

**PROBLEMATIZING LIBERAL INSTITUTIONALISM AND THE EUROPEAN UNION
INTEGRATED GLOBAL ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY (EUIGES)**

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Introduction:

In her Burges Speech to the College of Europe in 1988, former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher likened the European Union (EU) to a super-state. Thatcher famously proclaimed that "We have not successfully rolled back the frontiers of the state in Britain, only to see them re-imposed at a European level with a European super-state exercising a new dominance from Brussels."¹ Although seemingly opposed to the centralization of European Union powers, Thatcher's remarks render the European project a super-state. Though diverging from the theoretical influence of Thatcher's position, liberal institutionalists like Dr. Andrew Moravcsik would also view the European Union as a super-state, a robust global power. In "*Why Europe Wins*," Moravcsik exclaimed that the "Answer is in Europe: In the 21st century. Such policies are not only sustainable but successful. Europe is the future."² Other scholars have viewed the European Union more ambiguously as a normative power, or a mere "sui generis institution" - Nonetheless, the question persists: Is the European Union a global power? And if not, what is needed to make it one? **In exploring the question, this paper will argue that the European Union is not a global power in its current semblance, but substantive policy and institutional reform creates the possibility of the EU as a global power.** This paper will proceed in two parts: First, problematize the liberal institutionalist conception of the European Union while addressing the practical barriers that fall short of global power. Secondly, this paper will propose deliberate and substantive policy reform, coined as the "European Union Integrated Global Enhancement Strategy" (abbr. EUIGES), which would solidify the European project as a global power.

Problematizing Liberal Institutionalism – Why the European Union is not a Global Power:

The question of how to classify the European Union within an institutional classification continues to illustrate debates in international relations. In contemplating the terms of this debate, this paper will employ a purposely broad definition as to what constitutes a global power. In March 2010, prominent liberal scholar Dr. Andrew Moravcsik appeared in the "*Journal of Contemporary World Affairs*" to argue that besides the United States, Europe was the only global power.³ Using Moravcsik's construction, this paper constitutes a global power as an entity that can "exert global influence across the full spectrum of power, from hard to soft,"⁴ an entity that can "possess a range of effective civilian instruments for projecting international influence,"⁵ and an entity that "projects intercontinental military power."⁶ To an extent, the liberal institutionalist classification of Europe is valid. However, there are still substantive institutional inhibitors that limit the European community's classification as a global power.

¹ Margaret Thatcher, "*Speech to the College of Europe ('the Bruges Speech')*," Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed October 1, 2021, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107332>.

² Andrew Moravcsik, "*Why Europe Wins*," *Foreign Policy*, January 1, 19846, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/09/24/euroskeptic-europe-covid-19-trump-russia-migration/>.

³ Andrew Moravcsik, "*Europe, the Second Superpower*," *Current History* 109, no. 725 (January 2010): pp. 91-98, <https://doi.org/10.1525/curh.2010.109.725.91>, pg. 91.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pg. 91.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pg. 91.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pg. 91.

The European Union, without a doubt, has been characterized by its reliance on soft power mechanisms and "incentive-based policy." In *"Hard Power in Hard Times: Can Europe Act Strategically?"* Dr. Janne Haaland-Matláry argues that Europe is a post-modern state where societal integration and cooperation between member states runs so deep that borders are of less importance.⁷ She continues by arguing that the "use of force is no longer relevant for Europe...because Europe represents a model society in which economic and political interdependence run so deep that nation-states fade away".⁸ Adding that "Deterrence, as the major and preferred role of military force, then becomes difficult, if not impossible."⁹ Given Europe's regional cooperation, defence and deterrence from external threats have become a non-priority within the community, this, of course, challenges Europe's ability to exert global influence beyond soft power as well as project intercontinental military power. Recently, Secretary Clément Beaune, France's Minister of European Affairs, said that "Usually the way to think in the EU is to say, when there is a tension or provocation, let's hide and hope that it will go for the better in one week, one month, one year."¹⁰ Beaune's point demonstrates even the practical shortcomings of the EU's global actorness when projecting hard power in the neighbourhood. Take the cases of Russian aggression or the migration crisis of 2015 as examples of the inability to project hard power in the European region, let alone around the globe.

Following protests in Ukraine in 2013 and attempts at a closer EU-Ukraine relationship, Russia launched an assault on Ukraine's eastern territory in violation of international law.¹¹ Documents released by the European Parliament indicated that the official EU position on the matter is that "there can be only a political solution to this conflict, not a military one."¹² Given the EU's unwillingness to project hard power considering flagrant international law violations, this position is problematic and worrisome. On a normative level, the EU's inability to deal with aggression and project deterrent hard power inhibits its classification as a global power. Another substantive failing within power projection is the EU's response to the 2015 migratory crisis, where refugee arrivals overwhelmed the southern periphery of the Schengen zone. Dr. Vittoria Meissner argues that "The migration crisis of 2015–2016 shook the institutional foundations of the European Union and revealed a cracked Schengen system against which the Member States were not able to find swift, common and effective solutions".¹³ As with Russian aggression in Ukraine, the migration crisis yet again demonstrates Europe's inability to project hard power to respond to global problems and situations in the neighbourhood of Europe.

By no means is this paper advocating for an EU-standing army; projecting intercontinental military power does not necessitate this. However, to solidify the EU as a global power,

⁷ Janne Haaland Matlary, *Hard Power in Hard Times: Can Europe Act Strategically?* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pg. 13.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pg. 22.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pg. 14.

¹⁰ Hans von der Burchard, "EU Must Use Hard Power with 'Not so Nice' Russia and Turkey, Says French Minister," POLITICO (POLITICO, September 22, 2020), <https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-hard-power-russia-turkey-france-minister/>.

¹¹ "EU Reaction to Russia Ukraine Conflict - European Parliament," accessed October 1, 2021, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/EPRS/EP-answers-EU-reaction-to-Russia-Ukraine-conflict-EN.pdf>.

¹² *Ibid.*, pg. 1.

¹³ Vittoria Meissner, "The European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex after the Migration Crisis: Towards a 'Superagency'?", *The Role of EU Agencies in the Eurozone and Migration Crisis*, January 2020, pp. 151-174, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-51383-2_7, pg. 151.

intercontinental military power and hard power can be coordinated more effectively. The current EU institutional framework confines the projection of intercontinental military power to the "Petersberg Tasks." Agreed to in 1992, the Petersberg tasks restricts EU interconnectional military action to humanitarian, rescue and disarmament operations, military advice, and assistance to third countries, conflict prevention and peacekeeping, and crisis management.¹⁴ One of the EU's ongoing military endeavours is the EU Training Mission in Somalia (EUTM-Somalia).¹⁵ Although in alignment with the Peterburg takes, EUTM Somalia has been ineffective in projecting military power or assisting in the stabilization of Somalia. Again, without adequate hard power or military power projection, the EU's global actorness is inhibited.

Amongst indicators within Moravcsik's typology of global power are "effective civilian instruments influence." Further, amongst the guiding values of the European Union are freedom, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, central tenants that underpin EU civilian instruments and action.¹⁶ However, despite these normative guiding principles, the EU struggles to enforce these guiding civilian instruments within its Member States and neighbourhood. Perhaps the most troubling Member States within the European community are Hungary and Poland, who have come under increased scrutiny for illiberal practices and democratic backsliding.¹⁷ In the "*Journal of Comparative Politics*," Dr. Atilla Ágh argues that the European community has focused solely on the economic development of certain Member States and therefore creating a periphery of other Member States, causing them to undermine the EU's guiding values.¹⁸ Ágh continues by arguing that both Hungary and Poland "have to overcome their current socio-political crisis that has produced these hard populist regimes"¹⁹ - crises only aggravated by the lack of cohesion amongst the EU Member States. In short, current conditions in the EU, stemming from Hungary and Poland, inhibit the EU's classification as a global power due to lacking civilian instruments unable to project the EU's normative values globally.

European Union Integrated Global Enhancement Strategy (EUIGES)

So far, this paper has problematized liberal institutionalism in the context of the European Union. However, shortcomings in projecting hard power, intercontinental militarism, and effective civilian instruments can be overcome with effective institutional and policy reform. Of course, the purpose of these institutional and policy reforms is to advance the European Union's position as an emerging global power. To this end, the package of reforms can be coined as the European Union Integrated Global Enhancement Strategy (EUIGES), integrating policy advancements from the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA), Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), and European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) areas.

¹⁴ "Operation Atalanta, EUTM Somalia and EUCAP Somalia: Mandates Extended for Two More Years," Consilium, December 23, 2020, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/12/23/operation-atalanta-eutm-somalia-and-eucap-somalia-mandates-extended-for-two-more-years/>.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Anonymous, "The EU in Brief," European Union, March 16, 2021, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/eu-in-brief_en.

¹⁷ Atilla Ágh, "DECLINE OF DEMOCRACY IN THE ECE AND THE CORE-PERIPHERY DIVIDE: RULE OF LAW CONFLICTS OF POLAND AND HUNGARY WITH THE EU," *Journal of Comparative Politics* 11, no. 2 (June 2018): pp. 30-48.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pg. 30.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pg. 31.

CSDP reform is perhaps one of the critical elements illustrating EUIGES. Key reforms include realigning the Petersberg Tasks to include rapid deployment of EU member states troops. In addition, EUIGES would expand the ability of armed forces to deploy as a preventative measure rather than a reactionary measure with the consent of the relevant legislative or executive mechanism.²⁰ Beyond this, EUIGES would mandate more regular, clearer, and further coordination between the armed forces of Member States so that CSDP deployments are more rapid and organized in terms of operational priorities.²¹ EUIGES would also mandate a more precise and more connected relationship with ENP policy areas so that EU armed forces can coordinate with local leaders on the ground in deployment areas. In short, CSDP reform under EUIGES aims to coordinate a more effective projection of intercontinental militarism so that the EU can be viewed as a global actor.

ENP policy advancements under EUIGES would work in tandem with JHA and CSDP. On ENP, EUIGES' reforms would address underlying problems like policy eurocentrism, policy rigidity, and the overreliance on bilateral relations.²² EUIGES ENP reforms would acknowledge and anticipate the roles of key actors in the neighbourhood and around the globe, integrating them into policy beyond Europe.²³ EUIGES reforms would also emphasize multilateral relations and multi-dimensional approaches in the community and around the globe – issues are often more complicated than just the EU and other states. Current ENP neglects the dynamic and changing nature of geopolitics; EUIGES would modify the decision-making process around ENP so that the EU can react to the current geopolitical situation and react to states whether they want EU membership or not.²⁴ In short, ENP reforms under EUIGES aim to work with CSDP and JHA to expand the EU's exertion of global influence and expanded hard power.

JHA policy reform under EUIGES would attempt to stop democratic backsliding and stop the spread of illiberal practices within the community. This, in turn, would solidify effective civilian instruments to advance Europe's position as a global power. JHA reforms under EUIGES would include targeted and measured structural reforms tied to EU funding. Here the EU could mandate institutional reforms reported in each Member State's Recovery and Resilience Plans.²⁵ JHA policy under EUIGES would also create a post-pandemic economic stimulus to reinvigorate the peripheries' economies, discouraging illiberal and undemocratic practices. In short, JHA policy under EUIGES reforms aims to create the conditions that promote effective civilian institutions within the European Union, projecting power around the globe.

²⁰ Muriel Asseburg, “*Becoming A More Effective Actor Crisis Management and Post-Conflict Peace Building*,” accessed October 1, 2021, https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/fachpublikationen/tgae_csdp_ass_kmp.pdf, pg. 176.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pg. 176.

²² Christoph M. Abels et al., “*Enhancing Europe's Global Power: A Scenario Exercise with Eight Proposals*,” *Global Policy* 11, no. 1 (2020): pp. 128-142, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12792>.

²³ Stefan Lehne, “*Time to Reset the European Neighborhood Policy*,” Carnegie Europe, accessed October 1, 2021, <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2014/02/04/time-to-reset-european-neighborhood-policy/h021>, pg. 1.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pg. 2.

²⁵ “*2020 RULE OF LAW REPORT*,” European Commission - European Commission, accessed October 1, 2021, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_20_1757.

Conclusion

The EU is undoubtedly a "sui generis" institution that can become a global actor with substantive institutional and policy reforms. This paper has demonstrated why the liberal institutionalist approach is wrong; the EU is currently not a global power. Without the ability to project global influence across hard or soft power, intercontinental military coordination, or effective civilian instruments, the EU will continue to punch below its weight as an important regional actor. This paper has suggested the European Union Integrated Global Enhancement Strategy (EUIGES) would revolutionize the EU and solidify the EU's position as a global power. Moravcsik argues that the "Answer is in Europe...Europe in the future",²⁶ this assertion certainly necessitates substantive policy and institutional reform.

²⁶ Moravcsik, "*Why Europe Wins.*"

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