**Unpacking Normative Power Europe: EU Promotion of Security Norm Cluster in ASEAN**

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**Abstract**

The concept of Normative Power Europe (NPE) has sparked widespread debate over the EU’s external relations and its role in world politics. Whist the EU studies community has engaged with the NPE literature and studied EU norm-entrepreneurship at theoretical and empirical levels, the NPE literature suffers from two limitations: first, it does not fully uncover the complexity of EU diffusion items with various levels of specificity; second, the effectiveness of EU norm diffusion remains underexplored. To remedy these limitations, this article aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the EU’s projection of normative power by drawing on analytical tools from diffusion literature. By doing so, this research argues that the EU’s projection of normative power in relation to other international actors can be conceptualised as a process of diffusion EU norm-clusters in various policy areas. It also reconceptualises the impact of the EU’s normative power as varying diffusion outcomes. By undertaking an empirical case study of the EU-ASEAN security cooperation, this research adopts the analytical framework to unpack the EU’s projection of normative power and diffusion of security-related norm-cluster in relation to ASEAN.

**Keywords: Normative Power Europe, EU, ASEAN, Security, Norm-cluster, Diffusion**

1. **Introduction**

Normative Power Europe (NPE), conceived by Ian Manners in 2002, sparked widespread debate among scholars of EU external relations and the EU’s global role (Bicchi 2006; Birchfield 2013; De Zutter 2010; Manners 2002). For nearly two decades, the EU studies community has engaged with the NPE literature and studied EU norm-entrepreneurship at theoretical and empirical levels (Sicurelli 2020; Wagnsson and Hellman 2018; Whitman, 2011). Nevertheless, the existing literature on the EU’s normative power in global politics struggles to uncover the complexity of EU diffusion items across different policy areas and the effects of the Union’s projection of normative power in relation to third parties. Specifically, the conventional NPE literature primarily focused on the EU’s promotion of a single norm (or a single category of norms) in relation to third parties.[[1]](#footnote-1) This is mainly because the current research on NPE has not developed sufficient analytical tools to grasp the complexity of the EU’s diffusion items and the outcomes of diffusion process. To address this shortcoming, this article draws from diffusion theory – a growing body of literature exploring how and why international norms and policies spread across the globe (Delcour, L. and Tulmets 2019) — and develops an analytical framework offering a more nuanced understanding of the EU’s projection of normative power in international relations with a particular focus on the EU’s diffusion items with different levels of specificity and the effectiveness of diffusion outcome.

In building on analytical tools from recent diffusion literature, this article conceptualises the EU’s projection of normative power as a process of diffusing EU ‘norm-clusters’ (Winston 2018) – a looser collection of interlocking norm components with varying degrees of specificity – in specific policy areas in relation to third parties in international politics. By viewing the EU’s diffusion items as ‘norm-clusters’ rather than single norms, this study aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the substance of EU diffusion items. It also reconceptualises the impact of NPE as varying diffusion outcomes, ranging from full adoption, selective or partial adoption, to rejection. The degree of normative impact can further be evaluated by assessing whether EU diffusion items have been translated into the recipient’s domestic discursive frames, legal frameworks, and policy implementations (Risse 2016; Zimmermann 2016). Drawing on an empirical case study of EU-ASEAN security cooperation, this article operationalises the analytical framework to illustrate the EU’s projection of normative power in the security domain – a policy area that remains underexplored in the NPE scholarship. By undertaking an empirical research on EU-ASEAN relations, this research argues that the EU’s efforts to project its normative power and to increase its ideational influence in security field in relation to ASEAN can be fruitfully understood as a process of norm-cluster diffusion, which entails the Union’s promotion of a distinct combination of values and behaviours in response to some specific security problems in ASEAN. This study further identifies three fundamental EU security norms in EU–ASEAN security interactions: sustainable peace (SP), soft security regionalism (SR) and the rule of law (RoL). These fundamental EU norms have been translated into specific norm components such as mid-level norms (e.g., comprehensive approach to security) and concrete policy settings (e.g., border security management, CBRN mitigation policy, counterterrorism) through the process of EU–ASEAN security engagement. It is further argued that such diffusion process has resulted in ASEAN’s partial adoption of certain components with higher degree of specificity from the EU’s security norm-cluster. This study also departs from the conventional NPE research in the sense that from the perspective of diffusion literature, norm diffusion should be understood as a two-way process. In other words, ASEAN should not be regarded as a passive recipient downloading the EU’s norms and policy-settings. Instead, ASEAN stakeholders play a significant role in shaping this diffusion process by actively adopting the mechanisms of lesson-drawing.

Drawing on the diffusion literature (Klinger-Vidra and Schleifer 2014; Wiener 2009), this study tests the following hypothesis: the effectiveness of the EU’s diffusion is closely linked to the level of specificity of EU diffusion items. Specifically, the low degree of specificity is likely to result less effective diffusion outcomes, whereas a high degree of specificity is likely to generate more effective diffusion outcomes. Methodologically, this article draws on qualitative content analysis based on 16 author interviews with EU and ASEAN officials and experts who have closely involved in EU-ASEAN security relations between 2017 and 2020, and a wide range of primary materials including EU and ASEAN official documents, statements and media reports.

In what follows, this article will, first of all, provide a brief overview of the NPE literature while discussing its limitations. To address the identified gap of literature, the second section seeks to outline an analytical framework for illustrating the EU’s normative power from a diffusion theory perspective. Furthermore, this section sets out the hypothesis which will be tested in the empirical case study of EU-ASEAN security relations. In the third section, this article will operationalise this analytical framework in the case study as well as test the hypothesis against evidence from the EU-ASEAN security cooperation. The final section concludes the research findings.

1. **Understanding the EU’s Normative Power Europe through the lens of diffusion theory**

NPE has received tremendous attention in EU studies over the past two decades. By differentiating NPE from the previous conceptualisations of military power (Bull 1982) and civilian power (Duchêne 1972), Manners highlighted the uniqueness of the EU’s nature and identity and suggested focusing on visions, ideations, norms and values as the substantive foundation of EU foreign policy (Manners 2002; Whitman 2011). The central premise of Manners’s concept of NPE is that the EU distinguishes itself from other international actors through its ‘normative power of an ideational nature characterized by common principles and a willingness to disregard Westphalian conventions’ (Manners 2002: 239). He believes the EU’s unique normative power derives from three sources: historical context, hybrid polity and political-legal constitution (ibid. 240–1; Whitman 2011). In the post-Cold War period, the combination of these features, helped bring the shared values of member states into a common framework and facilitated commitment to shared norms and principles at both national and supranational levels. These principles and values constitute the EU as a *sui generis* political entity in policy areas where the EU places a set of universal norms (e.g., peace, liberty, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights) at the centre of its relations with the rest of the world (Manners, 2002; Whitman, 2011).

Since Manners’s original article, a large number of scholars have adopted the concept of NPE to stimulate critical reflection on the EU’s ideational power in world politics. Whereas some scholars focused primarily on conceptual and theoretical discussions on the definition of normative power (e.g. Birchfield 2013; Diez, 2005; Forsberg, 2011; Hyde-Price, 2006; Parker and Rosamond, 2013), others used the concept to inform empirical investigations of how the EU promotes its principles, such as human rights (Lerch and Schwellnus, 2006), democracy (Pace, 2009), labour rights (Orbie, 2011), or more specific norms or policy items such as R2P (Newman and Stefan, 2019), biofuels regulation (Afionis and Stringer, 2012) and regionalism (Lenz, 2013).

This body of literature provides valuable conceptual and analytical tools for understanding the EU’s international identity and its role as a significant norm-promoter in global politics (Whitman, 2011); however, there exist two limitations. First, although the NPE literature establishes a tripartite framework which identifies principles (the principles that the EU promotes), actions (the actions that the EU takes in order to promote its principles) and impact (the impact of such promotion) (Manners, 2008; Tocci, 2008; Whitman, 2011) as key factors defining the EU’s normative power, it does not fully uncover the complexity and diversity of EU diffusion items. Specifically, the majority of NPE literature focuses primarily on EU promotion of a single norm (or set of single norms), instead of unpacking the multidimensional nature of norms (Wiener 2009). Besides, it is also noteworthy that most existing studies focus on the EU’s externalisation of socio-political norms (e.g., democracy, human rights, good governance), paying relatively limited attention to the EU’s security-related norms. Second, the existing NPE framework falls short in terms of assessing the effectiveness of EU norm diffusion in empirical cases (Sjursen 2005). This is largely because the EU’s normative impact has been ill-defined in the conventional NPE literature (Forsberg, 2011). Moreover, there is a lack of concrete indicators that can be adopted in empirical research to evaluate the actual effects of the EU’s normative impact across different policy areas.

Apart from the NPE literature, there is another group of scholars who has explicitly examined the EU’s norm and policy diffusion. This scholarly camp has developed a considerable volume of theoretically informed and empirically exhaustive literature investigating into the EU’s external influence in the context of enlargement and the Union’s neighbourhood policy under the label of ‘Europeanisation’ (see for example Buller and Gamble 2002; [Börzel](https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=Gu2E6HkAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=sra) and Risse 2012; Wallace 2000). A key line of inquiry in this scholarly literature is about how the EU has leveraged its impact on policy and institutional evolution of its neighbouring and enlargement countries in various policy areas (see for example Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005). Apart from analysing the EU’s impact, the debate also examined the mechanisms through which the EU leverages its influence including material and ideational ones. While these discussions are relevant for this research, it is noteworthy that the relationship between the EU and its candidate or neighbouring countries differs from the relationship between the EU and other far away regions such as ASEAN. For instance, Europeanisation process often entails the mechanism of legal imposition which is characterized by the ‘shadow of hierarchy’, which allows the EU to legally impose its institutions and policies on its candidate states ([Börzel](https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=Gu2E6HkAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=sra) and Risse 2012: 2). However, these dynamics are largely absent in the context analyzed in this research because the potential for accession to the EU is absent in the case of ASEAN. Furthermore, although Europeanisation literature also discussed other causal mechanisms of EU policy diffusion, such as positive incentives, socialization, and learning, it has been acknowledged that these approaches have been analysed from a top-down perspective, which tends to prejudge the EU as the main source of domestic change (Bulmer and Burch 2005). As [Börzel](https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=Gu2E6HkAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=sra) and Risse (2012: 2) rightly pointed out, the further we shift away from the EU and its immediate neighbouring regions, the less it makes sense to analyse the diffusion of EU policies and institutions through the lens of Europeanisation.

To address the aforementioned limitations in the NPE and Europeanisation literature, this research seeks to develop a more nuanced analytical framework drawing on both NPE literature and the recent study on norm and policy diffusion. By doing so, this article unpacks the complexity of EU diffusion items as well as to investigate the effectiveness of EU diffusion in international politics.

In diffusion literature, diffusion is widely defined as a consequence of interdependent decision-making (Gilardi, 2012; Solingen, 2012). Specifically, it examines how prior adoption of a trait or practice in a population alters the probability of adoption for remaining non-adopters (Strang, 1991). Rich literature explains why and how international norms (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Acharya, 2004; Prantl and Nakano, 2011; Zimmermann, 2016) and concrete policy settings (Simmons and Elkins, 2004; Gilardi and Füglister, 2008) spread across the globe. Although norm diffusion and policy diffusion are often considered separate academic camps with different research focuses, this study sees diffusion literature as sharing a common conceptual ground to understand the ‘travelling’ processes of norms, ideas, models and policies (Delcour and Tulmets, 2019).

Since the inception of Manners’s normative power approach, there has been increasing convergence between the NPE research and norm diffusion literature. For instance, the original article on normative power (Manners, 2002, pp.244-245) provided a brief discussion of norm diffusion in international relations with reference to six mechanisms of diffusion.[[2]](#footnote-2) Over the past decade, scholarly discussions on norm diffusion within the NPE approach have been more widely discussed and applied to empirical research (Manners, 2013; Manners, 2015; Manners; 2021; Björkdahl, et al., 2015; Lenz, 2013). With an attempt to advance and expand this line of scholarly inquiry, this study draws on conceptual tools from the recent diffusion literature which emphasizes the multifaceted nature of norms and diffusion items (Klingler-Vidra and Schleifer 2014; Winston 2018). According to the recent literature on diffusion, when norms travel across the globe, they can be seen as social facts that are continuously reconstituted (Wiener, 2018). In other words, norms can be regarded as social phenomena that carry specific contextualised meanings (Wiener, 2009). The multifaceted nature of norm therefore can result in different diffusion outcomes in different contexts in international relations. Aware of the flexibility of norms, recent diffusion scholars, exemplified by Winston (2018), argue that conceptualising a norm as a single item is problematic as this perspective does not allow for a holistic understanding of the variety of norms as well as how norms are practiced by political actors in the real world (Winston, 2018). Rejecting the linear and static conceptualization of norms, Winston proposes redefining the international norm as a loose collection of interlocking norm components, a ‘norm-cluster’—a bounded collection of specific problems, values and behaviours (Winston 2018, p. 647). It is further argued that focusing on norm clusters and specific norm components, rather than on single norms, provides a more precise and nuanced understanding of how principle-based action diffuses and evolves across the globe (ibid, p. 638).

Whereas the existing NPE literature essentially sees EU norms as single norms (see for example Manners 2002; Whitman 2011; Lerch and Schwellnus, 2006; Pace 2009), adopting the concept of norm-cluster allows a better understanding of how the EU’s projection of normative power is realised through the diffusion of different constellation of interlinked but distinct values and behaviors in order to offer acceptable solutions to relevant problems. In doing so, this approach attaches great importance to the practicalities of the EU’s normative power and norm diffusion, which remains significantly underexplored in the existing literature.

Closely linked to the previous point, another useful idea from the recent diffusion literature relates to the degree of *specificity* of diffusion items, believed to be causally related to the effectiveness of diffusion (Klingler-Vidra and Schleifer, 2014). Whilst NPE scholarship does not explicitly discuss the implications of varying specificity in EU diffusion objects, diffusion research maintains that a low degree of specificity of diffusion items would create space for contestation and interpretation, which is likely to result in less effective diffusion outcomes. Conversely, a high degree of specificity is more likely to generate more effective diffusion outcomes (Klingler-Vidra and Schleifer 2014).

Given the flexible nature of norms and the specificity of diffusion items, the EU’s diffusion items in this research can be analyzed as norm-clusters consisting of specific problems, values and behaviours that are similar enough to be studied as a family group (Winston, 2018). Drawing on diffusion literature’s conceptualisation of diffusion items (Klingler-Vidra and Schleifer 2014), values and behaviours can be further analyzed according to different levels of specificity. In this study EU ‘values’ can be further disaggregated into overarching ideas or fundamental norms with a low level of specificity and organizational principles or governance models with a medium level of specificity (Wiener, 2009). Moreover, ‘behaviours’ can be understood as the adoption of standardized procedures or specific policy settings with a high degree of specificity (Wiener, 2009; Klingler-Vidra and Schleifer 2014). As will be demonstrated in the empirical section, by categorising EU diffusion items in such way, this research is the first attempt to offer a systemic mapping of EU security-related norms and policies vis-à-vis ASEAN. Figure 1 illustrates how the diffusion item is defined in this thesis as well as the relationship between the structure and types of norms. This approach helps to identify the full spectrum of diffusion items by taking into account norm types, norm structure, norm nature and different levels of specificity.

Figure 1. Conceptualising EU diffusion items as ‘norm-clusters’

图形用户界面, 文本, 应用程序, 聊天或短信

描述已自动生成

Source: developed by the author based on diffusion literature (Wiener, 2009; Klingler-Vidra and Schleifer, 2014; Winston 2018)

Another key advantage of diffusion literature is that it develops better analytical tools to evaluate the *effectiveness* of EU norm promotion in comparison to conventional NPE literature. The outcomes of diffusion can be assessed according to ‘the degree of norm adoption – in other words, the extent of institutional and ideational change – that takes place’ at the recipient side (Zimmermann 2016: 102; see also Acharya 2004; Wiener and Puetter 2009). Diffusion outcomes are also contingent on ‘the mediating effect of prevailing local norms, political institutions, and economic structures’ (Klingler-Vidra and Schleifer, 2014, p. 271). Normative and cultural matches have a powerful influence on diffusion and a high level of congruence between external norms and local culture can facilitate the diffusion process (Checkel 1999). Nevertheless, in empirical cases, perfect matches rarely happen. Due to the incompatibility between external practices and local norms, there is always a degree of friction between norm-sender and recipient, which leads to different and complicated adoption processes and diffusion outcomes (Risse 2016).

Specifically, three broad categories of diffusion outcomes have been identified in mainstream diffusion literature. The first type of diffusion outcome is full convergence or wholesale adoption of norms, institutions, or policy settings (Bjorkdahl et al. 2015; Klinger-Vidra and Schleifer 2014; Risse 2016). Numerous diffusion studies suggest, however, that full or complete convergence rarely happens in practice (Klinger-Vidra and Schleifer 2014). The second type of outcome can be referred to as selective adoption or adaptation: the differential and partial adoption of norms, institutions and policies, adjusting them to particular local contexts (Risse 2016). The third type of diffusion outcome refers to resistance or rejection, which is characterized by limited import of external norms or practices at the point of adoption (Bjorkdahl et al. 2015). In such situations, the targeted recipient explicitly resists or rejects particular normative models or policies promoted by external actors (Risse 2016). Building on this perspective, recent diffusion studies further point out that norm diffusion should be understood as ‘fluid processes’ and that their outcomes should be regarded as neither stable nor complete (Zimmermann 2016: 105). As a result, it is better to evaluate the effectiveness of diffusion based on three phases: (1) whether diffusion items are translated into the recipient’s domestic discursive frames; (2) whether they are translated into law; and (3) whether they are translated into policy implementation (ibid). In line with these criterial, this research develops five indicators which facilitate the empirical investigation into the EU’s diffusion outcomes in the context of EU-ASEAN relations. Table 1 provides a summary of these empirical indicators.

[Insert Table 1]

As mentioned previously, this study aims to test the following hypothesis which is derived from the diffusion literature:

The level of *specificity* of diffusion items is causally related to the *effectiveness* of diffusion. Specifically, a low degree of specificity of diffusion items is likely to result in less effective diffusion outcomes. Conversely, a high degree of specificity of diffusion item is more likely to generate more effective diffusion outcomes.

Although the diffusion literature has attempted to explain the effectiveness of norm and policy diffusion by taking into account a wider range of intervening factors such as the diffusion mechanisms and the local context of the recipient (Risse 2016; Klingler-Vidra and Schleifer 2014) , this empirical study will primarily test the above mentioned hypothesis with a particular emphasis on the relationship between the specificity of EU diffusion items and the effectiveness of diffusion outcome.

1. **Unpacking the EU’s projection of normative power: analysing EU diffusion of security norm-cluster in ASEAN**

Whilst the previous section discusses the analytical framework, this section applies this framework to analyse an empirical case study which examines the EU’s diffusion of security-related norm-cluster in ASEAN. The existing literature on ASEAN regional integration and comparative regionalism tends to support the view that ASEAN has become a regional model in its own right rather than being a reflection of any European paradigm (Acharya 2009). Considering the major differences between the EU and ASEAN states in terms of economy, history, political regime type, and geopolitical environments, the consensus view is that ‘anything comparable’ to the EU is unlikely to develop in ASEAN and the Asia–Pacific region (Narine 2009:3). Most existing research therefore considers ASEAN an unlikely case for the diffusion of EU norms and policies in general and in security issues in particular, given that ASEAN has placed a set of norms associated with the ASEAN Way of diplomacy (e.g. non-interference, respect for sovereignty, informal consultation) at the centre of its internal security community-building as well as external security relations (Acharya 2004; Katsumata 2006). Moreover, according to the existing studies on ASEAN security governance (Caballero-Anthony 2019), the development of ASEAN’s regional security policies and architecture has mainly been influenced by endogenous factors within Southeast Asia or the Asia-Pacific region, such as power rivalry between the US and China, and ASEAN’s cognitive prior and domestic factors. This implies that the formation of ASEAN’s security policies is isolated from or independent of other regional actors.

However, after conducting a more nuanced investigation into recent developments in ASEAN security policy, this research detected an increasing level of convergence between the EU and ASEAN in certain security-related ideas, policies and institutional settings, which implies that a process of interdependent norm and policy diffusion may be taking place. For instance, in the years following the establishment of EU civil protection mechanisms, ASEAN adopted numerous new initiatives, exemplified by the adoption of a legally binding accord, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), and a formal institution, the AHA Centre, both of which are comparable to the institutional settings in the EU in the same policy area (Pennisi di Floristella 2015). In addition, ASEAN has recently established the ASEAN Chemical, Biological and Radiological (CBR) Network, which aims to strengthen regional counter-terrorism preparedness and cooperation against CBR threats. This initiative illustrates ASEAN’s increasing commitment to build a regional framework to address CBR risks as well as a more integrated approach to cross-cutting security challenges (e.g. integrating counterterrorism and CBR issues); this resonates with the EU’s integrated, all-hazards and regional approach to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) security challenges. In recent years, ASEAN policymakers have also started to consider introducing a common ASEAN visa mirroring the EU’s Schengen agreement, partly as a result of increasing challenges to border security and regional human mobility (Border Management 2018).

These observations suggest an increasing degree of convergence between ASEAN and the EU in numerous security-related policy areas. It is therefore worth asking: is this increased convergence a result of the EU’s diffusion of security norm-cluster in ASEAN? Based on the findings of this research, the argument is twofold: first, despite the fact that the EU has increasingly come to view ASEAN as an equal partner and has significantly toned down its norm-exporter rhetoric in its relations with ASEAN (Chen 2018), an active process of the EU’s diffusion of security norm-cluster can still be observed at empirical level. The EU’s diffusion has primarily revolved around three overarching security norms—sustainable peace, soft security regionalism and Rule of Law—across a number of security areas. Second, although ASEAN’s domestic conditions played a significant role in determining its security policy agendas, the possibility cannot be discounted that EU norms and policies may have contributed to some of the variance in ASEAN security policies, especially as some of the EU’s diffusion items began to gain traction among ASEAN stakeholders.

* 1. **Specifying diffusion items: EU security norm-cluster**

While the EU’s externalisation of security norms is neglected by mainstream NPE scholarship, this article attempts to identify EU diffusion items in EU-ASEAN security relations. It argues that the EU has sought to promote a security norm-cluster composed of several combinations of problems, values and behaviours towards ASEAN.

According to data collected from interviews and official documents, the EU tends to emphasize two major problems associated with ASEAN’s security governance. First, EU political elites consider the increasing non-traditional security challenges to be a major problem for ASEAN. As interview data and EU documents reveal, ASEAN faces a rising number of newly emerging transborder security challenges[[3]](#footnote-3) including border issues, cybersecurity, water and energy security, human trafficking, terrorism and climate change (European Commission, 2015, pp.11–12). Second, from the EU’s perspective, the lack of effective regional security architecture and appropriate institutional and regulatory framework constitutes another significant problem for ASEAN. As various interviewees from the EU pointed out, despite the fact that ASEAN has been facing an increasing number of newly emerging security challenges, there is ‘a lack of regional security architecture that is capable of solving these security problems in ASEAN’.[[4]](#footnote-4) One interviewee who participated in the EU CBRN initiatives in ASEAN region points out that ‘there is an absence of coordination mechanisms and coherent policy framework to address CBRN crises in ASEAN’.[[5]](#footnote-5) In a similar vein, it is also believed that ASEAN institutions, particularly ASEAN Secretariat, ‘does not have sufficient capacity and resources’ to effectively address these challenges.[[6]](#footnote-6) In response to these problems, the EU has promoted three fundamental norms in relation to ASEAN: sustainable peace (SP), soft security regionalism (SR), and the rule of law (RoL). These norms are either embodied in important EU treaties and policy guidelines or rooted in EU security governance.

The first fundamental security norm examined is SP. In Manners’ initial conceptualization of NPE, sustainable peace is considered a ‘prime principle’ defining the EU’s external relations (Manners 2009:4). In Manners’ theorization of normative power, SP refers to ‘resolving both the structural causes and violent symptoms of conflict in ways that guarantee, rather than enforce peace’ (Manners 2008:131). Specifically, the EU’s principle of SP is primarily concerned with ‘addressing the structural causes of conflict through extensive development aid policies and support for bottom-up, local development programs that tackled the roots of inequality such as health, education, and infrastructure’ (Manners 2008:135). Some other studies echo Manners’ argument and acknowledge that the EU should be seen as a distinct norm-entrepreneur in sustainable peace or peacebuilding in its external relations (Merlingen and Ostrauskaite 2005; Merlingen 2009). Although sustainable peace is seen as a key component and a prime principle defining the EU’s normative power, a curious omission in the existing NPE research is the lack of empirically grounded discussion on how the EU promotes the norm of sustainable peace in its external relations.

Drawing on the concept of norm-cluster mentioned earlier, this research argues that in EU foreign policy in general and in EU-ASEAN relations in particular, the fundamental security norm of SP can be seen as transferring into more specific norm components with a higher degree of specificity. In particular, we argue that the comprehensive (or integrated) approach to security (CA) constitutes a middle-level norm embedded within the Union’s overarching idea of SP. The norm of CA has a higher level of specificity: in comparison to SP, which underpins the EU’s early experience of peacebuilding and its overall relations with the rest of the world (Manners 2008), CA represents a more concrete idea guiding the operationalization of the EU’s external security strategy, in particular the development of ESDP and CSDP (Drent 2011; Faleg 2017). Besides, compared to the norm of sustainable peace, CA is defined in a number of recent EU documents in a clearer manner over the last decade (Zwolski 2012). Specifically, this middle-level norm was developed by the EU as a result of the realisation that security and development challenges were increasingly interconnected.[[7]](#footnote-7) The EU defines CA as ‘strategically coherent use of EU tools and instruments’ for external actions relating to crisis or conflict situations (European Union, 2013). Since becoming a guiding principle of EU external actions after the joint communication of December 2013 (European Union, 2013), CA has included both internal EU coordination and implementation of external cross-sector activities linking conflict prevention, stabilization, and development (EEAS, 2016).

It is worth examining how the EU has attempted to diffuse the norms of SP and CA in the context of EU–ASEAN security relations. To what extent are these norms visible in the EU’s concrete security-related policies towards ASEAN? First, the EU’s attempts to diffuse the norms of SP and CA can be observed in its active engagement in debates on conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy in ASEAN through multilateral or interregional fora such as ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP). Specifically, the EU has promoted its approach to preventive diplomacy[[8]](#footnote-8) through regular participation in ARF activities that reflect the three phases of the development of ARF’s objectives: confidence building, preventive diplomacy and approach elaboration to conflicts (ARF 1995). The EU has long been an active contributor to the Inter-Sessional Support Group on Confidence-Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBM and PD). For instance, in Helsinki in 2007, the EU co-chaired an ARI ISG on CBMs and PD through which it sought to promote its confidence-building practices and experiences by discussing the OSCE’s potential for strengthening ties with ARF (CSR, 2007). In addition, through the CSCAP, the EU initiated a two-year study group entitled ‘Towards Preventive Diplomacy’, which concluded in November 2015.[[9]](#footnote-9) The study group was co-chaired by the EU, Malaysia, Singapore and New Zealand. Its primary objective was to contribute to the ARF’s ambition to ‘move towards Preventive Diplomacy’ by providing a gap analysis of existing PD cases in the Asia–Pacific region (CSCAP, 2015).

Second, the EU has sought to promote the norms of SP and CA by establishing a strong link between development aid programmes and non-traditional or soft security issues. This reflects the EU’s strategy of addressing the root causes of security problems through multifaceted policy instruments. An increasing nexus between security and development policies can be observed in the EU’s recent development cooperation programmes with ASEAN and its member states. It can be observed that EU-funded IcSP projects in Southeast Asia projects attach great importance to fostering ‘sustainable peace and human security in conflict-affected areas’, ‘strengthening local capacities and mechanisms for inclusive peace’ and ‘strengthening civilian protection towards sustaining peace and promoting community resilience and social cohesion’ in Southeast Asia (European Commission, 2021). Apart from supporting individual ASEAN states at interregional level, the EU updated its development cooperation plan in 2013 with a stronger focus on non-traditional security issues. Specifically, the EU–ASEAN development cooperation agenda for 2014–20 has a dedicated focal sector on ‘climate change, environment and disaster management’, which can be seen as reflecting the EU’s desire to develop a stronger connection between development assistance and security issues (EU ASEAN Blue Book, 2020). By incorporating security-related issues into development cooperation programmes, the EU has successfully established a closer link between its development assistance policy and its wider goal of promoting a comprehensive approach to security in ASEAN. As mentioned by an interviewee from DG Devco, the EU’s development aid programmes have been intertwined with its foreign and security policy towards ASEAN.[[10]](#footnote-10)

The second fundamental norm identified is the EU’s idea and practice of security regionalism (SR). Research has explained the consolidation of European security regionalism since the early 2000s (Cross, 2011), but little attention has been paid to the EU’s diffusion of regionalism to other regional or international actors in the security domain. This is mainly because security integration remains a relatively weak aspect of the EU’s regionalism process, especially in comparison to the EU’s Common Commercial Policy. Although some scholarly discussions contend that the EU’s CSDP and CFSP should be understood as forms of security cooperation rather than security regionalism due to its strong emphasis on intergovernmentalism (Howorth, 2012), interview data demonstrates that the EU’s security governance goes far beyond intergovernmental cooperation. A growing sense of de facto supranationalism underlies the development of EU security governance, rendering a dichotomy between cooperation and integration impossible. In other words, although the EU’s security governance architecture was officially defined as intergovernmental, security regionalism has become an increasingly important norm among political elites in the EU and its member states.[[11]](#footnote-11)

In the context of EU–ASEAN security relations, the EU does not appear to promote SR as a core norm in its rhetoric. However, research findings suggest that EU policymakers do seek to promote a soft form of security integration[[12]](#footnote-12) in ASEAN. Interview data shows the EU believes its own experience and practice can offer useful lessons for ASEAN, especially in soft security or non-conventional security areas, and has attempted to share these experiences with ASEAN.[[13]](#footnote-13) This approach is reflected in the 2015 Communication, which claims that ASEAN ‘can draw inspiration from the EU’s experience of framing security cooperation at regional level’ (European Commission 2015, p.11).

While the idea of SR remains broad and abstract, the EU seeks to transform this overarching idea into more specific diffusion items at a practical level. For example, the EU promoted soft security regionalism in ASEAN by funding a project known as the EU–ASEAN Migration and Border Management Programme (EA–MBMP) in 2012, extended into a second phase in 2015. EA–MBMP aims to improve intra-ASEAN connectivity and border security through enhancing law enforcement networks and cooperation at main regional hubs (ASEAN, 2015). The EU Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence (CBRN CoE) initiative also demonstrates how the EU translates the general idea of SR into specific policy. According to the EU, the CBRN CoE was established ‘in response to the need to strengthen the institutional capacity of countries outside the EU to mitigate CBRN risks’ (European Commission, 2019). EU CoE activities can be interpreted as promoting soft security regionalism in the sense that ‘the EU has a mature framework of preventing and managing CBRN challenges’ and that it ‘tries to deliver this policy framework in the Southeast Asian region’.[[14]](#footnote-14)

The third fundamental norm the EU seeks to promote is the (international) rule of law (RoL). According to the Treaty of the European Union, ‘the EU is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights’ (TEU Article 2), and the EU ‘seeks to advance its principles in the wider world’ (TEU Article 21). The EU’s promotion of the RoL is primarily regarded as an annex to democracy, good governance and human rights and has rarely been discussed in a security-related context.

In the specific case of EU–ASEAN security relations, it can be observed that, when formulating its discourse on the rule of law, the EU has attached less importance to democracy and good governance. Rather, the EU’s promotion of RoL to ASEAN has centred around two specific dimensions: first, the EU has prioritized its promotion of respect for ‘international rule of law’ in its security relations with ASEAN.[[15]](#footnote-15) Second, the EU has attempted to promote RoL in ASEAN by supporting and strengthening the aspect of domestic law-making and law-enforcement across security-related sectors such as border management, cybersecurity, anti-trafficking, CBRN risk management, and maritime security.

With regards to the promotion of international RoL, the EU’s consideration has been consistently reflected in EU official documents or statements concerning EU–ASEAN security relations. For instance, the 2003 Communication on Southeast Asia stressed the importance of international RoL in addressing security issues such as terrorism, organized crime, illegal migration and human trafficking (European Commission 2003). Similarly, the Nuremberg Declaration on the EU–ASEAN Enhanced Partnership in 2007 emphasized that ‘cooperation in addressing and combating terrorism, trafficking in human beings, drug trafficking, sea piracy, arms smuggling, money laundering, cybercrime and related trans-national crime’ should be undertaken ‘in accordance with international law’ (Council of the EU, 2007: 3). Whereas the norm of RoL remained relatively vague in these statements, in recent years the EU has attempted to translate this overarching idea into more specific diffusion items in different security-related policy contexts.

Specifically, in the 2012 Guidelines on the EU’s Foreign and Security Policy in East Asia, the EU explicitly linked the norm of RoL to maritime security issues. With regard to the South China Sea tensions, the EU expressed its ‘perspective of promoting the rules-based international system’ and encouraged ‘the parties concerned to resolve disputes through peaceful and cooperative solutions in accordance with international law (in particular UNCLOS)’ (Council of the EU, 2012: 19). The 2015 Joint Communication on EU–ASEAN relations also noted that the EU ‘has a strong interest in maintaining stability and security in the South China Sea, as well as respect for international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)’ (European Commission, 2015: 12). The document also called for ASEAN and China to resolve the dispute by agreeing a Code of Conduct on the South China Sea in line with international law (ibid.). According to an EU diplomat, since the increase of South China Sea tensions in 2012, the EU has paid increasing attention to maritime security issues in ASEAN. In the hope of ‘featuring law enforcement in maritime governance’, the EU has ‘stressed the importance of principles such as international maritime law and navigation rules’ through cooperation mechanisms such as the ASEAN–EU High Level Maritime Forums and ARF.[[16]](#footnote-16)

Apart from emphasizing the international dimension of RoL, the EU has also sought to help ASEAN and its member states to strengthen domestic legislation and law-enforcement in various security-related sectors. Notably, in the Plan of Action to implement the Nuremberg Declaration on an EU–ASEAN enhanced partnership (2007–12), the EU stressed its ‘objective of strengthening the capacities of national law enforcement agencies’ in the ASEAN region in multiple security areas. Specifically, the EU announced its intention to ‘step up EU technical assistance, enhance cooperation in information sharing, legislative framework and law enforcement…in support of efforts to tackle the problem of transnational crime’(European Commission 2007). From the EU’s perspective, enhancing national legislative framework and law enforcement capacity in security-related issue areas can make a significant contribution to addressing ASEAN’s non-traditional security challenges.[[17]](#footnote-17) Notably, the EU has prioritized the enhancement of legislative frameworks and law enforcement in its cooperation with ASEAN in border management and CBRN risk mitigation. The EU’s promotion of domestic RoL to ASEAN can be observed in the EU–ASEAN Migration and Border Management Programme II, which aims at ‘improving connectivity through strengthening law enforcement networks and cooperation at main regional transit hubs’ in ASEAN.[[18]](#footnote-18) The programme included training programmes and workshops to strengthen the capabilities of law enforcement entities and empower law enforcement officials to address security challenges including migrant smuggling, human trafficking and border management challenges.[[19]](#footnote-19) Similarly, in EU–ASEAN cooperation in CBRN risk management, support to enhance national legislative frameworks and law enforcement in CBRN has been embedded in multiple EU CBRN CoE projects in ASEAN (e.g. Project 46, Project 62, Project 81). For instance, the EU CBRN CoE 46 project has a dedicated component, ‘support to strengthen legal framework’, which focused on ‘awareness raising concerning CBRN risk mitigation and technical support to strengthen legal framework’ in the ASEAN region.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Figure 1. EU security norm cluster in EU-ASEAN security relations

图示

描述已自动生成

Source: developed by the author based on the norm-cluster model (Winston 2018)

To summarize, two major problems and three fundamental security-related norms can be identified as low-specificity diffusion items in the context of EU–ASEAN security cooperation, including SP, SR and RoL. Each norm has been transferred into more specific diffusion items (either mid-level norms such as CA or concrete policy settings and behaviours). Figure 1 illustrates the structure of the EU’s security norm-cluster in this case study. It is important to note that these three overarching norms are distinct but interrelated at an empirical level. In the context of EU–ASEAN security relations, the three norms are often treated as cross-cutting issues and therefore intertwined across a range of security-related policy areas.

* 1. **Assessing normative impact: Effectiveness of EU diffusion of security norm-cluster in ASEAN**

Based on the empirical indicators listed in Table 1, this research has evaluated the EU’s normative impact across various security-related issue areas within the context of EU-ASEAN cooperation. The findings suggest that the effectiveness of the EU’s diffusion varies across the different security-related norm components with different levels of specificity, which largely confirms the hypothesis developed in the analytical framework. This research reveals that a partial adoption of EU norm-cluster can be observed in ASEAN in the sense that some components within the EU’s security norm-cluster are being transferred into ASEAN’s domestic discursive frames and, to a lesser extent, legal frameworks and policy implementation. In comparison to diffusion items with lower degree of specificity (e.g., overarching ideas), EU diffusion items with higher degree of specificity (e.g., precise policy-settings) have gained more traction among ASEAN stakeholders. Furthermore, this research also finds that, instead of passively downloading the EU’s ideas and practices, ASEAN stakeholders have played a crucial role in shaping the diffusion processes through the mechanism of lesson-drawing which takes place at the level of concrete policy settings. By evaluating the EU’s diffusion outcomes according to the empirical indicators identified in the analytical framework, Table 2, 3 and 4 provide a summary of the EU’s normative impact across three fundamental security norms and various policy sectors.

[Insert Table 2, 3 and 4]

The indicators of effectiveness discussed in the tables 2 – 4 suggest that the EU’s diffusion of specific policy prescriptions and behaviours with a higher level of specificity has resulted in some positive diffusion outcomes. For instance, as shown in table 3, in terms of the EU’s promotion of SR in the sphere of border management, two important indicators can be observed: first, the EU was considered a crucial reference point that has contributed to shaping new policy agenda in ASEAN, exemplified by the ongoing discussion about the development of an ASEAN common visa based on the Schengen model.[[21]](#footnote-21) Second, the research findings show that the EU’s policy initiatives, especially EA–MBMP projects, have received positive responses from ASEAN participants, resulting in active learning processes among ASEAN member states. For instance, in August 2018, a meeting was held under the framework of the EA–MBMP. During the meeting, representatives from ASEAN member states, industry, law enforcement departments, academia, the EU, INTERPOL and the Habibie Center in Jakarta reviewed a feasibility study concerning an ASEAN common visa and discussed practical issues relating to border security. In a media report, it is explicitly noted that the ASEAN common visa vision ‘borrows from Europe’s Schengen model (Border Management 2018). The project’s press release also noted that a key component of the Comprehensive Feasibility Study on ASEAN Common Visa Workshop was to ‘shaping practical recommendations on mobility and border security’ in ASEAN region by ‘obtaining a greater understanding on how the EU was able to overcome issues and challenges in its implementation of the Schengen Visa Scheme’ (Interpol, 2017). The empirical findings reveal that ASEAN stakeholders have sought to play an active role in shaping this dynamic diffusion process. For example, in a number of EU CBRN CoE Projects in Southeast Asia (see Table 3), rather than being indifferent to EU ideas and policies, ASEAN stakeholders tended to be active learners who participated in shaping the project agenda and curriculum. According to an interviewed officials, with a vision and aspiration to develop a regional framework to address CBRN challenges, ASEAN member states took the initiative to request CBRN assistance and training from the EU: ‘the need comes from ASEAN countries, not the EU telling them what they need’.[[22]](#footnote-22)

Another example of the EU’s effective policy-level diffusion can be observed in its promotion of legislative and regulatory frameworks in ASEAN and RoL-based counterterrorism measures in conjunction with the UN. By providing financial and technical assistance through the EU–UNODC Joint Initiative within the framework of the Counterterrorism sub-programme, the EU’s efforts have generated a number of legislative changes in ASEAN member states (see Table 4). For instance, such joint initiative resulted in a number of positive outcomes, including the drafting of new anti-terrorist financing law according to international standards and adopted in the Philippines, Cambodia and Lao PDR, technical support on extradition, mutual legal assistance laws and ratification of UN Conventions in general recognized by Laos and the Philippines and international stakeholders, extradition law adopted in Lao PDR in 2012 (UNODC 2016: 19-20).This is a telling example of how diffusion items with higher level of specificity have been translated into the recipient’s domestic legal contexts as a result of EU-funded initiatives.

By comparing effectiveness indicators across various security-related policy areas as listed in Table 2 – 4, the research has identified some general patterns concerning the EU’s normative impact. First, the EU’s normative impact seems to be more tangible in its promotion of RoL and SR than in the promotion of SP. Specifically, whereas the EU’s diffusion of SP has contributed to generating new agendas and initiatives on preventive diplomacy within ARF and CSCAP and received positive comments from ASEAN stakeholders, there has been no indicator demonstrating that EU diffusion efforts result in identifiable policy changes and implementations in ASEAN. Nor has the EU’s promotion of SP generated legislative adjustments in ASEAN and its member states. To the contrary, the EU’s diffusion of RoL and SR norms and policy prescriptions has resulted in new policy implementation, legislative adjustments and ideational shifts in certain policy areas in ASEAN.

Second, an investigation into those indicators shows that ASEAN actors tend to be more receptive to the EU’s diffusion of concrete policy settings. In other words, the EU’s promotion of items with higher degree of specificity seems to be more effective than norm components with a lower degree of specificity. Third, the research finds that the EU is less capable of influencing ASEAN by altering ASEANs’ actual behaviour or encouraging ASEAN to sign up new legislations. EU norm and policy diffusion seems to play a more effective role in contributing to the construction of new themes and policy agendas, shaping internal debate, creating new institutional networks, improving some ASEAN member states’ domestic capacity and legislative environment, and constructing a positive image among ASEAN players. As a result, it can be argued that ASEAN remains at the early stages (stage 1 and 2) of internalizing EU norm-cluster. According to the indicators listed in Table 1, the EU’s norm and policy promotion has resulted in a process of partial adoption of EU norm-cluster in ASEAN. As evidenced in this case study, EU security-related norms and policies identified in this study are essentially being translated into ASEAN’s discourse or domestic discursive frames, with a limited number of diffusion items being translated into law and policy implementation.

**Conclusion**

The concept of Normative Power Europe generated a vibrant debate on the EU’s role as a norm-diffuser in world politics. Existing NPE research did not fully uncover the complexity of EU diffusion items or disentangle the effects of the EU’s norm diffusion, however. By introducing analytical tools from diffusion literature, this study provides a more nuanced framework which helps remedy the limitations of NPE scholarship. Recognising the elastic nature of international norms, the paper conceptualised EU diffusion items not as single norms but as norm-clusters that may contain interrelated specific problems, values and behaviours with different levels of specificity. As shown in the case of EU-ASEAN security cooperation, the EU highlights two problems associated with ASEAN’s security environment: an increase in transnational and non-traditional security challenges, and a lack of effective regional architecture to address these security problems. Responding to these issues, the EU has attempted to promote three overarching security norms across ASEAN: sustainable peace; security regionalism; and rule of law. The article then showed that each of these fundamental norms has been translated into specific norm components such as mid-level norms (e.g., comprehensive approach to security) and precise policy settings (e.g., border security management, CBRN mitigation policy) throughout the process of the EU’s interaction with ASEAN in the security domain. Viewing EU diffusion items in this way contributes to advancing NPE research as it calls for a more nuanced understanding of the norms and actions underpinning the EU’s projection of ideational power in a particular policy context. In addition, this research makes a contribution to furthering our understanding of the EU’s normative impact vis-à-vis a third actor in international politics. As demonstrated in this case study, the effectiveness of EU diffusion may vary across the different norm components with different degrees of specificity. The case study in this research largely confirms the hypothesis derived from the diffusion literature concerning the causal relationship between the specificity of diffusion items and the effectiveness of diffusion outcomes. Specifically, in the context of EU-ASEAN security relations, research findings reveal a partial adoption of EU norm-cluster in ASEAN. Notably, a number of EU security norm-components with higher levels of specificity (e.g., precise policy-settings in border management, CBRN risk mitigation) have gained increasing traction among ASEAN stakeholders and have been translated into ASEAN’s domestic discursive frames, legal frameworks or policy implementation. By analysing EU diffusion outcomes in accordance with various empirical indicators, this research has advanced our understanding of the EU’s normative impact and the effects of EU diffusion in world politics at empirical level.

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Annex - Table 1. Indicators for assessing the effectiveness of EU diffusion

Rejection

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Degree of effective diffusion | Indicator of effectiveness | Source of information |
| Stage 1: Diffusion items translated into the recipient’s domestic discursive frames | 1. The EU’s policies and initiatives have received positive responses and feedbacks from ASEAN stakeholders. 2. The EU has influenced the construction of policy problems or policy agendas in a given issue area in ASEAN 3. The EU demonstrably changed the opinions of ASEAN stakeholders in internal debates concerning a given issue area | ASEAN official documents  Evaluation reports of EU-ASEAN cooperation programmes  Media articles  Interview data  Secondary sources |
| Stage 2: Diffusion items translated into law | 1. ASEAN’s adoption of international legal documents or the development of new domestic laws and regulations as a result of EU norm and policy diffusion | ASEAN official documents  Evaluation reports of EU-ASEAN cooperation programmes  Media articles  Interview data  Secondary sources |
| Stage 3: Diffusion items translated into implementation | 1. New policy implementations or policy changes in ASEAN as a result of EU norm and policy diffusion | ASEAN official documents  Evaluation reports of EU-ASEAN cooperation programmes  Media articles  Interview data  Secondary sources |

Full adoption

Partial adoption

Table 2. the EU’s diffusion of Sustainable Peace in ASEAN

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Security Norms** | **Policy areas and relevant behaviours** | **Key dialogue and policy Instruments** | **Indicators of effectiveness** |
| Sustainable Peace and Comprehensive Approach to Security | Preventive Diplomacy, conflict prevention and peace building (developing a holistic and multi-faceted approach to conflicts and crises drawing on a wide range of policy instruments) | * The EU’s participation in ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Support Group on Confidence-Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy * Asia-Europe Roundtable Workshop on Early Warning System in Minority Conflicts * EU-initiated CSCAP study group on PD (2013–15) * The EU has enhanced the nexus between development aid and security-related issues (e.g., a wide range of IcSP projects in Southeast Asia focusing on sustainable peace, human security and conflict prevention) | * Indicator 1. The EU’s policy initiatives, such as its contributions to ARF, CSCAP, and IcSP projects, received positive responses from participants based on interviews with EU officials who participated in these activities, and ASEAN policymakers and experts.[[23]](#footnote-23) * Indicator 2. The EU has contributed to constructing or shaping new policy agenda of the target recipient. Examples include the EU’s contribution to shaping the agenda of ARF Inter-sessional support group on CBM and PD by acting as co-chair. Specifically, the EU proposed, initiated and sponsored events supporting the ARF and AIPR capacities, including workshop training on PD and Mediation in 2014. It also initiated the CSCAP study group on PD and a dedicated conference/workshop on PD and early warning capacities in 2017.[[24]](#footnote-24) |

Table 3. the EU’s diffusion of soft security regionalism in ASEAN

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Security Norms** | **Policy areas and relevant behaviours** | **Key Dialogue and Policy Instruments** | Indicators of effectiveness |
| Soft Security Regionalism | Border Security  (Foster regional approaches to tackle border security challenges; improve information-sharing and harmonization of regulations concerning border management; improve intra-regional connectivity and border security through enhancing law enforcement networks and cooperation at regional hubs) | EA-MBMP: Project activities include trainings, workshops, seminars implemented by Interpol, aiming to provide a platform for ASEAN border security and immigration officials to exchange information, best practices and ideas about relevant knowledge and techniques of border security governance | * Indicator 1. The EU’s policy initiatives receive positive respond from participants based on interviews with EU officials who participated in these activities, and ASEAN policymakers and experts (Interpol 2016; 2017a; 2017b; 2017c) * Indicator 2 & 3. The EU has contributed to constructing the new policy agenda of ASEAN stakeholders and has contributed to shaping the opinions of ASEAN stakeholders in internal debates on the issue concerning the development of an ASEAN common visa (Border Management 2018, Interpol interview 2016; 2017a). |
| CBRN risk management (Foster regional approaches to tackle CBRN threats; increase the capacity of the regional secretariats; improve coordination between national and regional authorities to address CBRN risks) | EU CBRN CoE projects, which adopt bottom-up, national and regional approaches, aiming to promote and facilitate the development of a regional framework to tackle CBRN crises in the SEA region; activities take various forms such as training programmes, workshops, seminars, research | * Indicator 1. EU policy initiatives receive a positive response from participants based on interviews with EU officials who participated in these activities, and ASEAN policymakers and experts[[25]](#footnote-25) * Indicator 2. The EU has contributed to constructing or shaping the new policy agenda of ASEAN stakeholders: the EU has facilitated ASEAN participant countries’ development of national CBRN action plans.[[26]](#footnote-26) * Indicator 3. The EU has contributed to changing the opinions of ASEAN stakeholders’ ideas in internal debates, bridging the gap between CBRN security and CBRN safety.[[27]](#footnote-27) |

Table 4. the EU’s diffusion of Rule of Law in ASEAN

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Security Norms** | **Policy areas and relevant behaviours** | **Key Dialogue and Policy Instruments** | **Indicators of effectiveness** |
| Rule of Law (domestic and international) | Maritime Security  (Promoting UNCLOS, FON, and universal application of international law; fighting against IUU; enhance law enforcement at sea) | * ARF: EU’s co-chairmanship of the ARF-Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (2017–20): organizing a series of workshops on maritime law enforcement, promoting best practice-sharing and concrete measures for reducing regional tensions, enhancing Maritime Domain Awareness; land–sea and civil–military nexus, and IUU fishing * ASEAN–EU High Level Dialogue on Maritime Security, focusing on exchange of practices in law enforcement at sea * EU–ASEAN seminars on security and defence: maritime security as one of the key themes for the seminar since its inception in 2014; activities take the forms of workshops and technical training focusing on exchange of ideas and practices * E-READI: several themes focusing on fisheries policy, IUU fishing and marine natural environment | Indicator 4. ASEAN stakeholders signed up to international legal documents: ASEAN jointly declared war on IUU fishing through the SEAFDEC in 2016, partly thanks to the EC’s yellow card (The ASEAN Post 2018)[[28]](#footnote-28) |
| Border Security (Strengthen law enforcement networks and cooperation at main regional transit hubs in ASEAN countries;  improve coordination amongst ASEAN’s law enforcement agencies in implementing effective border controls) | * EU–ASEAN Migration and Border Management Programme (EAMBMP): Training courses involving law enforcement officials from ASEAN MS; the training was based on Interpol’s global policing capacities, aiming to provide support for daily operations of border management and law enforcement across the ASEAN region | * Indicator 1. The EU’s policy initiatives receive positive response from participants based on interviews with EU officials who participated in these activities, and ASEAN policymakers and experts (Interpol Interview 2016; 2017a; 2017b; 2017c) * Indicator 5. Observation of ASEAN’s policy changes or new policy implementations as a result of EU initiatives: under EAMBMP I, successful expansion of access to INTERPOL’s tools and services to frontline police in Cambodia and Vietnam; the connection of 16 border points in Cambodia and Vietnam to I-24/7 Interpol’s secure global communications system; under EAMBMP II, 3 border points were connected to the INTERPOL network[[29]](#footnote-29) |
| Combat terrorism and transnational crime (Promoting cooperation on the implementation of UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols) | * ARF: EU’s co-chairmanships of ARF meetings on counterterrorism and transnational crime * EU-UNODC Joint Initiative in the framework of the CT sub-programme (EU provided USD 2,600,728 for technical assistance; Programme activities include support the establishment of legislative and regulatory frameworks in ASEAN participant countries, efforts to build implementation capacity for rule-of-law-based CT measures through training and workshop events (UNODC 2016)[[30]](#footnote-30) | * Indicator 4. The drafting of new anti-terrorist financing law according to international standards and adopted in the Philippines, Cambodia and Lao PDR; Technical support on extradition, mutual legal assistance laws and ratification of UN Conventions in general recognized by Laos and the Philippines and international stakeholders; The sub-programme reports contributing to the following specific legislative outcomes through the provision of drafting and other technical assistance: Extradition law passed in Lao PDR in 2012 (followed up by training to prosecutors from implementation in 7 provinces); Submission of the draft bill on Mutual Legal Assistance and an amendment to the Extradition law in the Philippines; Ratification of the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (UNODC 2016: 19-20) |
| CBRN risk management, disarmament and non-proliferation (Promoting non-proliferation and disarmament based on international law and conventions;  combating illegal transfer of SAWL in line with the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit trade in SALW;  improve the regulation of international trade in conventional arms) | * EU CBRN CoE projects: with specific components to improve the participant countries’ legislation in addressing CBRN risks and to combat illicit trade in biological and chemical weapons * ARF: EU’s participation in ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on non-proliferation and disarmament | Indicator 1. The EU’s policy initiatives receive positive response from participants based on interviews with EU officials who participated in these activities, and ASEAN policymakers and experts[[31]](#footnote-31) |

1. For instance, the conventional NPE literature focuses primarily on the EU’s promotion of single norms in international relations, exemplified by the EU’s diffusion of human rights (Erickson 2013), democracy (Powel 2009), sexual minority rights (Mos 2013), sustainable development (Lightfoot and Burchell 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The initial discussion on NPE (Manners, 2002) provided a brief discussion on norm diffusion in international relations, drawing on the international dimension of democratisation (Whitehead 1996), cultural diffusion on political learning in the democratisation of China (Kinnvall 1995), and the EU’s international network of relations (Manners and Whitman, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Author interview with desk officer ASEAN and Afghanistan, Asia, Australia & New Zealand Unit European Parliament. Brussels. 17 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Author interview with Head of Strategy Section, Security Policy Directorate, EEAS. Brussels. 15 May 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Author interview with a former Expert for the EU CBRN CoE Project 46. London. 17 April 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Author interview with the former Deputy Head of Mission, the EU Mission to ASEAN. Beijing. 3 November 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Author interview with an EU official from DG Devco, Brussels. 3 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. In the context of the EU, Preventive Diplomacy was explicitly mentioned in a 1996 Communication as a way to address tensions through opening political dialogue with affected parties (European Commission 1996). The EU’s vision of PD was further explained in the 2003 European Security Strategy, which stressed ‘the need to be able to act before countries around us deteriorate, when signs of proliferation are detected, and before humanitarian emergencies arise. Preventive engagement can avoid more serious problems in the future’ (Council of the EU 2003: 11). The 2016 EU Global Strategy highlighted the need to ‘redouble our efforts on prevention, monitoring root causes’ in a ‘more connected, contested and complex world’ (EEAS 2016). The document also stressed that ‘Early warning is of little use unless it is followed by early action. This implies regular reporting and proposals to the Council, engaging in preventive diplomacy and mediation by mobilizing EU delegations and Special Representatives, and deepening partnerships with civil society’ (ibid.). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. A detailed introduction to the study group can be found at CSCAP, ‘Towards Preventive Diplomacy: promoting prospects for mediation and peaceful settlement of disputes in the Asia-Pacific’, available at: <<http://www.cscap.org/index.php?page=towards-preventive-diplomacy>>. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Author interview with an EU official from DG Devco, Brussels. 3 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Author interview with the former Deputy Head of Mission, the EU Mission to ASEAN, Beijing. 3 November 2017; Author interview with a former Member of Cabinet, HRVP. 15 May 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. In line with Cross’ argument, soft integration can be understood as ‘the development of a strongly held norm among actors to always deal with particular issues collectively and interdependently’ (Cross, 2011, p. 50). This process of harmonization does not necessarily require a supranational mandate but is based on member states’ desire to harmonize their regulations and laws ( p. 51). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Author interview with desk officer ASEAN and Afghanistan, Asia, Australia & New Zealand Unit European Parliament. Brussels. 17 February 2017; Interview with ASEAN Desk Officer, EEAS. Brussels. 25 March 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Interview with a former expert for the EU CBRN CoE Project 46. London. 17 April 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Author interview with an EU official from DG Devco, Brussels. 3 February 2017. Author interview with the former Deputy Head of Mission, the EU Mission to ASEAN, Beijing. 3 November 2017; Author interview with a former Member of Cabinet, HRVP. 15 May 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Author interview with the Head of Strategy Section, Security Policy Directorate, EEAS. Brussels. 15 May 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Author interview with the Policy Officer for Asia, CSDP Policy, Partnerships and Agreements, CMPD, EEAS. Brussels. Brussels. 25 April 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. see ASEAN Secretariat’s report on the launch of 2nd phase of EU-ASEAN border management programme, available at: <https://asean.org/eu-asean-launch-2nd-phase-of-border-management-programme/> [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. See the EU CBRN CoE Project 46 which has a dedicated component aiming to strengthen legal framework concerning CBRN risk management, available at: <http://www.cbrn-coe46.eu/index.php/the-project/strengthening-legal-framework> [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. This observation is confirmed by an author interview with a participant of the EA-MBMP project as well as by media reports, such as ‘Immigration heads’ meeting moots ASEAN common visa’, 13 August 2018, Border Management, available at: <http://bordermanagement.net/?p=277>; and ‘ASEAN ponders a common visa scheme’, 07 May 2017, Myanmar Times, available at: <https://www.mmtimes.com/asean-focus/26000-asean-ponders-a-common-visa-scheme.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Author interview with the Regional Coordinator of the EU CBRN CoE for Southeast Asia, EU Delegation in the Philippines. 30 May 2019. Author interview with a Senior Expert of an EU CBRN CoE project for Southeast Asia. 30 June 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Author interviews with the former Secretary-General of ASEAN. Singapore. 24 August 2017; author interview with the former Deputy Head of Mission, the EU Mission to ASEAN. Beijing. 3 November 2017; author interview with a former senior EU Diplomat. Phone interview. 30 May 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. ASEAN Regional Forum, seminar on Preventive Diplomacy and Early Warning Systems: Concept Paper: <http://aseanregionalforum.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Annex-46-Concept-Paper-for-the-ARF-Seminar-on-PD-and-Early-Warning-Systems.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Author interview with Regional Coordinator of the EU CBRN CoE for Southeast Asia, 30 May 2019; Author interview with two senior experts of EU CBRN CoE projects for Southeast Asia. Phone interview. 30 June 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Author interview with two senior experts of EU CBRN CoE projects for Southeast Asia. Phone interview. 30 June 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Source: ‘hard tackle against illegal fishing’, the ASEAN Post, 7 August 2018, available at: <https://theaseanpost.com/article/hard-tackle-against-illegal-fishing> [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Source: see ASEAN Secretariat’s news on the launch of 2nd phase of EU-ASEAN border management programme, available at: <https://asean.org/eu-asean-launch-2nd-phase-of-border-management-programme/> [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Available at: https://www.unodc.org/documents/evaluation/Independent\_Project\_Evaluations/2016/XAPX37\_Sub-Programme\_Counter-Terrorism\_East\_and\_Southeast\_Asia\_final\_evaluation\_report\_2016.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Author interview with Regional Coordinator of the EU CBRN CoE for Southeast Asia, 30 May 2019; Author interview with two senior experts of EU CBRN CoE projects for Southeast Asia. Phone interview. 30 June 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)