

SHORT SUMMARY

Focusing on how to explain the problems in creating a sustainable common security and defence mechanism for the EU, this research explores a causal mechanism based on the institutional gridlock, member states' preferences, and the characteristics of the EU strategic culture, and their reflections in the context of two specific policy issues (2011 Libya crisis and 2014 Ukraine conflict). It observes that three factors play an equally and simultaneously important role. Nevertheless, its empirical findings (e.g., the absence of an operational headquarters, military capacities, the issue of applying to EU institutions, local ownership, and political will) suggest considering other related factors in explaining the problem. For example, the main problem in institutional gridlock is the coordination problem of EU institutions. So, studies should focus on that, and the EU institutions integrated actions with member states. In addition, although case studies provide strong evidence, the member states' preferences should be analysed multi-dimensionally. Indeed, the research findings do not conclude that national preferences replace CSDP decisions or that CSDP actors affect member states through socialisation. Therefore, ongoing studies should focus on alternative explanations for socialisation. Finally, the research details the characteristics of EU strategic culture, stating that it should be studied from a holistic perspective, perhaps independently. Doing so makes an essential contribution to the EU strategic culture debates. Overall, this research produces more accurate explanations about the functioning of defence and security policies and the reasons for forming specific results in the EU and contributes to the existing literature by presenting alternative suggestions.
