



## THE CHANGING DYNAMICS OF GERMAN POLITICS: AN OVERVIEW

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### Abstract

*Ever-transforming economic and political shifts and ever-developing German position in the EU and world may lead Germany to more involvement in the world politics. This paper argues that we should analyze the German leadership in three domains; Leadership in European Community, European neighborhood and International politics. An in-depth research through analysis identify that Germany has already developed its leadership reputation in the European Community through European integration process since World War II, although Germany never declare it as leadership. The second domain, specifically in the case of its Ostpolitik, to some extent, Germany has inclined to come out of European sphere towards becoming an international political leader or hegemon but there are many obstacles, and challenges. Germany has the potential to enlarge its European Economic Leadership and Model of non-aggression in international affairs. This model can lead Germany towards becoming influencing power.*

**Keywords:** European Union, German Politics, German Leadership, Peace, CFSP, Ostpolitik

### Introduction

Recently, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of EU has been in jeopardy. The EU was expecting that the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009 would resolve many institutional problems of CFSP but due to Libyan crisis, terrorist

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attacks in France, Belgium, Ukraine and migration crisis; the CFSP is still at stake.<sup>1</sup>

In recent years, Germany's role in EU's foreign and security affairs is increasing. This influencing role was also increased during the economic and financial crisis. Recently, Germany generates more than a fifth of the total GDP of EU that has evolved its influential role in the Union according to research scholars working of EU politics.<sup>2</sup>

There were various factors behind the notion for German policy makers to emphasize on the Germany's new responsibilities. These factors can be categorized as Germany's resources in the Central Europe, economic power, provider of international public products and services, different service positions in the EU, maintaining consent and legitimacy from its partners, potential for internal politics.<sup>3</sup>

It was an imperative need to understand Berlin and its roles after getting benefits of globalization that led Germany towards shaping its power in new global trends.<sup>4</sup> Germans are well aware about the new emerging role of the country. In a conference, President Joachim Gauck specifically illustrated that Germany has to take more steps for strengthening its collaboration with the United Nations, EU, and NATO. He also suggested that it must be more focused on its security matters.<sup>5</sup>

After a long time, Germany is in a position for demonstrating its commitment and enthusiastic participation in international affairs and leading the region

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<sup>1</sup> M. Hussain, *The European Union: On the Verge of Global Political Leadership* (Singapore: Springer/Palgrave Pivot, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> W. Paterson, *The Reluctant Hegemon? Germany Moves Centre Stage in the EU*, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 49 (2011): 57-76.

<sup>3</sup> C. Dustmann, B. Fitzenberger, U. Schönberg & A. Spitz-Oener, *From Sick Man of Europe to Economic Superstar: Germany's Resurgent Economy*, *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 28, no.1 (2014): 167-188.

<sup>4</sup> SWP-GMF, *New Power New Responsibility: Elements of a German Foreign and Security Policy for a Changing World*, Washington and Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (Swp) and the German Marshall Fund of the United States (gmf), 2014. Available at [https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/projektpapiere/German\\_ForeignSecurityPolicy\\_SWP\\_GMF\\_2013.pdf](https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/projektpapiere/German_ForeignSecurityPolicy_SWP_GMF_2013.pdf) (accessed on March 20, 2019).

<sup>5</sup> J. Gauck, *Speech to Open 50th Munich Security Conference*, Munich, January 31, 2014. Available at <http://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Reden/EN/JoachimGauck/Reden/2014/140131-Munich-Security-Conference.html> (accessed on March 21, 2019).

from the EU's platform. In 2014, during the Ukraine crisis, Chancellor Merkel and German Foreign Minister Steinmeier played an important role between conflicting parties for encouraging them for a peaceful political solution of crisis.<sup>6</sup> Along with this, Germany also worked for maintaining its relations with Russia.<sup>7</sup> During migration crisis in 2015, Germany proactively welcomed the refugees from Middle East and Southern Mediterranean. Chancellor Merkel open-heartedly adopted a welcoming policy. Furthermore, Germany worked for searching European solutions for dealing with this humanitarian challenge.<sup>8</sup>

The leadership role was not inherited by Germany. There were many factors involved in shaping German hegemonic position in the region including the national interests, ability of resolving conflicts without aggression and gradually increasing its influential role than UK and France in the Union. On national level as well, there is an understanding and expectation on gearing up the German international role.<sup>9</sup> Internationally, Germany applauded for enhancing its international participation on humanitarian grounds. On the other hand, the politicians and policy makers are also eager to increase its international reputation and influence. Therefore, there is an inflated debate from inside and outside the country for redefining German role as a leader.

Even German and EU's foreign and security policy interest are intertwined but indeed there is a large extent of German ambition for building and encouraging a common EU foreign policy. Germany's neighbors including France, for limiting German role, always want to keep Germany in check for limiting its power and make sure that Berlin is adopting the West European approach.

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<sup>6</sup> Fix Liana, Leadership in the Ukraine Conflict: A German Moment, in N. Helwig (ed), *Europe's New Political Engine: Germany's Role in the EU's Foreign and Security Policy*, *FIIA Report 44* (Helsinki: Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2015), 111-131.

<sup>7</sup> N. Helwig, "Europe's New Political Engine".

<sup>8</sup> Toygür İlke and Benvenuti Bianca, *The European Response to the Refugee Crisis: Angela Merkel on the Move*, *IPC-Mercator Policy Brief*, June 2016, at [http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/IlkeToygur\\_BiancaBenvenuti\\_FINAL.pdf](http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/IlkeToygur_BiancaBenvenuti_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> B. Dettmer and T. Sauer, *Implementation of European Cohesion Policy at the Sub-national Level: Evidence from Beneficiary Data in Eastern Germany*, 2019, 167-189, at <https://doi.org/10.1111/pirs.12348>.

### **German Position: Old and new debates**

There are different old and new debates on evolving German foreign policy and its response to European challenges. Germany has a clear understanding regarding its economic and political stability, participation in fundamental principles of democracy, respect of human rights and rule of law. Furthermore, it urges towards its traditional principles for its position in Europe and transatlantic relations. During the last decade, few EU crises pushed Germany for rethinking about its priorities for building international reputation. Helwig categorizes the debates over German foreign policy and its position in Europe and other world into four parts. First category '*restrain vs responsibility*' defines the transformation of post-war identity of Germany from military restraint to responsibility. During this transformation, Germany overthrown the signs of Nazism towards the military restraint. Initially Germany was restricted by the allied forces to marginal military strength but Germany adopted a way to recoup its European reputation through economic progress rather militarism. After unification in 1991, Germany emerged with having a largest population in Europe, thriving economy and a peaceful country.

### **Historical traces of Ostpolitik**

Since 1969, Germany adopted an eastern centric policy known as the *ostpolitik* those focused on normalizing German relations with East European countries.<sup>10</sup> A greatest achievement of this policy was the unification of East and West German. Ostpolitik played an important role in bridging relations between the west and Russia. The German role in neutralizing tension in between was phenomenal. New concept of *ostpolitik* was further demonstrated during Ukraine crisis when Russia annexed Crimea through military intrusion.<sup>11</sup> The EU instantly imposed the economic sanctions on Russia. Germany rapidly responded criticized Russia against the violation of international law, and did not appreciate the EU's sanctions because these sanctions were violating its *ostpolitik* and that could lead to Russian isolation from European scheme. Siddi identifies that Germany

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<sup>10</sup> Kramer David and Shevtsova Lilia, Germany and Russia: End of Ostpolitik?, *The American Interest*, 13 November 2012. Visit at <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2012/11/13/germany-and-russia-the-end-of-ostpolitik/>.

<sup>11</sup> Osborn Andrew, Russia Seen Putting New Nuclear-Capable Missiles Along NATO Border by 2019, *Reuters*, 23 June 2016. Available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-europe-shield/russia-seen-putting-new-nuclear-capable-missiles-along-nato-border-by-2019-idUSKCN0Z90WT> (accessed on February 13, 2019).

believed the policies of *Ostpolitik* may provide a momentum in relationship management with Russia.<sup>12</sup>

Another category as per Helwig is *Global versus European reach* that defines that German foreign policy regarding international challenges falls under the framework of European Union. However, the EU is not apparently effectively successful in solving problems and in many cases, its reaction was late. For international ventures, German foreign policy was under the mandate of international institutions and other partners for conflict resolution and crisis management. Germany should take more independent responsibility on international affairs unilaterally if the EU's response is curtailed. This category shows that the transatlantic relations set the directions of EU's response to global foreign policy and Germany must focus on its foreign & security policy under European perspective and transatlantic ties.

Helwig defines *Value vs interest* in which the differences and clash between German values and interest regarding foreign affairs was exposed. Generally, Germany works under European perspective and parameters with European counterparts, German values but sometimes it prefers to prioritize the national interest over its European values. In the case of Syrian migration, Germany welcomed the migrants irrespective of reluctance of other EU counterparts. Although the secure neighborhood and promoting European values are fundamental principles of German foreign policy but in such case, it preferred to welcome the migrants even after the criticism by European member states. This notion is based on Germany's current ambition for participating in international affairs. Anna-Lena Kirch analyzes that more focus of Germany towards southern neighborhood for its national stability may lead to less value-based approach other than European value.<sup>13</sup> This clearly defines that the Germany is moving towards a leadership position in its foreign policy and actively participating in international political challenges.

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<sup>12</sup> Siddi Marco, Germany's Evolving Relationship with Russia: Towards a Norm-based Ostpolitik, in N. Helwig (ed), *Europe's New Political Engine: Germany's Role in the EU's Foreign and Security Policy, FIIA Report 44* (Helsinki: Finnish Institute of International Affairs), 157.

<sup>13</sup> Kirch Anna-Lena, Germany and the European Neighbourhood Policy: Balancing Stability and Democracy in a Ring of Fire, in N. Helwig (ed), *Europe's New Political Engine: Germany's Role in the EU's Foreign and Security Policy, FIIA Report 44* (Helsinki: Finnish Institute of International Affairs), 71.

### As a Leader

The German foreign and security role as a 'reluctant hegemon' refers to its political position on international stage as an influencing hegemon but it avoids to claim itself a leader or hegemon. The highlights of few important issues those increased German power in the EU indicative of the fact that Germany's material sources have increased its reputation and power in the region.<sup>14</sup> Like Germany exports public goods internationally that increased its reputation on international level. Plus, Germany is potentially an influential player in the internal politics of the EU.

The increasing influence of Germany is obvious regionally and internationally. Germany is an emerging geo-economic power. Since 1871, a unified Germany was a problematic country because of its population, central location and size. Historically neighbouring countries around Germany stress upon a balance of power in the region rather hegemonic power of Germany. These regional confusions were obvious after reunification for NATO allies and EU partners. Kundani believes that the geopolitical problem of Germany was resolved after unification but it re-emerged as a geo-economic power without calling it as a regional hegemon.<sup>15</sup>

The German power as an *inevitable hegemon* rather calling it a reluctant hegemon according to many researchers. Few factors those made it inevitable for Germany to be a leader of region including size, population and economy etc.<sup>16</sup> Crawford uses a term of *unacknowledged hegemon* for Germany that refers to the position of Germany as a hegemon that is not well acknowledged or recognized by its European counterparts and rest of the world.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> S. Bulmer and W. Paterson, Germany and the European Union: From Tamed Power to Normalized Power? *International Affairs* 86, no.5 (2010): 1051-73.

<sup>15</sup> H. Kundnani, Germany as a Geo-economic Power, *The Washington Quarterly* 34, no.3 (2011): 31-45. Visit at [https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy\\_files/files/publication/twq11summerkundnani.pdf](https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/twq11summerkundnani.pdf) (accessed January 17, 2019).

<sup>16</sup> C. Schönberger, Hegemon Wider Willen, Zur Stellung Deutschlands in der Europäischen Union, *Merkur* 66, no.1, 1-8. Available at [http://www.klett-cotta.de/ausgabe/MERKUR\\_Heft\\_01\\_Januar\\_2012/21486?bereich=subnavi=zusammenfassung&artikel\\_id=23634](http://www.klett-cotta.de/ausgabe/MERKUR_Heft_01_Januar_2012/21486?bereich=subnavi=zusammenfassung&artikel_id=23634).

<sup>17</sup> B. Crawford, German Power and Embedded Hegemony in Europe, in S. Colvin (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of German Politics & Culture* (London: Routledge, 2015), 329-348.

Few studies indicate that the German financial facilitation to EU is a dominant factor that makes it an influential European player. Germany as the 'chief facilitating officer'<sup>18</sup> and Gunther Hellman as 'Chief Financial Officer' with reference to high German financial support to the bloc. According to Hellman, Germany is no longer interested in reducing a kind of 'cheque book diplomacy'.<sup>19</sup> This argument describes that Germany spends lots of money on different projects of EU that has increased its reputation in the bloc and made Germany an influential power.

Thomas Baggar also discusses few other facets of leadership including negotiated leadership as network diplomacy in international affairs.<sup>20</sup> This argument defines that Germany played a role in networking of different countries. As discussed before that through Ostpolitik, Germany liaised between the West and Russia.

In 1990s, another term for Germany as *Leadership avoidance reflex* was used.<sup>21</sup> This describes that Germany did not forcefully articulate its deliberate power but struggled to get its power by using its resources through soft power and institutional enhancement of EU. Germany emerged as a dominant power in the Community, during decision-making at European level and supporting the EU's institutions. Few classical examples of this power include facilitating in standardization of European single market, working for developing common monetary system and getting good decision-making position.

**Leadership by Power:** Germany has two types of resources those made it a powerful leader; economic and military resources. Both of these resources are seen as 'hard power' resources.<sup>22</sup> Germany clearly uses the economic resources but never claims it as hard power but Germany remains reluctant to use the military resources as a power due to its long going pacifist

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<sup>18</sup> F. W. Steinmeier, Save Our Trans-Atlantic Order: The Postwar System is Under Challenge, *New York Times*, March 11, 2015. Available at [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/12/opinion/save-our-trans-atlantic-order.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/12/opinion/save-our-trans-atlantic-order.html?_r=0).

<sup>19</sup> Hellmann Gunther, Germany's World: Power and Followership in a Crisis-ridden Europe, *Global Affairs* 2, no.1 (2016): 3-20.

<sup>20</sup> T. Baggar, The "German Question" and the Nature of Leadership in Europe, *Central Europe Digest*, June 5, 2013, 9-11.

<sup>21</sup> W. Paterson, The Making of German European Policy, in S. Colvin (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of German Politics & Culture* (London: Routledge, 2015), 315-328.

<sup>22</sup> N. Helwig, "Europe's New Political Engine".

background. Germany is an active member of NATO and United Nations' peace missions and deployed its military troops in different conflicting zones but still avoids to directly associate itself with military operations and apparently not willing to lead the Europe on military grounds.

In EU politics, different member states have diverse preferences. There is an important role of three big EU countries on European politics including Germany, France and UK. These three member states are also represented as E3 or EU3. Hill specifically discussed the influence of these three powerful actors of EU on its foreign and security policy. He also raises a question on the dilemma of leadership among the three.<sup>23</sup> Lehne believes that these three states are globally influential and active through capability therefore they act independently, differently and sometimes beyond the EU's domain.<sup>24</sup>

Helwig also mentions a term *minilateralism* for defining the leadership role of Germany in European Union. Minilateral settings means initiative of E3 or EU3 member states as influential power in the EU. Helwig believes that these countries are real drivers of EU policy but among them Germany is playing its role as a leader. He recommends few minilateral diplomatic initiatives for German leadership such as close networking with EU member states and non-EU countries, developing conducive international environment with support of the US and other like-minded big powers and more engagement of EU institutions.<sup>25</sup>

The challenges ahead are Germany's limited size and military power as compare to the USA. In this situation, Germany is not in position to be a world leader but can only exercise its power as *embedded hegemon* or *embedded leader*.<sup>26</sup> Germany can share with any other world power, such as

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<sup>23</sup> Hill Christopher, The Big Three and the High Representative: Dilemmas of Leadership Inside and Outside the EU, in Spyros Blavoukos and Dimitris Bourantonis (eds.) *The EU Presence in International Organizations* (Milton Park: Routledge, 2011) 78-95.

<sup>24</sup> Lehne Stefan, The Big Three in EU Foreign Policy, *The Carnegie Papers*, 2012, at [https://carnegieendowment.org/files/eu\\_big\\_three1.pdf](https://carnegieendowment.org/files/eu_big_three1.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> N. Helwig, Germany in European Diplomacy: Minilateralism as a Tool for Leadership, *German Politics*, 2019.

<sup>26</sup> Hellmann Gunther, Germany's World: Power and Followership in a Crisis-ridden Europe, *Global Affairs* 2, no.1 (2016): 3-20.



the USA for leading the world.<sup>27</sup> Hellmann also mentioned that German Parliament, for many years, minimizing the budget for international engagements and peace-mission's budget that shows less interest of German politicians is a challenge for its world leadership.<sup>28</sup>

Second challenge is geopolitical as Germany is located in the centre of Europe so logically its geopolitical affiliations are more focused in the Europe rather than international as compare to the USA.<sup>29</sup> Logically its geopolitical affiliation and interests are more Eurocentric rather global as compare to the US. It is important to note that Germany is the driving force in the process of European integration and playing a dominant role in the EU political affairs and not willing to compete for international leadership.

Thirdly German leadership mostly depends on majority-building and coalition in which Germany normally deals with the policy of consensus. Even in Ukrainian crisis and problem of migrants', Germany played an important role for handling the problems but it was led by EU's majority voting.

Forth challenge as per Hellmann is relevant to global leadership experience. He mentions that the USA has a stable reservoir and long experience of leadership but Germany has started its leadership experience for past few years and needs a long time to understand the ups-and-downs of international politics.

**Leadership by Consensus:** German politics focuses on majority-opinion and consensus. Normally Germany does not strive for imposing certain decision. Helwig rightly mentioned that Germany leads from the middle rather leading from front. Germany generally looks forward for a common instance with key partners in foreign affairs.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, Munk believes that Germany prefers in cooperation rather confrontation.<sup>31</sup> It has a long history of

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<sup>27</sup> B. Crawford, German Power and Embedded Hegemony in Europe, in S. Colvin (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of German Politics & Culture* (London: Routledge, 2015), 329-348.

<sup>28</sup> Hellmann Gunther, *Germany's World: Power and Followership in a Crisis-ridden Europe*.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> N. Helwig, "Germany in European Diplomacy".

<sup>31</sup> Munk Leonie, *Germany's OSCE Chairmanship 2016, The Need for Contagement, Security Policy Working Paper*, no. 10 (Berlin: Federal Academy for Security Policy, 2015). Available at [https://www.baks.bund.de/sites/baks010/files/working\\_paper\\_security\\_policy\\_10\\_2015.pdf](https://www.baks.bund.de/sites/baks010/files/working_paper_security_policy_10_2015.pdf).

cooperation, making a policy with consensus and mutual understanding after World War II, it demonstrated itself a trustworthy and reliable actor rather using power and domination.

The foreign policy of Germany during this era was challenged with dynamics of multilateralism, observance of law and protection of human rights. For solution of these problems Germany tried its best for supporting the idea of Common European Defense but UK particularly opposed and emphasized on reliance on NATO.<sup>32</sup> In 1998 under St-Malo Agreement UK, France and Germany particularly developed the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) for crises management tool of CFSP. All these features show that Germany led the Europe through trust, compromise, mutual understanding, cooperation and consensus.

**Leadership by Institutions:** Along with the Germany policy of cooperation and consensus, another common policy of Germany was to build the EU institutions. Germany has long history of building, developing and enhancing the European institutions since the development of ECSC in 1950s to European Community in 1960s, Single Market during 1980s and European Union in 1990s. These European structures developed the common European norms a favorable environment to German interests in the long term. European enlargement, monetary union and process of integration are good examples where Germany worked for enhancing the European institutions and developed its foreign policy.

The role of Germany in shaping the institutional structures of the EU is a same expression of post-war identity as a *civilian power* and during this process focus was on Europeanization and effective multilateralism. The lesson of World Wars for Germany was to work for shaping the common institutional framework. European enlargement can be seen as a tool for restructuring the Europe after centuries old conflicts and wars. The transformation of sovereign rights to supranational institutions was unique example set by the European member states but major credit goes to Germany for being having a largest size and economy.

Germany being a powerful member state have more responsibility on its shoulder than EU's other member states, it make many decisions single

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<sup>32</sup> Harnisch Sebastian and Maull Hanns, *Germany as a Civilian Power? The Foreign Policy of the Berlin Republic* (Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press, 2001).

handedly to find diplomatic solutions.<sup>33</sup> Chancellor Merkel's visit to Turkey during the peak of Syrian refugee crisis in 2015 was very critical when few of European state raised their concerns at that time. German foreign minister Steinmeier said that Germany is expected to lead as this is a scope given to Germany by the Lisbon Treaty.<sup>34</sup>

We can classify German leadership in 3 types; Shared Leadership, Leadership through Example, Leadership through mediation.<sup>35</sup>

Shared Leadership defines that mostly Germany obtains its national interests and develops its foreign policy under the European framework, mainly the CFSP with conjunction of member states on multilateral level rather adopting unilateralism. Helmut Schmidt and Helmut Kohl, use a term *follower to co-leader* for this type of role for German leadership.

Germany also worked for networking and working along different sets of states. In this policy a group of member states including Germany, France and Poland was established in August 1991 called Weimar Triangle.<sup>36</sup> Another example is *Eastern Partnership* is a joint initiative among EU and its Eastern European neighbors. Germany also took few initiatives with France and UK those are demonstrated as shared leadership. These three member states worked together under the banner of CFSP and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Furthermore, after initial establishment of the CSDP, they developed a military alliance named the European Defence Agency (EDA) and then the *Permanent Structured Cooperation in Defence (PSCD)* under the framework of Lisbon Treaty.<sup>37</sup> In this shared collaboration,

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<sup>33</sup> N. Helwig, "Germany in European Diplomacy".

<sup>34</sup> F. W. Steinmeier, Germany – Looking Beyond its Borders, speech by Federal Foreign Minister Steinmeier at 'Carnegie Europe', Brussels, March 16, 2015, available at [http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/eN/Infoservice/Presse/Reden/2015/150316\\_Bm\\_Carnegie.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/eN/Infoservice/Presse/Reden/2015/150316_Bm_Carnegie.html).

<sup>35</sup> N. Wright, *The EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy in France, Germany and the UK: Co-operation, Co-optation and Competition* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

<sup>36</sup> Helm Sarah, 'Weimar Triangle' Takes Shape for Power', *The Independent*, May 23, 1996, at <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/weimar-triangle-takes-shape-for-power-1348723.html>.

<sup>37</sup> Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union, Article 42, Paragraph 6 (ex-Article 17, TEU): "Those Member States whose military capabilities fulfil higher criteria and which have made more binding commitments to one another in this area with a view to the most demanding missions shall establish permanent structured cooperation within the Union framework".

military forces of these member states deployed in Congo in 2003 on *Operation Artemis* that was EU's autonomous rapid action in crisis management operations.<sup>38</sup> The main objective of this shared initiative was to enhance the effectiveness of EU's military capabilities. It was an initiative to grow an individual military ability outside the framework of NATO.

**Leadership by Example:** According to Nicholas Wright Germany is a *hub* among other member states that set few distinguished examples for others. Germany, among two influencing EU countries; the UK and France is an alternative centre of gravity in the region where it is considered as a moderate, responsible and strong economic power of mainstream EU affairs.

**Leadership through Mediation:** As per Wright, this is a subset to both above-mentioned types of leadership; shared and by-example. The role of Germany as a mediator is clearly visible in German-Russian relations where Germany tried its best for neutralizing the deadlock between the west and Russia. Furthermore, the mediating or bridging role of Germany is also obviously clear in the EU's decision-making processes, specifically in the EU's foreign and security measures. There is no doubt that the EU's two other members; France and UK are very influential in decision making and often cause disagreements on the purpose of common matter and direction of EU. This confusion looks more visible in France and UK's dealing with NATO and transatlantic relations for EU's security. Furthermore, France and UK both are permanent members of UN Security Council but their representation is more focused on their national foreign policies rather EU. In this situation, as Wright mentions, Germany has an ideal place to be a mediator or neutralizer. On the other hand, Germany on international level, in the UNSC as well, represents the EU.<sup>39</sup> But Germany's ability to play its leadership role hinders because it does not have permanent position in the Security Council. An important example of German mediation role is mediation on Iran where Germany bridged between the E3 (France and Britain) and Iran. This is important to note that sometimes France is harder than the USA on dealing with Iran so this was a great achievement that they were successful in facilitating agreement among the parties. Another example was German role

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<sup>38</sup> EU Battlegroups, Press Report: Common Security and Defence Policy, Consilium, Brussels, 2013. Available at [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/esdp/91624.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/esdp/91624.pdf).

<sup>39</sup> N. Wright, The EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy in France, Germany and the UK.

in negotiation between West and Russia on Ukrainian crisis. Furthermore, during 2005 on the issue of European Union Military Staff (EUMS) and establishing the EU's Military Committee now known as EEAS there was a big rift between France and the UK. In this situation, Germany worked hard for bringing both on compromising position. Germany spent 18 months of negotiation for filling this gap.

In his analysis, Wrights discusses that Germany has distinctive position in the Europe; both geographically and economically. Because of this position, this is difficult to ignore the voice of Germany. But a less clear area is recognition of German position as mediator among other big powers in the EU e.g. France and UK.<sup>40</sup>

### **German Influential Power**

Dahl (1957) has done a substantial work on defining the political power and influences. He defines power as an interactive point where one can modify the behavior of other in a certain decision-making process.<sup>41</sup> A country's power depends on economy, total land, trade relations, population, natural resources and military powers.<sup>42</sup>

In the case of Germany, it has substantial structural power in the European Union. Since 1990, German focus is, more or less on trade and economics for utilizing its structural power and Germany tried to build up its financial markets and consequently became the largest economy of Europe. W. Jacoby uses a term of *exorbitant privilege* for Germany that exhibits the German strive for economic power in the Europe.<sup>43</sup> International security and diplomacy were second choices for Germany and as per claim of Matthias Matthijs, Germany is a second-rank power for international security and diplomacy.<sup>44</sup>

Bachrach and Barat include Germany's influence on setting boundaries or shaping the agenda for a decision-making process as a power. This power

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Dahl Robert, The Concept of Power, *Behavioral Science* 2, no.3 (1957): 201-215.

<sup>42</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1979).

<sup>43</sup> W. Jacoby, Europe's New German Problem: The Timing of Politics and the Politics of Timing, in M. Matthijs & M. Blyth (eds.), *The Future of the Euro* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 187-210.

<sup>44</sup> Matthijs Matthias, The Three Faces of German Leadership, *Survival, Global Political Strategy* 58, no.2 (2016): 135-154.

could be consciously or unconsciously adopted for the public expression of policy conflicts.<sup>45</sup> This could be institutional in which a country can have a significant decision-making power in a group of states that could be economic power or influence in foreign affairs. Germany have the institutional and agenda-setting power in the EU and it had this power through its significant voting powers in European institutions especially Parliament and Council.<sup>46</sup> Secondly, Germany is the largest financial contributor of EU. This financial position also provided an opportunity to Germany to influence the bloc. Germany had a significant role in establishing the European Central Bank and European Monetary Union in early 1990s. Interestingly, the European Central Bank was a mirror image of German Bundesbank.<sup>47</sup> Germany has a strong voice in the EU that has most of its weight due to its large size of economy.

Matthijs claims that German ideas regarding foreign policy and financial matters have an influencing role in European system for developing and designing the European institutions. Furthermore, Germany's own policy focuses on the competition, fiscal restraint, price stability and rule of law and all these dimensions are obvious in the value system of the European Union.<sup>48</sup>

### **Challenges ahead**

Three key challenges for Germany will directly set the dimensions for German leadership role in European Union. First, as per Maurer's claim would be next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) negotiations in which post-Brexit budget has to decide the German response on this mega spending.<sup>49</sup> It is also important to note that Germany is leading the Council of European Union in 2020 as President and this Presidency role will show in the coming months the German strength towards setting its national priorities as well as the EU's priorities. Secondly for Germany, European

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<sup>45</sup> Bachrach Peter and S. Baratz Morton, Two Faces of Power, *American Political Science Review* 56, no.4 (December 1962): 949.

<sup>46</sup> Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

<sup>47</sup> Matthijs Matthias, Powerful Rules Governing the Euro: The Perverse Logic of German Ideas', *Journal of European Public Policy* 23, no.3 (2016): 375-91.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> A. Maurer, Germany and the EU: Managing Differentiation to Avoid Structural Segregation, in M. Kaeding, J. Pollak, and P. Schmidt (eds), *The Future of Europe* (Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2019), 42.

Parliamentary elections in mid-2019 in which along with the party position in the European Parliament, national foreign policy measures of France also have impact on the German position. French President Emmanuel Macron has announced a policy for democratic revolution by the title of *en marche* (Move forward) in April 2016.<sup>50</sup> As per the policy of Macron, French government is more focused on bypassing the supranational institution of European Union; the Commission, Court of Justice and Parliament on safeguarding its national interests but on the other hand, Germany might continue its support to the supranational structures of EU, intergovernmental and differentiated Europe.<sup>51</sup>

### Conclusion

Germany has a wonderful model as a EU member state. In this experience, Germany always preferred to avoid war, conflict, aggression and hard-core political character rather adopted the policy of collaboration, collectivism, economic prosperity and leading the Community through economic generosity. Non-aggressive-economic policy would lead Germany towards successful future with implementing its European experience globally.

Germany should apply this European experience in international arena. Germany should work for its independent global economic leadership especially in the cases where EU member states are reluctant due to their transatlantic or national compulsions.<sup>52</sup>

During Syrian crisis and Arab-Israel conflict, and recent migration surge in Europe on humanitarian grounds, the deployment of German personnel for civilian support of Palestinians was respected by the Muslim world. These policy measures if continue in the future, will likely to expand the German foreign relations with Muslim and Arab world. It would be a new welcoming dimension as an influential European state in the politics of Muslim world.

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<sup>50</sup> Gomart Thomas and Hecker Marc, *Macron, Diplomat: A New French Foreign Policy? Etudes de l'Ifri*, April 2018, available at [https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/gomart\\_hecker\\_macron\\_diplomat\\_new\\_french\\_foreign\\_policy\\_2\\_018.pdf](https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/gomart_hecker_macron_diplomat_new_french_foreign_policy_2_018.pdf).

<sup>51</sup> A. Maurer, *Germany and the EU: Managing Differentiation to Avoid Structural Segregation*.

<sup>52</sup> H. Kundnani, "Germany as a Geo-economic Power".

Second identified region is Maghreb where in Libya, Germany was involved in UN's peace mission and represented the European Union.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, Germany has already developed good relations with the countries due to Mediterranean Policy through Barcelona Process in 1995 of the EU. Germany enjoys would good political and economic relations with Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco and Libya. It can also increase its individual economic and political ties with the countries of Maghreb.

Third region is Central Asia. Among all EU member states, Germany is the biggest business partner of Central Asian states including Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.<sup>54</sup> Germany has a potential to enhance its political and economic ties more for utilizing the natural resources of this region that can reduce German reliance of power and natural resource on Russia and East European states. After the success of One-Belt-One-Road (OBOR) or simply Belt-and-Road-Initiative (BRI), Central Asia may have the connectivity in the world and Germany can avail the benefit of resources of this region.

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<sup>53</sup> Hussain Munir and Kashif Muhammad, Arab Uprising 2011: Emergence of Extremism in Middle East and its Regional Consequences, *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations* 14, no.2 (2015). Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.21599/atjir.04880>.

<sup>54</sup> Shao Yuqun, The EU's Central Asia Policy and its Implications for China, Discussion Paper (Bonn: Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik, 2008).