 makes explicit mentions to the High Representative and the EEAS: "the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy […] shall contribute through his proposals to the development of the common foreign and security policy […] In fulfilling his mandate, the High Representative shall be assisted by a European External Action Service" (Treaty on European Union, 2007). A separate Council decision would then formally set up the EU´s External Action Service, based on "a proposal from the High Representative after consulting the European Parliament and after obtaining the consent of the Commission" (Ibid.).

In conclusion, the modifications brought forward by the Lisbon Treaty in CFSP matters were meant to, as stated by Maria Giulia Amadio Viceré, "answer the need to advance [European] integration" in those areas (2015). Did the Council decision on the establishment of the EEAS reflect this view?

1.2. Council Decision 2010/427/EU: a triumph of intergovernmentalism?

In order to provide guidelines for the forthcoming proposal of the High Representative, the Swedish presidency of the Council sent a report to the European Council on the EEAS, which acknowledges that "in order to ensure the consistently and better coordination of the Union´s external action […] [the EEAS should] closely cooperate with the Member States" (Council, 2009). Foreign policy was to remain firmly in the hands of member states, notwithstanding the above-mentioned ambition behind the changes brought forward by the Lisbon Treaty (Balfour and Raik, 2013).

Such a vision was even shared the then High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton when presenting her proposals for the future EEAS: "The EEAS is called a service for a reason. It is there to work for […] Member States" (Ashton, 2010).

The Council decision 2010/427/EU "establishing the organization and functioning of the European External Action Service", formally adopted on the 26 July 2010, reaffirms the intergovernmental nature of the EU´s Common Foreign and Security Policy (Rehrl, 2014). Indeed, while the Council decision defines the EEAS as a "functionally autonomous body of the Union under the authority of the High Representative", its obligation to cooperate with EU member states is unambiguously outlined in one entire article of the decision (Blockmans & Hillion, 2013): "The EEAS shall *support, and work in cooperation with*, the diplomatic services of the Member States" (Council, 2010). Such cooperation is, as laid out in the decision, a legal obligation for the EEAS (Blockmans & Hillion, 2013). As a result, it could be argued, in the vein of Erkelens and Blockmans (2012) that the setting up of the EU's External Action Service has to a certain extent reinforced the intergovernmental nature of EU's decision-making regarding its Common Foreign and Security Policy: "it is our impression that the post-Lisbon institutional balance in the area of EU external action slightly tilts in the direction of the Member States, and the intergovernmental method of policy-making in the realm of EU external action".

1.3. The EEAS as a permanent chair of the Council's CFSP working groups

Nonetheless, the intergovernmental nature of the EU's policy-making in EU´s external relations since the creation of the EEAS has

been nuanced by Balfour et al. (2015, p. 49-50) who insist on the importance of a new procedural rule introduced in 2010: "the permanent chairmanship of the Political and Security Committee (PSC) and of 17 geographical and thematic working groups in the area of CFSP and external relations by EEAS officials and no longer by the officials of the rotating presidencies".

The Council decision L 322/28 of 1 December 2009,"laying down measures for the implementation of the European Council Decision on the exercise of the Presidency of the Council, and on the chairmanship of preparatory bodies of the Council", terminated the rule of EU member states alternatingly holding the chair of CFSP working groups for a period of six-months (Council of the European Union, 2009b). Figure 1 presents the Council preparatory bodies that are chaired by EEAS officials:

A.5 Political and Security Committee (PSC)
A.10 Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CivCom)
C.4 United Nations Working Party (CONUN)
C.5 Working Party on OSCE and the Council of Europe (COSCE)
C.6 Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM)
C.7 Working Party on Transatlantic Relations (COTRA)
C.9 Working Party on Eastern Europe and Central Asia (COEST)
C.11 Working Party on the Western Balkans Region (COWEB)
C.13 Middle East/Gulf Working Party (MOG)
C.14 Mashreq/Maghreb Working Party (MAMA)
C.15 Africa Working Party (COAFR)
C.17 Asia-Oceania Working Party (COASI)
C.18 Working Party on Latin America (COLAT)
C.20 Working Party on Non-Proliferation (CONOP)
C.21 Working Party on Conventional Arms Exports (COARM)
C.22 Working Party on Global Disarmament and Arms Control (CODUN)
C.25 Politico-Military Group (PMG)
C.36 Nicolaidis Group

Figure 1. List of Council preparatory bodies chaired by EEAS officials (Council of the European Union, 2012).

According to Bicchi and Carta (2011), there are strong reasons to believe that this new role given to the EEAS as a permanent chair of the CFSP working groups have "caused a massive institutional and bureaucratic reorganization" of the Council and have even affected the EU member states´ abilities to launch initiatives in the areas of EU´s

external action (Balfour et al., 2015, p. 50-51), a hypothesis that will be at the center of this thesis.

1.4.   Aim and Research Question

This thesis is an attempt to fill the gap of research on the consequences of the EEAS taking over the chairmanship of CFSP Council working groups, with special focus on the bearing it has had on EU Member states´ abilities to influence decisions taken in the areas of the EU´s Common Foreign and Security Policy. In point of fact, much attention has been paid the actor-level independence of the office of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-president of the Commission (Helwig, 2014; Berger & Von Ondarza, 2013; Mirschberger, 2012) and of the EEAS as such (Henökl & Trondal, 2015; Helwig & Kostanyan, 2013; Smith, 2013), focusing on the power rivalries between the different EU actors involved. However, as underlined by Vanhoonacker, Pomorska & Maurer (2011), a thorough analysis of the permanent presidency in CFSP is "still missing", especially in the case of Council preparatory bodies.

Consequently, this thesis hopes to bring in a new perspective, based on the theoretical framework of role theory, to the debate about the implications of the setting up of the EU´s external action service for EU member states, by concentrating upon the agenda-setting powers that EEAS might have gained in its new role as the permanent chair of CFSP Council working groups. In that context, I would argue that it is essential to get a better understanding of this new procedure rule, in place since 2010, and for two reasons:

Firstly, chairing CFSP working groups allowed EU member states to push forward their national priorities at EU level before the Lisbon Treaty (Vandecasteele, Bossuyt & Orbie, 2013), something that will be further detailed in the literature overview. This thesis will therefore seek to examine if the same is true for the EEAS.

Secondly, a relatively high proportion of decisions are in reality agreed at the level of Council working groups: Juncos and Pomorska estimate that only 39 per cent of all items are discussed by EU ministers at the Foreign Affairs Council, the rest having being debated and agreed upon at lower preparatory bodies (2012). Consequently, it is of high relevance to understand the consequences of the above-mentioned Council decision L 322/28 for EU foreign policy-making in Council working groups.

In order to investigate this particular issue, this thesis aspires to answer the following research question:

How has the EEAS´s role as a permanent chair in CFSP working groups, as perceived by EEAS officials and national delegates from EU member states, affected EU member states´ possibilities to influence EU´s Common Foreign and Security Policy?

Our research question entails the several sub-questions:
- Which conception(s) do EEAS officials have of their own role(s) as a permanent chair of CFSP working groups?
- Do EU member states' delegates have similar conception(s) of such role(s)?
- To what extent can variations in EU member states´ possibilities to influence EU´s Common Foreign and Security Policy be explained by corresponding/conflicting role conceptions from EEAS officials and role expectations from national delegates?

1.5.   Outline of the Thesis

After the introducing chapter, the thesis will present previous research conducted on the EU Council Presidency and on the formal as well as informal agenda-setting powers attached to such function. Drawing upon the shortcomings of such theoretical perspectives, this study will then introduce the theoretical framework chosen in order to answer our research questions, role theory, particularly focusing on the concepts of role conformity and role conflict. In Chapter 3, the methodology section is outlined, which will begin with the presentation of the study´s research design, and will thereafter concentrate upon the methodological tools used in the analysis part of the study: mixed methods with quantitative as well as qualitative tools. In Chapter 4, the material produced during semi-structured interviews will be analyzed and discussed in line with the operationalized concept of "roles" of the Presidency of Council working groups used in the study as well as with the methodological strategies. Chapter 5 will entail the conclusive remarks of this study, with a particular focus on the extent by which the theoretical framework has allowed to answer the research questions. Finally, chapter 5 will also include proposals for further research.

2 Theoretical framework

This study aims to be an original contribution to the debate on the role(s) and influence of EEAS as chair of Council CFSP Working groups. As originality in social sciences can be seen as "finding your own angle on what is previously published on the subject" (Cottrell, 2014, p. 69), I will now present some previous theoretical perspectives on the EU Council Presidency.

2.1. Literature review

2.1.1. Previous research: The EU Council Presidency

Since little attention has been devoted to the EEAS´s presidency of Council CFSP working groups in previous research, this thesis will partially rely on earlier theoretical perspectives, which sought to clarify the characteristics, the functions and the actorness of EU member states when holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union and its working groups.

The *Hamdbook of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union,* developed by the Council´s General Secretariat (CGS), defines the role of the Presidency as follows: "The Presidency must, by definition, be neutral and impartial. It is the moderator for discussions and cannot therefore favour either its own preferences or those of a particular Member State" (Council of the European Union, 2011). This view seems to be in accordance with earlier accounts of the role of the Council presidency, who define it as a "responsibility without power", with a limited influence on the actual policy-making processes (Thomson, 2008). Seen through the lenses of this theoretical framework, it does not make any difference which EU member state "runs the Presidency" (Wurzel, 1996).

However, a growing section of the academic literature has more recently underlined the Presidency's abilities to influence decisions taken at EU level. For instance, Jonas Tallberg (2003) has particularly emphasized the three distinct powers gained by EU member under the

Presidency office: "agenda-setting" (the possibility to introduce new issues on the agenda), "agenda structuring" (the power to emphasize or de-emphasize issues that are already set up on the agenda) and "agenda exclusion" (the ability to exclude issues from the agenda). Tallberg concludes that the Presidency offers "an arsenal of means" for EU member states to get an increased command over policy-making processes.

Coming to CFSP working groups, which are at the center of this study, various case studies have examined whether the rotating presidency in such areas has allowed member states to promote their national priorities at EU level. Bengtsson, Elgström and Tallberg has for example underlined how the Swedish presidency of the Council has functioned as a "megaphone to […] launch […] novel policy ideas [which] provides a usual opportunity to influence the direction of the debate" (2004), which explains why EU enlargement and the state of the relations with Russia were defined as two of the main priorities of the presidency. The fact that the presidency permits the "office holder" to push forward its national priorities has been proven particularly true for Council preparatory bodies since the civil servants and technical experts involved can gather more opportunities to exert influence over other EU member states than at Ministers´ level (Vandecasteele, Bossuyt & Orbie, 2013).

Building upon these previous theoretical perspectives, this thesis aims to explore whether the EEAS has acquired a similar influence over European foreign policy-making after taking over the presidency of CFSP working groups. Before conducting our analysis, we need to get a better understanding of the *sources* of the above-mentioned agenda-setting powers. Thus, this literature review will look further into the distinction proposed by Pollack (2003, p. 7) between formal and informal agenda-setting powers.

2.1.2. Formal agenda-setting powers in the Council.

Formal agenda-setting powers are defined by Pollack (1999) as "the ability of an actor to set the procedural agenda of a legislature by placing before it legislative proposals that can be adopted more easily than they can be amended, thus structuring and limiting the choices faced by of a group of legislators". Touching upon formal agenda-setting prerogatives of the Council Presidency before the Lisbon Treaty, Tallberg (2006, p. 88-89) emphasizes that the specific EU member state, when holding the chairmanship of Council CFSP working groups, enjoy "the power of initiative – either exclusively or together with the

Commission". However, can the same be said about the External Action Service after it took over the chairmanship of such preparatory bodies?

As stated above, the Lisbon Treaty has brought about important changes to the European foreign policy-making. In that context, previous research has been paying attention to the implications of the he amended articles 18(2,3) and 27(1) of the Treaty of the European Union, which read as follows:

> Article 18
>
> 2. The High Representative shall conduct the Union's common foreign and security policy. He shall contribute by his proposals to the development of that policy, which he shall carry out as mandated by the Council [...].
>
> 3. The High Representative shall preside over the Foreign Affairs Council.
>
> Article 27
>
> 1. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who shall chair the Foreign Affairs Council, shall contribute through his proposals to the development of the common foreign and security policy and shall ensure implementation of the decisions adopted by the European Council and the Council.
>
> (Treaty on European Union, 2012)

Koehler (2010), for instance, insists that the position of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy has been strengthened compared to the previous office of the High Representative of the CFSP (pre-Lisbon). The High Representative now "enjoys the right to submit proposals for the development of the CFSP and the common security and defense policy (CSDP), which he or she shall carry out as mandated by the Council [...]". Therefore, on the same lines as Pernice (2009), it could be said that the new formal agenda-setting powers of the High Representative, that he/she shares with EU member states, contributed to create a Union "speaking with one mouth" on the international stage.

Being under the authority of the HR/VP, the EU´s External Action Service has gained similar formal agenda-setting prerogatives in Council CFSP working groups that it presides. Balfour et al. (2015, p.

50) argue that the procedural rule of the permanent chairmanship of such preparatory bodies "places EEAS officials at the heart of vertical coordination, which enables them to provide more continuity than the rotating presidencies did in the past". EEAS officials have in that context been able to push forward their own policy proposals in areas of the EU´s external action, thus "reducing the dynamism for new initiatives [from EU member states]" (Ibid.).

Such theoretical approaches focusing on formal agenda-setting powers rely on an analysis on the "specific rules of behavior that are agreed upon and followed by agents" (Lowndes & Roberts, 2013, p. 47). In so doing, the establishment of new institution – such as the External Action Service - can be regarded, in accordance to Pollack´s views (1997) as a way for EU member states to lower the transaction costs of international cooperation. It can therefore be contended that EU member states, by delegating their formal agenda-setting powers of the rotating presidency to the EEAS, aspired to promote more continuity and coherence in EU´s external action (Oxfam, 2012).

The above-mentioned considerations have illuminated our understanding of the importance of formal agenda-setting powers in the post-Lisbon architecture of the EU´s Common and Foreign Policy, which this study intends to take into account. However, the future theoretical framework, that this study will use, will need to address two significant shortcomings attached to devoting much attention to formal rules:

Firstly, the precise role(s) of the presidency of Council working groups – both at the time of the rotating presidency and after Lisbon - are not at all addressed in the EU treaties. It is therefore up to the office holder to *interpret their role differently over and above all formal prescriptions* (Vanhoonacker & Schout, 2003).

Secondly, those approaches are based on the "assumptions that the institutions adopted are those that most efficiently perform the tasks set out for them by their creators and are chosen for that reason" (Pollack, 1997). But is that always the case? Paul Pierson has underlined how the "*unintended consequences*" for earlier institutional decisions made by actors can lead to further delegation of power to supranational institutions, such as the EEAS (2000). The EEAS might also have preferences of its own that it might want to push forward against EU member states by other means than formal agenda-setting powers, which this study will need to consider.

In order to complete our literature review, this thesis will now assess the usefulness of theoretical frameworks focusing on informal agenda-setting powers.

2.1.3 Informal agenda-setting powers in the Council

Pollack refers to informal agenda-setting as "the ability of a "policy entrepreneur to set the substantive agenda of an organization, not through its formal powers, but through its ability to define issues and present proposals which can rally consensus among the final decision makers" (1999). In that context, one of the major theoretical contribution to the importance of informal agenda-setting in policy processes has been brought about by John W. Kingdon´s book *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* (1984). The outcomes of policy-processes, seen through the lenses of Kingdon´s model, should be explained by the influence of the individual behavior of actors who manage to (1) identify specific problems, (2) propose policy solutions, (3) and operate within the right climate of their adoption (Pollack, 2003, p. 50-51). The coupling of those three "streams" create the opening of a "policy window" which enables the adoption of new policies (Kingdon, 1984, p. 172-173). Successful policy entrepreneurs can succeed in controlling all of the three streams of policy-processes, which involve having personal qualities beyond all formal agenda-setting powers (Ibid., p. 180-181).

Applying Kingdon´s theoretical premises to the EU policy-processes, Princen (2011) distinguishes four informal agenda-setting strategies that might be used to gain influence on the policy outcomes:
- *"mobilizing supporters"*, which is about involving actors that share the same interests as the agenda-setter and excluding others that do not support them (notably through the organization of informal meetings and consultations),
- *"arousing interests"*, which can be seen as the way that the actor chose to frame and define an issue in order to gain more support,
- *"building capacity"*, defined as the possession of the necessary organizational capacities so that to be considered as a legitimate actor,
- *"claiming authority"*, which is the strive to justify why a certain issue has to be dealt at EU and not at national level (Ibid.).

Vanhoonacker & Pomorska (2013) have used Princen´s model and analyzed how the new functions gained by the HR/VP and the EEAS as the permanent chair of respectively Foreign Affairs Council and CFSP working groups has affected the EU member states´ abilities to form decision-making in such policy areas. The EEAS has

successfully used the "building capacity" strategy in order to promote its own views on the EU´s foreign policy agenda (Ibid). By prioritizing the practical setting-up of a new diplomatic service, the then High Representative Catherine Ashton and EEAS officials have succeeded in being recognized by EU member states as possessing extraordinary administrative resources, organizational capacities and expertise on which none of them could lean on anymore in the course of decision-making processes in CFSP areas. (Ibid.). EU member states have therefore had the tendency to regard the EEAS – as the chair of Council working groups – as a true "*foreign policy entrepreneur*" (Ibid.) bringing added value to policy-making in the areas of the EU´s Common and Foreign Policy. However, these informal agenda-setting strategies have met a certain degree of resistance from EU member states who still attempt to "mobilize supporters" for their own national priorities and "arouse interest" for the way they chose to frame and define policies in CFSP areas (Ibid.).

To sum up, Princen´s model and its applications on the cases of the EU Council presidency and of the EEAS has highlighted the signification of informal agenda-setting strategies for measuring influence in EU policy-making in CFSP areas. However, such perspectives fail to take into account the following elements:

Princen´s views tend to overshadow *the individual level of analysis,* which refers to the individual behavior of chairs within Council working groups, and treat the EEAS from a holistic perspective (Juncos & Pomorska, 2010).

Furthermore, Princen´s model risks *of surpassing the interactional nature of EU policy-making.* By focusing on the informal agenda-setting powers that the EU actors might (or might not) have gained, Princen´s model does not consider the fact that leadership could be seen as an "interaction between institutions and the leader, where the institutions constitute the frame in which the leader has a possibility to affect the form and content of leadership. […] The leadership position [is] not fixed, but as a circular process, where the limits of leadership are constantly negotiated by leaders and followers" (Floman, 2015, p. 16).

Pulling these threads together, the central claim of this thesis is that the new role(s) acquired by the External Action Service after the Council decision L 322/28 must be examined through the lenses of role theory, a theoretical framework that allows to bear in mind some of the key insights from the works mentioned above (the importance of both formal and informal agenda-setting prerogatives for a Council working group chair) as well as to come to terms with their theoretical limitations.

2.2. Theoretical framework: Role Theory

This section will therefore introduce role theory as this study´s theoretical framework. We will first start with some considerations about the concept of role as well as its ontological underpinnings.

2.2.1. The Concept of Role and Social Constructivism

As stated by Thies (2010), the concept of role in international relations is a metaphor borrowed from the theater, where it was used to describe how actors were expected to perform on the stage (de Oliveira Marques Leal, 2010, p. 173). It therefore presupposes the existence of scripts that outline what actors should – and should not – do (Turner, 2001, p. 217). Breuning (2011, p. 20) argues that role is closely associated to notions developed by the theoretical school of social constructivism such as identity, image and self-image, making social constructivism the "implicit" of role theory. Therefore, it appears necessary to clarify the ontological assumptions of social constructivism in order to better understand the key concepts used by role theorists.

One of the central claims upheld by social constructivism is that actors´ behavior is primarily influenced by their identities (Zehfuss, 2001). Wendt, in *Social Theory of International Politics,* argues that:

> "Identity is whatever makes a thing what it is […] I will treat it as a property of intentional actors that generates motivational and behavioral dispositions. This means that identity is at base a subjective or unit-level quality, rooted in an actor's self-understandings" (1999, p. 224).

Refuting the principal arguments of neo-realism, Wendt argues that identities are not primarily constituted by material structures such as natural or military resources or even geography (Zehfuss, 2001). On the contrary, identities are not given, but shaped and re-shaped through interactions with others. According to Wendt, "collective meanings" such as cultural norms, rules or expectations are attached to actors´ identities, which directly affects their behavior:

> "Actors acquire identities--relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self by

participating in such collective meanings. Identities are inherently relational […] (Wendt, 1992).

Nonetheless, collective meanings are not the only explanatory factors shedding a light on actors´ behavior. Drawing upon the wider academic debate between agency and structure, Wendt´s theoretical framework presupposed two main elements of identity-formation (Harnisch, 2011, p, 9-10): an *ego*, possessing self-image(s) of its own identity, and an *alter,* retaining pre-conceived image(s) about the ego´s identity. Wendt distinguishes in that sense "corporate identity", which he defines as "consciousness and memory of Self as a separate locus of thought and activity" (1999, p. 225), from "role identity", seen as "substantial rights and behavioral norms" (Ibid., p. 228). Coming to international relations, states´ behavior should subsequently be analyzed by highlighting the intersubjective interactions between corporate and role identities, between structure and agency:

> "The daily life of international politics is an on-going process of states taking identities in relation to Others, casting them into corresponding counter-identities, and playing out the result. These identities may be hard to change, but they are not carved in stone" (Ibid., p. 21)

In sum, emphasizing the ontological assumptions of social constructivism has proven to be useful since the concepts of role and identity are related and sometimes intertwined. In fact, as Elgström and Smith (2004) declare:

> "Roles are in several ways closely intertwined with identities. In our view, the role conception of an actor constitutes a behaviorally related element of an actor's identity, linked to its relations with other actors. Roles are thus related to the *social* identity of an actor […] in contrast to the actor's *intrinsic* identity"

I will now outline the key concepts and understandings of role theory.

2.2.2. Role Theory: Key concepts and theoretical claims

Role theory seeks to highlight some stability and predictability in actors´ conduct, (de Oliveira Marques Leal, 2010, p. 161), it looks for, in the words of Elgström and Smith (2004), "patterns of expected or appropriate behavior". On the same lines as social constructivism, role theory claims that such behavior is influenced by the conceptions that an ego has of its own role(s) and the expectations that an alter holds about these roles. In order to answer the research questions, this study will therefore rely on the concepts of *role conceptions* and *role expectations* such as defined by Aggestam (1999):

> "*A role conception* is a set of norms expressing expected foreign policy behavior and action orientation. It can be thought of as a `road map' that foreign policy-makers rely on to simplify and facilitate an understanding of a complex political reality"

> "[The concept of *role expectations*] refers to roles that other actors or groups prescribe and expect the role-beholder to enact"

The extent to which actors´ behavior is affected by role conceptions and/or role expectations has been largely debated within role theorists. Biddle (1986) distinguishes five principal theoretical approaches within role theory depending on how they emphasize – or downplay – these notions, thus mirroring the wider ontological discussion about structure and agency: *functional, symbolic interactionist, structural, organizational, and cognitive role theory*. Although accounting for those five distinct perspective is beyond the scope of this study, I believe that it would be useful to replace the theoretical framework used within this academic discussion. Functional role theorists, for instance, focus on the importance of rules and norms (i.e. alter expectations) which prescribe the behavior that actors will adopt while enacting a specific role (Ibid.). Others, like cognitive role theorists, had devoted more attention to the individual perceptions of such rules and norms, hence underlining the effects that such perceptions have on behavior (i.e. ego conceptions) (Ibid.).

This study will build upon the *symbolic interactionist role theory,* which stresses that actors´ behavior is influenced by the interactions between role conceptions and role expectations. Indeed, as explained by Niklas Nilsson (2015, p. 44), while role expectations are constraining what an

actor is awaited to do or not to do, "these expectations rarely provide precise prescriptions for what roles the actor should take and how they should be enacted". In that context, the concept of role expectations is to be distinguished from *role prescriptions.* Actors are not, in the words of Nilsson (Ibid.), "structural idiots", they constantly adapt and re-adapt their behavior in according to their own conceptions of what their role is but also according to their own interpretations of alter expectations held on them. Therefore, role conceptions and role expectations will be seen as "two sides of the same coins" (de Oliveira Marques Leal, 2010, p. 163). Elgström (2006) clarifies in that matter that:

> "Role-taking is, however, no automatic or mechanic process. How the role will be played is to a certain extent a result of learning and socialization in interactive processes of negotiation, where the self-images and role conceptions of actors entering the role are confronted with existing expectations. In these processes, individual actors have a certain room for manoeuvre to choose in what way and with what intensity they will perform the role, as well as what aspects of the role at hand they want to emphasize"

In conclusion, and given both our literature review and the assumptions of symbolic interactionist role theory, this study will refer to *the concept of role* as a "set of formal and informal rules shaped and re-shaped through interactions between an ego and an alter" (Harnisch, 2011b).

2.2.3 Role conflict and role conformity

Since roles are understood as a social constructs constituted by the conceptions of an ego and the expectations of an alter, "they entail a substantial potential for conflict […] between roles" (Harnisch, 2011b). Reflecting over this notion, Harnisch (2010) makes an important distinction between intra-role conflict (when an actor holds incompatible conceptions about its own role) and inter-role conflict, which is defined by Nilsson (2015, p. 49) as follows:

> "Inter-role conflict […] emerges in the social relationship between actors and significant others, and

denotes a conflict between ego and alter expectations regarding the appropriate role of an actor"

Coming to our topic, this thesis will use the concept of *role conflict* understood as inter-role conflict (between the EU member states´ expectations and the EEAS´ own conceptions of its role as chair of CFSP working groups). Actors on which expectations are held, when confronted with the negative effects of an inter-role conflict, might, according to Nilsson (2015, p, 53) engage in *role playing*, meaning that they "formulate [their] interests in accordance with alter expectations". As a result, their possibilities to realize their own goals is expected to decline, being forced to readjust their wider ambitions to the role expectations imposed upon them. Such possibilities for actors holding those expectations (alters) are on the contrary expected to increase.

Against this background, the first hypothesis that this study will seek to verify will be the following:
H1: EU member states´ abilities to influence EU foreign policy decisions will increase when role conceptions and role expectations are conflicting, while the possibilities for the EEAS, as chair of CFSP working groups, to influence such decisions will decrease.

On the contrary, *role conformity* occurs when role expectations and role conceptions are concurring (de Oliveira Marques Leal, 2010, p. 184). Role conformity is associated with positive outcomes in terms of decision-making, as the role holder performs exactly the roles that the alters have expected from him– while possibilities for those alters to influence decision-making are likely to decrease (Schout and Vanhoonacker, 2006).

In that context, this study will aim at validating a second hypothesis linked to role conformity:
H2: EU member states´ abilities to influence EU foreign policy decisions will decrease when role conceptions and role expectations are matching, while the possibilities for the EEAS, as chair of CFSP working groups, to influence such decisions will increase.

2.2.4 Theoretical limitations of the study

A theoretical framework is, according to Hawthorne (1992, p. 126) a "set of beliefs that both enables and constrains research: a framework or scaffold, which can underpin or support further work but which, of necessity, also excludes a range of possibilities". Therefore, looking critically at the theoretical limitations of this study is crucial.

First of all, this study will only focus the interactions between two relevant actors in decision-making processes in CFSP areas, the EEAS and EU member states, thus omitting other significant players such as the EU Commission, the Council Secretariat or the European Parliament, which also might affect the EEAS´ possibilities to push forward its own interests in EU foreign policy matters (Serrano, 2013, p. 25-26). However, there are strong reasons to believe that EU member states could be regarded as the *"significant others"* that most likely could enter into role conflicts with the EEAS (Balfour & Raik, 2013, p. 2). I have therefore chosen to concentrate exclusively upon the interactions between EU member states and the External Action Service.

Secondly, this study will seek to understand how the EEAS´ possibilities to influence decision-making in CFSP areas could be influenced by the interplay between the EEAS´ conceptions of its own role(s) as chair of CFSO working groups and the EU member states´ role expectations. Consequently, this thesis will not consider the EU member states´ *conceptions on their own role(s)* in such matters, neither the EEAS´ *role expectations* towards EU member states. Figure 2 summarizes such theoretical limitations by underlining in grey boxes the aspects that this study will encompass, and in white boxes the aspects that this study will disregard:

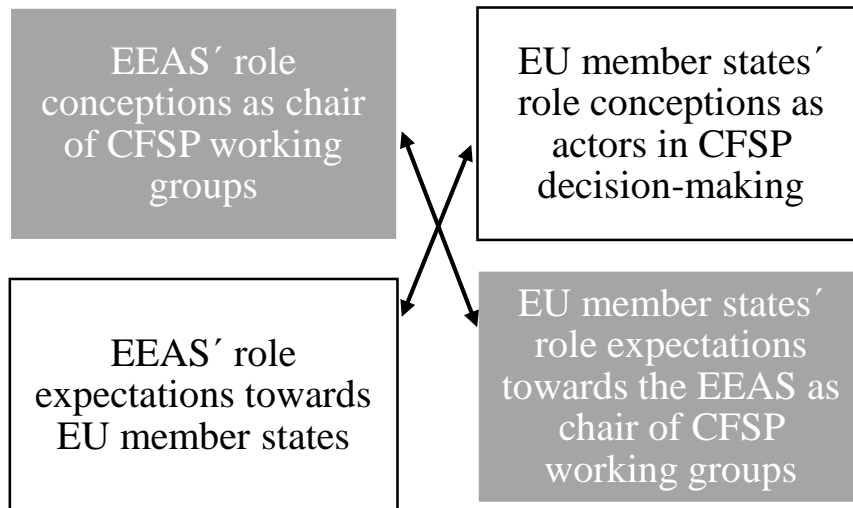| EEAS´ role conceptions as chair of CFSP working groups	EU member states´ role conceptions as actors in CFSP decision-making
EEAS´ role expectations towards EU member states	EU member states´ role expectations towards the EEAS as chair of CFSP working groups

Figure 2: Author´s representation of the study´s area of focus (in grey)

I will now approach the methodology section, which will - among other things - highlight how the above-mentioned concepts developed by role theory could be operationalized in order to be able to verify our hypotheses.

3 Methodology

As stated by Halperin and Heath, "the kind of question you ask determines the type of answer you provide, the research you pursue […], and the means by which you pursue it. *You must provide the type of answer that you question requires"* (2012, p. 133). Analyzing the research question is therefore needed in order to identify the most appropriate methodological techniques and provide a valid answer (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006). The methodology section will therefore begin by coming back to the research question and lay out the methodological assumptions related to it before presenting such techniques (mixed methods).

3.1. Research Question and Methodological Assumptions

The above-mentioned research question is two-folded: it is a *descriptive question,* since it is "concerned by the characteristics of what has happened, is going on, or exists, or of how something behaves" (Halperin & Heath, 2012, p. 133), but it is also an *explanatory question* who seeks to point out the "factors or conditions that are causally connected to a known outcome" (Ibid., p. 116). The aim of this study will be in that context to (1) describe the new roles acquired by the EEAS as chair of Council working groups following Council decision L 322/28 in terms of role conceptions from EEAS officials and role expectations from national delegates, as well as to highlight the similarities and differences between conceptions and expectations; (2) to underline the consequences of those similarities and differences for EU member states´ abilities to influence decision-making in CFSP areas.

Secondly, and as outlined in the proposed theoretical framework, the research questions and sub-questions are focusing on how individuals interpret their roles and expectations. Thus, such questions rely on *methodological individualism.* Methodological individualism considers that individuals are the primary independent variables of the social phenomena that are to be explained (Halperin & Heath, p. 82), which implies, in the words of the philosopher Karl Popper, that:

> "[methodological individualism is the important doctrine that all social phenomena, and especially the functioning of all social institutions, should always be understood as resulting from the decisions, actions, attitudes, etc., of human individuals" (Popper, quoted by Hodgson, 2007).

A central claim of methodological individualism is that any explanation of social phenomena should be based on statements that relate to individuals and their actions (Halperin & Heath, 2013, p. 81). However, this thesis will, on the same lines as List & Spiekermann (2013), not reduce social facts to only individuals and their behavior, but will also include *relations between those individuals.* Hodgson (2007), referring to the notion of social positions (which reminds of the concept of role used in this study) clearly states why social interactions have to be encompassed by methodological individualism:

> "A social position is a specified social relationship with other individuals or social positions"

Consequently, this study will start from the *individual interpretations of the new roles* gained by the EEAS as chair of CFSP working groups in order to be able to examine whether *the institution EEAS* has affected EU member states' possibilities to influence decisions in such areas due to this new procedural rule. This thesis will therefore consider, on the word of J.W.N. Watkins (quoted by Lukes, 1968) that "every complex situation, institution or event is the result of a particular configuration of individuals, their dispositions, situations, beliefs, and physical resources and environment".

Clarifying the nature of the research questions and the methodological assumptions related to them has allowed to better understand *which specific methodological tools* would be the most appropriate strategy to answer the research questions. I will now introduce this study´s research design, that has also a bearing on the choice of appropriate methodological strategies.

3.2 Research design

As it is concentrated upon one single case – the eventual new roles gained by the EEAS as chair of CFSP Council working groups and their effects on EU´ member states possibilities to influence decisions taken in such areas -, this study in a *qualitative in-depth case study*, which can be defined as "an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar units). A unit connotes a spatially bounded phenomenon [...] observed at a single point in time or over some delimited period of time" (Gerring, 2004). However, single case studies also allow to investigate temporally bounded phenomena, which is the case here, since this thesis aims to clarify the consequences of the Council decision L 322/28, agreed upon by EU member states in December 2009. Gerring (2015, p. 30) adds in that context:

> "Sometimes, temporal boundaries must be arbitrarily assigned. This is particularly important when cases consist of discrete events – crises, revolutions, legislative acts, and so forth – within a single unit".

Consequently, this thesis also aims to understand *variations over time within a single unit* (Gerring, 2004). Indeed, exploring the consequences of the Council decision L 322/28 will automatically lead to compare the influence of EU member states in CFSP decision-making after the Lisbon Treaty with the period before the its entry, when EU member states still held the rotating chairmanship of CFSP working groups.

Secondly, our study is close what Eckstein names "disciplined-configurative studies" (Eckstein, quoted by Gomm et al., 2012, p. 172); which seeks to interpret social facts according to theoretical postulates:

> "Disciplined-configurative case studies […] aim to explain/interpret a single case, but that interpretation is explicitly structured by a theory or well-developed theoretical framework that focuses attention on some theoretically specified aspects of reality and neglects others" (Levy, 2002).

Indeed, and as stated above, this thesis proposes to interpret the new roles gained by the EEAS after Lisbon and their consequences on EU member states' potentials to have a say in CFSP decision-making by emphasizing the similarities or discrepancies between role conceptions

and role expectations. This study will therefore be *theory guided* or *theory confirming* (Levy, 2008) and will aim at applying a theoretical framework to a new context in order to see if it holds (Halperin & Heath, 2012, p. 206).

Besides, beyond its ambition of *theory confirming,* this case study will also seek to contribute to develop the theoretical framework it uses. As Eckstein claims:

> "In essence, the chain of inquiry in disciplined-configurative studies runs from comparatively tested theory to case interpretations, and thence, perhaps, via ad hoc additions, newly discovered puzzles" (Eckstein, quoted by Gomm et al., 2012, p. 172-173).

The extent to which a single case study can fulfill these goals (especially confirming a theory and ascertaining a relationship between independent and dependent variables) will be addressed further down.

3.3. Semi-structured interviews

3.3.1. Presentation of semi-structured interviews.

Since this study´s research question is two-folded (descriptive and explanatory), the use of mixed methods – with quantitative and qualitative tools - appeared to be relevant to both the research questions and the hypotheses. However, to begin with, some words have to be said about the methodological strategy that will be used in order to produce the material to be analyzed through those tools: *semi-structured interviews*.

This study, which aims to give emphasis to individual conceptions and expectations related to the new roles of the EEAS as a chair of CFSP Council working groups, will adopt the technique of semi-structured interviews since it is well-fitted to "understand people´s perceptions, feelings, opinions, experiences, understandings, values, beliefs, attitudes, emotions, behavior, formal and informal roles, and relationships" (Halperin & Heath, 2012, p. 262).

Semi-structured interviews generally involve a smaller number of participants and combine both closed and open questions (Ibid., p. 258). In that sense, this technique allows for a certain degree of

flexibility, where the interviewer remains in control of the process of gathering information from the respondents, while the respondents are given the necessary space to develop specific themes and opinions related to the questions asked (Partington, 2001). Therefore, semi-structured interviews offer "greater insight into the meanings of a subject´s experiences and provide more valid data", through the use of more general and follow-up questions (Halperin & Heath, 2012, p. 258),

Two different interview guides has been prepared, which will serve as a basis for our interviews (reproduced in the Appendix): one interview guide for the national delegates from EU member states and another one for the EEAS officials. A central difficulty associated with semi-structured interviews is to avoid questions that are too leading and would close off the discussion or preempt a particular kind of answer (Halperin & Heath, 2012, p. 264). At the same time, questions that are too open would make it challenging to compare answers, since each respondent would convey his/her own and specific experiences when answering the questions.

3.3.2. Operationalization of the concept of "roles" of the Presidency in Council working groups

This difficulty appeared clearly concerning the concept of the roles of the presidency in the interview guide. Even though it appeared essential to let the respondents freely speak about their own conceptions and expectations towards the roles of the presidency of CFSP Council groups, I had to further detail what those roles could be in order to get comparable answers and draw conclusions about the similarity (or dissimilarly) between them.

Consequently, I had to operationalize the concept of the roles of the Presidency by using the typology of Kietz (2008). Kietz, reflecting over the EU rotating presidency, defines seven central functions (each of which being associated with a certain number of specific roles) held by the president of the Council: *management, brokerage, strategic guidance, impulse-giving, external representation of the EU in the CFSP, representing the Council to other EU institution and internal representation of the EU*. I have particularly chosen to use Kietz´ typology as it includes both formal and informal agenda-setting powers held by the Council presidency, whose importance was underlined in this study´s literature review. However, I had to adapt such typology and retain only the three first functions assigned by Kietz, given that the

external representation of the EU in CFSP (function 5) is not performed by a chair of a Council working group and that this thesis has chosen to disregard the interplay between the EEAS and other EU actors (function 6) and with the outside world (function 7). I had initially chosen to retain the fourth function, "impulse giving", but a majority of respondents stated clearly that this function was redundant with the third one (strategic guidance). Therefore, it was excluded from the analysis. I also excluded one specific role from the analysis, "coordination of negotiations within Council" in function 1 ("management"), which was deemed by a majority of respondents as irrelevant for Council working groups.

In that context, my interview guide retained only the first three functions – which encompass both the formal and informal roles highlighted in the literature review - from Kietz´ framework:

- *Management:* Considered by Kietz as one of the main function of the Council presidency (Ibid.), it entails both planning and preparing the sessions of the Council working groups. A major aspect included in that overarching function concerns deciding on the working groups´ agenda and which issues are to deserve attention or not during the sessions. As stated by the author:

> "The tasks of formulating the agenda for the Council, of deciding when certain dossiers move within […] the various Council working levels, of presiding over the Council sessions as well as structuring and moderating the debate are in principle left to the Presidency" (Ibid).

- *Brokerage:* This function is related to the conduct of the formal sessions of the Council working groups and the presidency´s role in reconciling the different positions expressed by the EU member states both during and outside negotiations. Kietz´ summarizes that function as follows: "in its function as mediator, it is up to the Council Presidency to manufacture consensus between the positions of different EU member states during the negotiations in the Council itself […] Apart from the mediation efforts undertaken during sessions of the respective Council bodies, the Presidency also utilizes bilateral talks [...] in order to explore the negotiating positions of participating actors" (Ibid.). Indeed, as stated by Elgström (2006), performing those tasks allows the actor chairing Council preparatory bodies to gain control of "privileged information, on member states´ preferences and positions", a power resource that "creates a huge advantage in negotiations, which the Presidency can use to persuade and/or manipulate other actors in order to reach collective as well as private goals"

- *Strategic guidance:* The third function developed by Kietz´ framework emphasizes the role of the Council work presidency into persuading EU member states to understand the importance of EU goals and projects. Kietz states in the matter that:

> "The core of those presidency tasks which we subsume under the general term "strategic guidance" […]The Chair has to urge member state delegations to put their short-term, national interests behind long term goals that all EU members can agree on. In this way, long-drawn-out and blocked negotiations may be revived" (Ibid.)

Table 1 summarizes those three main functions and the roles attached to each of them:

1) Management	2) Brokerage	3) Strategic Guidance
1.1. Time and agenda-management, as well as coordination of meetings in Council and its working committees 1.2. Chairing Council meetings and structuring debates 1.3. Preparation of summarizing and explanatory background documents	2.1. Sounding out the positions of the member states 2.2. Devising forward-looking negotiations strategies and fall back positions 2.3. Identification of points of consensus and package deals 2.4. Formulation of compromise proposals 2.5. Fostering a positive negotiations environment 2.6. Persuasiveness in pursuit of mutual understanding between member states	3.1. Placing current discussions in long-term perspective bringing in future challenges for the EU 3.2. Persuading national delegations to look beyond their short-term. National interests, and to think in terms of a European goals 3.3. Reinvigorating negotiations that have become bogged down

Table 1: Author´s representation of the three major functions of the Council working group presidency according to Kietz (2008)

3.3.3. Sampling

As argued by Curtis et al. (2000), it is of crucial importance that the sampling strategy, referring to the selection of individuals that will be contacted to be respondents, fits both the conceptual framework and the research questions of our study. Besides, the sample has to be designed in a way that will provide us rich information of the phenomenon it intends to examine (Ibid.) In that context, I have defined

two categories of respondents: delegates from EU member states and EEAS officials.

Coming to EU member states delegates, I have selected national diplomats that are involved in Council working groups in CFSP areas. However, I have deliberately chosen to exclude the following working groups:
- The Political and Security Committee (PSC), as it would have been unlikely to be able to conduct interviews with PSC ambassadors due to constrained time schedules,
- Nicolaidis group, since its primary task is to prepare the meeting of the PSC committee and go through the PSC agenda (Council of the European Union, 2015),
- The Council working groups that are more of a technical nature, such as CONOP, COARM, COFUM, RELEX, PMG, where the differences between positions of EU member states are likely to be smaller,
- The Council working groups that are "capital-based", where national delegates are travelling from the EU member states´ capitals to attend the meetings. Those working groups meet more rarely, which explains why I have chosen to exclude them from our analysis.

Subsequently, in a first time, the following working groups were prioritized: COEST (Working Party on Eastern Europe and Central Asia), COHOM (Working Party on Human Rights), and COAFR (Africa Working Party) where the author has been able – during an internship at the Swedish Permanent Representation to the European Union under the autumn semester 2015/2016 – to observe strong dissimilarities between the views and priorities put forward by EU member states.

Regarding EEAS officials, I have contacted both former and active chairs of CFSP working groups.

In a second time, I also asked my first respondents to advise me on officials, both from the EEAS and EU member states´, that could be of interest for my study due to their knowledge and experience with the EEAS as permanent chair of CFSP working groups. Consequently, the sampling could be characterized as a "snowball sampling", an approach that is particularly adapted for a sampling population mainly consisting of diplomats:

> "With snowball sampling, also known as chain referral sampling, individuals in the original sample are asked to identify others who might be interviewed." (Copes & Miller, 2015).

15 individuals were contacted by e-mail, and the total response rate was 60%. Interviews were held in English, Swedish and French.

The national delegates interviewed come from three different EU member states.

Table 2 summarizes the respondents that were interviewed:

Interview n°	Date	Delegation	Position
1	2016-03-04 (27 min)	EEAS	Former chair of COEST
2	2016-03-10 (28 min)	EEAS	Current chair of COEST
3	2016-03-10 (26 min)	EEAS	Current chair of COHOM
4	2016-03-17 (26 min)	EU member state	Delegate to COEST
5	2016-03-18 (32 min)	EU member state	Delegate to COHOM/CODEV
6	2016-03-18 (22 min)	EU member state	Delegate to COEST
7	2016-04-18 (27 min)	EEAS	Policy Coordination Unit
8	2016-04-20 (32 min)	EU member state	Delegate to COHOM/CODEV
9	2016-04-21 (32 min)	EU member state	Delegate to COAFR

Table 2: Summary of the interviews conducted

Presently, some words will be said about the conducts of the interviews.

3.3.4. Conduct of the interviews.

The majority of the interviews were recorded, except for four: two for technical reasons and two due to the refusal of the respondents. All the interviewees that were recorded gave their consent to the

recording. Recording the interviews, when it happened, allowed for a smoother and more direct conversation, as I was not obliged to take notes thoroughly. The reliability of the material was also enhanced through recording the interviews, as the likeliness of misunderstanding or missing one element during the conversation was diminished by the fact that I could come back to the recorded file and re-listen to parts of the interviews. Having the possibility of re-listening enabled me as well to reflect on my material and improve my interview technique.

Giving to the interviews the prospect to be anonymous appeared to be essential, as it was very often the pre-condition for their participation in the interview. Even if that could limit the credibility of the study, anonymity often contribute to the individuals being more open and willing to express their opinion (Nelson, Bryner & Carnahan, 2011, p. 205).

All of the interviews were conducted face-to-face (FtF) in Brussels, which presents obvious advantages. As underlined by Opdenakker (2006), face-to-face interviews allows the researcher to be able to identify "social cues", such as body language, intonation or voice.

Moreover, as face-to-face interviews do not lead to any delay between the question (or follow-up question) and the answer, it allows for direct and more spontaneous interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer (Ibid.). Nevertheless, face-to-face interviews often crave from the researcher a higher degree of attention, which has been underlined by Wengraf (2001, p. 194).

Face-to-face interviews has proven to be a fruitful technique when conducing semi-structured interviews, as it permits the researcher to establish a good interview ambiance (Opdenakker, 2006), which is essential in order to get more valid and reliable answers – something that I will come back to in a latter section. In fact, as argued by Berry (2002):

> "The best interviewer is not one who write the best questions. Rather, excellent interviewers are excellent conversationalists. They make interviews seem like a good talk among old friends"

Now that I have presented the research design and the methodological assumptions related it, as well as how the material has been produced (semi-structured interviews), I will introduce how the material will be analyzed – through the lenses of mixed methods with

both quantitative tools (measurement of role conceptions, role expectations, role conformity and role conflict) and qualitative tools (process tracing).

3.4.   Answering the *descriptive* dimension of the research questions: quantitative tools.

As stated above, the research questions outlined in this study have a *descriptive dimension*, which aims at shedding a light on which roles conceptions/role expectations the respondents hold on the EEAS´ chair of CFSP working groups, as well as comparing them (between respondents from the EU member states and from the EEAS). This descriptive dimension is clearly present in the sub-questions 1 and 2. In that context, the use of quantitative strategies appeared both relevant and well-fitted.

Building upon Kietz´ typology, I have therefore asked the respondents to grade the different roles attached to each of those functions on an ordinal rating scale from 0 (not at all) to 10 (very much) when considering if each of those roles corresponded to their conceptions (EEAS) or their expectations (national delegates) towards the presidency of CFSP working groups held by the EEAS. This tool has been widely employed in previous studies that used role theory, as for example in sociology and educational sciences such as McNutt (1969) or Richards, Levesque-Bristol and Templin (2014), but also in political science, as in Juncos & Pomorska (2010).

Without exaggerating the importance of statistical analysis in this study, asking the respondent to place each of those roles within the above-mentioned scale aims at *describing* the role conceptions and expectations of the respondents as well as at *identifying* role conformity and role conflict, the effects of which are to be further examined through the lenses of the interviews´ content and the methodological strategy of process tracing (Korabik & Lero, 2004). Indeed, quantitative research is widely used in social sciences to "empirically identify the presence [of a social phenomenon] and magnitude of differences between individuals and/or groups of individuals" (Weathington, Cunningham & Pittenger, 2010, p. 526). The material produced during the semi-structured interviews (answers from the respondents) will be also used on the side of those quantitative strategies in order to complete the description of the role conceptions and role expectations, as well as the similarities and differences between them, as stated by the respondents.

On the same lines as MacKinnon and Summers (1976), role conformity and role conflict could be identified through quantitative data in a two-step approach:

(1)   *Within groups:* differences or similarities between role conceptions from EEAS officials and role expectations from EU member states´ delegates would be more reliably defined if a majority of individuals within each group grade the roles developed in Kietz´ framework (2008) in a similar manner. Therefore, as stated by Donnell (1970), measuring role conflict (or role conformity) between groups should include "the spread of the responses to the items in the questionnaire". The spread would be calculated for each grade for the two sample groups, or "populations" (4 EEAS officials and 5 EU member states´ delegates), according to the following formula (University of Surrey, 2016):

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (x - \mu)^2}{N}}$$

In the formula, **σ** represents the population in question, **x** represents each value in the population, **μ** the mean value of the population, **Σ** is the total and **N** is the number of values in the population (Ibid.). The standard deviation would be indicated into brackets, under each grade related to each sub-role from the three overarching functions developed by Kietz (2008), in the analysis part of the study.

One the same lines as Donnell (1970), a standard deviation higher than three points would mean that there is no sufficient consensus on a certain answer within a certain group, leading to a less reliable measure of role conceptions or role expectations held on the EEAS as chair of CFSP working groups. Such answer will therefore be excluded from the analysis.

(2)   *Between groups:* in order to compare the grade of each group regarding the roles attached to each function in Kietz´ study, "groups can be compared in terms of […] their similarity of groups means" (Donnell, 1970). Consequently, the difference between means will be calculated for each of Kietz´ roles. Role conflict would be defined, as a matter of consistency with point (1) and the arguments proposed by Donnell (Ibid.), as a difference of more than three points.

3.5. Answering the *explanatory* dimension of the research questions: process tracing.

As mentioned earlier, the third sub-question and the hypotheses outlined in this study imply to examine the operation of causal mechanisms at work:

- Our first hypothesis, if true, expects the EU member states´ abilities to influence CFSP decision-making to *increase* in case of role conflict;

- Our second hypothesis, if true, expects the EU member states´ abilities to influence CFSP decision-making to *decrease* in case of role conformity;

In order to establish this causal link between the ability to influence decision-making and role conflict/role conformity, this study will use the process tracing method, which has been outlined by George and Bennett:

> "In process-tracing, the researcher examines [...] interview transcripts [...] to see whether the causal process a theory hypothesizes or implies in a case is in fact evident in the sequence and values of the intervening variables in the case" (2005, p. 6)

Interviews, and particularly elite interviewing, are especially relevant to the process tracing method, since "elite actors will thus often be *critical sources* of information about the political processes of interest" (Tansey, 2007). The sampling adopted in this study has indeed sought to select individuals that have been directly implicated in the work of Council working groups, such as EEAS chairs or national delegates.

Actually, through questioning a number of individuals involved in CFSP decision-making on a daily basis, this study will be able to reconstruct the effects of the EEAS presidency in CFSP working groups, through "stitching together various accounts to form a broader picture of a complex phenomenon" (Ibid.).

Therefore, analyzing the data retrieved from the interviews would be concentrated upon finding if the causal mechanisms expected by hypotheses 1 and 2 are also observed and witnessed by our respondents. The second part of the questionnaire for both EEAS officials and EU member states contain detailed questions about whether

the respondents could share empirical evidence and reflections, from their professional experience, of the effects of the EEAS´ presidency on EU member states´ possibilities to influence decision-making in CFSP working groups (reproduced in the Appendix).

3.6. Reliability and validity

As stated by Alshenqeeti (2014), "issues of validity and reliability of research instruments are of great significance to the findings of any scientific research". Although the concepts of validity and reliability are not unilaterally defined in qualitative research, this study will build upon the definitions proposed by Joppe:

> "Validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are." (2000, p. 1, quoted by Golafshani, 2003).

> "Reliability is] the extent of which results are consistent over time and a representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable" (Ibid.).

Coming to validity, a traditional distinction is made in the literature between *internal* and *external* validity. While internal validity is related to whether the instrument used measures what it is supposed to measure, external validity (also called generalization) is to be seen as whether the results achieved in the study could be generalized to a larger population (Given, 2008, p. 714).

Firstly, this study is deemed to have a high degree of internal validity, which is usually true for in depth case studies (Halperin & Health, 2012, p. 208). Moreover, as Council working parties are not open to the public, and due to limited access to the documents discussed during such negotiations, I would argue that expert interviews are in our case the most valid methodological tool to understand the effects of the EEAS' presidency on EU member states' possibilities to influence decision-making in CFSP areas. Indeed, on the lines of Hooghe et al. (2010), "when the object of inquiry is complex, it makes sense to rely on the

evaluation of experts – that is, individuals who can access and process diverse sources of information".

One dilemma that I faced is related to the number of respondents to be interviewed. Would a large number of respondents better address the need for the study to be internally valid, knowing that semi-structured interviews are time-consuming? After giving it a lot of thoughts, I decided to interview a relatively low number of respondents and follow the advice of Hooghe et al. (Ibid):

> "there are instances where knowledge is limited to a handful of observers or participants, either because only a few persons are privy to the relevant negotiations […] or because only a few persons have the relevant expertise"

Besides, after having conducting nine interviews, I felt that this study had reached theoretical saturation, as the ninth interview did not bring any new perspective on the research questions to be examined.

One more issue related to intern validity concerns the accuracy of the accounts given by interviewees. Berry (2002) argues in the matter that:

> "Interviewers must always keep in mind that it is not the obligation of a subject to be objective and to tell us the truth. We have a purpose in requesting an interview but ignore the reality that subjects have a purpose in the interview too: they have something they want to say"

Therefore, Berry (Ibid.) propose some strategies in order to increase the internal validity of the results achieves, strategies that I have strived to adopt in this study:
- *using multiple sources*, which I addressed in the sampling chosen as I have interviewed several former and current chair of working groups, other EEAS officials and several national delegates;
- *asking the subject to critique his own case*, which I did by using follow-up questions outside of the questionnaire.

It is though essential to underline that such risk of the subject not telling the truth or exaggerating their role in decision-making processes cannot be entirely abolished (Berry, ibid.).

As for external validity, that is whether the results achieved could be generalized, this study stays humble. Generalization has always been a concern in qualitative research:

> "Since the findings of a qualitative project are specific to a small number of particular environments and individuals, it is impossible to demonstrate that the findings and conclusions are applicable to other situations and populations" (Shenton, 2004).

Would the results reached in this study be different if I had interviewed a different sampling of individuals? Would they differ if I had interviewed more national delegates from "bigger states" such as France and Germany? Or more EEAS officials? This question cannot be answered with certainty. Consequently, it is crucial to keep in mind that the results proposed by this study aim at highlighting how the respondents construct and conceive their role conceptions (or role expectations) towards the EEAS´ chair in CFSP working groups, and those results might have been slightly different if another sample of interviewees was chosen. Consequently, on the same line as Gross, this study provides a "baseline understanding" on the topic it has analyzed, paving the way for subsequent work to be done (Gross, 1998, quoted by Shenton, 2004).

Coming to reliability, achieving it is also to be seen as a frequent problem in studies using qualitative methodological tools. Zohrabi (2013) explains that:

> "qualitative approaches to research achieving the identical results are fairly demanding and difficult. It is because the data are in narrative form and subjective"

However, there are according to the same author strategies to reduce bias and address issues related to reliability:
- *being transparent and describe* in detail how the data was collected, how they have been analyzed and how the results have been obtained,
- *avoid leading questions* during the interviews,
- *leaving the scope for the interviewees* to express their opinions,
- *avoid interrupting* interviewees,
- *striving to be nonjudgmental and neutral* during the interviews (Ibid.).

Nevertheless, it is important to reminder that obtaining the exact same results would be unlikely since "it is impossible to ´freeze´ a social setting and the circumstances of an initial study" (Floman, 2014, p. 30).

Therefore, rather than thinking in terms of obtaining similar results, Zohrabi (2013) notes that those above-mentioned strategies would contribute to reach findings that are "consistent and defendable".

3.8. Methodological limitations

Finally, and taking into account the weaknesses of this study already mentioned, there are some few words to be said in order to point out the limitations of this research.

First of all, although the ambitious of this study is, as underlined earlier, to be *theory-testing* (by applying the framework of role theory to a new case, the EEAS´ presidency of CFSP working groups), it is important to remember the shortcomings of single case studies in the matter. As expressed by Gerring (2004);

> "We are unlikely to reject a hypothesis, or to consider it definitely proved, on the basis of the study of a single unit, particularly if the hypothesis has behind it a corpus of scholarly work […]. A single case study is still a single-shot, a single piece of evidence".

Therefore, rather than aiming at definitely proving the hypotheses underlined in the theory section of this study, this case study would aspire to "provide empirical evidence for the explanatory relevance or relatively strength of one theoretical approach in comparison to other theoretical approaches" (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, quoted in Ulriksen & Dadalauri, 2016).

Secondly, this study is not to be considered as immune to interviewer bias, especially as "the use of one interviewer only in the collection of case data may increase the possibility of interviewer bias" (Woodside, 2010, p. 249). Considering that the author of this study has pursued an internship at the Swedish permanent representation to the EU in Brussels under the autumn semester of 2015, I had already met several of the respondents in the context of CFSP working groups. Would those

respondents have answered differently to my questions if I hadn´t met them? This question cannot be answered categorically.

Gray (2014, p. 389) highlights some strategies aimed at reducing such interviewer bias:

- *try not to depart too much from the questionnaire*, although in my case I also made full use of the flexibility provided by the framework of semi-structured interviews,
- try to *standardize* my behavior during the interviews,
- *avoid influencing* the answer of the respondents, when, for example, repeating a question or providing some clarification (Ibid.).

I strived to strictly follow those strategies during the given interviews, but it is also crucial to keep in mind that the risks of interviewer bias cannot completely be eliminated.

4   Analysis

The analysis has been designed in order to answer the research questions and hypotheses. For the sake of clarity, rather than dividing the analysis into two separate sections (one dedicated to the EEAS´s conceptions of its roles as chair of CFSP working groups and one paying attention to the role expectations from national delegates), it would be organized according to the three different functions developed in Kietz´s framework (2008), while allowing the necessary space to influence the interviewees' own reflections on topics not comprised in such framework.

4.1. Management and the EEAS´s "agenda-setting powers"

As seen in the literature review, the first overarching function from Kietz´s framework – "management" – is of crucial importance (see table 1). In fact, the agenda is to be regarded as a "list of issues that receive serious attention in a polity" (Meyerhöfter, 2009). Consequently, the actors being entrusted with agenda-setting powers are also controlling over which issues deserve considerable attention and which issues will receive little attention (Ibid.). Besides, agenda-setting powers are also about being in command of how a specific issue is framed and debated within the Council (Princen & Rhinard, 2006), something that has a decisive influence on how CFSP decisions are formed.

Coming to our analysis, there appears to be correspondence between EEAS's own conceptions on its roles as chair on "management" and the EU member states' expectations on the matter. Table 2 summarizes how both EEAS officials and national delegates have graded the roles developed by the Kietz (Ibid) under the above-mentioned overarching function, according to the strategy outlined in this study´s methodology section.

Roles within Kietz´ first overarching function: "management"			
Respondents	_Role 1.1: "Time and agenda-management, as well as coordination of meetings in Council and its working committees"_	_Role 1.2.: "Chairing Council meetings and structuring debates"_	_Role 1.3: "Preparation of summarizing and explanatory background documents"_
EEAS	9,75 (0,43)	9,75 (0,43)	4 (1,73)
EU member states	9,6 (0,8)	9,6 (0,8)	4,4 (4,6)
Difference of means	**0,15**	**0,15**	**-0,4**

Table 3: Means, standard deviations and difference of means from the grades given by the EEAS officials and EU member states´ delegates on the roles under Kietz´ overarching function "management"

Indeed, being asked to freely described what their roles encompass, many respondents from the EEAS mentioned the "management aspect" of their work, especially the above-mentioned roles 1.1 and 1.2 – roles that received high grades from EEAS officials, respectively 9,75 and 9,75 with a very low standard deviation (meaning that all respondents from the EEAS gave high grades). Coming to our interviews and those roles, one current chair of one CFSP working group said, for instance, while responding to question 1 in my questionnaire:

"The first dimension of my work is to chair the debates, and arbitrate them if necessary. As you know, the *** working group is a Council preparatory body, which means that it has to prepare the works, documents and positions of the European Union. Consequently, the role of a chairman of a working group [...] is to ensure that such documents, which will arrive on the negotiating table of the ministers, are of good quality"

"Secondly, the role of a chairman of a working group is more about planning. Therefore, in collaboration with the EEAS, the Commission and the Council Secretariat, we do determine the agendas of the working groups [...] My responsibility as a chair is for that reason to make sure that the decisions of the Council are ready in due time".

Another EEAS official mentioned the fact that "*the EEAS has also a role within the EEAS too and this is about planning*".

Such view has been reiterated too by a majority of EU member states´ delegates, who also gave high grades to roles 1.1 and roles 1.2 (9,6 in both cases), with low standard deviations here as well (0,8 in both cases) - which denotes that almost all national delegates put high scores to such roles. During the interviews, for instance, one respondent explained that "*the role of the chair takes place in two different contexts. First, in the meetings and just before them, the chair should inform, this is the basics, send out the underlying documents in due time [...} the role should also be about ´time management´*". Another national delegate also mentioned roles 1.1 and 1.2 when reflecting over the roles of the EEAS in working bodies: "*Another important role for the chair and those who help him/her is to plan and organize the work in Council working parties. So that there is, for everyone involved, both Member States and institutions, a clear plan for the working group, so that you know approximately when and how and why certain questions come up* ".

Role 1.3, "preparation of summarizing and explanatory background documents", was however given relatively low grades from EEAS officials and EU member states (4 and 4,4). Almost all EEAS officials mentioned that such role is not directly performed by the chair of CFSP working bodies, but by the institutions (EEAS or the Commission), something that is reflected in the relatively low standard deviation (1,73). However, delegates from EU member states seem to have dissimilar views on whether role 1.3 should be included in the normal tasks of the chair (2 national delegates put a high score on such role, while a 3 of them gave a very low score). As mentioned in our methodology section, a standard deviation that is higher than 3 (4,4 in this case) would mean that there is no sufficient consensus regarding role 1.3. within the group of national delegates, and that such measurement should not be considered as sufficiently reliable. Therefore, I decided to exclude role 1.3. from the analysis.

However, 4 out of 6 national delegates stated that it was the role of the EEAS chair to circulate those documents in due time before the meetings of the working parties; something that was not included in Kietz´ framework. In that matter, all of the four diplomats regretted that fact that the EEAS chair was often sharing those documents too late, and sometimes not at all. For instance, one of them affirmed that "*there is a lack of transparency [...] and there´s a lot to do about openness in the processes, for the documents*", while another one declared that "*the fact is, and this is something I am concerned about, the late submission of the documents. And this is happening, sometimes I raise this, I did it recently [...] It´s surprising for me, still, because if you get some documents late*

[…] then you are invited to have a strategic debate on some important topic, in two days [...] And one might ask, but I don´t know the answer, whether this is tactics by the EEAS and whether this is sometimes simply given by the complicated clearing process, which is also true up to the certain extent". Nonetheless, no EEAS officials took up that particular role that lies outside of Kietz´ framework. Therefore, I have not been able to draw final conclusions on whether it is a case of role conflict, as it seems to be from the beginning.

In conclusion, in line with our theoretical framework, in case of matching role conceptions and role expectations (role conformity), the possibilities for the role holder to influence decision-making should be greater (the EEAS), while the possibilities for actors holding expectations on the role holder should be lesser (the EU member states); which we have expressed in hypothesis 2. Our interviews, both with EEAS officials and with national delegates from EU member states, seem to confirm the validity of hypothesis 2 in the case of the "management roles". As one respondent from the EEAS expressed it (current chair of a CFSP working group):

"I think that with the EEAS´ presidency we´re extremely open to Member states, we´re asking them to put issues on the agenda in *** working group, [but]. that does not really happen. […] I hear from my coordinators in *** working group that Member states would never provide topics for the agenda. Of course occasionally informally they would mention to me that they would like to work with X or Y, but [member states providing issues for the agenda], that doesn´t really happen"

EU member states´ delegates have also been mentioning the fact that the agendas in CFSP working groups seem to be taken for granted by their capitals, and that they do not include topics that they wish to discuss. For example, one respondent, active in a CFSP working group as well as in a non-CFSP working group (whose presidency is still held by EU member states), declared:

"If I now compare it with *** working group where the EU member states still have the rotating presidency, I would say that in CFSP working groups the EU member states do take the agenda a little bit for granted, what´s on the agenda is what we are going to discuss […] I do have the impression that the EU member states feel more involved in the agenda in working groups where EU member states still hold the presidency"

"In those working groups we still have a discussion about the EU presidency´s working program for example. It happens also with the EEAS […] The chair of *** working groups presents a planning for the semester

or the year, but it´s not like she has a working programme, this is more an administrative help".

Another national delegate, from a different Member state and working in a different working group, added that "*my diplomacy is basically on a ´reactive mode´. We get [the agenda], we react. In general, I don´t get such instructions from *** [my capital] to ask that this or that should be put on the *** [working group] agenda [...] So I get the agenda, *** [my capital] decides what to do, whether to comment on something or not. I mean, we are in that matter on a ´passive mode´*".

In summary, EEAS officials and EU member states delegates do hold similar role conceptions and role expectations regarding the "management tasks" (role 1.1 and role 1.2.) performed by the EEAS presidency in CFSP working groups. Such case of role conformity places EEAS chairs at a central position in the policy processes and allows them to affect how the agenda is CFSP working groups is shaped (Dikjstra, 2012), a role that was previously held by the specific EU member state holding the rotating presidency. As the results have shown, EU member states´ possibilities to influence those "management tasks" have decreased compared to the pre-Lisbon period and to non-CFSP working groups.

4.2. The roles of the EEAS in "brokerage".

Tasks related to "brokerage" were also usually performed by the EU Council Presidency, but have been transferred to the External Action Service when it took over the chairmanship of CFSP Working Groups (Helwig et al. 2013, p. 14).

Once more, the interviews performed show a correspondence between EEAS´ own conceptions of the roles linked to the overarching function "brokerage" in Kietz´ framework and expectations held by EU member states on the EEAS to execute those roles – except for the last role, "persuasiveness in the pursuit of mutual interests between member states", which I will come back to later down. Table 4 summarizes how such actors have graded such roles:

Roles within Kietz´ second overarching function: "brokerage"						
Respondents	Role 2.1: "Sounding out the positions of the member states"	Role 2.2: "Devising forward-looking negotiations and fall back positions"	Role 2.3: "Identification of points of consensus and package deals"	Role 2.4: "Formulation of compromise proposals"	Role 2.5: "Fostering a positive negotiations environment"	Role 2.6: "Persuasiveness in pursuit of mutual interests between member states"
EEAS	8,5 (1,11)	7,5 (2,17)	8,5 (1,11)	8,75 (1,08)	9,75 (0,4)	8,9 (1,13)
EU member states	10 (0)	8,4 (1,35)	9,2 (0,97)	9,2 (0,97)	8,6 (1,95)	7,4 (2,9)
Difference of means	**-1,5**	**-0,9**	**-0,7**	**-0,45**	**1,15**	**1,5**

Table 4: Mean, standard deviations and difference of means from the grades given by the EEAS officials and EU member states´ delegates on the roles under Kietz´ overarching function "brokerage"

Firstly, the results show that both EEAS officials and EU member states gave to all the roles under Kietz´ second overarching category "brokerage" relatively high scores. The fact that EEAS officials and national delegates hold the same role conceptions/role expectations towards such roles is expressed by the fact that the difference of means between the grades given is fairly small. There is therefore, according to our methodology, role conformity between the EEAS officials and the national delegates regarding the above-mentioned roles. This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that within groups, both groups of respondents rather shared the same conceptions/expectations and tended to give similar scores, as the standard deviation is always below three points (except for the case of role 2.6, the standard deviation for EU member states´ delegates is 2,9 – which resulted from the much lower score given by one national delegate compared to the other interviewees from the same group).

Coming to the interviews, when being asked to freely describe what the roles of the EEAS as chairman of CFSP working groups are, an EEAS official argued that one of those roles was similar to 2.1 and was to "*be the instrument that conveys back the opinions of the EU member states to the EEAS*". Another EEAS official, current chair of a working group, also mentioned this dimension when being requested to answer the same question:

"For me it is very important to maintain a constant dialogue with the delegates - to see if there are problems to solve, to be aware of the sensitivities, positions, as they are shaped in the capitals"

One national delegate from a EU member state also mentioned role 2.1 in Kietz´ framework as being of crucial importance: "*discuss with the member states, and eventually be ready for problems*" was said to be part of the EEAS roles as chair of this working group. This aspect was confirmed by another national delegate who declared that the EEAS chair *"should always consult closely with the member states"*.

Secondly, roles 2.2, 2,3, 2.4 and 2.5 were also named both by EEAS officials and EU member states´ delegates when commenting on their role conceptions or expectations towards the EEAS as chair of their working groups. For instance, a current chair of a CFSP preparatory body declared:

"*The chair of a working group, essentially, to my mind, is trying to find the consensus between the member states on every issue in the working group"*

Another respondent, an EEAS official referred to his role as being "*the impartial chair of a working group for the EU member states"*. Being asked to further comment on this dimension, he added *"well, I think it´s the key. EU member states must trust that the chair only works in the best interests of all EU member states, this is crucial [...] they must trust that the chair will satisfy the interests of the EU member states as a collective"*.

A third EEAS official particularly insisted that "*the EEAS should be the ´honest broker´ in the working parties"*.

A fourth EEAS official reiterated this view and insister particularly on role 2,5, "fostering a positive negotiations environment":

"*[My role is also about] maintaining a group spirit, a team spirit, ensuring that there is a good cohesion within the *** working group. As you know, national delegates, they are all here to represent the interest of the member states, but at the same time [...] the emergence of a consensus works all the better when national delegates are more concerned by the general European interest [...] So let me repeat again, and this is my own way to interpret my role, that I strong believe in the informal dimension of my role"*.

National delegates shared also similar expectations towards the EEAS chair to perform those tasks and be that "honest broker" that EEAS officials were referring to. One of them stated that "*the chair should be*

fair [...] and transparent"; while another one pointed out that the chair was expected to act as *"honest broker"* and *"unbeholden to the different factions"*, adding that such person should be able to creatively resolve the "*knots"* during negotiations. A third national delegate insisted that *"the EEAS chair should work for the successful combination of the different opinions, so that to enable a compromise between EU member states"*, while a fourth one declared that ""*a first important role is [...] that the chairman as such, I look a lot about him/her as a facilitator [...] he/she should be able to carry forward the discussions in order to try to reach solutions and consensus [...]"*.

Our results are therefore showing that the Council Presidency is still "characterized unanimously as a neutral mediator (Elgström, 2003), as both role conceptions and role expectations on the matter are matching. Consequently, the holder of the presidency office should act accordingly both formally, during negotiations, and informally, through the means of maintaining contacts with national delegates.

In accordance with our theoretical framework, the fact that the EEAS took over the roles related to "brokerage" from the EU member states´ rotating presidency should lead to a decrease in EU member states´ possibilities to influence decision-making processes in CFSP working groups. Nevertheless, respondents from both the EEAS and EU member states have underlined during the interviews that this does not seem to be the case.

As explained by a current chair of working group, when commenting the overarching category "brokerage in Kietz´ framework, *"for the dimensions ´identification of points of consensus and package deals´ and ´formulation of compromise proposals´ I do that together with EU member states"*. Another EEAS official mentioned that *"I do believe that they [EU member states] have greater possibilities to influence decisions in CFSP areas because they simply have one person to talk to"*. A third one claimed that *"[the EEAS chairmanship] should in principle be more effective, because there is less change of personnel [...] With the rotating presidencies, if you are a national delegate wanting to build constituencies and coalitions, you´re constantly dealing with a new presidency and new priorities"*.

National delegates, during their interviews, did not experience either that their possibilities to influence decision-making in such dimensions had decreased, nor that the ones enjoyed by the EEAS had particularly increased. Indeed, here also, when being asked to grade all the roles under the overarching category "brokerage" (and more particularly roles 2.3 and 2.4), a majority of national delegates remarked that the chair of their working group performed those tasks is close cooperation with them. For instance, one national delegate pointed out that "*In general, for*

the whole point 2 ["brokerage"], a person [from the EEAS] would say that the EU member states have to play an essential role in the process, and that it is not the sole responsibility of the Presidency". Another national delegate underlined that his/her chair was "*very talented in listening to the member states and talking on board their positions",* when formulating compromise proposals.

By the taking over of powers related to brokerage, our material shows that the EEAS doesn´t seem to have particularly been able to "shape the boundaries of where consensus lies and steer the process ´a bit in [its own] way" (Chelotti, 2016, p. 26), Indeed, our theoretical framework does not allow us to shed a light on the consequences of the EEAS´ permanent chairmanship for EU member states´ possibilities to influence decision-making in the roles related to brokerage, which haven´t decreased. Hypothesis 2 is therefore rejected for such dimension. This study will, in the conclusion part, examine whether our theoretical framework should be revised.

4.3. The EEAS and the "strategic guidance" dimension.

4.3.1. Role conformity or role conflict: the EEAS as a "strategic guider"?

The third overarching function developed by Kietz' is connected to what she named "strategic guidance", which has been defined earlier in the study as a function related to persuading EU member states to look beyond their national interests in order to realize the importance of EU projects.

Being asked to grade each of the roles related to the overarching category "strategic guidance", EEAS officials and national delegates from EU member states seem to have diverging role conceptions and role expectations regarding that dimension of the work of the EEAS chair, more particularly concerning role 3.2. Table 5 summarizes the results:

Roles within Kietz´ third overarching function: "strategic guidance"			
Respondents	Role 3.1: "Placing current discussions in a long-term perspective bringing in future challenges of the EU"	Role 3.2: "Persuading national delegations to look beyond their short-term, national interests and to think in terms of European goal"	Role 3.3: "Reinvigorating negotiations that have become bogged down"
EEAS officials	6,75 (2,58)	6,75 (1,47)	6,5 (2,06)
EU member states	6,6 (3,3)	3,6 (2,65)	7,2 (2,48)
Difference of means	**0,15**	**3,15**	**-0,7**

Table 5: Means, standard deviations and differences of means from the grades given by the EEAS officials and EU member states´ delegates on the roles under Kietz´ overarching function "strategic guidance"

About role 3.1., our results are not very concluding. Both groups of national delegates from EU member states and EEAS officials did not share similar views about the extent to which it is appropriate for the EEAS chair to perform such task, which is reflected in the relatively high standard deviations (2,58 for EEAS officials and 3,3 for national delegates). According to our methodology, a standard deviation higher than three points means that there is no sufficient consensus regarding role 3.1 within the group of national delegates, leading to a less reliable measure of role expectations held on the EEAS as chair of CFSP working groups. Besides, the material produced during the interviews only reproduces this dissimilarity of views. For instance, one EEAS official mentioned that "*This is something in which I believe quite a lot [...] I have done it recently with *** [a particular topic]*"; while another one underlined that it was not at all the role of the EEAS to do such thing. Several national delegates pointed out at the lack of time and resources given to the EEAS chair, which did not allow him/her to perform role 3.1, but underlined that they would welcome if the chair could be given more opportunities to complete this task more often. On the other hand, one national delegate stated very clearly that he/she would feel very uncomfortable if the EEAS chair performed role 3.1. In conclusion, due to the wide difference of views held towards role 3.1, I decided to exclude it from my analysis as I could not draw any final conclusions.

Role 3.2, which is about pushing forward EEAS priorities against the EU member states´, has been the more controversial during the interviews. Indeed, the difference of means between the grades given by the EEAS officials and EU member states is higher than three points (3,15),

which according to our methodology, indicates a case of role conflict. Coming to the interviews, almost all national delegates agreed that the EEAS did try to persuade them to move beyond their national interests, and that performing such role did not at all match their expectations. One national delegate, for example, said that:

"*The role of the EEAS chair should be to know when to bring a certain question to the Member states. But as you understand, if you work in the EEAS [...] you act like ´oh, no, we have to go to the member states. But they [the chair] do not always think when it´s smarter to do it [...] It´s your role [as a EEAS chair] to notice the EEAS when it´s time for the Council to come in*"

"*Of course, the EEAS´ role is to bring back the member states´ position to the EEAS, but what I would like to underline is that there already is a specific EEAS´ position*"

Another national delegate brought up the same view: "*I can only say that everyone, within the EEAS of course, has its vested interests [...] If I would work for the EEAS, I would look at the Member states from a different perspective. My position would be, ´oh, do I have to give this to *** working group or not´, it is so complicated and I am losing some time, but not I have to present it to the Member states´*". Being asked to further comment on that, the same national delegate added, "*I believe they [the EEAS] is afraid [that the Member state would water down their proposals], and those things do happen of course. So you have proposals from the EEAS and I would say that they are a bit testing the temperature, they must realize that this for example will not fly [...] So you put something which will easily fall out, so that you can give the Member states the feeling that ´yes, we have been fighting´, I mean, it´s normal, it´s tactics [...]*".

A third national delegate, from a different working group, mentioned very clearly that "*a Council working party is for the Council and its member states. And there, it is precisely the positions of the member states that should come forward clearly. But what we´re seeing more and more is that the EEAS has its own position that it tries to push forward, more or less [...] I think it depends on something structural, it depends on the system. The chairman is working within the EEAS, and within the geographical units in charge of the issues that we´re talking about. And the chair is in that way related to those units and pushes forward their proposals, a little bit, almost automatically. Even if I must say, we have in my **** working group a very good chair, who does everything to listen to the member states and try to find the way forward*". Coming back on the topic, the same national delegate added: "*Listening to the member state is an important role for the EEAS chair, and I have to say that our chair is really doing it, but I would say that he listens, maybe unconsciously [...] from his own*

perspective, [the perspective] of what the EEAS wants to achieve. The EEAS chair is really much into this third dimension, the strategic guidance, they think, ´how could we move on and achieve the EEAS´ and the EU´s interests while taking into account [the EU member states´] positions".

Finally, a fourth national delegate, also from a different working groups, declared that *"Clearly we see that the EEAS presidency would like to go further on certain topics, but have to accept certain redlines of certain EU member states who hold the EEAS positions back. For the positons that call for stronger EU engagement, the EEAS presidency is always on the side of those member states who share this line, in contrast to the EU member states that want to hold this back".*

However, another national delegate working in a different preparatory body did not share the same impression: "*I don´t think that we have had such proposals where we felt that ´now the EEAS has push forward its proposals against the Member states. Almost everyone agrees to what we´re doing".*

On the other side, almost all EEAS officials interviewed gave a quite high score for role 3.2. (from 5 to 9), but referred to the fact that such role was needed in order to reconcile the different positions expressed by EU member states into a common EU policy. Many repeated the comments made (and reflected in the two precedent sections) about the importance of being an ´honest broker" when performing role 3.2. Only one EEAS official (not a chair of a working group) declared:

"The EEAS is also, in principle, a policy-driver. The EEAS come also along with its own proposals prepared in cooperation with the EU commission. There´s the idea here that [the EU] should go somewhere. However, this role is not always compatible [with the role of being an honest broker]. [...] It is obvious that if you want to be a policy-driver, if you want to go somewhere, you cannot only sit there and listen, you need to push for something".

Before drawing our final conclusions, we will examine in the following section the difference between EU member states´ possibility to influence CFSP decisions between the period before and after Lisbon – in case of the observed role conflict regarding role 3.2.

Role 3.3., however, was not extensively commented by neither EEAS officials nor EU member states´ delegates, and was clearly referred to, several times, as "something normal" to be performed or expected by an EEAS chair.

4.3.2. The permanent character of the EEAS chair and its effects on EU member states´ level of activity in CFSP working groups.

About the EEAS´ chairmanship in CFSP working groups, and more particularly role 3.2., many respondents have reflected the effects of the permanent character of the office on the possibilities for the EEAS´ chair to launch new specific projects, while comparing it to the pre-Lisbon period. In actual fact, one EEAS official stated that "*it decreased the level of ambition a bit [...] When EU member states still held the chairmanship of CFSP working groups, they wanted the presidency to be as successful as possible, to push the maximum of their national priorities in the Council, whereas as you know, if you´re a permanent chair, it does not matter so much if you achieve your objectives in December or in January*".

However, as the same official nuanced such view, by adding: "*For me, if Sweden for example wants to push forward a new project, it can do it now as well [...] My point is that you should not exaggerate the role of the Council Presidency as it was before. You´re holding the presidency for a very short period of time, six months, you can of course push forward your own initiatives during that time, but it´s very seldom that you can actually complete them and implement them as well. And besides, you should remember that the EU member states have retained the Council presidency of Coreper, and therefore of some thematic and technical working groups, which still allows them to pursue their own positions*".

A second EEAS official also shared the view that the level of ambition of EU member states´ in CFSP working groups have decreased following the EEAS´ permanent chairmanship: "*I suppose the big difference [with the EEAS permanent chairmanship] is in the title, it´s only for six months, they [EU member states] put a lot of preparation into it, they would have a very clear set of priorities for the presidency [...] it´s very important, the chair is actually the visible deliver of those policy priorities [...] Whereas in the EEAS it´s just the normal routine work*".

The same EEAS official came back to the issue another time during the interview and highlighted that "*it [the EEAS´ permanent chairmanship] raises a lot of question about the level of activities of EU member states in working parties, and the extent to which they are active in *** working group, because there´s no longer the expectation of becoming the presidency. It´s always when you´re waiting for it and getting closer and closer to the chair, EU member states would become much more turned to the priorities, it´s always like a fear factor, so certainly a lot of us would identify now a more passive attitude*".

A third EEAS official mentioned that the post-Lisbon period and the rule of the EEAS´ permanent chairmanship *"has led us, I think, to a situation where there is less intergovernmentalism. Now it is actually up to the EEAS to decide when it wants to go to the Council working parties, and even to which Council working party it wants to go. The trend is therefore that the EEAS chair does not think that it needs to seek the mandate from the EU member states, not to the same extent than before [...] EU member states control much less, there are for example less Council conclusions. And it becomes so that the Council working parties has become more of an information forum than a forum where one seeks the mandate [from the EU member states] [...] There is therefore a very different dynamic after Lisbon, EU´s foreign policy has become much more Brussels-based. Before, when we still had the rotating presidency in CFSP working groups, the division of the roles was much clearer. With every presidency you had new inputs, new ideas, you sought member states´ mandate to do what you wanted to push forward"*.

One national delegate has also been pointed out that "*a national chairmanship has a political goal, they want to ´check off´ two or three things, like trade and development, or whatever it might be [...] With the EEAS it became more ´even´ in the negotiations [..].*

Another national delegate underlined that: *"it would be very interesting to make a comparison here [between pre- and post-Lisbon]. My feeling is that we have seen the most important changes in the geographical working parties. There it´s a third party, a little bit outside, that leads the negotiations. To be complete, it is clear that it presents advantages: you have the institutional memory, you have a huge capacity internally compared with a rotating presidency, more abilities to think strategically, to make contacts, to develop documents, to structure discussions [...] and to organize meetings. But the question is rather [...] what role do we want the EEAS to play [in Council working groups]. If we want a strong EEAS, which will represent a strong EU, then we need the EU member states to be on board"*.

The same national delegate added then that "*With the chair coming from the EEAS, there has since been a little bit more bias towards the institutions [...] In the rotating presidency, there was a strength – which is difficulty to ignore -, which is a little bit like a self-regulation: when you are rotating the chairmanship every six months, then you know that, if you sit as a chair, in six months you will sit at the left of the chair like a regular EU member state. Therefore, if you want a chair that would listen to you and work in cooperation with you, then you should ensure to be a good chair [in the working group]. It was a sort of automatic self-control"*.

A third national delegate, when reflecting about the differences between pre- and post-Lisbon, clarified that "*if you take the Lisbon Treaty as a basis, you could argue that the EEAS sometimes excluded the EU member states from the formulation of policies at the beginning, they of course then present a document that is open for negotiations*"

In conclusion, EU member states´ possibilities to influence decision-making in CFSP working parties seems to have partially decreased due to the fact that they can no longer benefit of the six-month chairmanship to launch their own projects subsequent to the EEAS taking over those roles since 2010. As seen in our literature review, the rotating presidency could be characterized as a "amplifier", which allows the office holder to "influence the decision-making process with the aim of promotion national interests" (Bengtsson, Elgström & Tallberg, 2004). However, the theoretical framework used in this study does not predict that outcome in case of role conflict – such as in the case of role 3.2. Hypothesis 1 is therefore to be rejected for such dimension. I will therefore come back in our concluding chapter about whether our theoretical framework needs to be revised.

5 Conclusive remarks

Our research question, and the sub-questions related to it, aimed to understand how the EU member states´ possibilities to influence CFSP decisions have been affected by the rule of the permanent chairmanship of the EEAS in the Council working groups in such areas. In order words, is the chair from the EEAS a *humble servant*, representing and pushing through the different positions expressed by EU member states in such working parties, or *an agenda-setter*, having an increased command over decision-making processes, thus decreasing the influence of EU member states over such processes? Drawing upon the framework developed by Daniel Kietz (2008), and using role theory as a theoretical tool, the results achieved in this study, by mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative methodological tools), seem to both confirm and infirm the two hypotheses. I will now briefly discuss such aspect before coming back to the theoretical framework of role theory.

Management

Regarding the roles within Kietz´ first overarching function, "management, the results reached in this study clearly show that EEAS officials and national delegates from EU member states´ do hold similar role conceptions and role expectations towards the EEAS chair. From the interviews conducted and the grades given by both groups, cases of role conformity were observed concerning roles 1.1, *""Time and agenda-management, as well as coordination of meetings in Council and its working committees",* and role 1.2., *""Chairing Council meetings and structuring debates".* In line with the theoretical framework used in this study, a decrease in EU member states´ possibilities to influence decision-making processes in those matters was to be expected, which our results confirmed. Hypothesis 2 is therefore to be held true in the case of the roles within the overarching function "management".

Brokerage

Similar role conceptions from the EEAS and role expectations from national delegates were also observed regarding the roles under Kietz´ second overarching function, "brokerage", which is also a case of role conformity. According to our theoretical framework, role conformity should lead to a decrease of EU member states´ possibilities to influence CFSP decisions. Nonetheless, that was not confirmed by the interviews

conducted, as a majority of national delegates pointed out that the EEAS chair performed those roles in close cooperation with them. However, that should not come as a surprise, since Council working parties are one of the most important arenas for EU decision-making, that is characterized by "their ability to create compromises and solutions on an ever growing amount of issues and policy areas. This capability is to a large extent a result of strong norms of mutual understanding and compromise seeking behavior, where the actors involved share a solid commitment to finding common solutions" (Olsen, 2010). Hypothesis 2 is therefore infirmed for the roles related to "brokerage".

Strategic guidance

On the subject of Kietz' third overarching function, and the roles attached to it, this study's result reveal a clear case of role conflict about role 3.2., "*persuading national delegations to look beyond their short-term, national interests and to think in terms of European goals*". EEAS´ officials gave higher score for such role than national delegates from EU member states´. Our theoretical framework would have predicted that the EEAS chairs would then have engaged in "role playing", meaning that they would have adapted their behavior according to the role expectations of national delegates. The chair would have, in that case, toned down this role that overstepped what national delegates expected, leading to an increase of EU member states´ possibilities to influence CFSP decisions. Nonetheless, the results achieved in this study show that it was not the case. A majority of national delegates did experience that their ability to influence decision-making processes within the framework of the "strategic dimension" had decreased following the introduction of the EEAS´ permanent chairmanship in CFSP working group. Hypothesis 1 is therefore infirmed for this particular function.

The consequences of EEAS´ permanent chairmanship for decision-making processes in CFSP working groups

Before coming back to role theory and whether this theoretical framework needs to be revised following the results achieved in this study, some final words have to be added about how decision-making processes in CFSP working groups have been affected since the EEAS´ permanent chairmanship has been introduced. Throughout the study, some trends on the matter appeared very clearly:

New dynamics: As stated above, several national delegates as well as EEAS officials mentioned that each rotating presidency, before the Lisbon Treaty, brought up new ideas and priorities on CFSP matters that it wanted to push forward in the Council within the scope of six months; which of course had an impact on the working methods in CFSP working groups (for example when negotiating Council conclusions). However, with the EEAS´ permanent chairmanship, the national delegates interviewed felt that a clear set of priorities is missing – or not discussed extensively with the EU member states.

This concern echoes the conclusions drawn by a report prepared by the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) in 2013, *"The New EU Foreign Policy Architecture: Reviewing the Two Years of the EEAS"* (Hedwig et al., 2013, p. 17)*:*

> "However, the HR/VP and the EEAS faced challenges in its role as an agenda-manager. In the formulation of the agenda, member states felt a lack of clear priorities on which the EU could focus its activities and provide added value".

Does it necessarily mean that the EEAS is doing "less" in CFSP matters compared to a rotating presidency? Or are the new priorities of the EEAS formulated in a non-transparent or less visible manner? This question, notwithstanding its legitimacy, could not be answered within the limited framework of this study.

Even though, it is important to note that during the review of the EEAS commissioned by the then High Representative Catherine Ashton in 2013, one of the policy change that was proposed was that "The EEAS should present medium-term strategies for specific regions or thematic issues in line with the established policy priorities, for *discussion in the Council according to an agreed timetable*" (EEAS, 2013).

The increased importance of the "brokerage" function of the EEAS presidency: Secondly, the study clearly showed that EU member states´ have today less possibilities to influence decision-making processes within the dimensions of "management" (formulating the agenda) and "strategic guidance" (pushing through its own priorities). Consequently, Council working parties – and the informal dimension related to them – were therefore seen by national delegates as very important negotiating fora in order to get an influence and find the necessary compromise over the policies already put forward by the EEAS in working parties – which might explain why a majority of the national delegates pointed out that the EEAS chair should act as a "honest broker". Moreover, since the EU member states are partly excluded from agenda-setting and the formulation of new policies, national delegates as the EEAS chairs have seen their role slightly

evolve. Informal contacts between EU member states and the EEAS´ chairs - ranked in the brokerage dimension in Kietz´ framework - are seen as crucial ways to get information. As expressed by one respondent, *"you have to lay more in advance to get to know what will come up. For the Member States, it creates an unnecessary burden. A meeting and contact culture in some way. Everyone should run around to guess what others think, contact others in order to know what they might do, and maybe manage to get a little draft in hands"*.

In that matter, EEAS chairs (and EEAS officials working with them) are considered by national delegates as key persons in order to maximize their influence over new CFSP policies in the making. Hedwig et al. (2013, p. 14) claim that

> "The informal modes of working together in the various groups are decisive factors for their effectiveness. In fact, member state representatives acknowledge that compared to the times of the rotating Presidency more efforts are being made by the appointed EEAS chairs to communicate and consult with them on an informal basis ahead of meetings in order to find possibilities for agreement at earlier stages".

More coherence in CFSP? One of the main argument behind the EEAS´ permanent chairmanship in CFSP working groups was to bring out more coherence and continuity in the EU´s Common and Foreign Policy, by avoiding the "January" and "July" gaps between each rotating presidency (Balfour, Carta & Raik, 2015, p. 50). Nevertheless, if – as our results have shown – EU member states are partly excluded from agenda-setting tasks and the formulation of new CFSP policies, there´s a risk that the objective of more continuity and coherence could be more difficultly achieved. As said by one respondent from the EEAS, "there *is a risk that the EEAS Presidency is leading to more fragmentation downwards. Of course I don´t see any evidence of it but there is a real risk there"*. Could it be argued that the EU member states feel less "bound" by CFSP decisions as they have been partly excluded from the formulation of them? This question could neither be answered within the limited framework of this study, but deserves much attention, as it influences the working methods in Council preparatory bodies, as well as the role of the EEAS´ chair. Hedwig et al. (2013, p. 14) mentions such risk:

> "A new kind of relationship is being developed between the permanent chairs of the FAC and its subsidiary bodies and other members. Early experiences are mixed: if member state representatives are denied access to certain information

or feel excluded in the process of drafting decisions, the new set-up is likely to lead to *lower trust towards the permanent chair*"

Or, as highlighted by a national delegate, "*and there is also a lack of transparency, which leads ultimately to a lack of confidence. The lack of transparency leads very easily to the Member States feeling excluded, so they lose the confidence and instead ask more and more questions*".

Towards a revised theoretical framework

As stated above, hypothesis 2 has been confirmed for the first overarching function, "management", but hypotheses 2 and 1 have been infirmed for the functions of "brokerage" and "strategic guidance". This leads us to two different considerations:

- There are cases of role conformity, where the abilities to influence decision-making processes of the role expectations´ holders do not seem to decrease; while the powers of actors on which those expectations are held do not increase. Our results show that the theoretical framework of role theory would need to include such aspect;
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- Secondly, even in the cases of role conflict, the abilities of the actors on which expectations are held do not automatically decrease, as they do not engage in "role playing". Such aspect has been earlier considered by role theory:

> "The actor can maintain that his own definition of the role is correct and that alter expectations are faulty by engaging in "altercasting, ´a process by which individuals seek to persuade others o their definition of their role´" (Nilsson, 2015, p. 53).

Role theory needs therefore to integrate an explanation of the conditions by which such actor might choose between *role playing* or *altercasting*.

Proposals for further research

The approach to EEAS´ chairmanship and its consequences for EU member states´ possibilities to influence CFSP decision-making processes in Council working groups has proven to be fruitful. The results achieved in this study, despite its limited framework and sample, have shown that the EU member states´ do not have the same influence over CFSP decisions

compared with the period before the Lisbon Treaty. In the future, this study could be expanded in the following directions:

Firstly, as said earlier, in case of role conflict, actors on which expectations are held might choose between *role playing or altercasting*. Altercasting, or insisting on the legitimacy of its own role, comes nonetheless with political costs. For instance, EU member states might protest against such a move, which they have done in December 2011 where eleven 11 foreign ministers sent a letter to the then HR/VP Catherine Ashton where it says:

> "To avoid the setting up of a new structure disconnected from the Member States, there should be a close interaction between the EEAS and the Member States. In this regard, an important prerequisite for EEAS effectiveness is the close involvement of Member State personnel" (Foreign Ministers of Belgium, Estonia, Finland et al, 2011).

Other forms of protests happen also in Council working groups, when national delegates are taking up – formally or informally – critical points regarding the working methods in Council preparatory bodies and the roles performed by the EEAS chair. Role theory could in that case be completed with rational approaches who might shed a light on *why and how* role holders are adapting their behavior (altercasting or role playing). Harnisch (2011, p. 12) underlined on the matter that:

> "In rationalism and cognitivism, learning depicts a causal process in which the role beholder changes the structure and content of a role conception based a new (deviant) information, i.e. experience"

Secondly, our study could be expanded by taking into account the interactions between the EEAS chair and the Commission in Council working parties. As mentioned earlier, the EEAS presents new policy proposals in Council working groups, that it had prepared together with the Commission. Nonetheless, while presenting such proposals (and by such enacting the role of "strategic guider"), the EEAS chair might need to adjust them and modify them by taking on board the different positions expressed by the EU member states´ (performing then the role of "honest broker"). It therefore can create situation when the EEAs chair has to go against proposals developed by his/her own institution and the Commission, something that was underlined by one of the respondents. A further study could then explore the case of role conformity and role conflict between the EEAS´ chair and the Commission.

In addition, in our study, there appeared to be differences of working methods between working bodies. Tensions and role conflicts have been for instance much more apparent in COEST and COAFR than in COHOM. However, due to the limited sampling used in the study, final conclusions on the matter could not be drawn. A further study could then examine more deeply such differences by taking into account a wider number of working groups.

Finally, a further study could also explore whether the EEAS´ chair has dissimilar relations to "bigger" Member states compared to "smaller" one. This aspect has also been taken up by several respondents. The effects of the EEAS´ permanent chairmanship over decision-making powers of "bigger" and "smaller" EU member states could therefore be examined more thoroughly in further research, for example by enlarging the sample used.

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Appendix

Interview guide for EEAS officials (English)

1) According to you, what is your role as chair of CFSP working group? According to your own conceptions of your role(s) as chair, what kind of tasks should you perform?
2) Let me now be more specific and name some tasks that are common for a chair of Council working groups (Presentation of Kietz´ framework). I will ask you to place on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 10 (very much) those following tasks if you think that they correspond to your own conception of your role as chair of working group.
3) Are there some tasks that I have not been mentioning above and that correspond to your own conception of your role as chair?
4) According to you, if I did the same survey with a delegate from a EU member state, would he/she share the same picture than yours of your role(s) as chair? Why? Why not?
5) If the answer if no at question 4: If we take the tasks mentioned at question 2 as a starting point, what kind of tasks, in your role as the chair of working group, would this national delegate do not expect you to perform? Can you name some examples?
6) Do you generally think that your role(s) as chair in your working group (or any group in CFSP areas) have changed since the EEAS took over the chairmanship?

Interview guide for national delegates (English)

1) According to you, what role(s) do you expect the EEAS to fulfill as the chair of your working group?
2) Let me now be more specific and name some tasks that are common for a chair of Council working groups. I will ask you to place them on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 10 (very much) if you expect those tasks to be performed by the EEAS as chair of your working group (Presentation of Kietz´ framework).
3) Are there some tasks that I have not been mentioning above and that correspond to your own expectations towards the EEAS as chair of your working group?
4) According to you, if I did the same survey with an EEAS official chairing a working group, would he/she share the same picture than yours of his/her role(s) as chair? Why? Why not?
5) If we take the tasks mentioned at question 2 as a starting point, what kind of tasks, in its role as the chair of your working group, did the EEAS perform that went beyond your expectations? Can you give some examples?
6) What were then, according to you, the consequences for your own possibilities to influence the decisions taken in your working group?
7) Do you generally think that the role(s) of the chair in your working group (or any group in CFSP areas) have changed since the EEAS took over the chairmanship?

Interview guide for EEAS officials (Swedish)

1) Enligt din uppfattning, vad är din roll/dina roller som ordförande för en GUSP -arbetsgrupp? Vilka typer av uppgifter bör du utföra?

2) Låt mig nu vara mer specifik och nämna några roller som är vanliga för en ordförande för en rådsarbetsgrupp (Presentation av Kietz' ramverk). Jag kommer att be dig att placera varje roll på en skala från 0 (inte alls) till 10 (mycket) om du anser att den specifika rollen överensstämmer med din egen rolluppfattning – som ordförande för en rådsarbetsgrupp.

3) Finns det några roller som du eller jag inte har nämnt i fråga 1 eller 2 och som överensstämmer med din egen rolluppfattning (som ordförande)?

4) Enligt dig, om jag gjorde samma enkät med en nationell delegat från en EU-medlemsstat, skulle han / hon dela samma bild än din av din roll/dina roller som ordförande? Varför? Varför inte?

5) *Om svaret är nej på fråga 4*: Om vi tar de roller som nämns i fråga 2 som utgångspunkt, vilka uppgifter (i din roll som ordförande för arbetsgruppen), skulle denna nationella delegat inte förvänta sig att du gör? Kan du nämna några exempel?

6) Tycker du generellt att din roll/dina roller som ordförande i GUSP-arbetsgruppen har förändrats sedan EEAS tog över ordförandeskapet från medlemsstaterna?

Interview guide for national delegates (Swedish)

1) Enligt din uppfattning, vilken roll/vilka roller förväntar du dig att en EEAS-ordförande utför i din arbetsgrupp?

2) Låt mig nu vara mer specifik och nämna några roller som är vanliga för en ordförande för en rådsarbetsgrupp (Presentation av Kietz' ramverk). Jag kommer att be dig att placera varje roll på en skala från 0 (inte alls) till 10 (mycket) om du anser att den specifika rollen överensstämmer med dina förväntningar gentemot vad en EEAS-ordförande bör göra i din arbetsgrupp.

3) Finns det några roller som du eller jag inte har nämnt i fråga 1 eller 2 och som överensstämmer med dina förväntningar gentemot vad en EEAS-ordförande bör göra i din arbetsgrupp?

4) Enligt dig, om jag gjorde samma enkät med EEAS-ordförande, skulle han / hon dela samma bild än din av hans/hennes roll/roller som ordförande? Varför? Varför inte?

5) Om vi tar de roller som nämns i fråga 2 som utgångspunkt, vilken typ av uppgifter, som EEAS fullgjorde i sin roll som ordförande i din arbetsgrupp, gick längre än dina egna förväntningar?

6) Tycker du att, i sådana fall, dina möjligheter att påverka de beslut som fattas i din arbetsgrupp påverkas?

7) Tycker du generellt att den eller de roll/roller av EEAS-ordförandena har förändrats sedan EEAS tog över ordförandeskapet från medlemsstaterna?

Interview guide for EEAS officials (French)

1) Selon vous, quel est votre rôle/vos rôles en tant que président du groupe de travail sur la Politique Etrangère Commune et de Sécurité (PESC)? Selon vos propres conceptions de votre rôle/vos rôles en tant que président, quel genre de tâches devez-vous effectuer?
2) Permettez-moi maintenant d´être plus précis et de nommer certaines tâches spécifiques qui sont généralement acceptées en ce qui concerne la présidence des groupes de travail du Conseil (Présentation du cadre théorique de Kietz). Je vais vous demander de les placer sur une échelle de 0 (pas du tout) à 10 (beaucoup) si vous pensez qu'elles correspondent à votre propre conception de votre rôle en tant que président de groupe de travail.
3) Y at-il des tâches que vous ou moi n´avons pas mentionnées par avant et qui correspondent à votre propre conception de votre rôle en tant que président?
4) Selon vous, si je faisais la même enquète avec un délégué d'un Etat membre de l'Union européenne, est-ce qu´il ou elle partagerait la même conception de votre rôle/vos rôles en tant que président d´un groupe de travail sur la PESC ?
5) *Si la réponse est non à la question 4:* Si nous prenons les rôles mentionnés à la question 2 comme point de départ, quel genre de rôles – en ce qui concerne le président d´un groupe de travail sur la PESC-, est-ce que ce délégué national n´attendrait pas de vous ? Pouvez-vous citer quelques exemples ?
6) Pensez-vous généralement que votre rôles/vos rôles en tant que président de groupe de travail sur la PESC ont évolué depuis que le SEAE a pris la présidence de tels groupes de travail ?

Interview guide for national delegates (French)

1) Selon vous, quel rôle (s) attendez-vous du SEAE en tant que président de votre groupe de travail?
2) Permettez-moi maintenant d´être plus précis et de nommer certaines tâches spécifiques qui sont généralement acceptées en ce qui concerne la présidence des groupes de travail du Conseil (Présentation du cadre théorique de Kietz). Je vais vous demander de les placer sur une échelle de 0 (pas du tout) à 10 (beaucoup) si vous pensez qu'elles correspondent à vos attentes envers votre président du groupe du travail sur la PESC.
3) Y at-il des tâches que vous ou moi n´avons pas mentionnées par avant et qui correspondent à vos attentes envers le président de votre groupe de travail ?
4) Selon vous, si je faisais la même enquête avec un président de groupe de travail, venant du SEAE, aurait-il ou eller la même idée de son rôle en tant que président que vous ?
5) Si nous prenons les rôles mentionnés à la question 2 comme point de départ, quel genre de rôles – en ce qui concerne le président d´un groupe de travail sur la PESC - est allé au-delà de vos attentes? Pouvez-vous citer quelques exemples?
6) Quelles sont alors, selon vous, les conséquences pour vos propres possibilités d'influer sur les décisions prises dans votre groupe de travail?

7) Pensez-vous généralement que votre rôles/vos rôles en tant que président de groupe de travail sur la PESC ont évolué depuis que le SEAE a pris la présidence de tels groupes de travail ?