The Exit Impact on the Remaining Members

A comparative case study on how the Brexit referendum did affect the sense of a European identity in four of the EU member states

Mari Wallin

Abstract

This thesis seeks to investigate how the EU member states react to the occurrence of an internal crisis within the EU. More specifically, how a European identity gets either strengthened or weakened by experiencing challenges. When addressing a European identity, this thesis works with the term of "belonging", an attachment to something greater when defining the concept of European identity. Through the lens of ontological security, this study aims to answer the research question: Did the Brexit referendum affect the sense of a European identity in the EU member states, and if so, how did this play out in the different member states? By conducting a comparative analysis together with a discourse analysis over the member states of France, Poland, Portugal and Sweden, the rhetorical changes towards the EU are investigated. The findings show that a sense of a European identity has in fact increased in all four cases, even if this presents itself in various ways in the member states. However, it is difficult to argue that the Brexit referendum was the solely variable behind this outcome, but one could claim it to be a catalyst for the member states to move closer to a belonging within the EU.

Key words: *Brexit referendum, crisis, European identity, France, member states, Poland, Portugal, ontological security, Sweden*
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1   Introduction

The first chapter is introductory to the research puzzle, which seeks to unfold the purpose of this study, to go from the wide to the precise within the chosen subject. The introduction offers an overview of the named cases, the chosen theoretical framework, and the selected research design. Furthermore, at the end of the first section, the research question is displayed. Lastly, the chapter terminates with a brief background on the process of Brexit.

1.1   Purpose and Puzzle

Ever since the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 (European Union, 2022a), the European Union (*EU*) has worked toward promoting a unified front. Merely by looking at the motto of the EU, which came into use in the year 2000, "united in diversity", this motto determines a cornerstone for the EU (European Union, 2022b). It symbolises the joint work for moving forward and creating peace and prosperity within Europe while endorsing the varieties of culture and traditions that enhanced the continent's diversity. Even if the motto is relatively new, the idea has been a focal point that entered into force right after the Second World War ended. To enable stability and security in Europe, shape solidarity and create a unified identity (Calligaro, 2015).

The idea of creating a European identity has continued to be a focal point for the EU throughout the decades. This is transparent by looking at the priorities presented by both the prior and the present president of the European Commission. With the Juncker Commission, a priority was to create a Union for democratic change, with the aim to get closer to the European citizens and to re-gain trust in the European project (European Commission, 2014). The von der Leyen Commission has followed, by presenting a priority that entails a new push

for European democracy. The objective is to hold on to the vibrancy of European democracy and provide a stronger role for the Europeans (European Commission, 2019). This priority is put into practice through the initiative of the Conference on the Future of Europe, a platform for European citizens to speak their minds and interact with each other. The initiative functions as a productive instrument for the people of Europe to raise issues that need improvement. At the same time, there is the prospect of creating a forum for European citizens to connect around the theme of unity through diversity, feel internal solidarity with one another, as well as shape a common identity (Lory, 2022).

Looking at these priorities and initiatives, it is significant that unity and solidarity are of high importance at an EU level, a focal point to continue the work for deeper European integration with a stronger sense of belonging to the EU. However, one could wonder if this is just an example of theoretically well-suited goals. Thus, the united front that is promoted seems to possess some cracks and the EU has been struggling with several in-house crises over the last couple of years (Kelemen & McNamara, 2021). Looking to examples such as the financial crisis, the migration crisis, the pandemic, the current war in Ukraine, and the rule of law dilemma in Hungary and Poland. These crises are all events that have put EU cooperation to the test.

As one can tell, the past decade has been quite challenging for the EU on many levels (European Union, 2022c). The claim to make here is that a major internal crisis occurred with the decision of the United Kingdom (*UK)* to leave the EU, as this came at a time in history when the EU was struggling. A tough hit towards the promoted picture of unification within the EU, when it instead showed a fragmented collaboration. With the example of Brexit, one can view a situation where the dissatisfaction with the EU grew stronger, the Euroscepticism increased as well as a higher questioning of the legitimacy deficit of the Union (Malik, 2018, pp.90-91, 98). Given these developments, it shapes the question regarding the strength, or perhaps weakness, of the European identity and what might affect a European identification among the remaining member states.

To be even more explicit, the research puzzle and the purpose of this thesis is to explore the impact that the Brexit referendum had on the sense of a European identity for the EU. This is to see whether a crisis increases the feeling of unity and therefore enhances the European identity, or if a crisis turns into a factor that decreases the sense of solidarity and develops into more protectionist behaviour. Because, when faced with a crisis, there is a human response to calculate the possible risks that could occur (Laing, 1960). The critical situation does not necessarily turn into a life-threatening situation, it is enough that the arising crisis disturbs the stability and the secure space (Giddens, 1991). Hence, it is not unlikely that one begins to assess the eventual security risk that it possesses towards the security of being – the sense of ontological security.

To be able to complete an analysis of the relationship between crisis and identity, the idea is to analyse four cases with different preconditions through the lens of ontological security theory. Here, the investigation covers the EU member states of France, Poland, Portugal and Sweden. These are four cases that all present a diverse set of prerequisites which make them interesting to compare with one another and to view how there can be a similar outcome even though they are dissimilar on many levels. By using the framework of ontological security theory, it presents an opportunity to explore whether the occurrence of the Brexit referendum has directed the member states to seek a fundamental sense of safety within the EU. Also, when mentioning European identity, it is the definition of belonging and feeling attachment that this thesis refers to (further description down in *section 4.3.2*). Lastly, the analysis covers a period between the years 2014 to 2019, in order to investigate the impact of the Brexit referendum on the member states' sense of a European identity.

Research Question

This thesis aims to answer the following research question:

> *Did the Brexit referendum affect the sense of a European identity in the EU member states, and if so, how did this play out in the different member states?*

1.2   Background on Brexit

The following section gives a short historical background of the process of the British leaving the EU, and some of the crucial events that occurred. This section aims to motivate the decision to investigate the occurrence of Brexit as an impactful event on the European identity, together with connecting episodes in the process of Brexit to the statistical data and national statements (the material is discussed in *section 4.4*). Furthermore, in the last chapter of the thesis, one can find a timeline of the key events within the Brexit process (Appendix A).

On the 20th of February in 2016, it was announced that a referendum was going to take place regarding the future of the UK in the EU (BBC, 2016). The statement came as a surprise since it was the first time a member opened up the door for a possible exit. One of the reasons for the former Prime Minister David Cameron to make the announcement about a referendum had to do with the pressure from the United Kingdom Independence Party to hold a national vote on the topic. Because ever since the end of World War II, the idea was to achieve economic prosperity and political stability in Europe, but that only could be done successfully if all member states conceded some national powers. The pressure from within the British parliament came from discontent regarding the loss of sovereignty in a diverse set of issues, a compromise of power which is one of the cornerstones of the EU collaboration (Malik, 2018, pp.92-93).

However, the conflictual relationship between the UK and the EU goes far back, all back to a statement by Winston Churchill when he said that the UK was "with Europe, but not in it. We are linked but not comprised" (Heer, 2016). This quote illustrates the British history of rejecting the European identity in favour of a strong national identity that emphasizes the country's sovereignty. However, it shows that it is more than the financial price tag of an EU membership that is at the core of Brexit. The economic perspective is combined with the angle of a strong national identity as well as a loss of authority over immigration control. Hence, it is a lengthy dilemma on the topic of the loss of British sovereignty, which was essential for the success of the leave-side (Collins, 2017, p.313).

The news of Brexit hit hard on the 23rd of June in 2016. The votes had been cast, which resulted in that 17,4 million people, correlating to an amount of 51.9%, voting to leave (Clarke & Goodwin & Whiteley, 2017, p.159). The outcome of the referendum revealed a divided country, showing how the British people were demographically separated (Abreu & Öner, 2020). With the Brits now leaving the EU it sent a message to all the member states that a withdrawal from the Union was possible. Previously, during the many years of evolving cooperation, the integration process had always been focusing on deepening the collaboration between the member states or widening the group with an enlargement of the member countries. Now, the departure of the UK marked the end of an era of constant regional integration in Europe (Malik, 2018, p.91).

On the 29th of March in 2017, Article 50 in the Treaty on European Union (TEU, 2012) got triggered: "Any Member State may decide to withdraw from the Union in accordance with its own constitutional requirements" (TEU, art 50.1). By the initiation of this article, it enables a member state to depart from the EU, and it sets out the procedure for the process of withdrawal. When the Article got triggered, the UK stepped into a transition period that was supposed to last two years, according to the Treaty (TEU, art 50.3). The original Brexit date was on the 29th of March 2019, 730 days after the initiation of Article 50. However, the leaving process was prolonged, and the British government asked for an extension of the transition period several times (House of Commons Library, 2021). Although, on the 31st of December 2020, the Brits officially left the EU after a successful negotiation process that left the UK and EU with an official Withdrawal Agreement (Council Agreement, 2019, OJ CI 384I). An over four-decade-long membership had now reached an end and by leaving the EU, the Union went from having 28 participants to now comprising 27 member states.

2 Literature Review

This chapter focuses on presenting an indication regarding the earlier work within the fields that connects to this thesis. From the discovered results, one can view how the previous research could fall into three different categories. Some articles discuss the European identity and what affects it, there are the pieces that analyse Brexit and its effect, and there are studies with a focus on crises through the lens of ontological security.

2.1 Earlier Work in the Field of European Identity

The first study for this review investigates the relationship between the national and European identity of Italian citizens. Anna Triandafyllidou (2008) shows that a European identity cannot be based on a common ethnicity or shared culture, much due to the fact that there is not a shared history in the way of a fight for independence. According to Triandafyllidou, a European identity has neither created a feeling of belonging nor a sense of solidarity that would be comparable to the level of passion people can feel for their own country. One of the core findings of this study still shows that the perception of a European identity is lower since the EU cannot command people's primary loyalty in the way the nation does. However, she argues that the project of European integration will give rise to a European level of cultural identification which will be added as an extra layer to the fundamental identity. It is stressed that this is a case of identities intertwined, that the European identity is formed through the interaction with national identity and dynamics of Self-Others (Triandafyllidou, 2008). Important to add is that for this thesis there is not an aim to show who wins the competition between national identity and European identity, but rather to analyse the potential increase of the sense of a European identity outside of the relation to national identity.

In the article by Huddy & Del Ponte & Davies (2021), they underscore the complex relationship between the attachment to the nation and the support for the EU. Looking towards the angle of nationalism versus patriotism, it is demonstrated how the intra-state standpoints possess a vast influence over the perceived European identity. The study presents that states with a high nationalistic spirit have an enhanced opposition towards the EU, while states that have a high feeling of patriotism are more likely to have a damping feeling of opposition towards the EU. The difference in these two national-identity modules is sourced back to political elites and their role in influencing the opinions towards the EU and a common European identity. An interesting thought that the authors offer at the end is the one related to the idea of whether patriotism will be the key to reducing the Eurosceptical political parties across Europe as well as the answer to a further increase in the feeling of European identity (Huddy & Del Ponte & Davies, 2021).

Kaija E. Schilde (2014) presents a focal point on Central and Eastern Europe, investigating the relationship between identity and integration in the countries that were a part of Europe but not the EU. She found that the perception of a European identity was much higher in the newest member states prior to accession, in comparison to the countries that had already joined the EU before the big bang of 2004 (Schilde, 2014). Schilde argues, that the core source for a European identification is what the EU represents in the broader picture. Meaning that the EU offers an identity-building project with connectivity and transnational exchange. Through the lens of Europeanization, it is visible how the group of countries from the latest enlargement share the component of turning towards the EU for stability and a sense of belonging (Schilde, 2014). Another study by Sybille Luhmann (2017), investigates whether European integration will automatically lead to a deeper European identity. She examines 14 countries over a period of twenty years, with the hypothesis that the more integrated Europe becomes, the more likely it should be that a European identity is achieved. However, the key finding is that European integration is not a linear process. Instead, it shifts over time due to different circumstances that occur, and it differs between countries depending on their diverse preconditions (Luhmann, 2017).

Another angle on the construction of European identity is presented by Christoffer Kolvraa (2018), who analyses the impact of elite discourse and populistic narratives on the shaping of the perception of European identity. By completing a psychoanalysis on Europe, Kolvraa claims that the institutions are the key to shaping a European identity. He stresses that in the rhetoric of European institutions, there is a framing of a European Peace Narrative that is believed to be crucial in order to promote European identity and legitimate European integration. The core of Europe's Peace Narrative is established upon the collective European memory connected to the second world war, the remembrance of a shared historical past together with the reminder of moving forward as a unified community (Kolvraa, 2018).

A different perspective on the integration of identity is through the work made by Judith Rohde-Liebenam (2020), where she looked into how the European identity is indoctrinated into European schools. The study examines schools in three European countries: Luxembourg, Germany and England. The schools aim to raise awareness with young European citizens regarding a European identity, focusing on children's identification with Europe. Rohde-Liebenam stresses that one of the reasons behind the continuation of this form of education has to do with the internal crises of the EU. Hence, having a successful establishment of a sense of belonging by the next generations of European citizens is an increasingly important element for sustaining European integration (Rohde-Liebenam, 2020). However, she concludes that for this project to be truly fruitful, there is a need for leaving the framework of "telling Europe" (students are passively exposed to European and national narratives) and instead move toward "doing Europe" (students are actively encouraging a transnational social network).

2.2 Earlier Work in the Field of Brexit

Catherine de Vries (2017) focuses on how the British withdrawal shaped the public opinion amongst the remaining member states. She constructs a new

theoretical framework, claiming Brexit to be a benchmarking theory. Meaning, that the UK leaving the EU could set an example for other member states to follow. She suggests "that support for the EU essentially boils down to a comparison between the benefits of the current status quo of membership and those of an alternative state namely one's country being outside of the EU" (de Vries, 2017). Meaning, that the British choice that was made, could either lead to a unified front and further integration of the EU, or lead to a complete shattering of the European dream. She argues that the findings show how the responsibility has been put on the shoulders of EU officials. Displaying that they need to make sure that Brexit does not become a positive model to pursue, but instead an example associated with a high risk. Essentially, this form of framing is necessary since the benchmark theory shows how people's opinions towards Europe are rooted in a comparison between the positive and negative components of leaving versus staying (de Vries, 2017).

In the newly published study, Markus Gastinger (2021) presents a compiled EU Exit Index consisting of the remaining member states. For a long time, the process of integration has only been a one-way street, with the EU continuously expanding, and not decreasing. Nonetheless, Gastinger investigates the hypothetical pattern for member states to follow in the footsteps of the UK. When arguing the probability of an additional exit from the EU, he looks into the issue from three different dimensions; economic, political and social. Firstly, it is about the financial situation of potentially leaving the Euro if one is a Eurozone country, together with opting out of the membership in the single market. Secondly, the amount of influence from the Eurosceptical parties within the member states and how much power they have over the discourse towards the EU. Thirdly, connected to the public opinion of a membership as well as the citizens' views on European integration. The overall result presents that Austria, Czechia and Sweden are the most likely to vote to leave in a possible referendum. Although, Gastinger stresses that there is no indication that any of the member states will be leaving any time soon (Gastinger, 2021).

Another interesting angle to look at is presented by Ronald Ranta and Nevena Nancheva (2018), who investigate the feeling of belonging from the standpoint of

EU nationals in the UK. By analysing intra-European migration, referring to the EU nationals that are living in the UK, they exemplify how the outcome of the British referendum has affected the sense of being for the remaining EU citizens. The findings show that after the referendum, the EU nationals in the UK started to rethink their own belonging and sense of identity. The dynamics of belonging connected the individuals to a collective identity, which in this case led to an increase in the shared European identity and making use of the EU citizenship they had in common (Ranta & Nancheva, 2018). They argue that these developments are interconnected to the phenomenon of EU migration being high support for European integration and European identity.

Nevertheless, with the occurrence of Brexit, it displays that an EU narrative has failed to infiltrate the people of the UK (Leith et al, 2019). Instead, it paints a picture of how the UK has been the member state with the highest rate of knowledge deficit in the EU. Also, by looking at the relationship between the UK and the EU, it is visible how the Britons have had reoccurring challenges with feeling European and being a part of Europe. Ever since the accession in 1973, there has been a hovering hesitance for full membership, and more specific, a celebration of their distinctiveness rather than an effort for working towards a sense of Europeanness (Leith et.al. 2019). Therefore, the knowledge gap together with the active distancing from the European community, have been two of the core components of the outcome of Brexit. One can tell that various perspectives have been covered through the extensive work in the area of the so-called "Brexit effect". However, what is not touched upon in these articles, hence creating an opportunity for this thesis to contribute to the field, is to investigate the event of Brexit on the European identity from an ontological security perspective.

2.3   Earlier Work in the Field of Ontological Security

From an outside-EU angle, ontological security has been applied to different situations of crisis. Examples with a populistic crisis in the United States with Trump in office (Homolar & Scholz, 2019); the covid-19 pandemic that altered

into a fundamental challenge and crisis (Kirke, 2020); the Gulf crisis where it became an obvious division with Self-Other between the United Arab Emirates and Qatar (Roberts, 2020). The examples illustrate how the occurrence of a crisis fulfilled the need for securing ontological security to deal with the critical period. In addition to this, the articles that follow below have all touched upon the research area for this specific thesis. Similar work has been done since they have discussed ontological security in relation to the crisis within the EU. However, they conduct their studies without a focal point on the case of Brexit, and without the component of a focus on specific member states. To the best of my knowledge, the impact of the Brexit referendum on the EU member states has not yet been explored from the perspective of ontological security. With that stated, there is a gap in the field of research, which presents a positive prospect for the research puzzle of this thesis. Also, from the four studies below, I can draw some testable implications from their work and relate them to my field of research, which will be presented alongside this section.

Vincent Della Sala (2017) states how political narratives were shaped to present territorial myths as a way to secure the EU during the refugee crisis in 2015. Meaning, that the political elites created sources for collective connection of beliefs and values to generate ontological security. The idea to design a specific narrative to gain homeland security through the illustration of a common community, was a suitable solution, in theory. Because, to the findings of Della Sala, it created a problematic setting due to an ill-defined definition together with an ill-connected core of a common community within the EU (Della Sala, 2017). A year later, Della Sala (2018) published a new study, relating to the earlier claimed ontological security dilemma for the EU. The article shows that in the light of an era filled with various crises for the EU, there is a need to form a new narrative for Europe to glue it back together. Still, this presents a challenge of its own, because there was not a common narrative for Europe to begin with. Della Sala stresses that it is not enough with "united through diversity" statements, because if the EU wants to reach ontological security through a common narrative, it needs to be a deeper transformation (Della Sala, 2018). In both of the articles by Della Sala, the focal point is on how the EU is working to secure ontological security for the Union, as a top-down approach. Whilst, in this study,

the aim is to investigate if the member states have succeeded in regaining their ontological security due to reshaping their rhetoric surrounding the EU.

The work of Cataraina Kinnvall, Ian Manners and Jennifer Mitzen (2018) touches upon the same theme, where the authors argue that several crises are soaring within the Union, creating a sense of insecurity and anxiety. Hence, the greatest task that the EU is confronted with is not related to the matter of physical security per se. Instead, the problem lies within the area of psychological security, the security connected to existential safety and the security of being (Kinnvall & Manners & Mitzen, 2018). The authors assert that a focus on ontological security provides for a possibility to investigate the crises within the EU from another angle. Here, they are exemplifying the scenario with Brexit and the anxieties of the "remainers" in Britain as an area to examine further. However, they are not addressing the prospect of looking into the remaining member states from an ontological security point of view, which presents a chance to contribute to the field of research.

In a separate article on the same topic, Jennifer Mitzen (2018) claims how the EU is faced with several stressors at this point that could disrupt the Union. At the same time, it presents a possibility to turn these challenges into a positive future. In the text, she is problematising how a more political Europe, when faced with possible threatening situations, could turn into a potentially encouraging outcome for the European identity and solidarity as a whole (Mitzen, 2018). Meaning, that a more political EU presents an opportunity to deal with different modes of existential anxieties and insecurities, both factors that are central to securing ontological security. This statement by Mitzen highlights an intriguing thought relating to the core material (presented in *section 4.4*) of this thesis. Namely, to investigate whether one could view a reaction from the government representatives in the member states, which could illustrate their positioning towards taking on or supporting the role of the EU as a political power.

3   Theoretical Framework

This chapter focuses on the theoretical part of the thesis. Departing from the core of the framework of ontological security, to then display the keystones of the theory that are applied in the analysis, together with a presentation of the relevance of this framework for this study. The last section provides the two hypotheses that this thesis works with.

3.1   Ontological Security Theory

Traditionally, security studies have presented a central emphasis on the area of political-military security. Meaning that the security aspect has been centred around the protection of national borders to secure the state from any given threat. Particularly concerning conflict, there has been a major focus on physical insecurity and how to go back to the point for physical security (Rumelili, 2015a, pp.12-14). Catarina Kinnvall and Jennifer Mitzen (2018) quote a section of a speech held by former president Obama where he states that "in an era defined by insecurity, uncertainty, and increasing anxieties, ontological security has proven to be a fruitful lens for analyzing world politics" (Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2018, p.825). The quote demonstrates that in a time of various forms of commotion, people search for a sense of stability and a secure upholding. Therefore, the topic of ontological security is of high relevance to investigate further, to look into the effect of unstable times on self-identity. The authors stress that since the literature possesses a broad range of studies connected to physical security, it is important to go deeper into the side-lined perspective of ontological security, to analyse the existential security (Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2018, pp.828-829).

The complex arena of security has entered a new era, the new research agenda (Nyman & Burke, 2016, pp.2-4). Within the discipline of international relations,

one can view how the last couple of decades have presented a more critical line. There has become more of a shift in the literature to show the complexity of the field since there is not "a straightforward answer to the question of what security means" (Ibid, p.6). Vivienne Jabri discusses that the uprising critique surrounding the area of security has altered into an alternative approach. By questioning the realist viewpoint, it has paved the way for a broader analysis beyond the security dilemma of national borders. Instead, the field of critical security studies opened up to include more layers of analysis and several new referent objects of security (Jabri, 2016, p.20). With this transition, it is visible how the literature on international relations reveals increased interest in ontological security, especially in the context of combining the research of identity and security (Browning, 2016, p.160).

The concept of ontological security was established by R.D. Laing (1960) and has its roots back in the field of psychological studies. This concept was used to investigate the human mind and to explain how people constantly seek to maintain a presence in the everyday life as a continuous person. Back in the 60s, Laing claimed that ontological security would be reached when identity is not endangered and there is a shortage of anxieties (Laing, 1960, pp.39-42). Nevertheless, it was through the work of Anthony Giddens (1991) that the concept of ontological security was theorised. Giddens started to address ontological security to better explain how people are drawn to shaping a so-called safe house. He claimed that every person seeks a fundamental sense of safety, which consists of basic trust together with shaping a framework of routines and the creation of a self-identity. Meaning, that when the surroundings become uncertain and fragile, individuals and groups search for a "protective cocoon" (Giddens, 1991, pp.38-45).

With the rising interest in using ontological security theory, Rumelili (2015b) is one of many who stresses how critical approaches to security have up until now been quite limited when it comes to theorizing the connection between identity and security. Nonetheless, the enlarged usage of the framework has put the interconnection in the spotlight. Within the area of existential issues, ontological security provides the pre-conditions of certainty and solidness, while at the same

time putting the focus on the dynamics that might affect the routines and system of certitude (Rumelili, 2015b, pp.53-57). The core of the theoretical framework is the factor of identity-seeking, a search where people are drawn to any form of collective identity to be part of something, for example via religion or nationalism (Kinnvall, 2004, p.746). In the same process of identity-seeking, one is also undertaking a securitisation of identity. Meaning that it entails increased scouting for a stable identity, that not rarely origins from a so-called memory conflict – the shaping of memories to frame historical remembrance as a security issue, as a way to unite behind a collective memory (Mälksoo, 2015, pp.225-228).

Three Factors of Ontological Security:

The ultimate achievement within ontological security is to secure certitude and stability. How to go about reaching this state differs between scholars. Although, it is agreed upon on three factors that are of great importance to locate a sense of ontological security. These are a basic trust, a formed framework, and a narrative of self-identity (Browning, 2016). The first factor is **basic trust**. It revolves around the accomplishment of finding both cognitive and emotional confidence in the nature of the world. A way to reach an existential anchoring of reality since there has been an emerged reliability in time, space and persons (Giddens, 1991, pp.38-39). This provides the foundation for basic trust, which leads to the emotional hindrance of existential anxieties. Meaning, that a state of faithfulness is recognised, that will develop into the possibility to handle any upcoming situation of distress, creating a solid ground for ontological security to be achieved (Browning, 2016, p.162).

The second factor is a **formed framework**. By having a frame of reference as a starting point, it turns into a creation for disciplined habits that become a great advantage to cope with anxiety. Through the help of a day-to-day routine, there is a possibility to support control and safety (Browning, 2016, pp.162-163. With a clear structure, one shapes a certainty in the everyday life and a sense of a repetitive pattern throughout the days. The framework retains a promise of ontological security because with the reappearance of activities there is a feeling of ongoing traditions and endless existence (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280).

The third factor is a **narrative of self-identity**. A central pursuit for ontological security is to search for and, thereafter, apply a single stable self-identity to associate with. To produce, perform and reinforce the narrative is a way to design an explicit definition of the self-identity since it is essential in order to assist in the process of a biographical continuity (Kinnvall, 2004, pp.746-748). By building up a certain type of storyline around a constant self-identity, it answers some of the crucial questions about one's being and doing in this world, which enables the connection to one's surroundings (Glynos & Howarth, 2008, pp.162-163).

The aspect of security studies has over time transformed from the traditional and realistic viewpoint to displaying a more critical and alternative perspective of what the area of security can enfold. Nowadays, several factors possess the potential of becoming threats in one way or another. The field has moved beyond the compliance of security dilemmas with nation-states, toward an angle of security in relation to identity. Hence, by choosing the approach of ontological security theory in relation to crisis and identity, the expectation is to contribute to the field from a new outlook. Also, with the three presented factors on the enabling of ontological security, one can observe the core meaning of the theoretical framework, which is that securing ontological security entails securing a solid identity. Due to this, the framework has been selected to tie the connection between security and identity in the case of an internal crisis in the EU.

3.2 Hypotheses

In this section, I present the two hypotheses that seek to guide this study as well as help to answer the research question for this thesis: *Did the Brexit referendum affect the sense of a European identity in the EU member states, and if so, how did this play out in the different member states?* The first hypothesis aims to answer the first part of the research question, while the second hypothesis aims to exemplify an answer to the second part of the research question.

I expect to find statistical evidence through the Eurobarometer reports which support the assumption of an increased sense of a European identity in the event of Brexit. The percentage might be dissimilar in the selected cases because I assume there to be different outsets for the four cases. Although, all four cases will probably experience an increase in the sense of European identity around the same period of time. I argue that it has much to do with the uncertainty of a crisis hitting home, which awakens a search for securing ontological security by going towards the EU instead of following the British. This will make it possible to draw a correlation between the increase and the impact of the Brexit referendum. Hence, the first hypothesis is as followed:

H1: The instability in the Union created by the Brexit referendum led the remaining Member States to move closer towards belonging to the EU and an increased sense of European identity in the pursuit of ontological security.

Even if I expect to find an increasing sense of a European identity in all four of the selected cases, I do believe that this will take place in different ways across the member states due to their diverse preconditions. For instance, as earlier mentioned, the assumption is that the internal crisis of the Brexit referendum will lead to uncertain times which will drive the member states to search for ontological security. This will be enabled by turning towards a continued collaboration on the EU level, a feeling of belonging within the EU, and an increased sense of a European identity. However, I anticipate that the sense of an increased European identity will be most visible in the two EU member states that are labelled as net receivers. This has to do with the second factor of the ontological security theory: the formed framework. Because the receiving of financial support increases the sense of economic stability in the member states and at the same, it creates a bond of dependence towards the EU together with an exchange between parties which supports a sense of safety. Therefore, the second hypothesis is as followed:

H2: After the Brexit referendum, the sense of a European identity, the sense of belonging to the EU, will be higher in the countries that are net budgetary receivers than in the countries that are net contributors.

4   Methodology

The following chapter focuses on the methodological part of the thesis. Firstly, there is a display of the four cases that are the focal point of the case study, together with an establishment of the variables. Secondly, the research design of a mixed-method, consisting of a comparative analysis and a discourse analysis, is presented. Thirdly, the three core concepts are defined, explained and operationalised. Fourthly, there is a reflection on the primary material, surrounding the national declarations and the statistical data. Lastly, three of the limitations of the thesis are addressed before moving to the analysis.

4.1   Case Selection

To compile this study, four out of the EU member states have been selected as the cases: France, Poland, Portugal and Sweden. The decision to pick out these specific countries to investigate the effect of the Brexit referendum has to do with the diverse preconditions that they provide. As can be found below in *Table 4.1*, the variables vary among each other except for one variable, which presents four suitable cases with diverse perspectives to analyse. Additionally, the choosing of these four countries is a decision inspired by the work of Sara Hobolt and Catherine de Vries (2016). Their work focuses on public opinion towards European integration, and their analysis takes place by categorising all of the EU member states into four different zones: The North Eurozone, the North not Eurozone, the South and the East. This specific framework that Hobolt and de Vries present in their article became the motivational choice for the selection of cases since the division they shaped presents a stepping stone for the comparison this thesis wishes to produce (Hobolt & de Vries, 2016).

At the end of this section, *Table 4.1* compiles the four cases together with the seven variables that assemble a most different system design for this thesis (addressed in *Section 4.2*). For starters, all of the selected countries **entered the EU** at different points in time. Looking at France as being one of the six founding nations from 1951, therefore, an original state and Portugal joined during the third wave of widening the Union in 1986. Less than a decade later it was Sweden's turn to enter the EU in 1995, followed by Poland becoming a part of the collaboration with the big bang enlargement process in 2004 (McCormick, 2008, pp.56, 63). The time of accession could possess an impact on the sense of a European identity.

Secondly, the member states are using three dissimilar **types of currencies**. Both France and Portugal left their previous monetary system, the French franc correspondingly the Portuguese escudo, to join in with the euro (McCormick, 2008, pp.157-160). With Poland and Sweden, these member states stand on the outside of the Eurozone, this by holding on to their Polish "złoty" or Swedish "krona". In this case, Poland aims to adopt the Euro but does not have a target date for this to occur, while Sweden does not have a target date for adopting the Euro as the official currency (European Commission 2022a; European Commission, 2022b). With two of the cases being part of the Eurozone and two of them not being part of it, it is interesting to view if the impact of the Brexit referendum will follow a similar pattern for the Eurozone countries versus the non-Eurozone countries.

Thirdly, the chosen nations show a mix of **geographical locations** since they are spread out over the European continent. Sweden can be found in the northern part of Europe, while Portugal is located down in the south. Both of the following two EU member states are situated in the central area of Europe; France is positioned in the west and Poland is found in the east (McCormick, 2008, p.xvi) Moving on to variable number four, it becomes a bit more complex than with the earlier variables. With the fourth variable, the category of **net contributor versus net receiver** is not without controversy, due to that the financial distribution is debated (Haas & Rubio, 2017). However, in the EU budget from 2018, one can find France and Sweden under the category of net contributors, with France being

the third biggest net contributor and Sweden being the sixth biggest net contributor. For Poland and Portugal, they are two of the EU member states that are net receivers, Poland being the biggest net receiver, while Portugal is the fifth biggest net receiver (Buchholz, 2020). This control variable of contributor versus receiver is interesting to add since it refers to the second hypothesis (found above in *Section 3.2*).

The fifth variable covers **political leadership**. By looking into political leadership, it is interesting to see if the political directions of the governing party shine through the national declarations of Foreign Affairs that will be investigated in the analysis. It is important to notice that the four countries have different governmental structures, and when referring to political leadership in this context, the decision is to look at the party affiliation of the political leader that represents the member state at the EU level (European Council, 2022). Further on, during the timeframe covering the years 2014 until 2019, all four of the EU member states have had at least one election period. In 2017, the French government went from having a centre-left socialist party to a centre liberal party in office (Reuters, 2017). The Polish government altered from a liberal conservatism ideology to voting for a right-wing populistic party back in 2015, which got renewed support in the parliamentary election in 2019 (UI, 2022). Portugal follows a similar pattern of election years, although, they went in the direction of a social democratic party in office onto a socialist party in 2015 that sat put in 2019's election (Election Guide, 2022). In Sweden, there was a transition from the liberal-conservative Moderate party to the Social Democratic Party in the election of 2014, which also got re-elected in 2018 (Valmyndigheten, 2021).

The sixth and seventh variables, the **independent** and **dependent** variables, are mutual of core importance to the thesis. They are of key significance because these two variables are two factors that all cases share. Also, they are of key significance since they are at the core of being able to answer the research question: *Did the Brexit referendum affect the sense of a European identity in the EU member states, and if so, how did this play out in the different member states?* In this scenario, it is the dependent variable, namely having an increased sense of a European identity, which is affected by the independent variable, trying

to achieve ontological security due to an internal crisis. The meaning behind the independent variable of ontological security is demonstrated in *Section 3.1* and below in *Section 4.3.3*. The definition of the dependent variable of European identity is defined and presented below in *Section 4.3.2*. The clarification on the concept of a crisis, together with why Brexit can be considered an internal crisis of the EU, is found below in *Section 4.3.1*.

Table 4.1: Variables for the Comparative Case Study

	France	**Poland**	**Portugal**	**Sweden**
Accession into the EU	1951	2004	1986	1995
Part of the Eurozone	Yes	No	Yes	No
Geographical location	Central-west	Central-east	South	North
Net receiver / contributor	Contributor	Receiver	Receiver	Contributor
Political leadership 2014-2019	Social democracy / Centre-left → Liberalism / Centre-liberal	Liberal conservatism / Centre-right → National conservatism / Right-wing	Liberal conservatism / Centre-right → Social democracy / Centre-left	Liberal-conservatism / Centre-right → Social democracy / Centre-left
Independent variable = Trying to achieve ontological security due to an internal crisis in the EU	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dependent variable = Sense of a European identity	Increased	Increased	Increased	Increased

Before moving to the last section of this chapter, an important clarification needs to be made. When composing this thesis, the goal is not to make a causal claim between the occurrence of the Brexit referendum and the increased sense of a European identity. At the same time, the goal is not to refuse to show causality. Though, according to Halperin & Heath (2017), to state that there is a single causation for the final result, where the independent variable creates changes to the dependent variable, is something of a great challenge. Especially within political research, one could claim that it is on the verge of being impossible to state a causality between variables (Halperin & Heath, 2017, pp.128-129). This is stated by the authors since it is complicated to eliminate other factors that could have had an important impact and effect on the outcome. Due to this, I hope for a causal mechanism, but I will be very careful to make any causal claims between the occurrence of Brexit and the increased sense of a European identity.

4.2   Research Design

This chapter presents a research design that is two folded through a mixed-method: First, explain the comparative research design that serves as motivation when selecting the cases for the comparison. Also, it supports the first part of the analysis when looking at the statistical reports and comparing the findings. Second, describing the discourse analysis which functions as a support for a deeper comparison of the selected cases through the use of national statements. Hence, there is an encouraging possibility to use a mixed-method approach to complement each other in a suitable way to conduct the analysis.

Comparative research design

For this thesis, a comparative research approach (Halperin & Heath, 2017, pp.211-238) is used as one of the methodological tracks. The analysis is compiled as a small-N case study, which looks into four of the EU member states. Meaning, that the thesis focuses on assembling a case-oriented qualitative study since it is fixed on a small number of cases (Halperin & Heath, 2017, pp.217-218). The decision to compile a comparative study goes hand in hand with the decision to

arrange a case study, especially when the aim is to search for differences and similarities in an academic investigation. When composing a small-N case study, one could either do a most similar system design or a most different system design and for this thesis, the decision is to work with a **most different system design**. This framework originates from the work by John Stuart Mill (1879), also called the method of agreement since the system design is shaped to present cases with variables that differ from one another, but in the end, they "reach an agreement on a common ground" with one specific variable. In other words, the selected cases for the comparative study are different in various ways, which are shown through the variables that are presented in *Table 4.1*.

Conducting a comparative case study entails that the project requires some set boundaries to narrow it down. One needs to select variables to work with, units of analysis to focus on, as well as a specific timeframe. For this thesis, a total of seven variables (five control variables together with one independent variable and one dependent variable) are selected. These have been presented above in *Section 4.1*, in *Table 4.1*, which also presents the units of analysis, namely the four selected member states. Concerning the timeframe, the data and material are analysed within the temporal space of 2014 up until 2019. Of course, the Brexit process was not completed by the end of this selected timeframe, and the exogenous shock of the full British withdrawal is therefore not included in this thesis. However, the timeframe is chosen on two grounds; firstly, because it presents the possibility to look at three national statements before and three statements after the Brexit vote was cast. Secondly, there is a shortage of material on foreign policy statements in the selected member states before the year 2014.

Discourse research design

As earlier mentioned, this thesis works with a two-part research design, a so-called mixed-method approach. Therefore, the second part of the methodological track is a textual analysis (Jorgenssen & Philips, 2002, pp.138-174). One can go about this in two different ways, either by conducting a content analysis which entails the study of the text itself instead of the broad context of the text. The other option is to compile a **discourse analysis**, entailing analysing the relationship of a text to its context and assembling a qualitative form of

examination over the chosen material. A discourse analysis is an approach that is suitable for this thesis because the aim is to draw connections between the annual statements by member states and the context before and after the Brexit referendum. To investigate how the rhetoric potentially has altered from the period before the referendum and after the vote took place, to view if there is an increased referring towards the EU and the European cooperation, a discourse analysis is the better option. Henceforth, for these specific reasons, the approach of a discourse analysis is applied in this study.

Within discourse analysis, there are three potential paths to go down; critical discourse analysis, post-structuralism, and speech act theory. Critical discourse analysis focuses on the relation between power, language and ideology, while post-structuralism focuses on the relationship between rhetorical statements and power dynamics (Jorgenssen & Philips, 2002, pp.6-10, 35-37). However, neither of these two branches has been chosen, because this study is not looking at the power dynamics of discoursal impact. Instead, it is the interpretative path of **speech act theory** that has been selected (Halperin & Heath, 2017, p.337). Speech act theory emphasises words being deeds and looking at language in context, meaning that the use of language is as much a way to make statements as it is to do things. With the use of words, one can address something at a certain place and time to shape a version of the social world which presents an opportunity to make specific attitudes real (Ibid). For this specific matter, there is an excessive relevance to using a discourse analysis to explore language in context. It presents an opportunity to analyse how the rhetoric surrounding the EU and the European identity may have changed in the selected member states in relation to the impact of the Brexit referendum. To compile this specific plan, the focus is placed on 23 national declarations of Foreign Affairs from the four countries, which is further explained in *Section 4.4.*

4.3 Conceptualisation and Operationalisation

Below in this section, one can find an explanation regarding the three main concepts for the thesis: crisis, European identity and ontological security. All three terms are central to this study and they are presented to define the cornerstones. In other words, the three terms are conceptualised to formulate how the concepts are identified by the writer, to provide the reader with the same perspective and understanding (DeCarlo, 2018, pp.228-233). Thereafter, the three concepts are operationalised, meaning that they are given an operational definition to turn the quite abstract concepts into something visible in the analysis. Meaning, that followed by the explanation of what the concepts entail, there is an explanation concerning how it is possible to observe this within the chosen material for the analysis (Halperin & Heath, 2017, pp.135-136).

4.3.1 Crisis

The concept of a crisis can behold several implications. It can represent an unstable period over time, a turning point in the course of events, or a crucial stage in a process (Collins Dictionary, 2022). For there to be a situation labelled as a crisis, many scholars argue that four components are necessary to occur: A crisis is to be the source of change and presenting uncertain times; a crisis is to be harmful to the institutions and the members; a crisis is a subjective occurrence that is socially constructed by the actors involved rather than an objective observation regarding a phenomenon; a crisis is not solely a distinct event but instead part of a bigger process (Bundy et al, 2016; Coombs, 2010; Jaques, 2009; Kahn et al, 2013).

Thus, a specific happening or incident could generate a crisis that disturbs the previous unruffled era. Examples of persistent dilemmas are visible during the last decade in the EU, considering the context of several internal challenges over the past few years. The UK's decision to leave the EU adds to the mountain of active crises for the EU (Malik, 2018), not in the least since the Brexit vote has altered

into uncertain times for the EU as well as being the source for change in the dynamics among the participants of the Union (Bundy et al, 2016). Bearing in mind the discussion regarding further exit strategies from other member states (Gastinger, 2021), the announcement of a Brexit vote became harmful for the EU institutions and the members of the Union (Kahn et al, 2013). Considering the fact that Brexit is a so-called in-house crisis, there is of course an EU subjective angle to the phenomenon (Jaques, 2009). Also, as previously mentioned in the introduction, the occurrence of Brexit as well as the following process of negotiations created a situation that is viewed as a major internal crisis for the EU (Kahn et al, 2013).

4.3.2 European Identity

A European identity is a complex concept as well as a contestant idea. At this moment in time, there is still not a single definition of the concept, instead, there are several active visions on how to define European identity (Jacobs & Maier, 1998). That there is a lack of a unified definition of a European identity might not be too unexpected, given the fact that the debate surrounding the characterisation of a common European identity is a continuing conversation (Canali, 2019). Still, because of the reason for there not to be one common explanation for a European identity, this section presents a few different branches of the definition. This is a way to go from a widespread definition to a narrowed definition that has become the specific track to follow for this study.

One aspect is the symbols that create the foundation for the EU, elements that can present a relatable bond to set the tone for a European identity. These symbols are the anthem of "Ode to Joy"; the currency of the Euro; the blue flag with its yellow stars; the European Day of the 9th of May; as well as the motto "United in diversity" (European Union, 2022b). Another aspect of it is the core values of the EU: democracy, equality, freedom, human dignity, human rights and rule of law (TEU, art.2). Thus, by becoming a member of the EU, the member states are inclined to respect and treasure these six values (European Commission, 2022c). According to the current President of the European Commission, Ursula von der

Leyen, these six values are at the heart of the creation of a European way of life, a part of a European identity (European Commission, 2022d).

The third aspect of European identity, as well as the aspect that is focused on in this thesis, is the perspective of being part of a certain unit, the sense of belonging to the EU. The concept of belonging is regularly used as a synonym for identity since it entails creating attachment to entities such as groups, institutions or places. Each and everyone search for a place to belong and a community to interconnect with, this since it is aspired to become a part of a social organisation (Antonish, 2010, p.648; Calhoun, 2007, p.286). Even if the notion of identity is formed on an individual level, it is not without the sentimental effect of a historical context that is shaped by collective symbols and social values through the use of discursive processes (Balibar, 1991, p.94; Lähdesmäki et al, 2021, pp.28-31). Simply because the process of identity-building consists of painting a picture with different components to formulate a sense of belonging, to incorporate the narrative of identification (Yuval-Davis, 2006, 199). In this regard, the EU can be seen as constructing a European community by promoting specific common norms, a specific collective identity, and a specific forum for collaboration (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier, 2004, p.667).

4.3.3 Ontological security

As previously mentioned, in the *Theoretical Chapter 3.1*, to achieve ontological security three factors need to be fulfilled. Firstly, there is basic trust: a way to reach an existential anchoring and find a safe space that creates a solid ground to handle any situation of distress (Browning, 2016; Giddens, 1991). Secondly, there is a formed framework: a frame of reference that assists in creating stability in the everyday life, which entails finding structure and a repetitive pattern to have consistency (Berenskötter, 2020; Browning, 2016). Thirdly, there is a narrative of self-identity: this is the process of a biographical continuity to build a specific storyline around a constant self-image (Glynos & Howarth, 2008; Kinnvall, 2004). When all three factors are secured, the state of ontological security is achieved. In *Table 4.2*, one can view the concepts that are searched for throughout

the analysis, to investigate whether the selected cases move towards the EU to secure ontological security. Henceforth, through the use of discourses in the national declarations of Foreign Affairs (presented below, *Section 4.1*), the analysis explores whether the rhetoric is changed due to the Brexit referendum.

Table 4.2: Concepts that connect theory and material

Theoretical factors	Terms from the national declarations
Basic trust	Cohesion Security Solidarity Stability Unity
Formed framework	Active member of the EU Common strategy Cooperation Enlargement European project Integration
Narrative of Self-identity	European dream European heritage European history European legacy European principles/values European membership Union of citizens

4.4 Material

The following section explains the two main categories of material for the analysis. The first core material is the national declarations of Foreign Affairs, six from each selected case (except for Poland, where there only are five statements on display). These declarations are analysed to find a correlation between the internal crisis of the EU, being the Brexit referendum, and the increased sense of a European identity, through the lens of ontological security. To support the hypothesis that the Brexit referendum has had an impact on the sense of a European identity, the statistics from the Eurobarometer surveys are serving as a complementary element and a starting point for the analysis.

National Declarations of Foreign Affairs

The focal point of the analysis is the national declarations of Foreign Affairs by the four governments of the member states. The reason behind analysing this material has to do with adding more depth to the analysis. Because, by only using the statistical data (which is presented below), one can present an overview in numbers regarding a decrease or an increase in the sense of a European identity. However, there is no possibility to say too much about the statistics, if it is not investigated in relation to an additional source of the material. Therefore, the statements that are at the core of the analysis are the declarations of Foreign Affairs that are presented every year by the national governments. Selecting these declarations is a way to look into how the member states address the EU, how this has perchance changed between the years 2014 up until 2019, and how this can be examined in relation to the crisis of the Brexit referendum as well as found correlating to ontological security theory.

Some brief background on the declarations of Foreign Affairs is that they are traditionally held at the beginning of the year by either the current President or the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the member state. The declarations of Foreign Affairs can be found on the official government's webpages of each of the countries selected for this thesis, and a compilation of all the 23 declarations can be found in *Appendix B*. Also, because there have been some limitations in

retrieving information on foreign affairs before 2014 in the cases of France and Poland, it came down to the decision to limit the timeframe for the period 2014–2019.

Also, it should be added that to be able to examine the declarations, there has been a necessity to work with a translating tool. In this case, the translating platform that has been worked with is DeepL Pro, an online language converting machine that is compatible with more than 20 different languages (DeepL, 2022). By using DeepL Pro, the paid version, there is the possibility to convert full documents and files to reach even higher success in converting the original languages into English. This website has been used to translate the selected declarations from France, Poland and Portugal. Of course, there is always a risk of missing out on the full implication of discourse when translating it from the original language to English. Although, in this scenario, there is no other option than to work with a trusted translating instrument. Lastly, it should be noted that the Swedish declarations have not been translated, since Swedish is the first language of the writer of this thesis.

Statistical data

Alongside the national declarations of Foreign Affairs, the second group of the core material is the statistical data, consisting of public opinion surveys with data focusing on questions around European identity. Here, the decision is to use the measurement found in the Standard Eurobarometer Surveys (European Union, 2022d), a series of reports that are commonly published twice a year. These surveys are requested as well as coordinated by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication, and are collected through face-to-face interviews conducted by *TNS Opinion & Social* between 2014 and 2016, followed by *Kantar Public* from 2016 and onwards. In the usual state, these interviews are compiled over two months, to then be published approximately two months after the fieldwork has ended.

The reports that have been selected for this thesis are reaching between the period of spring 2014 to spring 2019 (a compiled list is found in *Appendix C*). The timeframe is designed to cover as much as possible without analysing a too broad

period. Also, as was mentioned in the paragraph on the declarations, it has to do with the restrained amount of material that is found on the national declarations of Foreign Affairs. Hence, the timeframe is adapted according to the material that has been able to access. Additionally, all of the reports are divided into several parts and depending on the contemporary day-to-day life one can find specific themes in the different reports. However, three reoccurring sections can be found in all the reports: "Public opinion on the European Union", "Europeans opinions about the EU's priorities" and "European Citizenship". For this thesis, the focus is placed on the section of the reports that consists of the theme "European Citizenship". Between the years 2014 to 2019, fifteen reports have been published with this themed section. Within these reports, the focus has been put on two of the questions asked for the survey: "Sense of European citizenship" and "Attachment to the European Union".

Also, it should be addressed that the data that is presented below consists of the full result of the member states. During the fieldwork made by the data analytical groups, the compiling has been made through interviewing citizens, showing the evidence from an individual level. However, this thesis will not dive into a discussion regarding the socio-demographic perspective. Therefore, the reports will be analysed from a country level to be able to compile a generalized picture of the citizens' opinions that represent the state level. Furthermore, the compiled results found in the first part of the analysis (*Table 5.1 and Table 5.2*) are the registered percentage which represents the answers of both "yes, definitely" and "yes, to some extent".

4.5   Limitations

With this section, I would like to touch upon three features that could serve as limitations for this thesis. The goal of this presentation is not to disclaim the analysis that will be presented in the next chapter. Instead, it is a way for me as the writer to show awareness of possible shortcomings that could be questioned. Therefore, this section defends the decisions that have been made for this thesis.

First, I would like to address the choice of the theoretical framework and the possible obstacles that could occur by going down this path. Since this study is compiled on a member state level, there are some possible limitations to the theory of ontological security not reaching its fullest potential, because it could be argued to be a more individual-based framework. That being, the statistical data from the Eurobarometer surveys are gathered from individuals, as well as the fact that the national declarations of Foreign Affairs are presented by a person of the government. Due to this, the possible disadvantages that can appear and hinder the study is noted and kept in mind during the analysis.

Second, I would like to discuss the possible boundaries and observer bias with the selection of cases for this thesis. The selection has been made from a subjective perspective, by choosing countries that give good variation on key alternative explanations when comparing them with one another. However, all of the countries bring something to the table by presenting various prerequisites, which makes them attractive cases to further investigate and compare. With that said, I am not closing the door to the fact that other member states could also have been good cases to look into for the comparing analysis.

Thirdly, I would like to talk about the data collection and the possible disadvantages that could present themselves. On the one hand, the limitation lies within the data collector not being a neutral party, because the source is one of the main institutions within the EU. This could of course lead to raising questions about the objectivity of the gathered statistics. On the other hand, none of the reports specifically asks the question about or mentions the term European identity in the surveys. Hence, there was a need to look for the second-best option which could fall under the same category when searching for suitable data.

5 Analysis

The following chapter is the core of this thesis. Here, the result of the four cases, from the statistical surveys and the declarations of Foreign Affairs, is displayed. In the first section, the statistical data from the Eurobarometer reports are obtained through the presentation of the two tables. Thereafter, there is a compilation through a discourse analysis of the declarations, to reach a deeper understanding of the impact of the Brexit referendum to answer the research question.

5.1 European Identity in Statistics

To be able to view if the Brexit referendum did affect the sense of a European identity in the EU member states, two tables are presented below to illustrate the effect of the internal crisis. The statistical data is incorporated at the beginning of this analysis before heading into the specific cases, to establish a foundation that will assist to show the bigger picture and answer the research question as a whole. The two survey questions are connected to the concept of European identity because both European citizenship and attachment to the EU are related to the definition of belonging (Antonish, 2010, p.648; Calhoun, 2007, p.286).). By analysing the two tables, it is visible that all four cases possess different starting points for their support in both questions. Nonetheless, one can observe that they do alter similarly at a parallel time.

When looking at the data in *Table 5.1*, one can tell how there was a shift between the surveys from autumn 2015 to spring 2016. The member states increased by 2-6 percentage units, a correlation to the announcement of the British referendum (BBC, 2016) since the report from spring 2016 was conducted three months after the statement about the Brexit vote (Standard Eurobarometer 85, 2016). Three out of the four cases received their highest percentage in the spring of 2019, which

can be related to the fact that the original Brexit date had been pushed forward and the British government had asked for an extension of the Brexit process (House of Commons Library, 2021). Lastly, what can be retrieved from the table, is that all four cases have an increased sense of European citizenship at the end of this timeline in relation to what they all had at the start of 2014. As previously mentioned, the importance of this table is that it connects to the European identity in the way that a sense of European citizenship illustrates a branch of belonging to the Union.

Table 5.1: "Sense of European citizenship"

	France	**Poland**	**Portugal**	**Sweden**
2014 spring	63%	77%	69%	77%
2014 autumn	63%	74%	66%	76%
2015 spring	61%	74%	72%	78%
2015 autumn	61%	71%	72%	72%
2016 spring	67%	76%	75%	74%
2016 autumn	61%	78%	79%	75%
2017 spring	64%	80%	80%	76%
2017 autumn	63%	77%	81%	77%
2018 spring	61%	80%	83%	76%
2018 autumn	62%	79%	78%	82%
2019 spring	64%	84%	84%	83%

(Source: Standard Eurobarometer 2014-2019)

When looking at the data in *Table 5.2*, one can observe how all four cases demonstrate a high increase in attachment to the EU. (Unfortunately, three of the Eurobarometer reports did not address the question of "attachment to the European Union" during the spring surveys of 2014, 2015 and 2016. Hence, there is a lack of data collected from these reports). Starting from the autumn of 2014 up until the spring of 2019, all four cases received a growth of 6-17 percentage units. From autumn 2016 until autumn 2017, one can view an increase in three out of four cases, where a parallel could be drawn to the triggering of Article 50 regarding the withdrawal from the EU (House of Commons Library, 2021). The

activating of the article declared the process of exiting in motion, shaping a period of slight uncertainty about the future for the remaining member states. Hence, it could be stressed that the member states felt a stronger attachment to the European Union due to the need for existential anchoring (Browning, 2016, p.162; Giddens, 1991, pp.38-39). There is a wide range of increased support, but one can observe the difference after the Brexit referendum, with all cases accumulating at a gentle speed. Additionally, this table is of importance since it represents a feeling of belonging and a connection to the Union, both on a citizenship and membership level.

Table 5.2: "Attachment to the European Union"

	France	Poland	Portugal	Sweden
2014 spring	-	-	-	-
2014 autumn	51%	59%	45%	40%
2015 spring	-	-	-	-
2015 autumn	55%	58%	54%	44%
2016 spring	-	-	-	-
2016 autumn	53%	64%	51%	47%
2017 spring	56%	63%	51%	48%
2017 autumn	56%	66%	56%	47%
2018 spring	55%	71%	59%	51%
2018 autumn	52%	71%	56%	50%
2019 spring	57%	75%	62%	50%

(Source: Standard Eurobarometer 2014-2019)

With the statistical data presented and commented on above, there is support for approval of the first hypothesis, which is that *due to the factor of searching for stability and consistency in the everyday life, the internal crisis of Brexit did terminate this daily routine, leading to that the sense of a European identity has increased in all of the member states*. What the statistics have shown, is that one can state that there is a correlation between the Brexit referendum and an increase in the sense of a European identity. However, it is not possible to deduct whether this outcome is connected to the securing of ontological security or what the

reasons behind the variations between cases depend upon. Because of this, the statistical data is complemented by an analysis of the declarations on Foreign Affairs, to compile a mixed method of a comparative research design and a discourse analysis to dig deeper down into the meaning of the statistics. Further on, the analysis dives into the individual member states to look for developments and differences, through an investigation of the declarations of Foreign Affairs within all four selected cases.

5.2 France

Each year, the French President holds a statement regarding the challenges and priorities for the French foreign policy. This usually takes place in January at the circumstance for greeting the diplomatic force, the collective body of foreign diplomats. The statement stipulates the priorities together with the challenges of France's foreign policy, "*Déclaration sur les défis et priorités de la politique étrangère de la France*". Between the period of 2014–2017, the declarations are held by the former French President François Hollande. Whilst between 2018-2019, was presented by the current President Emmanuel Macron. Here, one can view a new President in office and also a change in the political party that took office, from the Socialist Party to the centre-liberal.

Pre-Brexit referendum (2014-2016)
In the French declaration of Foreign Affairs from **2014**, the then French President François Hollande refers to the world as "uncertain, unstable and unpredictable" (Vie Publique, 2022a). The main focal point throughout the given statement is on the outside world of the EU, and how the EU needs to work on an external level to achieve security and stability. France declares how they intend to play its part in resolving the ongoing crises on the African continent, while at the same stressing how "Europe has a particular responsibility" to influence the progress in the world (Vie Publique, 2022a). Additionally, at one point there is an internal focus on the EU, concerning the previous financial crisis. The economic crisis has been central to the French because they are a part of the Eurozone (McCormick, 2008, pp.157-

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160), but Hollande states that "we have found the necessary compromise because this is how Europe is always able to move forward" (Vie Publique, 2022a). Meaning that the economic struggles have now been stabilised, hence the focal point is back on the EU being an external actor and a unit for creating stability, instead of a focus on the EU on the home front.

Less than two weeks after the shooting at Charlie Hebdo, the **2015** edition of the declaration of Foreign Affairs was presented. Due to the occurrence of this tragic event, the French emphasis is placed on the security threat of terrorism and the oppression of freedom of expression. It is declared how "international solidarity has manifested itself with strength and symbolism" (Vie Publique, 2022b), embracing the global support regarding this specific cause that many countries are faced with. Looking from an internal perceptive of the EU, the financial crisis is addressed, where Hollande is stating that "the European Union has emerged from the crisis but has not yet found growth" (Vie Publique, 2022b). Although, the rhetorical weight of the declaration is not put on the economic area, but rather on the external crises. Hollande focuses more on the role that the EU could play to secure the physical security of the countries and the people on the European continent (Rumelili, 2015b, pp.53-57). The attention is put on how the EU can work as an external actor to act for peace on the European continent, which entails the need to address security issues concerning border crossings and terrorism.

Already at the beginning of the declaration, it is stated how the upcoming year of **2016** will be a decisive year for Europe and how the EU needs to make choices that most definitely will define the future of the Union. On the one hand, Hollande refers to the matter of security more from a traditional realistic perspective (Rumelili, 2015b, pp.53-57). This by stressing the ongoing wars within the European borders, the fight against terrorism, as well as the area of refugee flows. On the other hand, there is a transition towards putting more focus on the internal crisis of the EU, referring to the situation of the UK potentially leaving the Union (House of Commons Library, 2021). The future of the EU will depend on the outcome of the British referendum, and Hollande clearly states that France wished to see the UK remain in the EU and that this "is in the interest of Europe and the interest of Great Britain" (Vie Publique, 2022c). Although, if the UK would

choose to withdraw from the Union, it is stated to the French that they would accept the decision. However, the British choice "should not prevent those countries that have decided to go further in integration, particularly monetary integration, from being able to do so" (Vie Publique, 2022c). Also, an interesting perspective is that Hollande declares that due to this potential internal crisis of a member state leaving the Union, it could be "time to give a perspective to the whole of Europe, otherwise the temptation of national withdrawal will win" (Vie Publique, 2022c). Overall, one can observe a slight alteration in the rhetoric of the declarations, a beginning to concentrate a bit more on the internal side of the Union, hence enhancing the sense of belonging to the EU (Antonish, 2010, p.648; Calhoun, 2007, p.286).

Post-Brexit referendum (2017-2019)

In **2017**, Hollande addresses the many predicaments facing Europe at this period in time, referring to the impact of terrorism in today's society and the collective security in Eastern Europe due to the situation with Crimea. It is declared how Europe has had to face several challenges in the last decade and that it is Europe's "daily lot to face crises" (Vie Publique, 2022d). Notwithstanding, when Hollande presents challenges and priorities for the French foreign policy in 2017, there is however a considerable emphasis on the British withdrawal from the EU. He states that the EU is facing "a much more serious crisis than the one linked to economic situations or even the influx of migrants that we must treat with humanity and dignity" (Vie Publique, 2022d). According to Hollande, the internal crisis that has appeared due to Brexit is hitting the very core of the European project and exposes a wound for European integration, factors that are of great importance in the structure of the EU (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163).

In relation to the three other member states' relationship with the UK and their attempt to show support by discussing future bilateral collaborations, it is obvious how Brexit pushes the emotional buttons of the French, considering their founding legacy of the Union (McCormick, 2008, pp.56, 63). Hollande uses the verbal formulation that "it the first time that a country, and not just any country, a country that has counted in our history, that has its place necessarily, by

geography, in Europe, but it is the first time that a country, a large country, has decided to leave the European Union" (Vie Publique, 2022d). He does not agree with the British decision being an act of regaining independence and sovereignty (Leith et.al. 2019, because Hollande claims that France is both an independent country that is attached to its sovereignty while serving the construction of Europe. Instead, he stresses that this exemplifies "national egoism, it has nothing to do with sovereignty" since "each country cannot simply claim rights and come to Europe to obtain what it considers a priority for itself" (Vie Publique, 2022d) because this will only lead to the end of cohesion and solidarity, keystones to ensure existential anchoring (Browning, 2016, p.162; Giddens, 1991, pp.38-39).

With the declaration of **2018**, one can tell that there has recently been a shift in political leadership and that there is a new President in office. Emmanuel Macron presents strong pro-European rhetoric, stating how he wishes to work for "renewing the European dream, re-founding the European Union" since "the existence of a strong and sovereign Europe is one of the best guarantees in this regard, one of the conditions for meeting the challenges of the 21st century" (Vie Publique, 2022e). The encouraging and hopeful rhetoric around the EU cooperation is deeply related to the narrative of a self-identity (Glynos & Howarth, 2008, pp.162-163; Kinnvall, 2004, pp.746-748).

Macron refers to the unstable times connected to Brexit, stressing the need to "calm the anxieties of the people that underline the rise of individualism and isolationism" (Vie Publique, 2022e). Relating this to the global challenges that are facing Europe, calls for a unified and collective action to solve them. According to Macron, the answer is not to turn inwards and find individualistic solutions to the situation. Instead, the core is to involve the people more, the people of Europe need to have a larger platform to voice their opinions. This is important in two aspects, to make the citizens a part of the EU from the bottom-up, and to make the EU a present part of the everyday life of the citizens (Glynos & Howarth, 2008, pp.162-163; Kinnvall, 2004, pp.746-748). Because "Europe does not exist once every quarter through declarations agreed upon by the 28 of us today. It will continue to exist, and it must exist every day through concrete projects that we carry and that are carried in the member states" (Vie Publique, 2022e).

When the declaration of foreign affairs is held in **2019**, over three years have passed since the British referendum (House of Commons Library, 2021) and the end date of the transition process seems further and further away. Macron argues that "what the Brexiteers proposed to the British people was a very good slogan: take back control of our lives, of our nation" (Vie Publique, 2022f). However, the outcome of this promise is still not on the table, and it is clearly stated that Macron does not seek to follow in the footsteps of the UK. Rather, he looks at the British promise as an inspirational quote to use on the EU level to improve the European project (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163). Macron stresses that the key is to make the citizens more invested in the European project and to inspire the people of Europe to partake in the development of the future (Kinnvall, 2004).

Linked to this is the French initiative of the Citizens panels (Lory, 2022), a platform for European citizens to gather within a specific forum to address the issues that are of importance to the EU and its citizens. A way "to give back to our people a share of the control that we owe them and to re-inspire this project of European civilization" (Vie Publique, 2022f). The important thing for the French is to carry the leadership for the European project, to ensure it is a constant within the EU cooperation. This is because even if the project from the outside looks like a task to work on the overall inclusion and looking forward post-crisis, has a deeper meaning. Macron emphasises how "we are carrying a much deeper project for European heritage, for European culture and knowledge" (Vie Publique, 2022f). In other words, the future road of the EU together with the securing of the historical path, are factors resting on the shoulders of the remaining EU members (Glynos & Howarth, 2008, pp.162-163; Kinnvall, 2004, pp.746-748).

5.3 Poland

Every year, the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs presents an informative speech on the topic of foreign affairs. This takes place at the beginning of the year at the

Sejm, the lower house of the bicameral parliament of Poland. The statement works as an information point about the tasks of Polish foreign policy the upcoming year, "*Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej*". Due to an election year, the years 2014 and 2015 were combined into one single declaration, presented by the then Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Gregorz Schetyna. In 2016 and 2017, it was held by the then Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Witold Waszczykowski. Between 2018-2019, the declarations were given by the former Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jacek Czaputowicz. Important to add here is that the same political party was in office, Law and Justice, hence there was only a change in personnel.

Pre-Brexit referendum (2014-2016)

In the declaration from **2014-2015**, the Polish government presented four areas of priority that they wished to focus on when it came to the area of the Union: a deepening of the European integration to solve the internal divisions; overcoming the economic crisis which aftermath affects the EU; increasing the competitiveness of the Union; as well as working more closely with strategic partners (Sejm, 2022a). In relation to the second priority, the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs Gregorz Schetyna states that "as a leader of change in Central Europe and a country with significant economic potential, Poland deserves to have its voice in matters of further reform of the Economic and Monetary Union" (Sejm, 2022a). This statement relates to the image of the EU being a financial body, and much to the fact that the Polish agenda is to access the Eurozone in a near future (European Commission 2022a). Additionally, in connection to the fourth priority, Schetyna says "that unilateralism is harmful and that the times of absolute European domination in the world belong to the past. That is why we will put more emphasis on the global, non-European dimension of Polish foreign policy" (Sejm, 2022a). With this statement, the Polish declare how their focal point will be placed beyond the EU, looking more towards their relationship with NATO, especially to deal with the security challenges that are facing at the border towards the Eastern neighbourhood.

With the declaration from **2016**, the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs Witold Waszczykowski argues that "at the centre of this global uncertainty and instability

in Europe, weakened by recession, divided by different visions for the development of the European project" (Sejm, 2022b). With that said, the main attention is placed on the critical phase and the cracks within European unity. It is stressed that the UK's possible exit from the EU, referring to the one-month-old notice of the EU Referendum Act receiving approval (House of Commons Library, 2021), is the manifestation of the crisis. Poland claims that "the cohesion of the European Union is in the interest of the Republic of Poland" (Sejm, 2022b) and is vocalizing the wish to become more of an active member in the process of integration. For now, "the idea of closer European integration, the so-called Little Schengen, is addressed primarily to the countries of old Europe. Our region is not taken into consideration" (Sejm, 2022b). Waszczykowski stresses that Poland will work with a focus on further regional cooperation, both with the Visegrad group and with NATO, to strengthen the area of security. One can tell that Poland has altered its rhetoric in relation to the previous year, starting to refer to the EU in combination with cohesion and unity (Browning, 2016, p.162; Giddens, 1991, pp.38-39).

Post-Brexit referendum (2017-2019)

Waszczykowski declared that "the most difficult challenge we will face in **2017** will be the future of the European Union" (Sejm, 2022c). Waszczykowski explained that a gap has emerged between the European elites and citizens, meaning that there has been damage to the confidence in the European project and a decrease in the feeling of having any power to influence one's member state and the integration project as a whole. Poland, representing the groups of Central Eastern Europe in this analysis, claims that in the light of Brexit, it is still in the Polish interest to have a wider integration of the EU (Schilde, 2014). Waszczykowski argues that "Poland will remain an advocate of the European Union enlargement process. we believe that Europe's doors should remain open to countries that share a vision of cooperation among democratic nations. We would rather extend a hand of welcome than of farewell" (Sejm, 2022c). This refers to enhancing the enlargement project of the EU, to keep the ongoing tradition of regional cooperation that forms the framework of the EU (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163).

The Polish declaration clarifies that a close relationship with the EU is desired, but this should be based on an equal balance regarding the rights and obligations. Also, in relation to the British referendum, Poland stresses how it is necessary to restore the centrality of the member states within the Union, to secure future collaboration. It should be mentioned, that there is still a big focus on the Polish cooperation with different international partnerships, although it is mentioned by Waszczykowski that the "priority of our government's actions is to repair the European Union, not to dismantle it. A return to a Europe of national egoisms would be as harmful as integration utopias that have no roots in the social and political realities of our continent" (Sejm, 2022c). The transition towards a closer bond with the EU is observable through the declaration, claiming that it is in the interest of both Poland and Europe to possess and work towards having a competitive Union (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163).

In the declaration from **2018**, an equivalent pattern in rhetoric is followed as the previous year when it comes to the relevance of including citizens. The new Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jacek Czaputowicz, states how Poland hopes for "an EU that is a Union of citizens, which requires recognition of the fundamental role of the Member States as hosts of the European integration process" (Sejm, 2022d). This is stated in relation to the fact that "the fundamental issue for the effectiveness of the EU is the ability to obtain a real democratic mandate to act" (Sejm, 2022d). Czaputowicz argues that the EU needs to win the political support of its citizens to rebuild a strong Union and strengthen the effectiveness of the collaboration and present a united front to produce stability (Browning, 2016, p.162; Giddens, 1991, pp.90-91; Glynos & Howarth, 2008, pp.162-163; Kinnvall, 2004, pp.746-748).

Considering the fact that, in the aftermath of a decade filled with crises of varying degrees, it is visible that the political and social effects have had "an impact on the nature of relations between member states, the role of the Union in the future of the European project" (Sejm, 2022d). There is a rising perception of opposition towards further European integration, evident with the British withdrawal, which Czaputowicz claim "is not the cause of the Union's democratic weakness but its effect" (Sejm, 2022d). Also, similar to the case with the Swedish declarations of

Foreign Affairs, Poland stresses that the Polish membership of the EU "strengthens the position of the Republic of Poland in the international arena" (Sejm, 2022d) and that the support for the EU remains high among the Polish citizens (visible through the Eurobarometer reports presented earlier on in *Section 5.1*). This is evidence of the Polish rhetoric moving away from the promotion of the NATO partnership, to instead present a larger focal point on the EU (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163).

It is stated in the declaration, that the year **2019** will be extremely important for the Union, due to the upcoming election to the European Parliament in May that will commence a new institutional cycle. Czaputowicz stresses how they will put in the work to regain the citizen's trust in the European institutions because the "overriding goal must be to restore the Union's full, undoubted legitimacy" (Sejm, 2022e). Czaputowicz claims that "a significant proportion of Britons who voted to leave the European Union felt that they did not influence the decisions made in Brussels" (Sejm, 2022e). This statement illustrates the key importance for the Polish government, namely to include the citizens of the whole EU to create a platform where all members are a part of the integration process (Glynos & Howarth, 2008, pp.162-163; Kinnvall, 2004, pp.746-748). A way to succeed with this goal, is through the initiative of regional cooperation in Central Eastern Europe, to show the European citizens that strengthening relations with the Eastern part of Europe is an investment in the stable future and unity for the EU (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163). One of the essential components for the European integration process is to advance in cohesion and efficient cooperation, and according to Czaputowicz, by putting more effort into this part of Europe, that shares similar paths of social and economic development and similar priorities as the EU, it will be an integration process that will bring Europe closer together.

5.4   Portugal

Every year, the Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs gives an official announcement about the primacies of the foreign affairs of Portugal. This takes place in January at the Diplomatic Seminar, which is a big conference for discussing pressing issues on both a national and an international level. During the seminar, there is a specific section where the theme is focused on foreign affairs. At this point, the Minister for Foreign Affairs presents the guidelines and main objectives of European policy and Portugal's foreign policy, "*As orientações e os objetivos principais da política europeia e da política externa de Portugal*". Between the years 2014 and 2015, the declarations were held by the former Minister for Foreign Affairs Rui Machete. In the following years, they were presented by the present Minister for Foreign Affairs Augusto Santos Silva. Here, one can observe that there was a change in personnel and a change in office, from the Social Democratic Party to the Socialist Party.

Pre-Brexit referendum (2014-2016)

The **2014** declaration focuses on the challenges in a globalised world, but also the necessities that come from having an interconnected globe. Hence, a major focal point is on the foreign policy outside of the EU, looking at the Portuguese relations with Brazil and with several countries on the African continent (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022a). A fundamental part of the Portuguese foreign policy is directed by the participation and cooperation with different international communities, for example, the European Economic Community. Considering that Portugal is part of the Eurozone, there is a major importance of addressing the financial perspective in relation to foreign policy. The Minister for Foreign Affairs Rui Machete stresses how the financial crisis hit hard towards the Portuguese economy, and that the crisis revealed "difficulties regarding the integration stages" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022a). However, according to Machete, this should not hinder further integration of the EU. Quite the opposite, because he claims that Portugal is "dependent on the EU as an export arena" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022a), hence it is fundamentally important for the economy of the country that the EU cooperation continues. Machete claims how

Portugal wishes to see a deepening of the Single Market to achieve market competitiveness, together with a demand for joint efforts towards the construction of the Banking Union. Similar to the case with France in 2014, the financial perspective shines through in the Portuguese declaration of Foreign Affairs by both Eurozone countries (McCormick, 2008, pp.157-160).

In **2015**, the declaration focuses on the challenging times in the world and refers to the ongoing crises outside the borders of the EU. Machete puts emphasise on the role of the EU as both a "diplomatic and a supportive partner" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022b). Also, he stresses the importance of working cohesively with all affected countries to be able to shape a "common strategy for handling the outside crises" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022b), which would lead to creating stability and security in Europe. Even though Machete highlights the critical reality that surrounds the country, there is still an optimistic standpoint on the future throughout the statement. This position has much to do with the positive economic indicators that have occurred due to the financial assistance programme that helped the country to restore its credibility with external partners. The declaration addresses the newly instated European Commission and how the Portuguese government is supporting the change, hoping that this alteration will assemble the enthusiasm of European citizens for a common European project (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022b). This is related to achieving more structure and being more cohesive within the institutions. Additionally, the high expectation is that there will be more efforts on decreasing the asymmetric relationship between the member states in the area of financial support. With this declaration, Portugal is the first country out of the four cases which makes the first verbal move that shows evidence of securing ontological security (Glynos & Howarth, 2008, pp.162-163; Kinnvall, 2004, pp.746-748).

Entering the year **2016**, one can, as in the case of France, view a transition towards an increased focus on the EU from an internal angle. From this point forward, the Portuguese rephrase their yearly declarations on the international theme to "European and foreign policy" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022c,) putting more weight on the European perspective. One of Portugal's main objectives for the upcoming years relates to developing, enhancing and integrating their

partnerships to strengthen their European and foreign policy. This includes becoming a more active member within the EU and in the process of European construction (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163). According to the new Minister for Foreign Affairs Augusto Santos Silva, this means that they wish for more connected European efforts, to bring institutions and citizens closer together to deepen the democratic nature of the EU, which is of importance since there is a consistent dissatisfaction and discussion about deficits. Also, a deeper focus on policies within the Eurozone area, as well as looking to the collaboration within defence and security. The position of Portugal is clearly stated, in both a geographical and strategic matter, since they proclaim being, first of all, a "member state of the EU, the European Monetary Union, and the Schengen Area" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022c). The rhetoric states how they are a strong supporter at the front line for more European integration, which can be seen as a verbal reaction to the uprising discussion on the future of the UK in the Union (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022c).

Post-Brexit referendum (2017-2019)

In the declaration from **2017**, it stands clear that Portuguese foreign policy is interconnected with the EU foreign policy. Silva states that "the best way to deal with uncertainty, manage risk and respond to threats is to be firm in our values and principles, and taking care of our capabilities" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022d). The Portuguese show proof of their increased commitment to the EU and moving closer towards the European cooperation, how they wish to invest in what they find essentially important for the EU (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163). To continue the process of development, there is a need for European participation since "Europe is not a reality outside ourselves, but rather the continent to which we geo-historically belong and the economic and political Union into which we wanted and wish to become integrated" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022d).

Additionally, the declaration possesses a focal point on the pressing matter regarding the negotiation process of the UK leaving the EU. The Portuguese position revolves around being a supporting partner in the process and aiming for a smooth transition with the withdrawal. However, Silva presents the outlook that

"it would be inconceivable that those who wish to leave would be in a better position to enjoy the benefits of European integration than they had as participants in that integration" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022d). With that said, it is clarified by the Portuguese that the British decision to exit the Union is a choice they made and not a path Portugal wishes to follow. At the end of the declaration, Silva declares that "perhaps we should revisit one of the most important actions of the Jacques Delors Commission, which was to identify and explain the 'costs of non-Europe', demonstrating once again what we would lose, in all areas, if we were to abandon the European project" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022d). The statement declares the Portuguese position regarding membership in the EU, namely the significant weight it brings to the country (Glynos & Howarth, 2008, pp.162-163; Kinnvall, 2004, pp.746-748).

In the year **2018**, Portugal shows yet again their active commitment to overcoming the crucial challenges surrounding the European project, investing in building bridges and finding consensus. Silva states that "diversity must serve to build European unity and consensus on essential issues so that the direction and pace of European integration respect differences and involves everyone in this European unity" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022e). Silva means that this is the Europe that makes sense both from a historical perspective and as a present project, and the position of the Portuguese verifies that they refuse to manifest cultural, ideological or regional divisions, instead of looking to the cohesion and unity (Browning, 2016, p.162; Giddens, 1991, pp.38-39). Instead of detachments, the Portuguese displayed an assurance to the states of deepening European integration as the answer to the crises (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163). Silva draws on parallels to the EU journey of the country when stating how they are "committed to the successive enlargements which have brought the EU closer to the whole of the European continent and have proved so essential to the democratic transition of the countries of former Eastern Europe, as had previously been the case with Greece, Portugal and Spain" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022e).

Throughout the declaration, it is a high degree of emphasis on the advantages of being part of the Union, together with the active involvement in contributing to

the improvement (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163). Silva declares that applying for membership in the European Union was a strategic choice and that there is a "constant concern to build the bridges indispensable for the formation of the consensus required to advance European construction" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022e). On the topic of membership, there is a similar approach in the annual declaration from 2018 as in the one from the previous year. Namely, when addressing Brexit, Silva claims that "every effort must be made to ensure that it produces the fewest negative effects. The UK's exit is in itself a sad and damaging event, because the EU loses a member state for the first time and because the UK loses a particularly powerful link with the continent as a whole" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022e). There is a respectful role taken, that at the same time permeates a bit of scepticism regarding the withdrawal.

In **2019**, Portugal presents their agenda with a compilation of external and internal challenges. Three main areas are demonstrated as threatening on an existential level, physically as well as psychologically. These threats are the security issues with terrorism, the collapse of states in our immediate neighbourhood and climate change (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022f). According to Silva, these areas are vital to solving to reach stability and security within the EU (Browning, 2016, p.162; Giddens, 1991). He stresses that European construction can and must advance within foreign policy, because "we need more EU – more European unity and visibility" in the international arena (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022f). With that said, he connects the stability and security aspect of the country via increased efforts by the EU, but also through the EU (Browning, 2016, p.162; Giddens, 1991, pp.38-39).

On the internal level, the process of Brexit is still displayed as a major challenge in several areas, not least when it plays out concerning the internal issues with populist currents of the extreme right and the propaganda and counter-information agencies of authoritarian regimes. However, Silva states that the EU "did well in recent years to build what is sometimes called the Europe of Defence, with the expansion of the European Security and Defence Policy" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022f). With this policy, there has been a slight shift from solely relying on NATO as the security provider, to instead moving towards building up the EU as

a joined and united force for stability (Browning, 2016, p.162; Giddens, 1991, pp.38-39). Which is declared by Silva when he refers to the Portuguese as "we Europeans" and explains that "the European Union is existential to us" (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022f). For each declaration, one can tell that the Portuguese foreign policy aligns more and more with the EU foreign policy, a shred of evidence for the way Portugal wished to contribute to the European project to find consensus and common ground as a Union (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163).

5.5 Sweden

On an annual basis, the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs declares the priorities for the Swedish foreign policy. This takes place in February at the foreign policy debate at the Swedish parliament, a forum where the government presents its chosen standpoints to pursue within the area of foreign policy. Hence, the statement works as a verbal declaration regarding the national overall objectives and priorities for foreign policy, *"Regeringens utrikesdeklaration vid den utrikespolitiska debatten i riksdagen"*. The first declaration from 2014, was held by then Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt. Followed by the Swedish election in September 2014, the government altered from having the conservative Moderate party in office to shifting to the Social Democratic. Hence, the declarations stretching between 2015-2019, were presented by the former Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström.

Pre-Brexit referendum (2014-2016)
The declaration from **2014** focuses a lot on the EU, much to do with the upcoming election to the European Parliament just three months away. The then Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, stresses the importance of the people seizing the opportunity to make their voices heard to be able "to affect the future of the EU" (Regeringskansliet, 2022a). At this point, it is clearly stated that it is a historical responsibility to continue forward with the European cooperation. There is a great focal point on the EU as a global actor, on the strategic bridges that should be

created on the international platform. For example, the EU's role in regional efforts and crisis management operations (Regeringskansliet, 2022a). When looking at all the issues on an external level, Bildt discusses especially the challenges in the neighbourhood area, stressing the present opportunities for further enlargements but that this should be handled with "delicate care" (Regeringskansliet, 2022a) to first be able to ensure stability in the area. An interesting aspect of the statement is that it is only in this declaration that one can find the addressing about the financial situation and the economic crisis. Otherwise, Sweden is the exception from the rule, being the case that does not quite address the financial area of the EU. A possible explanation for this is related to the fact that the country is not a part of the Eurozone and does not entail entering the common currency forum (European Commission, 2022b).

Just as its predecessor, the declaration from **2015** pushes for international efforts and that the EU should continue in the process of becoming a forceful global actor. The topic of global security is addressed through the statement, indicating the ongoing conflicts in the close neighbourhood, the hovering predicament with the environment, as well as the situation with cyberattacks and digital intrusions (Regeringskansliet, 2022b). None of these security threats that have been mentioned is unique to occur within the EU, but instead, the critical forecast possesses an international perspective. However, in correlation to the Portuguese declaration from 2015, the tone throughout the statement is quite optimistic. Referring to the fact that even if there is a period of increased insecurity, this should "not be a shadow over the progress that has been made" (Regeringskansliet, 2022b). The key to solving these security issues is to continue with strong collaboration, both on an international level and an EU level. If this statement is related to the newly installed Social Democratic government (Valmyndigheten, 2021, or if there are other underlying reasons for the rhetoric, cannot be speculated upon.

In the **2016** years declaration, the focus continues to be placed on external security threats and global challenges. Discussing the efforts needed to be done within the areas of sustainability and climate, terrorism and human trafficking, migration and pandemics. The Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström stresses the

significance of climate deals and development cooperation, in order for the EU to "develop its capability for external crisis management" (Regeringskansliet, 2022c). Additionally, with this declaration, it becomes the first time the UK is specifically mentioned. Considering the fact that the Swedish statement is taking place at the beginning of February, only four days after the public announcement by David Cameron regarding the British referendum (BBC; 2016), Wallström had the possibility to address the unexpected event. Much because the information regarding the Brexit vote was presented earlier, it is decisively declared by Sweden that an exit is not the wished outcome of the referendum. Instead, Wallström stresses that it is the absolute "key that the UK stays in the EU" (Regeringskansliet, 2022c). Also, for the first time, the member states are not just referred to as the "member states of the EU", but the emphasis is placed on the number, "28 member states" (Regeringskansliet, 2022c). This simple rhetorical tool specifically highlights the importance of cohesion in the EU and the willpower for a unified Union without any withdrawals (Browning, 2016, p.162; Giddens, 1991, pp.38-39).

Post-Brexit referendum (2017-2019)

With the declaration from **2017**, there is a rapid transition from the traditional way of addressing the EU in the external sphere and as an international actor that needs to take greater responsibility in the global arena. Instead, there is a rhetorical change expressed by Wallström that falls in the area of shaping trust (Browning, 2016; Giddens, 1991). Not only is there an increased phrasing of the EU, but there is a change that emphasises the move towards a closer unity within the EU. For starters, there is the proclamation that "the EU is our most important foreign policy arena" (Regeringskansliet, 2022d). Wallström stresses that Sweden needs the support from the EU to make its voice heard on the global stadium (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163). The international challenges for the EU cooperation are of course still addressed and presented at the top of the agenda. Although, the declaration argues that it is crucial to forming a unity on an EU level to create a security strategy towards global threats, stating that "our response is guided by principles and values, is firm, clear and long-term, and fosters EU unity" (Regeringskansliet, 2022d). However, one can detect the swift transformation in formulation from one year to another, therefore, observe

how the crisis of Brexit has affected the Swedish standpoint towards the EU. Not the least since it is declared that the British decision is as much respected as it is regretted, but during the negotiation process, the emphasis will be put on "what best serves the common European project and Swedish interests" (Regeringskansliet, 2022d) the best.

When the declaration of **2018** is presented, on the 14th of February, the Brexit transition process has almost reached its halfway mark (House of Commons Library, 2021). Unlike the French declarations, the Swedish tries to present a particular neutral standpoint when addressing the UK, stating how the country is a member state that unfortunately decided to leave the union. The Swedes are, just as in the case with the Polish government, clear that they intend to keep a "close relationship" with the Brits even if they have decided to opt-out of the European collaboration (Regeringskansliet, 2022e). The importance at this point is not to burn bridges, but to build them. The focal point of the Swedish Foreign Policy is to promote democracy, to create security and safety in a time of change and uncertainty (Browning, 2016, p.162; Giddens, 1991, pp.38-39). Challenges such as the climate, countries that are protectionistic, and refugee flows. But at the same time, there is a sceptical tone regarding the future of the British withdrawal. Due to the ongoing internal crisis, it stands clear that Sweden wants to advocate for being an "active member of the EU" (Regeringskansliet, 2022e), pushing for a strong European community and the importance of a cohesive EU. Also, underlines the importance of the EU's work in supporting its citizens in these uncertain times of Brexit (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163; Glynos & Howarth, 2008, pp.162-163; Kinnvall, 2004, pp.746-748).

With the original Brexit date being only six weeks away and extension deadlines just around the corner, the declaration from **2019** is filled with a bit of hesitation about the future. At this point, it is the first time that the Swedes declare the Brexit process as an internal crisis (concept of crisis) that has struck the Union, stating that "the Europe we know is changing" (Regeringskansliet, 2022f). Wallström argues that the European unity is under pressure from different angles, but "with more democracy, more solidarity, more cooperation, more sustainability" (Regeringskansliet, 2022f) there is the possibility to reach cohesion within the EU

(Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163). Meaning, that now is the time to focus on the significance of the values that are at the very establishment of the EU and join together to solve the crisis. It is observable how the Swedish government is taking step after step to get closer to the EU and the European project (Ibid), much due to the fact that "Sweden's security begins in Europe. EU cooperation gives us peace, stability and growth" (Regeringskansliet, 2022f).

The Swedes are determined to "hone the EU instruments" (Regeringskansliet, 2022f) to strengthen the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU for the possibility to cope with the changing and shaky world. Also, Wallström is stressing the gravity of the upcoming election to the European Parliament and how this will be a key possibility to voice several current issues (Glynos & Howarth, 2008, pp.162-163; Kinnvall, 2004, pp.746-748). Considering the outcome of the Brexit vote and the several deficits the EU is faced with, there is a major opportunity for the citizens of Europe to use the voting power they possess and be involved in shaping the future of the Union. According to Wallström, it is now time that "inequalities must decrease, and prosperity increase" (Regeringskansliet, 2022f) to move forward in the European project (Berenskötter, 2020, p.280; Browning, 2016, pp.162-163).

6 Concluding Remarks

This study has aimed to answer the following research question: *Did the Brexit referendum affect the sense of a European identity in the EU member states, and if so, how did this play out in the member states*? According to the statistical evidence, one can observe an intensification in the support for the EU in connection to the referendum (Standard Eurobarometer, 2014–2019). Even if the member states started at different positions on the percentage scale, they all share a similar effect. Meaning, that all four cases experienced a stronger attachment to the EU and a more solid sense of a European citizenship. The figures show that, in some ways, Brexit has unified the EU more than it has divided the Union (Collins, 2017; de Vries, 2017). Additionally, throughout the discourse analysis, there has been evidence to show how the selected cases have transitioned towards EU, that the member states have secured the three factors of the theoretical framework, by moving closer to belonging to the EU, to increase their sense of European identity. Maybe not in the degree that was expected, through the narrative of a collective past and a historical remembrance (Kolvraa, 2018; Mälksoo, 2015), but instead through the rhetorical tools of promoting cooperation, security and solidarity (Calligaro, 2015).

With this stated, the first hypothesis has been fulfilled. The sense of a European identity, which in this thesis is defined as the sense of belonging to something bigger (Antonish, 2010; Calhoun, 2007) is increased in connection to the internal crisis of the Brexit referendum. Through the lens of ontological security, one can view how the selected member states move towards closer cooperation with the EU since the theory is all about the search for fundamental security and finding a so-called safe house (Giddens, 1991). In this study, one can observe that through the statistical data (with two tables that present numbers which support a step towards belonging with the EU) and through the rhetoric in the declarations of Foreign Affairs (where the focal point turns drastically toward the EU project and

all it consists of) the four EU member states increased their sense of a European identity to secure their ontological security. Hence, this supports the first hypothesis for this thesis.

Before the Brexit referendum, all cases address the EU as a global actor that needed to deal with the external challenges with a focal point located on the non-European dimension. Although, in connection with the British announcement about the referendum, all four cases transitioned to discuss the potential crisis within the EU and the internal security situation. Above all, Poland and Portugal present positions that shows the prominence of belonging to the EU and that financial support is crucial (Buchholz, 2020). They show examples of how they need the EU to secure their ontological security as well as what the membership has given them to create a sense of European identity. Portugal stresses the importance of being an active member in the EU to enhance the European project (Instituto Diplomatico, 2022e) and Poland displays how they wish for further enlargement to improve the regional cooperation (Sejm, 2022c). With this stated, the second hypothesis has been fulfilled to some extent. From a statistical point of view, the net budgetary receivers Poland and Portugal, have the highest increase in both of the survey questions related to the concept of belonging and a sense of European identity (Standard Eurobarometer, 2014-2019).

However, the second hypothesis has at the same time been falsified to some extent, because with the change in government in France, the rhetoric shifted towards an increased sense of European identity. France, being an establisher of the Union and an integrated partner in the EU, took political leadership (Mitzen, 2018) in securing ontological security after the British withdrawal. The rhetoric presents grand and hopeful ideas for the future to move closer to a European identity, among else through the involvement of the European citizens (Lory, 2022). Sweden possesses a similar pattern in rhetorical presentation, stressing the significance of the EU as their main political arena and the vital role the Union plays for European cooperation, as well as the key partner Sweden wishes to be. Although, even if there is an increased sense of European identity in the case of Sweden, in comparison to the other three cases it is still visible that Sweden is the

least integrated member state (Gastinger, 2021), perhaps connected to its geographical location, or due to not being part of the Eurozone.

To conclude, the increased sense of a European identity is shared among the member states. They all share the similar outcome of improved support, but how this support plays out, and how this rhetorical move to belonging to the EU is illustrated, varies due to diverse forms of preconditions. To some extent, the four EU member states are united through diversity. There is of course a possibility to argue that there are other underlying reasons for this stated increase in sense of a European identity. For instance, the aftermath of the financial crisis or the impact of the refugee crisis. As well as the influence of the chosen control variables, since they all matter for the preconditions in each member state. Nonetheless, it can be viewed how the independent variable did affect the dependent variable. In this study, it has been shown how there is a causation between the internal crisis of the Brexit referendum, in the way of it being a catalyst for an increase in the sense of a European identity among the EU member states.

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8 Appendixes

A. Brexit timeline:

Date	Event
2015-12-17	The European Union Referendum Act receives Royal Assent, providing for the opportunity to conduct a referendum on the UK's future as a member of the EU.
2016-02-20	The Prime Minister (David Cameron) announces that the UK referendum will take place on the 23rd of June 2016.
2016-06-23	The UK holds the referendum on its membership of the EU. A majority of the voters vote to leave (51.9% vs 48.1%).
2016-07-13	Theresa May becomes the new Prime Minister of the UK.
2017-03-29	The Prime Minster triggers article 50 of the Treaty of the European Union ("*Any Member State may decide to withdraw from the Union in accordance with its own constitutional requirements*". Art. 50.1 TEU).
2019-03-14	The UK government receives approval for the motion to seek permission to extend Article 50 TEU. Meaning, delaying Brexit beyond the 29th of March 2019.

2019-03-20	The Prime Minister writes to European Council President Donald Tusk, to ask for an extension of Article 50 TEU, until 30th of June 2019. The following day, the European Council agreed on the wished extension.
2019-03-29	Original Brexit date ("*The Treaties shall cease to apply to the State in question from the date of entry into force of the withdrawal agreement or, failing that, two years after the notification referred to in paragraph 2, unless the European Council, in agreement with the Member State concerned, unanimously decides to extend this period*". Art. 50.3 TEU).
2019-04-02	The Prime Minister announced that she will seek an even further extension of the Article 50 TEU.
2019-04-10	During a meeting at the European Council, it was unanimously agreed upon for a further extension until the 31st of October 2019.
2019-07-24	Boris Johnson formally takes over as the UK Prime Minister.
2019-10-19	The Prime Minister's new Brexit deal was lost on amendment in the Commons. Hence, the Prime Minister (Boris Johnson) writes once again to the European Council President.

2019-10-28	The EU ambassadors agree on further Brexit extension, until 31st of January 2020.
2019-12-12	The Prime Minister won a majority in the UK General Election, thereafter, reaffirming his commitment to "get Brexit done" by the 31st of January 2020.
2020-01-23	The European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill receives Royal Assent and becomes an Act of Parliament → The European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020. Meaning, that this is the legislation that will implement the withdrawal agreement.
2020-01-31	The UK leaves the EU. With this, the UK enters into the transition period that will run until the end of 2020.
2020-12-31	After a long process, the UK officially leaves the EU. The Brexit transition period comes to an end, the UK leaves the EU single market and customs union and EU law ceases to apply to the UK.

Source: House of Commons Library (2021)

B. List of Declarations on Foreign Affairs:

	France	Poland	Portugal	Sweden
2014	Déclaration de M. François Hollande, Président de la République, sur les défis et priorités de la politique étrangère de la France (17th of Jan.)	Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej, Minister Spraw Zagranicznych Gregorz Schetyna (6th of Nov.)	As orientações e os objetivos principais da política europeia e da política externa de Portugal, Ministro de Estado e dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Rui Machete (6th-7th of Jan.)	Regeringens deklaration vid 2014 års utrikespolitiska debatt i Riksdagen, Utrikesminister Carl Bildt (19th of Feb)
2015	Déclaration de M. François Hollande, Président de la République, sur les défis et priorités de la politique étrangère de la France (16th of Jan.)	Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej, Minister Spraw Zagranicznych Gregorz Schetyna (6th of Nov. 2014)	As orientações e os objetivos principais da política europeia e da política externa de Portugal, Ministro de Estado e dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Rui Machete (6th-7th of Jan.)	Regeringens deklaration vid 2015 års utrikespolitiska debatt i Riksdagen, Utrikesminister Margot Wallström (11th of Feb.)
2016	Déclaration de M. François Hollande, Président de la République, sur les défis et priorités de la politique étrangère de la France (21st of Jan.)	Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej, Minister Spraw Zagranicznych Witold Waszczykowski (29th of Jan.)	As orientações e os objetivos principais da política europeia e da política externa de Portugal, Ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Augusto Santos Silva (5th-6th of Jan.)	Regeringens deklaration vid 2016 års utrikespolitiska debatt i Riksdagen, Utrikesminister Margot Wallström (24th of Feb.)

2017	Déclaration de M. François Hollande, Président de la République, sur les défis et priorités de la politique étrangère de la France (12th of Jan.)	Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej, Minister Spraw Zagranicznych Witold Waszczykowski (9th of Feb,)	As orientações e os objetivos principais da política europeia e da política externa de Portugal, Ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Augusto Santos Silva (4th-5th of Jan.)	Regeringens deklaration vid 2017 års utrikespolitiska debatt i Riksdagen, Utrikesminister Margot Wallström (15th of Feb.)
2018	Déclaration de M. Emmanuel Macron, Président de la République, sur les défis et priorités de la politique étrangère de la France (4th of Jan.)	Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej, Minister Spraw Zagranicznych Jacek Czaputowicz (21st of Mar.)	As orientações e os objetivos principais da política europeia e da política externa de Portugal, Ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Augusto Santos Silva (3rd-4th of Jan.)	Regeringens deklaration vid 2018 års utrikespolitiska debatt i Riksdagen, Utrikesminister Margot Wallström (14th of Feb.)
2019	Déclaration de M. Emmanuel Macron, Président de la République, sur les défis et priorités de la politique étrangère de la France (27th of Aug.)	Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej, Minister Spraw Zagranicznych Jacek Czaputowicz (14th of Mar.)	As orientações e os objetivos principais da política europeia e da política externa de Portugal, Ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Augusto Santos Silva (3rd-4th of Jan.)	Regeringens deklaration vid 2019 års utrikespolitiska debatt i Riksdagen, Utrikesminister Margot Wallström (13th of Feb.)

Source: Official websites of the National Governments of France, Poland, Portugal, Sweden

C. List of Eurobarometer reports:

Date	Series	Report	Questions
2014 spring	Standard Eurobarometer 81	European Citizenship – English	QD 1.1
2014 autumn	Standard Eurobarometer 82	European Citizenship – English	QD1a.3 + QD2.1
2015 spring	Standard Eurobarometer 83	European Citizenship – English	QD1.1
2015 autumn	Standard Eurobarometer 84	European Citizenship – English	QD1a.3 + QD2.1
2016 spring	Standard Eurobarometer 85	European Citizenship – English	QD1.1
2016 autumn	Standard Eurobarometer 86	European Citizenship – English	QD1a.3 + QD2.1
2017 spring	Standard Eurobarometer 87	European Citizenship – English	QD1a.3 + QD2.1
2017 autumn	Standard Eurobarometer 88	European Citizenship – English	QD1a.3 + QD2.1
2018 spring	Standard Eurobarometer 89	European Citizenship –	QD1a.3 + QD2.1

		English	
2018 autumn	Standard Eurobarometer 90	European Citizenship – English	QD1a.3 + QD2.1
2019 spring	Standard Eurobarometer 91	European Citizenship – English	QD1a.3 + QD2.1

Source: Eurobarometer (2014-2019)