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**EXPLAINING THE ARCTIC POLICY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION:**

*SUPRANATIONALISM AND LIBERAL-INTERGOVERNMENTALISM*

*by*

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“The Arctic region is for us – the European Union, not only for the Member States that have and share a Nordic dimension – a key area. Be it on environmental protection, be it on economic and social development, be it on safety and security.”

— Federica Mogherini (2016)

## **ACRONYMS**

<b>CFSP</b>	Common Foreign and Security Policy
<b>DG ENV</b>	Directorate-General for Environment
<b>DG MARE</b>	Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
<b>EEA</b>	European Environment Agency
<b>EEAS</b>	European External Action Service
<b>EEB</b>	European Environmental Bureau
<b>EFP</b>	European foreign policy
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>HR</b>	High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy
<b>ICC</b>	Inuit Circumpolar Council
<b>NGO</b>	Nongovernmental organisation
<b>PERM REP</b>	Permanent Representation
<b>WWF</b>	World Wildlife Fund

## **SUMMARY**

This research investigates whether the EU Arctic policy can best be explained by Liberal-intergovernmentalism or Supranationalism, two major theories of European integration. It also aims to contribute to our knowledge of the institutional dynamics behind the Arctic policy. The explanatory power of Supranationalism and Liberal-intergovernmentalism for the EU Arctic policy is tested by means of Congruence Analysis; that is, by analysing the degree of congruence between falsifiable theoretical expectations and empirical observations. The results suggest that Supranationalism can best explain European integration in the field of Arctic affairs. In particular, this study illustrates that while EU decision-making on the Arctic is of an intergovernmental nature, the EU's supranational bodies have put the Arctic on the EU's agenda, drafted Arctic policy proposals, interacted with Arctic stakeholders and ensured general appreciation for the policy among the EU's Member States. They have done so in response to environmental, political and socio-economic changes in the Arctic that potentially affect the EU as a whole. In particular, the European Commission and European External Action Service have developed much knowledge of the Arctic region and have won a seat at table of Arctic politics in many policy domains. As Arctic stakeholders –coming from both within the EU and abroad– increasingly see the EU as a relevant actor in Arctic governance, it will become more and more difficult for its Member States to constrain supranational activities in the high north. Referring to the broader theoretical question addressed in this research, these results tells us that once a window of opportunity presents itself, supranational institutions can influence European governance, even in its most intergovernmental policy domains.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research aims

Climate Change has turned the eyes of the world towards the Arctic. Polar ice is melting, threatening the livelihood of endemic species and indigenous populations, providing opportunities for natural resource extraction, and opening up new shipping routes. Russia, Denmark, and Canada each have claimed Arctic territories leading to a series of political conflicts between the region's states (Breum, 2015). International organisations like Greenpeace have called for the Arctic to be a protected sanctuary to prevent "countries like Russia and Norway" from turning the region into "the next Saudi Arabia" (The Arctic Journal, 2015a). Responding to these concerns, the European Union (EU) has developed an Arctic policy too, presenting its own interests and concerns for the region. The development of this EU Arctic policy has triggered significant international attention. Researchers and politicians alike wonder on what grounds the EU has developed a policy for a region with which most of its Members States only have peripheral relations (Offerdal, 2011; Wegge, 2011). Nevertheless, EU engagement with the Arctic has intensified ever since it was first formalised in 2008, with the latest update of the policy being in June 2016. It will be the purpose of this paper to explore this policy's development and provide an explanation for it that is rooted in theories of European integration. Such an explanation can help us better grasp the current role of the EU in the Arctic while expanding our general understanding of the way in which EU integration in the field of foreign policy takes place.

This research investigates whether the EU Arctic policy can be best explained by Liberal-intergovernmentalism or Supranationalism. It aims to contribute to our knowledge of how and why the EU Arctic policy got its current form, while at the same time testing the applicability of these two theories of European integration in this relatively new field of EU foreign policy. While each EU Member State used to only have its own (or no) strategy for the Arctic, the EU Arctic policy outlines a common course towards the region that all Member States have agreed to follow. The policy aims to establish coherence between EU policies regarding Climate Change and the environment, economic and social development and international cooperation in the specific context of the Arctic region.<sup>1</sup> By agreeing with this purpose, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs from individual Member States have given up their ability to develop national policies towards the Arctic that oppose their common objective. In other words, the EU Arctic policy is a form of integration in the field of European foreign policy. While students of the EU Arctic policy have nominated different actors as drivers behind the policy, none of them has tested to what extent the policy can be explained by the two main theories of European integration. This thesis project addresses this research gap by posing the following research question:

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<sup>1</sup> The European Commission defines the Arctic region in its 2008 Arctic Communication as the area around the North Pole, north of the Arctic Circle, including the Arctic Ocean and territories of the eight Arctic states: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States.



*‘Which theory of European integration can best explain the development of the EU Arctic policy: Liberal-intergovernmentalism or Supranationalism?’*

The following chapters will contribute to answering this question by examining connections between major elements of both theories and real life observations of the development of the EU Arctic policy. Chapter 1 will introduce the research question and topic, followed by an overview of existing literature on European foreign policy and the EU Arctic policy in chapter 2. Chapter 3 will familiarise us with Liberal-intergovernmentalism and Supranationalism and extract from those theories their core concepts. After an explanation of this study's methodology in chapter 4, these concepts will then be used to formulate theoretical expectations in chapter 5. Chapter 6 then presents and analyses real world observations of the EU Arctic policy in the context of the previously established theoretical expectations. Finally, chapter 7 will draw inferences from these analyses and place them in the context of the overall research question of this study.

## 1.2 Relevance

Explaining the EU Arctic policy can be considered both theoretically and societally relevant. This study's theoretical significance lies in its connection with an existing scholarly debate concerning European integration; its results will strengthen either liberal-intergovernmental thinkers or their supranational opponents. While the EU Arctic policy falls under the responsibility of the Foreign Affairs Council and the HR, it is by and large concerned with matters in which the European Commission has developed particular expertise, such as environmental cooperation and research funding. Many studies indicate that the EU Member States tend to prefer limited integration in the field of foreign policy, as foreign policies help states ascertain national profiles (Hix and Høyland, 2011). Where a common foreign policy does occur, it often finds its roots in Member States' activities on the basis of a shared interest (Smith, 2004). This finding is not easily compatible with previous studies on the EU Arctic policy, which suggest that the supranational European Commission has been the most active agenda setter and influencer of the EU Arctic policy (Østhagen, 2011). Therefore, apart from contributing to the existing theoretical debate on European integration, this paper hopes to provide clarity regarding the roles and positions of the Member States vis-à-vis the European Commission in shaping the EU Arctic policy. Such a clarification may be used to advise the policy entrepreneurs behind the EU Arctic policy in determining the policy's future direction, providing societal significance to this study too. The EU Arctic policy has been criticised for a lack of policy coherence and insufficient coordination among relevant actors (Weber and Romanyshyn, 2011). This study contributes to a more profound understanding of the EU Arctic policy's roots and drivers, aiming to further solidify the knowledge upon which a more coherent and well-defined Arctic policy can be developed. It can furthermore enrich our understanding of EU foreign policy-making in general. Even though common foreign policies of the EU require decision-making by the Council alone, the EU Arctic policy touches

upon many policy domains in which individual Member States share competences with the EU. The EEAS entered the Arctic policy scene with its establishment in 2010, possibly changing the institutional climate in which the EU Arctic policy was born. The EU Arctic policy therefore presents an interesting case of EU institutional dynamics that can tell us more about how different political actors can influence EU foreign policy-making in general.

### 1.3 EU Arctic policy – an introduction

This study interprets the 2008 Commission Communication on the Arctic<sup>2</sup>, the Commission and HR 2012<sup>3</sup> and 2016<sup>4</sup> Joint Communications on the Arctic and the Council Conclusions of 2009<sup>5</sup>, 2014<sup>6</sup> and 2016<sup>7</sup> in response to these Communications as the basis of the EU Arctic policy. It distinguishes four reasons for which the Arctic area is of increasing strategic importance to the EU, building on reports from the European Commission, the European Parliament, the EEAS, the EEA and the Berlin Ecological Institute (European Environment Agency, 2004; European Parliament, 2010; Cavalieri *et al.*, 2011; European Commission, 2012a; European External Action Service, 2015). First, the EU is an active promoter of international cooperation in the fight against Climate Change, in particular through research. Retreating snow and ice coverage in the Arctic is both cause and consequence of Climate Change, making the area of critical importance for related scientific research.<sup>8</sup> Second, a part of the EU's geographic sphere of influence reaches the Arctic directly through Sweden and Finland and indirectly through Greenland (Denmark) and European Economic Area members Norway and Iceland. Each of these Member States and partners gains from a stable international regime for the Arctic area. Third, the melting of oceanic ice provides economic opportunities and security risks. It allows for an extension of the exploitation of resources like fish stocks and natural gas while making available new trade routes around the North-West Passage. The security risks following from these developments have been illustrated well when the planting of the Russian flag on the North Pole's seabed reached

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<sup>2</sup> *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council – The European Union and the arctic region*, 20 November 2009, COM (2008) 763, available at:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/NOT/?uri=CELEX:52008DC0763>

<sup>3</sup> *Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council – Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region: progress since 2008 and next steps*, 26 June 2012, JOIN(2012) 19, available at: [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=URISERV:2603\\_4](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=URISERV:2603_4)

<sup>4</sup> *Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council – an integrated European Union policy for the Arctic*, 27 April 2016, JOIN(2016) 21, available at:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1467293124346&uri=CELEX:52016JC0021>

<sup>5</sup> Council conclusions of 8 December 2009 on *Arctic issues*, available at:

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/111814.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/111814.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Council conclusions (9746/14) of 12 May 2014 on *Developing a European Union Policy towards the Arctic Region*, available at: <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9746-2014-INIT/en/pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Council conclusions (10400/16) of 20 June 2016 on *the Arctic*, available at:

<http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10400-2016-INIT/en/pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Ice and snow reflect a high proportion of solar energy back into the atmosphere. Bare rock and water absorb more solar energy. As Climate Change furthers and ice melts, the ability of the Arctic to reflect warmth is reduced (Sommerkorn and Hassol, 2009). This self-reinforcing mechanism is called the 'albedo effect' and shall be referred to more often throughout this paper.

international media attention in August 2007 (Parfitt, 2007; Van der Zwaag *et al.*, 2009). Finally, the EU is already a major exploiter of Arctic resources. For example, the Union imports 80% of Norwegian fish catches, 60% of Icelandic fish catches, 25% of Arctic oil and gas, fresh water, timber and other resources. Apart from these four core reasons for EU engagement with the Arctic, the Union has also expressed its concern for the livelihood of indigenous peoples in the region, who face both the effects of Climate Change and the thereupon consequent increasing economic activities in the region (European Commission, 2012a). The increasingly tangible effects of Climate Change provide the EU with environmental, economic, security and social reasons for which it may seek to get a more coherent and influential voice in Arctic politics.

The 2008 Communication from the European Commission to the Foreign Affairs Council and European Parliament was the first official step the EU took in the direction of the EU Arctic policy (European Commission, 2008a). It presented Climate Change as the stepping stone for the EU's involvement in the region, emphasising the EU's leading role in developing an international agenda for combating Climate Change. This Communication underlined that "Arctic challenges and opportunities will have significant repercussions on the life of European citizens for generations to come. It is imperative for the European Union to address them in a coordinated and systematic manner, in cooperation with Arctic states, territories and other stakeholders" (European Commission, 2008a, pp. 3). The Foreign Affairs Council welcomed the proposal with its draft Council Conclusions in 2008, and specifically approved of the Commission's objectives in its final Conclusions in 2009 (Council of the European Union 2008; 2009). An important next influence on the Arctic policy has been the establishment of the EEAS in 2010, a body that was given responsibility over the implementation of the CFSP with the HR as its executive under the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 (Art. 27).<sup>9</sup> According to a Commission official and the Danish PERM REP to the EU, the EEAS has increasingly served as a coordinator between different Commission departments and EU Member States, aiming to contribute to the coherence of the EU Arctic policy (Respondent A; Respondent B).

In 2012, the Commission and the HR published a Joint Communication on the EU Arctic policy, reflecting upon what had been achieved since 2008 and proposing a new, more coherent direction for the policy. This Communication suggested three key concepts that should guide EU-Arctic relations: knowledge, responsibility and engagement. The first concept referred to increased support for research concerning environmental and Climate Change in the Arctic and its consequences. 'Responsibility' referred to the way in which the EU hopes to ensure economic development in the Arctic "based on sustainable use of resources and environmental expertise" (European Commission, 2012a, pp. 4). Finally, the last concept of 'engagement' referred to increased and intensified cooperation specifically between the EU and Arctic states, representatives of indigenous communities and other

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<sup>9</sup> Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community [2007] OJ C306/01

partners in the Arctic. Part of this new policy also entailed the application of the Commission for a position of permanent observer of the Arctic Council, a decision which is yet to be agreed upon by the Arctic states.<sup>10</sup> The Foreign Affairs Council welcomed the Joint Communication as a next step in the development of the EU Arctic policy in its 2014 Conclusions: “The Arctic is a region of growing strategic importance and the Council agrees that the EU should now further enhance its contribution to Arctic cooperation. (...) The Council supports the intention of the Commission and the High Representative to intensify dialogue on Arctic matters with all the EU’s Arctic partners” (Council of the European Union, 2014, pp. 1-2). The Commission and HR have published a new Joint Communication on the EU Arctic policy in 2016, which further integrates all the EU’s activities in the Arctic. The Council has welcomed this Communication on 20 June 2016.

From this historical development we may conclude that the EU Arctic policy has by and large been drafted by the European Commission and negotiated and agreed upon by the Foreign Affairs Council. The EEAS has been responsible for the coordination between the different institutions involved since 2010. This paper will explore how each of these bodies has left its mark on the content of the policy. It will also provide a brief analysis of how the publication of the 2016 documents have altered the course of the EU Arctic policy.

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<sup>10</sup> The Arctic Council is the leading intergovernmental framework that exists to guide and secure cooperation and interaction between Arctic States. Its members are the Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States. [www.arctic-council.org](http://www.arctic-council.org)

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

European foreign policy (EFP) is often considered to be an output of Member States' interests, who merely employ the EU arena to further pursue domestically shaped preferences. Wagner (2003) argues that the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is and will stay intergovernmental of nature. He finds that Commission involvement in the CFSP is only marginal, and explains this on the basis of a rationalist institutional choice analysis, focusing on crisis management in particular. From this perspective, the current intergovernmental structure of the CFSP is likely to stay in place as it can effectively translate interests of Member States into a common policy in times of crisis. In "Europe's Uncommon Foreign Policy," Gordon (1997) emphasises this argument building on a variety of examples where the interests of Member States regarding foreign policy were too nationally oriented and divergent for a truly common EFP to arise. Looking at past attempts of European integration in the field of foreign policies, he concludes that three criteria need to be met will further integration occur: first, the perceived gains of common action need to outweigh the cost of lost sovereignty; second, government preferences need to be aligned sufficiently; and third, large states are able to protect their specific interests through particular institutional arrangements, like "opting-out". These conditions have not held in many foreign issues, because of either an absence of common interests or an absence of gains from common action when interests did align.

In contrast, other authors do see a role for supranational institutions in shaping EFP. Sandholtz (1996), for example, has demonstrated that EU Member States do not formulate national positions towards a particular foreign issue independently and that domestic lobbying on CFSP issues is quite rare. Furthermore, EU states are institutionally bound to discuss foreign problems collectively before developing national positions. He suggests three general ways in which EU institutions can affect EFP outcomes: first, EU institutions can become autonomous political actors themselves; second, they can bring domestic actors together on the basis of their preferences in EU level arenas; and third, they can cause domestic policies and institutions to change in accordance to EU standards. The EU is then no longer a "negotiating forum" where Member States pursue exclusively domestically formulated preferences (Moravcsik, 1993, pp. 507). Similarly, according to Smith (2004b), EFP-making is a process that involves intergovernmental, transgovernmental and supranational decision-making. While he acknowledges that the CFSP is not yet as supranational as many other EU policy domains, he does find that the role of supranational actors and institutions in shaping common foreign policies has become less and less marginalised since the 1980s. He for example points to the EU's foreign policy towards South Africa in the late 70s and 80s, in which individual Member States did not employ their right to veto even when they disagreed with common stances towards the sensitive political developments taking place in that country at the time.

Another example of how EU institutions may play a role in shaping the EFP can be found in Bicchi (2007), who has studied the formulation of EFP towards the Mediterranean. She finds that the

EU's interest in the Mediterranean has arisen predominantly from a common awareness or shared idea of challenges such as terrorism and migration. She distinguishes three conditions she considers necessary for the development of EFP. First, a policy window (or opportunity) is required, for example when national policy makers are puzzled with how to solve a particular issue independent from other states. Second, a policy entrepreneur is needed that is willing to take up the burden of advocating and creating the policy. In the case of the EU, this could be, among others, a Member State or an EU institution. Finally, Bicchi adds, a convergence of ideas on the definition of the problem at stake is required among the Member States and the EU institutions. These actors should firstly acknowledge the existence of the issue and secondly have similar thoughts about how to address this problem. Wegge (2011) has taken these three conditions out of the context of the Mediterranean and studied them in the case of the Arctic policy. In "the fuss in the media about the potential conflicts in the Arctic region, as well as the increased awareness of the future shipping and energy potential in the High North" he finds a window of opportunity for the rise of the policy in 2008 (pp. 23). The different EU bodies, however, had differing ideas on what sort of problem changes in the Arctic posed for the EU and how these issues should be tackled. While the Commission was well aware of developments in the Arctic and the Council had learned about Arctic issues through its Member States in or involved with the Arctic Council, the European Parliament was far less aware of recent Arctic developments. Only a limited number of MEPs had actual interest in the region. The Commission succeeded in unifying the interests of the rather radical stance of European Parliament (driven by a small group of interested MEPs) and the more status-quo oriented Member States through its 2008 Communication. The Commission, as such, fulfilled the role of policy entrepreneur and managed to establish a minimum convergence of ideas, opening the way for further development of the EU Arctic policy (Osthagen, 2011).

Various authors from different disciplines have studied the EU Arctic policy, answering different questions about the policy and applying different theoretical explanations. Some have focused on the legitimacy of the policy (Offerdal, 2011; Koivurova, 2012), while others have provided an overall analysis of the policy's development and the political questions that have been raised by various stakeholders in the Arctic (Young, 2009; Van der Zwaag, 2009). Weber and Romanyshyn (2011) study EU institutions as the causal determinants of the EU Arctic policy, hence analysing the supranational character of the roots of the EU Arctic policy, but largely treat these institutions as unitary bodies having single visions of what a complete EU Arctic policy should look like. This focus may not suffice, however, as Offerdal (2011) argues that only few people within the European Parliament, Commission and EEAS have been concerned with the EU Arctic policy, raising questions about the internal dynamics within each of the EU's bodies regarding Arctic agenda-setting. Wegge (2011) does place the EU Arctic policy within a more holistic theoretical framework by assessing congruence with liberal, realist and agenda-setting theories. While his study teaches us that the EU Arctic policy in general is an output of internal, external and systemic dimensions of EU foreign policy, it does not explain why some

items were particularly successful in making it onto the EU's Arctic agenda. Furthermore, building predominantly on public policy theory, this study only implicitly points to supranational and liberal-intergovernmental aspects of the Arctic policy.

Thus, studies on the EU Arctic policy do not yet include a theoretical analysis in which the explanatory power of Supranationalism and Liberal-intergovernmentalism, the two largest theories in the field of European integration, are tested. As such, they may inform us on why particular actors are involved in the EU Arctic policy, but do not answer why the policy looks the way it does from a theoretical perspective. Placing this question at its core, this research hopes to add to these studies by placing the EU Arctic policy within the theoretical context of European integration. Furthermore, incorporating the Commission and HR Joint Communication and Council Conclusions of April and June 2016 respectively, this paper also provides an analysis of the policy that is more up-to-date than any other study so far. Once we know which theory of European integration can better explain the EU Arctic policy, as it is today, we will not only have expanded our understanding of this particular policy domain, but we will also have tested the relevance of these theories in this relatively new and continually developing field of EFP.

### **3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1 Selection of theories**

According to Hix and Høyland (2011), intergovernmentalism and Supranationalism are the two main theoretical explanations for the integration of foreign policies of the EU Member States. Supranationalism builds on the content of Neofunctionalism, a theoretical trend that assumes a declining role for nation-states in international politics (Haas, 1961). Non-state actors, like European institutions and internationally oriented interest groups are considered the main drivers behind European integration from this perspective. Liberal-intergovernmentalism has criticised this stream of thought, claiming that European integration has never been anything but a mundane case of individual Member States pursuing their respective interests at an international level (Moravcik, 1998). The Member States hence remain the strongest drivers of European integration from this perspective. The Arctic policy is a relatively new EU policy, that predominantly presents social, economic and environmental objectives, even if it is a foreign policy of the Union. It therefore involves both national and supranational policy makers, whose roles and responsibilities towards the Arctic in many ways have not yet been set in stone. As such, it makes a particularly interesting case for the study of the explanatory power of both Liberal-intergovernmentalism and Supranationalism.

#### **3.2 Supranationalism – an introduction**

In order to understand the supranational perception of European integration, we must first study the original theory from which this line of thought has been derived: Neofunctionalism. The roots of Neofunctionalism lie most visibly in the works of Haas (1958) on European integration (Rosamund, 2000), who has developed three mechanisms through which he thought European integration progresses: first, positive spillover effects; second, a transfer of allegiances from the national to the supranational political arena; and third, a ‘technocratic automaticity,’ referring to an increasingly autonomous role of supranational institutions in promoting further integration. The spillover effect occurs when integration between states in a particular sector incentivises integration in other sectors too. One incentive is, for example, that the optimisation of common benefits of integration in the original sector requires integration in other sectors (Lindberg, 1963). The second mechanism refers to a process by which domestic interest groups shift their activities from the domestic to the international realm. Oftentimes national institutions provide less effective ways for interest groups to pursue their end goals than international institutions do. Finally, the third mechanism is a process in which established supranational institutions develop an interest of their own: encouraging deeper and broader integration. In the European case, the European Commission, established to coordinate and implement integration strategies, has an intrinsic interest to expand its competencies. In sum, Haas first sees integration as a process led by elitist groups, like leaders of industry associations or political parties, who recognise a lack of opportunities in pursuing a shared interest at the domestic level and then push



national governments to transfer policy competence to a supranational body. Then, once supranational institutions are created, international interdependence grows and interest groups or political party leaders can shift their loyalties away from national institutions by choosing to pursue their interests through newly established international institutions.

Sweet and Sandholtz (1997) suggest that European integration may occur through supranational governance, modifying and building on classical neofunctional perceptions of EU integration. Their argument is threefold: they consider the integration of decision-making as a result of, first, an increasingly transnational society; second, activities of supranational organisations; and third, the increasing density of supranational legislation. Because of these three processes, the Member States of the EU lose control over the outcomes of decision-making. This shift in authority from the state to the supranational occurs on the basis of an expansion of transnational exchange and the thereupon consequent social demand for European supranational institutions to respond with appropriate legislation. An important implication of this theory is that the competences of EU supranational institutions will not be constructed evenly among policy sectors and over time, but will rise in response to such social demands. At the same time, they argue that the increase of supranational legislation responding to the expansion of transnational exchange will also come with an increase in supranational institutionalisation, which in turn again encourages further integration of European decision-making processes. “Because of institutionalisation,” they suggest, “EC policy domains can become more supranational without some, or at times a majority of, governments wanting it or being able to reverse it” (Sweet and Sandholtz, 1997, p. 310). As European institutions become a domain for politics, “what is specifically supranational shapes the context for subsequent interactions: how actors define their interests, what avenues are available to pursue them, how disputes are to be resolved” (Sweet and Sandholtz, 1997, p. 311). In sum, the expansions of transnational exchange among the European states leads to an increase in the demand for supranational legislation, which then in turn reinforces the integration process through institutionalisation.

### 3.3 Liberal-intergovernmentalism – an introduction

Moravcsik (1998) claims that European integration can best be viewed as the output of rational choices made by government leaders of the EU Member States. He suggests a “rationalist framework” that assumes that “the primary political instrument by which individuals and groups in civil society seek to influence international negotiations is the nation-state, which acts as a unitary and rational actor on behalf of its constituents” (Moravcsik, 1998, pp. 22). This rationalist framework disaggregates the process of integration into three stages: national preference formation, interstate bargaining and institutional choice. In the first stage, the degree of integration depends on the interests of influential domestic constituents exercising pressure over their governments. Moravcsik (1993) explains that “the foreign policy goals of national governments vary in response to shifting pressure from domestic social

groups, whose preferences are aggregated through political institutions” (pp. 481). For example, national governments may pursue international agendas in the fields of trade and agriculture to satisfy domestic producer groups. Nevertheless, he argues that national preference formation regarding cooperation in the field of foreign and defence policy is subject to geopolitical interests, revolving around a state’s ideological commitment to European integration or its perception of military threat. In the second stage, integration depends on the bargaining process between states whose relative power is derived from asymmetrical interdependence. For this stage, Moravcsik argues that, given national preferences, the efficiency and distributional outcomes of interstate bargaining result from the issue-specific distribution of bargaining power among states. The third stage refers to a process by which Member States decide to delegate authority to a supranational institution, aiming to secure the implementation of their common agreement. No such institution has been founded with the special purpose of enforcing the Arctic policy. This third stage shall therefore not be further discussed in this paper. Stages one (preference formation) and two (interstate bargaining) are, however, crucial elements of Liberal-intergovernmentalism that may help us explain the EU Arctic policy. They shall be explained in more detail in the paragraphs below.

Moravcsik derives different expectations regarding preference formation from the geopolitical and economic explanations across five dimensions. First, for the economic explanation we should observe preference variation across countries and issues, while for the geopolitical explanation we should observe preference variation across countries, but not across issues. Second, while preference formation should not be influenced by economic trends and changes in the geopolitical explanation, it should in the economic explanation. Third, integration preferences should be consistent with national foreign and military policies, with major geopolitical bargaining demands and economic concessions in the geopolitical explanation. In contrast, the economic interest explanation predicts that major bargaining demands will be economic, whereas concessions may be of a geopolitical nature. Fourth, the geopolitical explanation predicts that the main actors behind preference formation are defence and foreign ministers, possibly interacting with elites and building on public opinion, while the economic explanation predicts that the key influencers of national preferences are economic interest groups and officials. Finally, while top decision makers will predominantly adopt an economic rhetoric taking geopolitical constraints as malleable in the economic explanation, the opposite applies to the geopolitical explanation. While these five expectations are opposing theoretical explanations, they may both be valid in different issue areas, as Moravcsik himself emphasises that geopolitical argumentation best explains integration in the field of foreign and defence policy (1998, pp. 28).

Moravcsik’s second argument concerns an almost inevitable process of interstate bargaining that states will participate in if they take any interest in integrating policies. He finds that, as the preferences of national governments hardly ever converge, international integration is subject to negotiations in which different states have different bargaining positions. In general, states that are in little need of a

particular agreement deviating from the status quo hold a strong bargaining position and can easily enforce concessions by threatening other states to refuse cooperation. Similarly, states that are able to collect more and better information about other states' preferences and institutional contexts can more easily influence negotiations. Again a distinction should be made between foreign and defence policy, in which bargaining demands are geopolitical with economic concessions, and other policy issues, in which bargaining demands are economic with geopolitical concessions.

### 3.4 Explaining the EU Arctic policy: Supranationalism or Liberal-intergovernmentalism?

The explanatory power of the two theories discussed above shall here be tested in the context of the EU Arctic policy. Both theories have different expectations about which institutions are more influential in the process of European integration. It is therefore important to distinguish between them. While supranational institutions like the European Commission represent the interest of the EU as a whole, intergovernmental institutions like the Council facilitate cooperation between national governments without compromising their sovereignty. Purely supranational policy-making would not require input from national authorities, while purely intergovernmental policy-making would not involve supranational actors. EU Arctic policy-making contains elements of both camps. Before testing our theories in the Arctic context, we must therefore first grasp all the steps that EU Arctic policy makers are obliged to follow in accordance with EU law. According to Art. 24 of the Lisbon Treaty, EU foreign policy “shall be defined and implemented by the European Council and the Council acting unanimously”.<sup>11</sup> Other EU bodies can, however, express their thoughts through (Joint) Communications. Communications are policy documents without mandatory authority; they reflect the thoughts of the Commission or HR on a particular topic. A Communication needs to be endorsed by the Council before it can be considered an expression of EU policy. The EU Arctic policy consists of such Communications and thereupon following Council Conclusions. These Conclusions do not intend to have legal effects, but can invite Member States or EU institutions to take action in a particular policy area. They can either request the Commission and HR to reduce, continue or intensify their activities towards developing a new policy, or steer these activities in a particular direction.

Figure 1. below places the procedure described above in the theoretical frameworks of Supranationalism and Liberal-intergovernmentalism. Following Supranationalism, integration in the field of Arctic policy is driven by the EU's supranational institutions. As explained in paragraph 3.2, these institutions are pressured to develop a common policy due to the functional spillover effect and by an increasingly transnational society. Even though, in practice, the EU's supranational institutions can only submit a proposal for Arctic policy to the Council, Supranationalism expects that such a proposal will already incorporate the interests of Member States to ensure agreement. In contrast,

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<sup>11</sup> Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community [2007] OJ C306/01

Liberal-intergovernmentalism predicts that domestic economic and geopolitical interests drive governments to develop a common Arctic policy (see paragraph 3.3). From this perspective, policy-making is an intergovernmental bargaining process, resulting in Council Conclusions that represent the lowest-common denominator of all Member States. These two opposing explanations for the development of the EU Arctic policy can each be reduced to three theoretical propositions, which will serve as a basis for the concrete and falsifiable theoretical expectations developed in chapter 5.

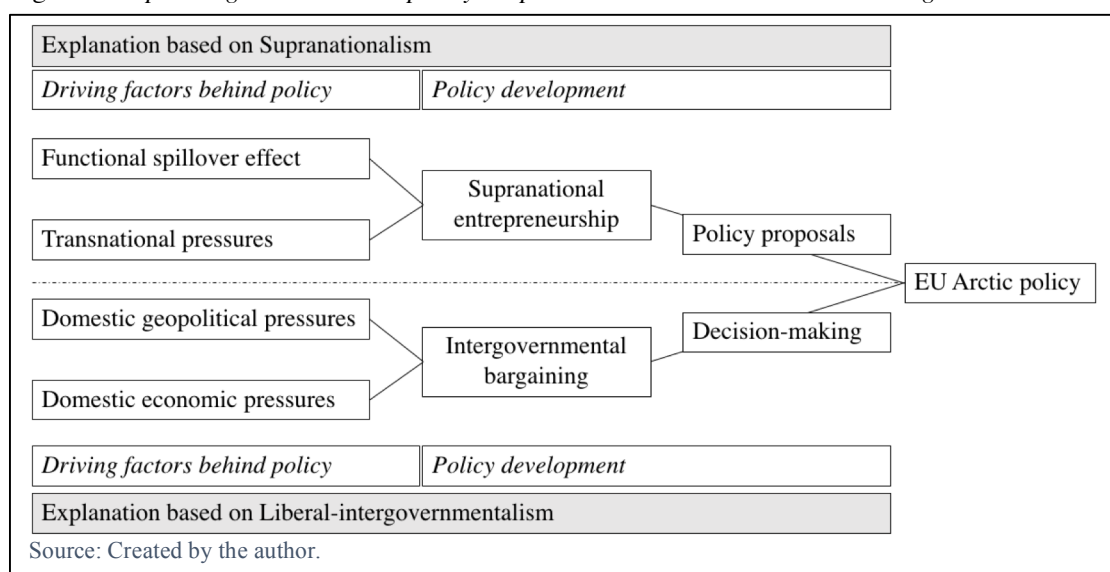
Following Supranationalism:

1. EU officials support an integrated Arctic policy because they perceive this as necessary for the fulfilment of policy objectives in a previously integrated area.
2. The EU Arctic policy is driven by transnational actors, such as interest groups, businesses, or knowledge-based elites, who increasingly pursue their interests at the EU level.
3. The EU Arctic policy is driven by the EU's supranational institutions, who act as policy entrepreneurs and negotiation leaders, promoting their own interests.

Following Liberal-intergovernmentalism:

1. The EU Arctic policy is driven by national governments reacting upon economic demands from domestic constituencies.
2. The security and defence issues falling under the EU Arctic policy are driven by national governments' geopolitical interests.
3. The EU Arctic policy is the lowest common denominator resulting from international bargaining by asymmetrically interdependent states.

Figure 1. *Explaining the EU Arctic policy: Supranationalism versus Liberal-intergovernmentalism*



#### 4. RESEARCH DESIGN

This research aims to test the explanatory power of two theories of European integration, Supranationalism and Liberal-intergovernmentalism, in the case of the EU Arctic policy. It employs the method of Congruence Analysis (CON) to reach this objective. According to Blatter and Haverland (2012), CON is a suitable method to assess to what extent a particular theory holds explanatory power for a particular phenomenon. Without explicitly mentioning it, Moravcsik (1998) applies a similar method, testing predetermined expectations derived from various general theories of international cooperation in the case of five important steps in EU integration. Moravcsik first formulates concrete and falsifiable hypotheses from competing theories, then disaggregates European integration into several case studies and finally relies on primary sources where possible to test his hypotheses. Since this study focuses on integration in the case of the EU Arctic policy only, it will not present several case studies. It will, however, test the level of congruence between falsifiable theoretical expectations, derived from Supranationalism and Liberal-intergovernmentalism, and real world observations, derived from primary sources where possible. The theoretical propositions to be tested in this research are given in the previous chapter on theory. Concrete expectations that follow from these propositions in the case of the Arctic policy will be explicated in chapter 5 on operationalization. This chapter will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of qualitative research, the application of CON in this paper and it will familiarise us with the data selection and interpretation process.

##### 4.1 Qualitative research design

In general terms, the goal of this study is inference on the basis of empirical observations. This is, according to King *et al.* (1996), the ultimate goal of scientific research. Following their perception of scientific research, this paper will employ explicit and public methods to analyse data, so that the results can be replicated. Significant attention will be paid to the operationalization of the studied theoretical framework and the method through which inferences will be made. This study will mention any possible imperfect fits that may occur between the research question at hand and the collected data. For studies that hope to contribute to theory, King *et al.* also recommend the author to choose theories that could be wrong, ensure their falsifiability by generating observable implications, and be concrete about their content and hypotheses. This study has tried to respect these guidelines, as theories are explained in chapter 3 and turned into concrete expectations that can be found in chapter 5. Similarly, this study follows the guidelines on improving data quality suggested in King *et al.*, including a description of the collecting and processing of data, the diversification of contexts in which we collect data, validity maximisation of measurements, and finally, reliability and replicability of data-collection methods. The first of these guidelines has resulted in the inclusion of section 4.3 in to this thesis. Diversification of contexts has been respected by not only collecting data where supportive arguments are likely to be found. For example, while official documents published by supranational actors may tell us a lot about

supranational entrepreneurship, relevant data in this field has also been sought in national, nongovernmental and other realms, like journalistic media. The validity of measurements has been maximized by supporting arguments with direct citations, ensuring the reader can see that argumentation actually adheres to the data. Reliability and replicability has been preserved in particular by usage of congruence analysis.

## 4.2 Congruence analysis

According to Blatter and Blume (2008a; 2008b), CON helps us observe the degree to which particular expectations deduced from core elements of abstract theories match with empirical findings. It hence helps us grasp the relative strength of theories to explain one or few cases. They define two preconditions that are required for a solid application of CON: first, CON requires a “plurality of full-fledged and coherent theories from which concrete expectations can be deduced”; and second, it requires a “plurality and diversity of available observations.” This plurality has been respected in this research as two of the largest competing theories in the field of European integration have been selected as possible explanations for the studied case. Furthermore, Blatter and Blume encourage the author to reflect intensively on the relationship between the abstract concepts deduced from theory and concrete observations. An author can do this by formulating concrete expectations about what observations of the studied case should appear in accordance with the chosen theories. In this study, reflections on the link between abstract theories and expected observations are first generally expressed in the six theoretical propositions mentioned above and the six concrete theoretical expectations that will be explicated below. In line with Blatter and Blume’s recommendations, these expectations include assumptions about the most relevant actors in the studied case, their perceptions and motivations, as well as the structure in which they operate. Finally, one benefit of CON is that it allows for a vertically oriented form of generalisation; that is, the possibility to draw inferences from concrete observations to abstract elements of theories or paradigms, in this case elements of Supranationalism and Liberal-intergovernmentalism. These inferences will be drawn in this thesis’ chapter ‘Discussion’. An overview of the application of CON in this study can be found in Table 1. below.

Table 1. *Use of Congruence Analysis in this paper*

PHASE	CH.	CONTENT
Interpretive and reflective	3.	Selection and explication of competing theories
	3.	Formulation of six abstract propositions based on core aspects of selected theories.
	5.	Reformulation of abstract theoretical propositions into concrete expectations referring to the studied case.
Analytical	6.	Testing the level of congruence between all six theoretical expectations and empirical observations.
Inferential	7.	Drawing inferences from the earlier tested degree of in(congruence) per theoretical expectation.

Source: Created by the author.

While Moravcsik's systematic and methodological explanation of European integration is much appreciated in the field of Liberal-intergovernmentalism, it has been criticised for benefiting Liberal-intergovernmental argumentation through case selection and by impoverishing the neofunctional argument. Caporaso *et al.* (1999) claim that by selecting discrete and bounded cases, Moravcsik places Neofunctionalism, in which a process-oriented method is commonplace, in a disadvantageous position vis-à-vis Liberal-intergovernmentalism. According to them, neofunctionalists would not look for explanations in periods of intense international bargaining, but instead study slow societal change "resulting from trade, capital flows, movements of workers, capitalists, and tourists, cross-border activities of professional organisations, and so on" (pp. 162). They also argue that Moravcsik only tests part of neofunctional argumentation, focusing solely on the influence of international technocracy and institutions on policy-making, while omitting the importance of transnational society and their link to supranational institutions. Similarly, Sweet and Sandholtz (1997) pay significant attention to the link between transnational society and supranational institutions in their defence of a theoretical shift from Neofunctionalism to Supranationalism. Increasing cross-border activities of professional organisations in relation to supranational institutions will therefore be incorporated into the supranational expectations formulated in this research. Thus, this study will build on Moravcsik's theoretical expectations for both Liberal-intergovernmentalism and Neofunctionalism, but enrich the latter with concepts derived from other works produced in the supranational camp.

#### 4.3 Collection of empirical data

Data has been obtained from a wide variety of sources, including newspapers and specialised journals, documentation by interest groups and EU and national government institutions, secondary literature, and interviews with EU officials. The questions posed in this study that relate to the content of the EU Arctic policy have been answered on the basis of the official documents that together form the policy. The 2008, 2012, and 2016 Commission and HR Communications to the Council and European Parliament lie at the heart of the policy. Nevertheless, questions regarding the processes behind the formulation of the EU Arctic policy and Arctic agenda items are rarely explicitly mentioned in such documents. Even if they are, they may be framed according to the interests of the document's author. Hence, some information had to be obtained through other media or interviews. Table 3. (Appendix I) shows the types of data employed to test the theoretical expectations proposed here. The method of information abstraction from the employed data with their advantages and disadvantages will be discussed in the paragraphs below.

Data has been used to provide evidence for each of the theoretical expectations that will be explicated in chapter 5. All data has been collected in a single database, where it has been categorised per theoretical expectation. This database has formed the starting point of chapter 6: 'Observations and Analysis'. Borrowing Yin's (2003) distinction between data types, this research has drawn upon two

sources of evidence. First, the *documents* studied for this project included agendas, official letters, written speeches and official announcements of EU bodies and national governments, as well as interest group written reports and other studies of the EU Arctic policy. According to Yin, the advantages of documents are that they are stable (that is, they can be reviewed repeatedly), unobtrusive (or not created for the purpose of this study), exact and broad in content. Given that access to documentation can be limited or purposely blocked, weaknesses of the application of these sources are that an incomplete collection leads to a biased selection of documents, while documents themselves also reflect the bias of their author. Documents can help explain the content of the policy and form a basis for further research regarding the processes behind its development.

Second, interviews have been conducted to reveal information about the procedures that underlie the formation of the EU Arctic policy. Moravcsik has used interviews in a similar manner, for example to obtain inside information about the role of the Delors Committee in negotiations on the European Monetary Union (Moravcsik, 1998). According to Yin, interviews are beneficial because they directly focus on the case study topic and allow for causal inferences to be made. Interviews allow answers to the ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions that may occur to us while observing and comparing documents and archival records. Disadvantages of interviews are that interviewees may be selective in the information they provide or that a certain degree of reflexivity (that is, the interviewee provides the interviewer with the desired answers) biases the outcome. Interviewees have been asked *informant factual questions*, circling around an entity of which the informant is expected to be particularly knowledgeable (Bryman, 2004). Closed questions have been asked concerning plainly informative facts which the author cannot access otherwise, to obtain only the required information while maintaining comparability of answers and enhancing the processing of answers. Open questions have been asked concerning processes in which interviewees participated, for example regarding the processes through which inter-institutional negotiations took place, to prevent reflexivity in answers and to allow the informant to employ his or her full level of knowledge of the issue at hand. Open ended questions can furthermore be useful in obtaining insights on further issues or key actors to involve. Given the informative character of the interviews, a large quantity of results is not required. The diversity of interviewees is more relevant to promote a fair distribution of data between the theoretical camps studied; interviewees should come from both the EU’s supranational and intergovernmental institutions. The lists of questions asked can be found in Appendix II.

To some extent, there has been a gap between collected data and the research question addressed. For example, it would have been useful to have observations of each Member States’ preferences towards the EU Arctic policy over the years since its establishment. Unfortunately, only few Member State governments have published an official statement on the EU Arctic policy. This lack has been compensated for by analysing what international media and the Arctic Journal have written about Member States’ roles in the Arctic during the development phase of the policy. The author has



corresponded with several PERM REPs of Member States to the EU about their role in the development of the EU Arctic policy, but few responded and only one answered the list of questions attached in Appendix II. Furthermore, it would have been useful to gain insights in the negotiating process between governments that have taken place before the publication of the Council Conclusions. Information about these processes could, however, not be discussed until the publication of the Council Conclusions of June 2016 (Respondent B). It would also have been valuable to learn from Commission staff about the change in the institutional dynamics behind the EU Arctic policy when the EEAS was established, but, according to one Commission staff member, EU officials do generally not have an institutional memory that dates back to this time (Respondent A). This research could very well be continued now that the Foreign Affairs Council has formally replied to the 2016 Joint Communication. While this paper already incorporates a brief analysis of the 2016 policy documents themselves, interviews with the Commission, the EEAS and PERM REPs about the drafting and negotiating process of the 2016 documents could provide new insights in the institutional dynamics behind the freshly updated EU Arctic policy. These insights would certainly enrich the results of this paper, but could not be obtained due time limitations.

## **5. OPERATIONALIZATION: DEVELOPING FALSIFIABLE EXPECTATIONS**

This chapter will present six falsifiable expectations based on the theoretical propositions formulated in chapter 3. By testing these expectations, each of which comes with a subset of indicators, we can reveal which theoretical camp holds most explanatory power for European integration in the case of the Arctic policy. This study suggests that, if the Arctic policy results from the functional spillover effect, from interaction between transnational actors and supranational institutions, and from supranational entrepreneurship, then Supranationalism can best explain the development of the EU Arctic policy. In contrast, if the EU Arctic policy results from international bargaining in which each government acts upon domestic pressures, through processes that vary across the foreign and defence and the socio-economic aspects of the Arctic policy, then Liberal-intergovernmentalism can best explain integration in this field. Table 4. (Appendix I) provides an overview of the questions that had to be answered to test each of the expectations explicated below.

### **5.1 Functional spillover effect**

Focusing predominantly on the technocratic, entrepreneurial aspect of Supranationalism, Moravcsik does not develop a clear expectation for the possibility that states may transfer sovereignty to supranational institutions consequent upon previous integration in another policy area. The functional spillover effect, which is, however, a core element of Supranationalism, therefore remains untested in his work. Sweet and Sandholtz (1997) claim that spillover reinforces integration processes, as supranational authority is extended from one policy area to another, related area. As this process proceeds, they argue, Member States become less proactive and more reactive to supranational initiatives in more and more policy fields. What is required for spillover to occur is a realisation by supranational institutions, pressure groups and national governments that some initial policy objectives cannot be effectively reached without an extension of supranational authorities to a new functional dimension. Niemann and Ioannou (2015) have probed several indicators that can help us recognise a case of functional spillover. These indicators include the salience of the original policy objective, the existence of functional interdependence between the original and the new policy, the availability of functional solutions, and the use of functional arguments in the political discourse behind a particular case of policy integration. The first indicator refers to the existence of an urgent original policy objective from which functional pressured develop. The second and third refer to the extent to which the original and new issues addressed are interdependent and can be solved only collectively. The final indicator refers to functional arguments made by key actors involved in the policy domain. On the basis of these theoretical concepts, the following theoretical expectation can be formulated in the case of the EU's agenda for the Arctic:

*The EU Arctic policy is derived from a previously existing policy through the functional spillover effect. The original policy objective cannot be properly reached by means other than a new integrative policy. The EU Arctic policy is functionally interdependent with this original policy and further integration is perceived by EU officials as necessary for the fulfilment of initial objectives.*

## 5.2 Transnational pressures

A second important process that is key to the supranational explanation of European integration is that of a shift in interest groups' allegiances from national governments to supranational institutions. Sweet and Sandholtz (1997) refer to a two-dimensional process by which, on the one hand, interest groups find a new political arena that they can use to exert their influence, while on the other hand, supranational institutions gain expertise, information and legitimacy from this increased interaction with societal groups. The more domestic groups shift their loyalty from national governments to supranational institutions, the more authority these institutions gain. Nevertheless, they argue, such a shift does not have to result from a changed perception of identification. When transnational exchange increases, be it economic, social or political, those who engage in such exchange (transnational actors) will increasingly develop a need for supranational rules that can help them reach collective (transnational) gains. At the same time, the costs for national governments to maintain dissimilar national rules increases. From a supranational perspective, transnational actors like interest groups, businesses, and knowledge-based elites can choose a political arena in which to exert their influence. supranational institutions provide them opportunities by solidifying bases for interaction and establishing access points for influencing policy-making processes. Transnational society can grow on the basis of these institutions, hence reinforcing the process through which supranational institutions came into being in the first place. On the basis of these theoretical concepts, the following theoretical expectation can be formulated in the case of the EU's agenda for the Arctic:

*The EU's agenda for the Arctic results from an increasingly transnational society. Transnational stakeholders in the Arctic policy, like interest groups, businesses and knowledge-based elites, have sought contact with supranational bodies to exert influence over the policy. They have used platforms for interaction and access points to decision-making processes provided by the European Commission.*

## 5.3 Supranational entrepreneurship

One theoretical concept tested by Moravcsik that is derived from Supranationalism is that of supranational bargaining, an explanation competing with Intergovernmental Bargaining Theory. From this perspective, officials from supranational institutions have a greater stake in international integration and therefore develop an information advantage over national governments. supranational institutions here play a central role in transnational networks, they possess technical expertise and political skills and benefit from a neutral position. National governments produce relatively few innovative policy proposals and supranational officials jump in where they see an opportunity for policy development.

supranational institutions can overview the negotiating process by mediating between involved stakeholders and proposing package deals that satisfy all actors involved. Typically, the outcomes of such policy proposals require supranational intervention to ensure compliance or implementation and are biased toward the preferences of supranational actors. On the basis of these theoretical concepts, the following theoretical expectation can be formulated in the case of the EU's agenda for the Arctic:

*The EU Arctic policy is a result of supranational entrepreneurship. The European Commission has used a comparative information and expertise advantage over Member States to initiate and shape the policy in line with its own preferences. Opponents to a particular policy item have been satisfied through package deals. Member state preferences towards the policy are unstable, as the information available to them changes throughout the negotiations.*

#### 5.4 Domestic pressures

National preference formation lies at the heart of Moravcsik's explanation of European integration. It is driven by the interaction between national governments and their domestic constituencies. While Moravcsik refers to both geopolitical and economic interests as factors underlying domestic preferences regarding international cooperation, his argument principally circles around the economic explanation. In the case of foreign and defence policy, however, Moravcsik states that "predictions are the same as those of the geopolitical explanation" (1998, pp. 28). Given that the EU Arctic policy consists of several issue areas, some of which are socio-economic, and others of which are more security oriented, both geopolitical and economic interests can explain the EU Arctic policy from the liberal-intergovernmental perspective. The socio-economic aspects of the EU Arctic policy, which predominantly fall under its objectives 'knowledge' and 'responsibility', would according to Liberal-intergovernmentalism best be explained by economic interest. In contrast, the security oriented aspects of the EU Arctic policy, which predominantly fall under its objective 'international cooperation', would according to Liberal-intergovernmentalism best be explained by geopolitical interest. The mechanisms through which economic and geopolitical interests influence national preferences towards integration are of a different nature, however, and must therefore be distinguished in separate theoretical expectations in this research too. While economic positions vary by policy domain and country and are formulated through non-hierarchical structures involving many stakeholders, geopolitical positions vary by country and are formulated through clear hierarchical structures on the basis of a government's ideological commitment to integration or perception of military threat by foreign power blocks. Furthermore, while economic positions can change over time, geopolitical positions tend to be persistent. On the basis of these theoretical concepts, the following two theoretical expectations can be formulated to explain different aspects of the EU's agenda for the Arctic:

*Domestic economic interests underlie national preferences regarding the socio-economic aspects of the EU Arctic policy. National government positions vary per country per agenda item, can change over*

*time and incorporate the commercial interests of interest groups and economic officials, possibly elites, ruling parties and chief executives. In the negotiation process, major bargains are of an economic nature, while major concessions are geopolitical.*

*Domestic geopolitical interests underlie national preferences regarding the foreign and defence aspects of the EU Arctic policy. Government positions vary per country, are consistent across issue areas and do not change over time. They incorporate the considerations of foreign and defence ministries, possibly elites, ruling parties and chief executives, which depend on commitment to integration or perception of politico-military threat. In the negotiation process, major bargains are of a geopolitical nature, while major concessions are economic.*

## 5.5 Intergovernmental bargaining

According to Moravcsik, European integration may occur on the basis of national preferences through a process of bargaining between Member State governments, in which supranational institutions only play a marginal role. During such bargaining processes, information and ideas regarding any particular issue are evenly distributed among national governments. supranational institutions do not benefit from an advantageous position vis-à-vis governments in terms of knowledge and expertise. Asymmetries regarding any particular issue between governments and societal groups only mirror the relative intensity of these actors' preferences concerning the issue. That is, those governments and other societal groups whose preferences are most intense can choose to serve as policy entrepreneurs. Governments initiate a policy, mediate between domestic groups and other national governments and negotiate with these governments on the distributions of gains that are to be obtained from the proposal. If an agreement is reached, it will be efficient without the requirement of supranational intervention. Typically, those governments that will benefit most from the agreement will also be willing to make the most compromises or side-payments, in line with the preferences of those governments whose preferences deviate most significantly from the policy proposal. On the basis of these theoretical concepts, the following theoretical expectation can be formulated in the case of the EU's agenda for the Arctic:

*The EU Arctic policy has been shaped through intergovernmental bargaining by asymmetrically interdependent states. Distributional asymmetries resulting from negotiations reflect the relative intensity of Member State preferences regarding the EU Arctic policy. Negotiations are initiated by the most interested national governments or societal groups, while the largest concessions are made to the strongest opponents of the policy, possibly through side-payments. The final outcome is the lowest common denominator that the Member States share.*

## 6. OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

It will be the purpose of this chapter to connect empirical observations of the development of the EU Arctic policy to the theoretical expectations that have been explicated in the previous chapter. Each paragraph will discuss to what extent the indicators summarised in Table 3. (Appendix I) can be observed, guided by the questions formulated in Table 4. (Appendix I).

### 6.1 Functional spillover effect

Within the theoretical framework of Supranationalism, one reason for supranational actors to develop new policies is the functional spillover effect. This concept refers to the need for integration in order to meet objectives of previously established common policies. It will be the purpose of this section to find out whether the EU Arctic policy results from other integrated EU policies through the functional spillover effect. The EU Arctic policy suggests a broad variety of proposals for action, from protection of the environment to safety regulations for tourist cruises over Arctic waters. Oftentimes these proposals display overlap with other EU policies, some of which explicitly connected to Arctic issues. One clear example of an Arctic-oriented policy is the Northern Dimension, initiated in 1999, which strives towards stability, economic cooperation and permanent dialogue between its four participants: the EU, Iceland, Norway and Russia (European External Action Service, 2016). Another explicit example is the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, which came into being when representatives of Finland, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Denmark, Iceland and the European Commission signed the Kirkenes Declaration in 1993, formalising intergovernmental cooperation in the region (The Barents Euro-Arctic Region, 2004, pp 5). Even though these institutions demonstrate that the EU and the Arctic are interlinked, the question remains if the EU Arctic policy exists out of the particular need to meet objectives of previously established EU policies. Four indicators (discussed in the chapters on theory and operationalization) can be employed to find out if this is the case: the presence of a salient original policy objective, the absence of means to reach this objective other than further integration, the degree of interdependence between issues falling under EU Arctic policy and the original policy and the employment of the ‘functional argument’ by EU officials. The paragraphs below illustrate observations of these indicators throughout the development of the EU Arctic policy. Table 2. summarises the findings.

The institutions binding the EU and the Arctic region mentioned above exist, because the EU depends on the Arctic environment and Arctic resources to fulfil its responsibilities in other policy areas, especially those concerning energy, Climate Change, and fishing. Under the Lisbon Treaty, the EU shares competence with the Member States in each of these policy domains. The EU has been triggered to develop an Arctic strategy as the Arctic plays an increasingly crucial role in all of these policy domains. In its 2008 Communication “The raw materials initiative – meeting our critical needs for growth and jobs in Europe”, for example, the Commission (2008b, pp. 6) wrote that it would

promote enhanced international cooperation in the Arctic region “on the security of international trade routes for raw materials.” The Commission refers to this report in its 2008 Communication on the Arctic, emphasising that “Arctic resources could contribute to enhancing the EU’s security of supply concerning energy and raw materials in general”. Indeed, as laid out in the EU energy policy, it is the task of the EU to secure energy supply and promote sustainability (European Commission, 2016a). Referring to this security responsibility, stakeholders recommend the EU to diversify its Arctic resource providers and reduce dependence on Russian resources (Maurer *et al.*, 2012). The task of the EU as securer of energy supplies was tested especially as EU-Russian relations got colder over the Ukraine crisis. According to the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, “the crisis may also have a long-term impact on Arctic development by potentially affecting the European energy security considerations” (Mikkola, 2014). Furthermore, referring to the EU’s sustainable energy responsibility, stakeholders note that the EU should look for Arctic hydrocarbon providers other than Russia, since in Russia international norms “are ignored if they are perceived to run against the ‘national interest’” (Maurer *et al.*, pp. 20). Given the resource extraction opportunities that have emerged around the time of the 2008 and 2012 Arctic Communications in, for example Greenland, the EU needs to get a voice in Arctic politics to fulfil its responsibilities under the energy policy.

The increasingly crucial role of the Arctic in Climate Change research requires the EU to pay special attention to this region on the basis of its existing responsibilities in this policy domain. Article 191 (1) TFEU expects the EU to contribute to the preservation, protection and improvement of the quality of the environment as well as to the promotion of measures at the international level to deal with regional or worldwide environmental problems, of which Climate Change is specifically mentioned under the Treaty of Lisbon (European Parliament, 2010).<sup>12</sup> It is also the task for the Commissioner for Climate Change, which since 2010 has been involved in shaping the EU Arctic policy, to continue EU leadership in fighting Climate Change, lead the EU’s international negotiations on climate, and help the EU to deal with the consequences of Climate Change (European Parliament, 2010). As the Commission underlines in its policy proposals, Climate Change occurs faster in the Arctic than anywhere else in the world, because of ice-albedo feedback. At the same time, the effects of Climate Change in the Arctic threaten Arctic and EU inhabitants. Possible consequences are acceleration of global Climate Change, loss or moving of fish stocks, forest fires and storm damage around Arctic coastal areas (including those within EU territory), global sea level rise, and disturbances of the Gulf Stream (Sommerkorn and Hassol, 2009). Not only does the EU feel the consequences of accelerated Climate Change in the Arctic, it also contributes to it with a share in global greenhouse gas emissions of about 16% (Koivurova *et al.*, 2012). Forming a particular threat to the Arctic climate, the European continent’s share of black carbon

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<sup>12</sup> *Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*, 26 October 2012, OJ L 326/47-326/390, available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012E%2FTXT>

emissions in the Arctic is 59%, partially due to international shipping. These data are presented in a study on the EU's impact on the Arctic funded by the Commission's DG ENV, which concludes that it is critical for the EU to "present a consistent message and continue to work with the eight Arctic states, and across sectors, to implement policies that promote sustainable resource development and protect the Arctic environment" (Cavalieri *et al.*, 2011, pp. 117). Developing a Climate Change oriented policy for the Arctic region is thus of considerable importance to the EU, and in particular the Commissioners for Environment and Climate Change, if they are to meet their legally constituted responsibilities.

A similar form of interconnectedness exists in the field of fisheries. In its 2007 proposal for an Integrated Maritime Policy, the Commission highlights the importance of the impacts of Climate Change on Arctic waters. The Arctic Communication returns to this topic a year later, stating that "Climate Change might bring increased productivity in some fish stocks and changes in spatial distributions of others" (European Commission, 2008a, pp. 7). The EU holds competence over the common fisheries policy, which makes it responsible for the protection of consumers' interests, fishermen's needs and the implementation of economically and environmentally sustainable fishing methods (European Commission, 2016b). It is also the largest fish importer of Norwegian and Icelandic catches. Given the northward movement of fish stocks, the EU needs to develop an Arctic strategy to meet its responsibilities under the common fisheries policy in the future. Finally, increased activities in terms of fish, mineral, and other resource extraction in the Arctic come along with more European transportation to and from the Arctic. The EU is responsible for the development and promotion of safe, secure and sustainable transport policies (European Commission, 2014). Indeed, the Arctic Communications suggest many activities aimed at developing infrastructural networks and improving the security, safety and sustainability of European transportation in the Arctic region. The 2016 Communication specifically states that, "in view of increasing vessel traffic in the Arctic, including some carrying flags of EU Member States, the EU should contribute to enhance the safety of navigation in the Arctic region" (European Commission, 2016c, pp. 12). In part, the Commission aims to reach this objective by preparing a network that is to cope with Arctic maritime security threats: an activity that is also required to reach EU commitments under the Horizon2020 framework (European Commission, 2016c, pp. 14).<sup>13</sup> In sum, the content of the Commission's Communications on the Arctic does not stand alone; it helps to meet EU responsibilities in other policy areas.

Both EU supranational and Member State officials have publicly recognised the need for an Arctic policy to fulfil EU responsibilities in other areas. A core reason for the development of the EU Arctic policy has been mentioned by the Commission itself in its 2008 Arctic Communication: "EU policies in areas such as environment, Climate Change, energy, research, transport and fisheries have a direct bearing on the Arctic. It is a fundamental premise of the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy that

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<sup>13</sup> Horizon 2020 is the financial instrument implementing the Innovation Union, an initiative aimed to contribute to the EU's global competitiveness.



each sea-region is unique and needs individual attention in balancing its uses in a sustainable manner” (European Commission, 2008a, pp. 1). As such, the first EU Arctic policy document explicitly links the Arctic policy to the Integrated Maritime Policy, considering it as a crucial element thereof. A coherent Arctic policy was also called “an important contribution to implementing the Integrated Maritime Policy of the EU” by the Foreign Affairs Council in its 2009 Conclusions (Council of the European Union, 2009, pp. 1). Similarly, in his speech at the Seminar on ‘Arctic Know-how as Strength’, the Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs has highlighted the need for a coherent EU Arctic policy originating from existing EU activities in the region. According to him, the EU’s policies regarding the use of Arctic goods and resources “have implications for all those who participate in trade and investments or provide related services. In the area of navigation, transport and logistics the role of the EU and its policies is likely to increase considerably. The expected growth in marine transportation between Europe and Asia via the Northern route is a case in point” (Tuomioja, 2016). Hence, EU activities have a strong impact on the Arctic: an impact that is interconnected with other Arctic issues, requiring an integrative response. Furthermore, EU officials are not shy to use the functional argument to justify the need for a common Arctic policy.

In thus appears that the EU Arctic policy responds to several other EU policies, including the energy, Climate Change, transport, common fisheries and integrated maritime policies. We may wonder, however, why an autonomous Arctic policy is needed to meet the objectives of each of these existing policies, when the EU could also treat Arctic issues separately per existing policy. The answer here lies in the EU’s ambition to increase its overall engagement in Arctic politics. It needs to be taken serious as an Arctic actor to secure its ability to pursue ambitions in other policy fields. According to the EEAS (2016) “the EU wants to engage more with Arctic partners to increase its awareness of their concerns and to address shared challenges in a collaborative manner.” The Foreign Affairs Council equally confirmed its support for “strengthened” EU action in the region, in part to “pursue long-term partnerships and policy dialogues contributing to securing access to, and promoting safe and sustainable management of raw materials and renewable natural resources” (Council of the European Union, 2014, pp. 3). If the EU would treat Arctic issues separately, where some issues would for example be dealt with under the Integrated Maritime Policy and others under the Climate and Energy Framework, the EU would less likely be considered by other states as a genuine player in Arctic politics. As Ms. Tocci, special adviser to the HR, said to the Arctic Journal in January 2016: “Our position in what we are doing is to (...) think about what can the EU do to support, and, in a sense, earn, its place at the table” (McGwin, 2016). Furthermore, the Commission Communications and Council Conclusions on the Arctic agree on that the high level of interdependence between Arctic issues asks for a coordinated and holistic response. Now that the EU’s common strategy for energy security is increasingly moving North, for example, the Union should also develop a common strategy to deal with the thereupon consequent externalities. Indeed, Commissioner Damanaki (2013) stated about the Arctic that “there are complex

variables that need to be taken into account by all of us together if we are to devise good adaptation strategies.”

To sum up the above, the EU Arctic policy serves two main functions following from already existing EU policy objectives: on the one hand, it aims to increase the EU’s overall engagement in Arctic politics, while on the other hand, it provides guidelines on how to ensure that EU activity in the Arctic is safe, secure and sustainable. This first function is required because the EU has a number of existing policy objectives, ranging from promoting sustainable fishery to securing energy supplies, which increasingly depend on the Arctic region. If it wants to meet its responsibilities in these policy areas in the future, it will need to be taken seriously by other states as an influential Arctic stakeholder. The Commission has undertaken actions already to diversify its Arctic energy supply. It has for example initiated a dialogue with the Government of Greenland in 2011 with the aim of “exploring the possibilities of a future cooperation within the area of natural resources, including raw materials” (European Commission, 2012a, pp. 19). The second function follows logically from the first one: if the EU is going to step up its activities in the Arctic, it also needs a common approach on how to deal with possible externalities resulting from these activities. Returning to the example of Greenland, “Commission services have organized and participated in a number of meetings focused on the safety of offshore oil and gas operations in the most challenging environments” (European Commission, 2012a, pp. 20). Dialogues with non-EU partners on safety norms for transportation, on environmental and health standards for resource extraction sites, or on the development of an international conservation regime for Arctic fish stocks, are just three examples of objectives mentioned in the Arctic Communications that respond to possible externalities of increased EU activities in the Arctic.

While the arguments above do show how the EU Arctic policy benefits the fulfilment of some original policy objectives, this section has not demonstrated that these original objectives could not possibly be reached without the establishment of the EU Arctic policy. Nevertheless, many other elements of the functional argument are present: various original EU policy fields upon which the EU Arctic policy is based do exist, the EU Arctic policy is heavily interconnected with these policy fields and EU officials publicly employ the functional argument to justify the establishment of the EU Arctic policy.

## 6.2 Transnational pressures

Many Arctic stakeholders have made it onto the EU’s agenda for the Arctic. This section will discuss with which EU institutions these stakeholders have interacted, how they have done so, and in which ways they have provided input into the EU Arctic policy. Two indicators (discussed in the chapters on theory and operationalization) can help us tell to what extent the EU Arctic policy results from an increasingly transnational society: the occurrence of interaction between the Commission and transnational actors and the presence of attempts by transnational actors to influence the EU Arctic

policy through this interaction. The paragraphs below illustrate observations of these indicators throughout the development of the EU Arctic policy. Table 2. summarises the findings.

The European Parliament, several Members of which are closely engaged with Arctic stakeholders, has pressured the Commission to develop a common Arctic policy through its several resolutions on the region. The Parliament's first resolution on the Arctic, sent to the Commission before its first Arctic Communication in 2008, informed the Commission of the interests of Arctic populations and indigenous peoples on the one hand, while also reminding it of its Climate Change and energy responsibilities related to the Arctic region on the other. Both in its 2008<sup>14</sup> and 2014<sup>15</sup> resolutions, the Parliament urged the Commission to establish dialogue with Arctic stakeholders, in particular representatives of local populations and indigenous peoples. Indeed, the Commission and the EEAS have frequently interacted with Arctic stakeholders during the development of the EU Arctic policy. Arctic stakeholders include representatives from the private sector, academia, NGOs, Arctic states, EU Member States and Arctic indigenous peoples. These stakeholders will here be considered as transnational actors because they engage in transnational social, economic and/or political exchange and have the potential of influencing politics across borders. As discussed in the section before, EU officials are well aware that "soft politics investments", for example in the fields of regional development or scientific research, will need to be made if the EU wants to secure a place at the table in Arctic politics. According to the Arctic Journal (2015*b*), "speaking with Arctic stakeholders will give Brussels a firmer idea of the investment it must be prepared to make in order for that to happen." At the same time, engagement with NGOs and local populations may increase the legitimacy of the EU's activities in the Arctic. Many initiatives were taken by the Commission and the EEAS to involve Arctic stakeholders in the policy-making process. For example, between the publications of the Commission's 2008 and 2012 Communications, large consultations with Arctic stakeholders were held in late 2009, March 2010, January, April and November 2011 and January 2012 (European Commission, 2012*b*). Given the initiating role of the Commission in these examples, these events may occur to us as cases of 'supranational entrepreneurship' instead of pressure by transnational actors. They shall therefore be described in more detail in the next section. Nevertheless, these events did establish a dialogue between Arctic stakeholders and the Commission, facilitating stakeholder contributions to the EU Arctic policy. Through these contributions, transnational actors have been able to leave their mark on the policy-making process.

We can observe such contributions by zooming in on a more recent extensive consultation event called 'What's next for EU arctic policy', held on 1 and 2 June 2015. This event brought together

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<sup>14</sup> European Parliament resolution of 9 October 2008 on Arctic governance, available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P6-TA-2008-474>

<sup>15</sup> European Parliament resolution of 12 March 2014 on the EU strategy for the Arctic, available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P7-TA-2014-0236>

“nearly 140 high-level and influential speakers and participants from academia and research, local, regional, national and international politics, the business sector and non-governmental organisations” (European Commission, 2015). Among the present speakers were, for example, the director of the WWF Global Arctic Programme, the President of the Inuit Circumpolar Council Greenland, and the Chair of the US Arctic Research Commission. This event was also seen as an opportunity for representatives of local Arctic communities to express their visions of the future EU Arctic policy. The Mayors of Oulu, Luleå and Tromsø, for example, together representing some 340 thousand people, used the conference as an opportunity to communicate a common vision for EU engagement in the Arctic (Pennanen *et al.*, 2015). Together, the Mayors state that “if we truly want to see the Arctic as part of future success stories in Europe as a whole, then investments in sustainable growth, diversified economy, and business development, a higher-degree of labor mobility and sustainable communities are needed” (Pennanen *et al.*, 2015, pp. 3). The interests of the Mayors are reflected in the Commission’s latest Communication on the Arctic policy, which, as explained by HR Mogherini (2016) to a great extent circles around “making sure that the development of the Arctic, which has a huge economic potential is done in a sustainable way and that there is a social part to it especially looking at the conditions of the indigenous peoples.” The 2016 Arctic Communication even specifically mentions Oulu and Luleå as sites for investment in links between maritime and land transport (European Commission, 2016c). As another example, ICC Greenland president Dahl made use of the same conference to express his discontent with the EU’s sealskin policy: “The EU simply must recognize that their policy has damaged our hunters, and will need to restore the European consumers’ confidence in our sealskin products as well as compensate for our hunters’ economic loss” (ICC Greenland, 2015, pp. 3). In October 2015, the Commission recognized the Greenland Department of Fisheries, Hunting, and Agriculture as authorized body to attest which seal products qualify under the Inuit exception, a rule that allows trade in certain seal products in the Union.<sup>16</sup> While it is hard to demonstrate a causal link between these stakeholders’ initiatives and the supranational policy outcomes, these examples do present cases of stakeholders who made use of official platforms to interact with the EU’s supranational bodies and eventually saw their interests reflected in the EU Arctic policy.

A second platform for interaction between the EU and Arctic stakeholders that reveals the transnational character of these stakeholders, as well as the role of the Commission in granting them influence over the policy-making process, is the Arctic NGO Forum. This Forum is an initiative that aims to provide mechanisms “for NGOs concerned with Arctic environmental issues to get together, exchange ideas and perspectives and develop common strategies to influence policy makers,” coordinated by GRID-Arendal and ECORYS (Arctic NGO Forum, 2014a). It was created in line with

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<sup>16</sup> Commission Decision of 26 October 2015 recognising the Greenland Department of Fisheries, Hunting and Agriculture (APNN) in accordance with Article 3 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1850 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1007/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council on trade in seal products [2015] OJ C 355.

a particular objective of the 2008 Communication: to “promote permanent dialogue with NGOs on the state of the environment in the Arctic region” (Arctic NGO Forum, 2011; European Commission, 2008a, pp. 3). The European Commission DG MARE was the main funder of the forum, which would meet twice a year for three years, starting in January 2012. Partners of the Forum are, for example, Wetlands International, WWF, University of the Arctic, the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat, and Greenpeace (Arctic NGO Forum, 2014b). A similar example is the Arctic Futures Symposium. This event, which is partially funded by the European Commission and the EEAS, is held every year in Brussels “to provide members of the European Institutions and the wider international community in Brussels with the opportunity to engage with Arctic stakeholders and specialists on the various challenges and issues the Arctic is facing today” (Arctic Futures Symposium, 2016). According to the Arctic Journal (2014), this Symposium has been used by representatives of the Saami indigenous peoples to promote a permanent representation of indigenous peoples in Brussels with the aim of influencing the development of the EU Arctic policy. These examples illustrate the way in which the Commission provides access points to the policy-making process to transnational actors. It also shows how NGOs and local stakeholders are willing to make use of these access points, explicitly stating they aim to “increase their effectiveness and influence with decision-makers” and “identify emerging issues and place them on the public agenda” (Arctic NGO Forum, 2012a).

Simply by expressing its interest in developing a policy toward the Arctic region in 2008, the EU has become an interesting arena for Arctic stakeholders to approach. Since only few Member States have developed national strategies for the Arctic, the EU has given Arctic stakeholders a policy area they can influence that hardly existed at the national level. Transnational actors, such as NGOs taking an interest in the Arctic region, have addressed the EU’s institutions not only through the pathways laid out by those institutions themselves, such as the Arctic NGO Forum. In a joint call for a drilling moratorium in the Arctic by the WWF, Bellona and the EEB, Dr. Patrick Lewis from the WWF addressed the EU as a whole, stating that “The EU has a growing interest in the Arctic. Hand in hand with this interest comes a responsibility to ensure that new industrial developments do not threaten the environment which defines the region, and upon which local communities depend” (European Environmental Bureau, 2010, pp. 1). Addressing the Union in a similar way, Secretary-General of the EEB, John Hontelez argued that “the EU pretends to go for a low carbon economy and is promoting investments in renewable energy sources and energy efficiency. It would therefore be strange to allow and support oil exploration in the Arctic” (European Environmental Bureau, 2010, pp. 2). This joint call was sent to the EU’s Energy Commissioner Oettinger on the day he would enter dialogue with major oil companies and industry regulators following the BP oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. The Commission sent an impact assessment and proposal for regulation to the European Parliament and the Council in October 2011, referring specifically to increased risk in the Arctic due to economic developments in the region (European Commission, 2011b). While it did not come to a general

moratorium on all Arctic drilling, the public discourse following this 2010 oil disaster did lead to the adoption of the Safety of Offshore Oil and Gas Operations Directive, which requires companies to prepare a Major Hazard Report containing a risk assessment and emergency response plan before they receive a license to drill (Arctic NGO Forum, 2012b).<sup>17</sup> These safety regulations are also mentioned in the 2012 Joint Communication, under a chapter called “promoting the sustainable management and use of resources” (European Commission, 2012a, pp. 9).

This section has presented two indicators of the impact of transnational pressures on the EU’s supranational activities towards the Arctic: first, the presence of interaction between the Commission and transnational Arctic stakeholders, and second, the presence of attempts by these stakeholders to influence the EU Arctic policy. Both of these indicators have here been observed. One of the reasons for which a common Arctic policy was established in the first place, was that the European Parliament had pressured the Commission to do so through several Arctic resolutions. Subsequently, with the establishment of an Arctic policy at the EU level, many organisations have found an access point the Arctic policy-making arena that did not exist before 2008. One can only imagine the many difficulties and high costs that Mayors of relatively small Arctic towns or representatives of Arctic indigenous communities would have faced, had they attempted to convince the governments of all 28 EU Member States to agree on a common policy that would represent their interest. It seems that the Commission and EEAS together have played a facilitative role in this regard, in trade for expertise and increased legitimacy for their Arctic agenda. By becoming a relevant actor in Arctic politics, however, the EU has also become a target for international organisations with own Arctic agendas, possibly opposing ones. The Commission’s involvement with both energy multinationals and concerned environmental NGOs in light of the BP oil disaster underlines this development.

### 6.3 Supranational entrepreneurship

The Commission’s 2008 Communication ‘the EU and the Arctic region’ was the first official EU proposal in the direction of a coherent EU Arctic policy. This alone does not yet tell us much about the entrepreneurial role that the Commission played in the development of the EU Arctic policy. In order to tell if the policy is a case of supranational entrepreneurship, we will have to unravel who pushed for the EU Arctic policy, as well as when, why and how they did so. Five indicators (discussed in the chapters on theory and operationalization) can help us tell to what extent the EU Arctic policy results from supranational entrepreneurship: the supranational as driver behind the political discussion on the subject matter, the supranational as advocator of the subject matter, the supranational as guider of negotiations on the subject matter, the supranational as expert, and finally, the supranational as designer

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<sup>17</sup> Directive 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 June 2013 on safety of offshore oil and gas operations and amending Directive 2004/35/EC [2013] OJ L 178.

of package deals. The paragraphs below illustrate observations of these indicators throughout the development of the EU Arctic policy. Table 2. summarises the findings.

The Commission has policy preferences in the foreign policy field, derived from its intrinsic interests in more agenda-setting power, more policy discretion and more EU activity in global affairs (Hix and Høyland, 2011; Nugent and Saurugger, 2002; Smith, 1997). The use of rhetoric in the Commission's Arctic Communications in many ways reflects these preferences, suggesting a proactive role for the Commission in the region. In the 2008 Communication, the Commission does not refer to the activities it proposes as part of a specific mandate granted by the EU Member States. The reasons for which the Commission proposes a common Arctic policy seem to lie in its role as representative of the Union as a whole, both within the EU decision-making procedures and outside of the EU. The Communication mentions the potential "repercussions on the life of European citizens for generations to come" that Arctic issues may cause, requiring EU action in a "coordinated and systematic manner" and in close cooperation with non-EU actors (European Commission, 2008a, pp. 2). This type of issue framing, highlighting the relevance of a common Arctic policy, returns more than once in the document: "The European Union is inextricably linked to the Arctic region (...) by a unique combination of history, geography, economy and scientific achievements" (European Commission, 2008a, pp. 2). Indeed, if the Commission presents the Arctic issue in a way that is appealing to the decision-makers, "the line between proponents and opponents of a proposal may be drawn differently" (Hennessy, 2013, pp. 78; Princen, 2009).

By the time of the publication of the Communication in November 2008, the Commission knew itself supported by the European Parliament, which had already expressed its desire for a "proactive role" for the Commission in the Arctic and urged the Commission to develop a "meaningful Arctic policy" in its resolution on the Arctic of September that year (European Parliament, 2008). While the majority of policy objectives put forward in the Communication were in line with European Parliament's hopes for an Arctic policy, the Commission took a more conservative position towards governance in the Arctic, suggesting further action be undertaken along the lines of existing institutions such as the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. This modest approach was likely necessary to secure an opening for a constructive political discussion on Arctic affairs with both Arctic and EU Member States. The Council welcomed the Communication in December 2008, considering it "a first layer of an EU Arctic policy," stressing its *gradual* development and recognising "Member States' legitimate interests and rights in the Arctic" (Council of the European Union, 2008, pp. 2). Indeed, the Council appreciated the Commission's mentioning of the value of existing international institutions in promoting international cooperation in the Arctic. The Council approved of all the Commission policy objectives by December 2009 in its final conclusions on the Communication (Council of the European Union, 2009). At first glance, it thus appears that the Communication expressed an equilibrium between the European Parliament's desire for action, the Council's more conservative stance towards active

involvement in Arctic politics, and the Commission's ambitions for a *coordinated* and *systemic* EU approach towards Arctic issues.

The Communication's rhetoric may suggest the entrepreneurial role of the Commission in developing a common Arctic policy, but we are yet to find out whether the initiative to work on the Arctic policy was truly taken by the Commission itself. Concerns in Brussels about Arctic challenges were raised in particular on the basis of an earlier Commission and HR paper to the European Council that urged European governments to develop an Arctic policy in response to an "increasing need to address the growing debate over territorial claims and access to new trade routes by different countries which challenge Europe's ability to effectively secure its trade and resource interests in the region" (European Council, 2008, pp. 8). Similarly, the Commission's 2007 proposal for "An integrated maritime policy for the European Union" already mentioned the Arctic as a case of special attention in the context of the geopolitical implications of Climate Change (European Commission, 2007). While both papers put forward a strong geopolitical, security-oriented rhetoric, geopolitical concerns were picked up by the Commission and communicated to the Council, rather than vice versa. In first instance, the Council merely "invited the High Representative and the European Commission to present a joint report" on the consequences of Climate Change for the EU's security: a concrete task with informative purposes (European Council, 2008, pp.1). The steps towards a common Arctic policy that followed from this informative report were initiated by the Commission itself, which seems to act on its responsibility "to propose policy ideas for the medium-term development of the EU" (Hix and Høyland, 2011, pp. 34). This does not mean that EU Member States had not yet been involved in Arctic affairs by that time. International news covered quarrels over Arctic waters between Denmark and Canada, for example, already from 2004 onwards (Clover, 2006; Coman, 2004; Harris, 2005). The planting of the Russian flag in Arctic ocean soils caused even broader international concerns (Parfitt, 2007). Nevertheless, no concrete proposals for a common EU Arctic policy were made until the 2008 Communication.

Even if the Commission opened the discourse concerning the EU Arctic policy, its entrepreneurial role could have been ended quickly by Member States, as soon as governments or influential domestic groups got word of Arctic issues and the Commission's proposal for a common approach to deal with them. The opposite seems to have been the case. The Commission took on a guiding role in the political discourse that followed on its 2008 Arctic Communication. It opened and organised dialogues with EU Member State governments, Arctic state governments, the Arctic Council, business groups involved in the Arctic, environmental NGOs and societal groups representing Arctic inhabitants. Three proposals for action expressed in the 2008 Communication were to "promote permanent dialogue with NGOs", "engage Arctic indigenous peoples in a regular dialogue," and "enhance input to the Arctic Council" (European Commission, 2008, pp. 3; pp. 5; pp. 11). An extensive series of actions was undertaken to meet these aims. On March 9, 2010, for example, the Commission



hosted an Arctic Dialogue workshop bringing together representatives of indigenous stakeholders from the Arctic “to establish dialogue on areas and means of cooperation with Arctic indigenous peoples” (European Commission, 2012*b*, pp. 9). Building on established contacts, EU institutions have funded a variety of initiatives supporting indigenous and local livelihoods in the Arctic, such as “Sápmi – borderless development”, “Botnia-Atlantica”, “Interreg IVA Sweden-Norway”, “the North Sweden programme”, the “Mid-North Sweden programme”, “the Kolarctic programme”, and “the Baltic Sea Region Programme” (European Commission, 2012*b*, pp. 8). Furthermore, a multiannual funding project establishing NGO dialogue on Arctic issues was started in July 2011, leading to a first (biannual) NGO forum in January 2012 (Ibid, pp. 6). The Commission participated in working group discussions held by international organisations, such as the IMO’s Ship Design and Equipment Sub-Committee meeting and the Arctic Council’s Arctic Ocean Review and Arctic resilience report (European Commission, 2012*b*, pp. 6; pp. 23). It established regular contacts with maritime industries too, for example by organising and attending an international shipping conference in May 2010, Copenhagen, where it also presented its Maritime Transport Strategy until 2018 (European Commission, 2012*b*, pp. 25). Finally, the Commission sought regular dialogue with both EU and non-EU Arctic states, for example with Greenland by proposing a new partnership agreement, with Russia on vessel traffic monitoring in the Baltic and Barents Sea and with Canada on shipping related matters, such as Port State Control (European Commission, 2012*b*, pp. 25). According to a representative from the Danish Permanent Representation (PERM REP) to the EU, the Commission and EEAS often interacted with Arctic states’ representatives to ensure support for the policy proposal from those states with the strongest voice in Arctic politics (Respondent B).

It thus seems that the Commission did play an entrepreneurial role in opening and guiding the political discourse on the EU Arctic policy. We may wonder, however, on the basis of which knowledge and expertise the Commission led its Arctic enterprise. Many scholars who have studied the development of the EU Arctic policy, have found that the Commission’s knowledge concerning the arctic was relatively poor in comparison with the EU’s Northernmost Member States (Offerdal, 2011; Weber and Romanyshyn, 2011). On the basis of an interview with one member of the Commission’s Arctic interservice group, Wegge (2011) writes that the biggest challenge for this group actually lied in overcoming “a fundamental lack of knowledge about the region” (pp. 876). The Commission has worked hard on overcoming this gap since the first Arctic Communication. A first series of studies was performed to analyse the EU’s own footprint on the Arctic, involving scientists, local stakeholders and Arctic Council working groups. The results were published in the “Arctic Footprint and Policy Assessment,” a document that not only provided insights in the Arctic region, but also on specific areas in which the EU influences the Arctic, further legitimising the EU’s actions in the region (Cavalieri *et al.*, 2011). The Commission completed another study, on the legal aspects of Arctic shipping, in April 2010. This study was performed in part by participating in “relevant Council meetings on the Law of

the Sea where Member States have also expressed their views” (European Commission, 2012*b*, pp. 24). It funded a multiannual research project, Arctic TRANSFORM, which involved expert discussions on indigenous peoples, environmental governance, fisheries, offshore hydrocarbon activities, and shipping in the Arctic: all of which are themes with which the Commission has been concerned since 2008 (Arctic Transform, 2009). The 2008 Communication also suggested the possibility of an Arctic Information Centre, an initiative aimed at providing information about the Arctic to policymakers, which was endorsed by Council and European Parliament in 2009 and 2011 respectively (European Commission, 2012*b*, pp. 31). As such, the Commission has extended its knowledge of the region, while only a selection of EU Member States has been concerned with developing a foreign policy towards the Arctic (European Commission, 2016).<sup>18</sup> It hence seems that the Commission may not have initiated the EU Arctic policy on the basis of a knowledge advantage over Member States, but it quickly extended its knowledge of the region to secure its leading position in the inter-institutional discourse on the subject.

A particularly striking new element in the 2016 Arctic Communication is the call for the establishment of a Council Working Party and European Parliament delegation on Arctic Matters and Northern Cooperation. The Commission and HR jointly make this suggestion “to ensure that the necessary coordination structures are in place at the EU level” (European Commission, 2016*c*, pp. 17). Indeed, the EU’s supranational institutions here recommend the Council to develop an extra branch with the purpose of enhancing the coherence of the EU Arctic policy. In response, the Foreign Affairs Council does highlight that it “encourages close cooperation between EU institutions and Member States in the context of Arctic challenges”, but mentions no intentions to also establish a similar Working Party. We are yet to find out if such intentions do exist. The 2016 Joint Communication also presents other activities that highlight the entrepreneurial role of the Commission in developing the EU Arctic policy. For example, the Commission states it intends to “make a special effort to promote the conditions for Arctic innovation and business opportunities as it implements its strategies for a Digital Single Market and in upgrading the Single Market” (European Commission, 2016*c*, 11). Here, the Commission promotes its engagement with the Arctic region by use of its existing competences in the Single Market. It intends to set up a European Arctic stakeholder forum, in which regional and local authorities can contribute to the identification of key investment and research priorities for EU funds in the Arctic region (European Commission, 2016*c*). The Foreign Affairs Council has welcomed this initiative (Council of the European Union, 2016).

These characteristics of Commission entrepreneurship in the field of foreign policy have been identified in other studies too. Krause (2003) has demonstrated that the Commission was able to steer the policy of the EU towards sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s, because of “its capacity to develop

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<sup>18</sup> Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Poland, Sweden and the UK have issued Arctic or Polar policy papers by now. The Netherlands, France and Spain intend to do so in 2016.

innovative ideas” and its experience with a region in which not all Member States are represented (pp. 237). In the African case, the Commission’s strategy was “to constantly promote discussion” and to propose “a coherent approach combining development policy and CFSP elements” (Krause, 2003, pp. 231). In the case of the Arctic, the Commission is promoting discussion on a region of which even fewer Member States have hands-on expertise, while suggesting a coherent approach combining Climate Change, environmental, social and economic policies with CFSP elements. The Commission continues building bridges between policy areas in which it holds competences and Arctic issues, as the 2016 Communication claims that effective access to the (Digital) Single Market may be critical to secure sustainable development in the region. Indeed, the topic of development has been a recurring theme in the 2009 and 2014 Council Conclusions, leaving the Council with little options in 2016 but to acknowledge again that the “policy responses outlined in the Joint Communication rightly place the emphasis on sustainable development”.

All in all, there seems to be a convincing amount of evidence illustrating the entrepreneurial role of the Commission in the development of the EU Arctic policy. First, this section has illustrated that the Commission’s 2008 Communication has served as the opening of an international and inter-institutional discourse on the EU Arctic policy. Member States did not assign the Commission to develop an Arctic policy; it initiated this by itself, building on earlier Commission reports and proposals, as well as encouragements by members of the European Parliament. This paper has underlined that the rhetoric of Commission Communications has framed Arctic issues in line with its own preferences, satisfying other EU institutions while securing a proactive Commission role in Arctic policy-making. Second, this section has argued that the Commission also took a proactive role in leading political and societal discussions on the EU Arctic policy after its first Arctic Communication, for example by organizing dialogues with Member States, societal groups, businesses and NGOs and by participating in Arctic fora. The 2016 Joint Communication even advised the Council to establish its own Arctic department for the benefit of policy coherence. Finally, this section has found that the Commission may not have acted on the basis of a knowledge advantage over Member States, but it did seek to reduce a possible knowledge gap between itself and other Arctic players. Especially the EU’s northernmost Member States have an extensive understanding of Arctic issues. In response, the Commission has invested heavily in expanding its knowledge of the region to secure its position as pioneer of the EU Arctic policy. It has interacted with local and regional authorities, funded research projects, included the Arctic region in the Horizon2020 programme, and now intends to expand its knowledge of the region through the establishment of a European Arctic stakeholder forum on investment and research priorities.

#### 6.4 Domestic economic pressures

Following the liberal-intergovernmental perspective on European integration, one core explanation for an increasingly integrative Arctic policy could be that the Member State governments are pressured by

domestic economic interests. Governments may for example be recommended by influential constituents, interest groups or firm representatives to develop a common Arctic policy to promote these parties' economic interest in the Arctic region. It will be the purpose of this section to find out to what extent domestic economic pressures can indeed explain the EU Arctic policy. Three indicators (explained in the chapters on theory and operationalization) can help us recognise domestic economic pressures: government positions can change per agenda item and over time, government positions represent the commercial interests of interest groups and economic officials, possibly elites, ruling parties and chief executives, and finally, major concessions made in the negotiation process on the policy outcome are of a geopolitical nature. In many ways, the expectation that interest groups would approach their national government in the first place opposes the supranational perception of the Commission as the main recipient of external pressures. Interaction between government (this time national instead of supranational) and interest groups shall therefore again lie at the heart of this analysis.<sup>19</sup> The paragraphs below illustrate observations of the indicators mentioned above throughout the development of the EU Arctic policy. Table 2. summarises the findings. The economic interest explanation merely refers to those dimensions of the policy that are not related to matters of security and defence. This dimension shall be dealt with separately in the next section.

Economic interest in the Arctic region may not be evenly distributed among the EU Member States, but national agendas for the Arctic do exist from North to South. The Member States that have issued strategies for the Arctic are the three Member States with territories in the Arctic (Denmark, Finland and Sweden), as well as Germany, Italy, Poland and the UK. Each of these Member States also holds an Observer status to the Arctic Council, meaning they participate in Arctic Council meetings and are invited to express their perception of Arctic matters in meetings of the Council's subsidiary bodies (Arctic Council, 2016). These Member States are not the only states with an interest in the region. Greece, for example, has also applied for a permanent Observer status to the Arctic Council in 2015 (European Environment Agency, 2016). Given that the EU is investing a lot of funds in the Arctic region while expanding its foreign policy dimension, non-Arctic Member States can be expected to have developed certain preferences regarding the EU Arctic policy too. Indeed, the interests of many Member States has been awakened by the Commission's 2007 and 2008 reports on potential economic opportunities in the Arctic. The different opening phrases of the Council Conclusions of 2009 and 2014 illustrate this increased interest. In 2009, the Council concluded that "it welcomes the gradual formulation of a policy on Arctic issues (...) while recognising Member States' legitimate interests and rights in the Arctic" (Council of the European Union, 2009, pp. 1). The opening phrase of the 2014 Council Conclusion lays a much stronger emphasis on the EU's interests in the region. It welcomes the

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<sup>19</sup> One must keep into account that absence of observations in this regard does not necessarily imply that interaction between governments and interest groups never occurred. Governments and interest groups alike may have little interest in disclosing their engagement with one another to the public.

Commission's documents that set out "the path for the EU's increased engagement in the Arctic" and underlines that "rapid Climate Change, (...), combined with increased prospects for economic development in the Arctic region call for the EU to engage actively with Arctic partners" (Council of the European Union, 2014, pp. 1). A change in domestic attitudes concerning economic activities in the Arctic may explain this more progressive stance of the Foreign Affairs Council. The paragraphs below seek to investigate if such change took place.

Several Member States issued their respective strategies for the Arctic in the period between the 2008 Commission Communication and 2014 Council Conclusion. The UK's 2013 strategy document, called 'Adapting to Change,' highlights the British interests in "long sought after sea routes to and from Asia" and "large reserves of oil, gas, metals, and rare earths" (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2013, pp. 5). Likewise, Germany's 2013 strategy document "sees the great potential for the economies of Germany and Europe that Arctic resources hold" (Federal Foreign Office, 2013, pp. 2). The Italian foreign policy for the Arctic quite explicitly presents Italian companies as exceptionally suitable for resource extraction work: "Italy is already able to answer the needs for infrastructures and services created to match the requirements of the region, through the technological excellence of its companies. (...) Italian businesses are especially sensitive to the environmental compatibility of extractive operations and have developed significant competence guaranteeing high levels of safety" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, 2016a). Some of the EU's most populous Member States have thus developed a strong economic interest in the Arctic, which is reflected in these countries' national strategies toward the region as well as the 2014 Council Conclusions. Nevertheless, EU officials have noted that interests in the Arctic have now been tempered by an increasing opposition against the exploitation of certain resources in the region and by disappointments regarding the commercial viability of Arctic endeavours (Respondent A; Harvey, 2015b). This goes to show that Member State preference towards a common Arctic policy is indeed led by their domestic interest in Arctic resources. We are yet to find out, however, where the origins of these interests lie.

Much in line with liberal-intergovernmental expectations, the preferences of Member States towards the EU Arctic policy oftentimes correspond with the economic sectors present in these countries. For example, the interest of the UK in the Arctic seemed predominantly defined by involvement of British companies in Arctic oil and gas exploration, such as BP, Shell and Cairn (Maurer *et al.*, 2012). The UK has been more sceptical about adding Arctic issues to the list of the Commission's competences than other states. The European Scrutiny Committee of the House of Commons (2010) specifically reminded the Commission in a letter on the EU Arctic policy that it does not have "any right of initiative or role in formulating EU policy" in CFSP areas. The British government has emphasized it prefers working through other existing international regulatory frameworks on the Arctic, such as the Arctic Council. In its 2013 strategy, the government explicitly states "the decision to invest in commercial projects in the Arctic is a matter for the individual companies concerned and the relevant

national authorities of the Arctic States in whose jurisdiction they take place” (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2013, pp. 23). When the European Commission considered to propose regulations to prevent oil and gas drilling in fragile areas in response to the BP oil disaster of 2010, the UK insisted that this clause be removed (Harvey, 2015a). Similarly, the UK responded negatively to EU Member State proposals to prevent drilling when the expected gap between a possible disaster and adequate response would be too large, causing frustrations among environmental interest groups (Harvey, 2015a). In contrast, Italy has in many ways contributed to enhancing the development of the EU Arctic policy, for example by drafting the Directive on offshore oil and gas operations and by fostering interaction between stakeholders of the Baltic Region Strategy and the Adriatic-Ionian Strategy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, 2016b). As one of the Arctic’s main resource extractors, Italian energy company Eni has developed a particular expertise in risk prevention and mitigation, meeting the requirements of newly devised European regulations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, 2016b). Italian companies are also involved in satellite-based monitoring and infrastructure development, two activities that gain significant attention in the EU Arctic policy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, 2016b). Finland expects that the employment of satellite monitoring in the Arctic would also provide it with new commercial opportunities. Indeed, in its vision for the EU Arctic policy, Finland expresses it prioritizes satellite monitoring of the Arctic region (Prime Minister’s Office, 2013).

While the EU Member States thus seem to do their best to project their economic interests onto the EU Arctic policy, little evidence exists to support the idea that domestic interest groups have approached their national government to take any particular stance on Arctic affairs. It is perhaps for this reason that, even though the Member States disagree on some particular points of the EU Arctic policy, all Member States that have elaborate national strategies for the Arctic do support the EU’s ambitions. Only the UK does not explicitly mention the EU Arctic policy in its own strategy for the Arctic, but it still underlines its policy coherence with individual items that fall under the policy, for example in the field of fisheries and trade in seal products. Moreover, the policy gains legitimacy from the EU’s three states with territory above the Arctic circle, each of which is in favour of an active role for the EU in the Arctic. The three Arctic EU states were the main drafters of the 2009 Conclusions, with Sweden as President of the Council at that time (Holdhus, 2010). One negotiation item that came to light for the 2009 Conclusions was on the expansion of EU fishing territories, which was supported by the UK and Spain, while opposed by Germany (Holdhus, 2010). This disagreement has eventually been settled in the Conclusions which states ambitions for expansion of fishing activities, but not until a new regulatory framework including relevant stakeholder interests has been established. In the 2014 Council Conclusions, the Council unanimously agrees that the EU should enhance its contribution to Arctic cooperation, that the Commission and HR should intensify dialogue on Arctic matters with Arctic partners, and that the Commission and HR should continue further developing an “integrated

and coherent Arctic Policy” (Council of the European Union, 2014, pp. 3). It thus requests from the Commission a new policy proposal that moves away from the status-quo in a pro-integrative fashion. From this document it seems that negotiations have circled around priority points, more than about the policy itself.

The 2016 Council Conclusions provide even less reasons to believe that economic interests have driven governments to further develop the EU Arctic policy. The Conclusions give a green light to the Commission and HR to “continue to actively implement and follow-up on the commitments highlighted”, encouraging the continuation of funds and time being invested in the Arctic even though enthusiasm for resource extraction opportunities has been tempered (Council of the European Union, 2016, pp. 5). The European Arctic is the only EU territory that seems to benefit directly from the action points highlighted in the Conclusions. For example, the Council encourages Commission investments in the European Arctic aimed at strengthening infrastructure and connecting local Small and Medium Enterprises. Apart from the EU Arctic states, few European regions will directly reap the benefits from these initiatives. Following the liberal-intergovernmental argumentation, we could expect that these regions’ governments must have made considerable concessions to convince other governments to agree with the proposal. Nevertheless, little evidence exists of such concessions or of complications during the bargaining phase that took place before publication of the 2016 Conclusions.<sup>20</sup>

In sum, the Member States of the EU do seem to have economic interests in the Arctic, which correspond to the character of their respective domestic economies. This confirms, to some extent, our liberal-intergovernmental expectations. Indeed, according to a Commission official, Member State interest in the Arctic has varied over time, with a peek between the first and second Council Conclusions, according to the available knowledge on economic opportunities of that time (Respondent A). According to her, many Member States have to some extent lost their interest in the Arctic now that economic prospects seem less promising than before. However, the 2016 Conclusions leave us somewhat puzzled in this regard, as they still endorse Council support for European research and development activities in the region. Thus, returning to our first indicator (variation in government preferences over time and per issue), we have observed a change in Member State preferences over time, but these changes do not entirely follow the logic of the economic interest argument. Focusing more on our second indicator (government preferences reflect domestic economic interests), we have indeed observed that particular national interests in the Arctic do also return in the EU Arctic policy. Nevertheless, given that EU Arctic policy proposals require Member State approval because of their foreign policy nature anyway, we may only consider it natural that each Member State makes use of

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<sup>20</sup> The 2016 Council Conclusions were yet to be published when this research was performed, and Member State representatives were unable to share details about the bargaining process that occurred in advance of the Conclusions’ publication. Nevertheless, according to a representative of the Danish PERM REP to the EU, the Member States started negotiations while agreeing on about 95% of the items contained in these Conclusions (Respondent B).

that opportunity to influence the policy where possible. On its own, this behaviour does not sufficiently indicate that domestic economic pressures underlie the EU Arctic policy. We remain uncertain about the extent to which governments are pushed by influential domestic constituents here, as Member States do not appear to have been very actively engaged in stakeholder interaction on Arctic affairs.<sup>21</sup> Overall, the Council Conclusions on the Arctic may be more modest than the Commission's ambitions, but they do not constrain the Commission's planned activities in the region. All the Council Conclusions, each of which signed by all of the EU's foreign affairs ministers, have encouraged the Commission and HR to continue working on the development of the EU Arctic policy and increase its coherence.

### 6.5 Domestic geopolitical pressures

Since the EU Arctic policy is a foreign policy that contains social and economic elements, both economic and geopolitical reasons could underlie national preference formation toward the policy following liberal-intergovernmental theory. It will be the purpose of this section to test congruence between the development of the EU Arctic policy and indicators of domestic geopolitical pressures. The included indicators (explained in the chapters on theory and operationalization) are: government positions that vary per country, but are consistent across issue areas and do not change over time, government positions that depend on commitment to integration or perception of politico-military threat, and the presence of major economic concessions. The previous section has already established that national preferences toward the EU Arctic policy do differ per issue and can change over time. This indicator shall therefore not be further included in this section. The paragraphs below illustrate observations of the remaining indicators throughout the development of the EU Arctic policy. Table 2. summarises the findings.

The EU Arctic policy did to a large extent originate out of geopolitical concerns resulting from the impacts of Climate Change on the Arctic region. As explicated in the section on supranational entrepreneurship, the Commission already warned the Member States of the potential security threat of Climate Change in the Arctic before it published its first Arctic Communication. Some of the EU Member States had experienced these developments by themselves. A 'race for the Arctic' started as the melting of Arctic ice was noticed by national governments across the world. Newspapers covered Arctic security threats with much consideration. As early as 2006, Clover wrote about newly available Arctic resources that "much of these fish will be in international waters and a race to exploit them and the oil and gas supplies in Arctic waters is already on. Russia has lodged a claim to the waters as far as

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<sup>21</sup> The author has found little evidence for interaction between Member States and domestic interest groups. This does not mean that such interaction has not taken place. According to a staff member of the Danish PERM REP, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs does interact with domestic stakeholders about the Danish national strategy for the Arctic (Respondent B). The EU Arctic policy could have been a topic during those meetings. Further research focusing specifically on the role of national bureaucracies in formulating national preferences regarding the EU Arctic policy could help us find out whether this is indeed the case.



the North Pole. Canada and Denmark are technically at war over Hans Island, a small uninhabited island in the Kennedy Channel, part of the North West passage which they both claim.” One year later, "Russia symbolically staked its claim to billions of dollars' worth of oil and gas reserves in the Arctic Ocean today when two mini submarines reached the seabed more than two and a half miles beneath the North Pole” (Parfitt, 2007). These events were not neglected by the EU Member States. The European Council assigned the Commission in 2008 to investigate “the recent planting of the Russian flag under the North Pole” (European Council, 2008). And some Member States shared ambitions for territorial claims above the Arctic circle: “Denmark,” for example, “has launched an extraordinary bid for ownership of the North Pole, one of the world's last untapped sources of oil and natural gas” (Coman, 2004). These attempts were not always appreciated by the outside world. Canadian and Norwegian government representatives, for example, were not shy to express discontent for European claims to Arctic territory. Some states reoriented their defence system toward the Arctic: "Ottawa has launched a series of Arctic sovereignty patrols to assert its territorial claims and fend off rivals, Denmark, Norway, Russia and the United States” (Harris, 2005). Similarly, discussions about a collective European response to these developments were seen by Arctic states as intrusive. "According to Norway's deputy Oil and Energy Minister, European claims of jurisdiction over the Arctic by banning offshore drilling “would almost be like us commenting on camel operations in the Sahara.” (Arctic NGO Forum, 2012b). Arctic states also responded negatively over the European Parliament's suggestion to develop an EU Treaty for the Arctic (Depledge, 2015). In conclusion of the events described above, “more than ever before, the Arctic [was] on the geopolitical agenda” (Arctic NGO Forum, 2011).

The Commission's 2008 Arctic Communication did place the proposal for the EU Arctic policy in a security-oriented context. Nevertheless, the Commission only explicitly refers to a political security reason behind the Arctic policy once in the whole policy proposal (European Commission, 2008, pp. 2). Implicitly, it still makes some proposals for maintaining and enhancing security in the region through existing international frameworks (European Commission, 2008, pp. 9-12). This security dimension disappears from the policy with the 2009 Council Conclusions. While the following Conclusions did grant the Commission and HR the authority to act on the EU's behalf in the Arctic, they did not do this for security and defence related items.<sup>22</sup> The Member States recognised security threats in the Arctic, but they did not wish to elevate their response to these threats to the European level. Germany, for example, mentions in its strategy for the Arctic that it “recognises that security issues do arise in conjunction with developments in the Arctic, and that possible security risks need to be addressed” (Federal Foreign Office, 2013, pp. 17). The German response to these issues is clear: “NATO's wide-

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<sup>22</sup> The 2016 Council Conclusions do mention that “engagement in the Arctic is also important from a foreign a security point of view” (Council of the European Union, 2016, pp. 2). Nevertheless, no foreign and security policy measures are specifically highlighted, apart from the expected observer status of the EU in the Arctic Council. Instead, the Conclusions remind the HR and Commission to implement the Arctic policy “in accordance with the division of competence between the EU and its Member States” (Council of the European Union, 2016, pp. 5).

ranging partnership formats, which are open to all countries bordering the Arctic Ocean, provide suitable forums for dealing with Arctic security policy issues” (Federal Foreign Office, 2013, pp. 17). Denmark, Sweden and the UK equally see NATO as the main security mechanism in place for the Arctic (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011; Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2011; Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2013). Finland mainly refers to its own defence forces, and sees opportunities for cooperation in the Nordic context (Prime Minister’s Office, 2013). Thus, the EU Member States did see a politico-military threat in the developments occurring in the Arctic, but they decided not to delegate any authorities to the EU to respond to these issues through the EU Arctic policy. In part, this has been a strategy to preserve Arctic cooperation from other security dilemmas in which the EU is involved. According to a Danish government official, it has been a priority for Denmark to ensure that security rhetoric was excluded from the EU Arctic policy to avoid that Arctic cooperation could be threatened by other issues, such as the EU-Russian tensions over the Ukraine Crisis (Respondent B). National strategies for the Arctic unanimously ignore the EU Arctic policy as a potential platform for security mitigation in the region. As a consequence, negotiations resulting in geopolitical bargains with economic concessions within the context of the EU Arctic policy would have been redundant. Therefore, while the EU Arctic policy may thank its reason of existence to an increasing geopolitical discourse on security threats in the Arctic, the policy itself paradoxically suggests no actual security-related measures be undertaken.

#### 6.6. Intergovernmental bargaining

It will be the purpose of this section to find out whether the bargaining process over the existence and content of the EU Arctic policy was of an intergovernmental nature. Four indicators (explained in the chapters on theory and operationalization) can help us recognise if the policy results from intergovernmental bargaining: first, the EU Arctic policy is an initiative from the most interested of the Member States, who also lead the negotiations following the initiative; second, the policy is the lowest common denominator of all the EU Member States; third, opponents of the policy are satisfied through side-payments or through package deals; fourth, the core of the policy is in line with the interests of its strongest defenders. The paragraphs below illustrate observations of these indicators throughout the development of the EU Arctic policy. Table 2. summarises the findings.

The EU Member States with the strongest interest in the Arctic did not initiate the Arctic Policy, but they did play an active role in the negotiation process that followed the Commission’s first proposal. The Member States first reflected upon the 2008 Communication together by encouragement of the Swedish Presidency during the second half of 2009 (Airoldi, 2012). Indeed, we may expect that Sweden, being one of the few European states with an Arctic population, has a particular interest in the development of the region. Its facilitative role in this regard supports the liberal-intergovernmental expectation that states with a strong interest in a common policy will contribute most to its establishment. Special emphasis was put in the following Conclusions on the “Member States’

legitimate interest and rights in the Arctic,” underlining the sovereignty of EU Arctic states. In particular Denmark has been pressuring for an emphasis on Arctic state sovereignty in the Council Conclusions (Weber and Romanyshyn, 2010; Holdhus, 2010). Even though the Danish foreign minister had explicitly expressed her support for the development of the EU Arctic policy, Denmark had a complicated preference towards the policy due to Greenland’s conservative stance towards EU involvement in the Arctic (Holdhus, 2010). While Denmark on the one hand wants to support the EU in its Northern ambitions, it also fears to upset Greenland, which cherishes a desire for independence in the management of its own resources (Holdhus, 2010). Today, it is still a Danish priority to integrate the interests of Greenland and the Faroe Islands into the EU Arctic policy, paying special attention to these territories’ economic development (Respondent B). The Danish PERM REP to the EU is engaged in interaction with representatives from those territories as well as the EEAS and Commission departments responsible for drafting the Arctic policy (Respondent B). According to the Danish PERM REP, these special concerns have very been well included into the latest Communication (Respondent B). This interaction is not just an indicator of an active Danish role in the negotiations on the policy, however. The Commission and EEAS departments oftentimes approached the PERM REP to ensure that the Communication would easily be agreed upon by the Member States with the strongest interest in the Arctic policy (Respondent B). These institutions have thus played an equally entrepreneurial role in streamlining the negotiations on the Arctic policy. Other EU Arctic states have expressed a stronger support for the policy. Finland has consistently lobbied for increased EU involvement in the Arctic, dedicating an extensive part of its national strategy to the EU Arctic policy and promoting the possibility of an EU observer status to the Arctic Council (Prime Minister’s Office, 2013). Sweden equally aims to “promote the EU as a relevant cooperation partner in the High North” in its national strategy for the Arctic (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2011, pp. 18).

Even though the EU Arctic policy seems to move far away from the status quo, at least for all the EU Member States without a national Arctic strategy, it still reflects a lowest common denominator. According to a Danish government official, the Member States agreed on approximately 95% of the content of the Arctic policy, and it has been relatively easy to find solutions for the remaining 5% (Respondent B). According to Moravscik (1993), “a ‘lowest common denominator’ outcome” means “only that the range of possible agreements is decisively constrained by [the least forthcoming’s government] preferences” (pp. 501). The least forthcoming of the European Arctic states was perhaps Denmark, which even though supportive of the policy, stressed the need for mentioning Member State sovereignty in the Arctic region in the Conclusions. The Danish government sent a list of priorities for the Arctic policy to the Commission and EEAS, including: sustainable development of Greenland and the Faroe Islands, avoidance of security rhetoric, and a coherent research funding policy. All of these issues have been included into the latest Communication (Respondent B). The relative ease with which agreement could be reached on these demands lied in the little interest that many other Member States

showed in the policy (Respondent B). Following liberal-intergovernmental argumentation, however, it would be unlikely that states that are relatively unconnected to the Arctic would easily agree to let common funds flow north. One reason for which they could have done so could be the strength of the Commission's and HR's messages about the impact of changes in the Arctic for Europe as a whole. For example, as Arctic states increasingly claim waters around the North Pole, countries with large fishing interests like Portugal and Spain may see their future fishing activities in the region threatened (Holdhus, 2010). As Europe's Mediterranean region is increasingly suffering from severe droughts, the Climate Change oriented rhetoric in the Arctic Communications could sound particularly relevant to those states. Greece's recent application for an observer status in the Arctic Council might indicate a general appreciation among European states for more engagement with Arctic politics. On top of that, few governments would like to publicly disagree with proposals regarding topics like the protection of indigenous peoples, the fight against Climate Change or the improvement of safety standards for travellers and traders: all of which are topics that the Arctic Communications highlight. Furthermore, the Member States' PERM REPs to the EU already interacted with Commission DGs and EEAS staff each time before a new Arctic Communication was published. This enabled the Commission and HR to integrate the interests of many Member States into the proposal before it would be discussed in the Foreign Affairs Council. In their shared role of policy entrepreneur, these supranational actors together thus reduced the need for intense intergovernmental bargaining.

## 7. DISCUSSION

The previous chapter has connected observations of the development of the EU Arctic policy to each of the six theoretical expectations formulated in this thesis. This chapter will bring these connections together and place them in the theoretical framework explicated in chapter 3. The observations are summarized in Table 2. below, and labelled as ‘strong’, ‘weak’ or ‘none’. ‘Strong’ refers to a situation in which one or more observations were made that were in line with a specific indicator, while ‘weak’ refers to a situation in which an indicator was only partially observed. ‘None’ refers to a situation in which the author found no evidence at all for that specific indicator. While evaluating the congruence between the observations and the theoretical expectations made, we ought to keep in mind the general theoretical explanation they adhere to. According to Supranationalism, integration occurs when functional spillover and transnational pressures drive a supranational actor to function as policy entrepreneur. According to Liberal-intergovernmentalism, integration occurs when domestic economic pressures (and possibly domestic geopolitical pressures in the case of security and defence) drive national governments to design a common policy through intergovernmental bargaining. Figure 1. can help us recapture this theoretical distinction.

Table 2. *Observations per theoretical expectation and per indicator*

INDICATORS OF SUPRANATIONALISM	OBSERVATIONS
<i>Functional spillover effect</i>	
Presence salient original policy objective	STRONG
Requirement of further integration to meet original policy objective	WEAK
Interdependence between new and initial policy domains	STRONG
Employment of functional argumentation by EU officials	STRONG
<i>Transnational pressures</i>	
Interaction transnational actors and European Commission	STRONG
Transnational actors attempt to influence policy-making process	STRONG
<i>Supranational entrepreneurship</i>	
Commission opens dialogue about policy	STRONG
Commission advocates policy	STRONG
Commission leads negotiations	STRONG
Commission benefits from knowledge advantage	WEAK
Commission satisfies opponents through package deals	NONE
INDICATORS OF LIBERAL-INTERGOVERNMENTALISM	
<i>Economic pressures</i>	
Government positions vary over time and per issue	STRONG
Governments pressured by domestic interest groups	WEAK
Governments willing to make geopolitical concessions	NONE
<i>Geopolitical pressures</i>	
Government positions do not vary per agenda item and across time	NONE
Governments pressured by geopolitical interests or political threats	NONE
Governments willing to make major economic concessions	NONE
<i>Intergovernmental bargaining</i>	
Member States with strongest interest open dialogue about policy	NONE
Member States with strongest interest push for negotiations on policy	WEAK
Policy is lowest common denominator of all states	STRONG
Opponents receive side-payments or other benefits through package deals	NONE
The policy core reflects the interest of its strongest defenders	STRONG

Source: Created by the author.

The Arctic region is mostly governed by sovereign states who develop a common strategy through intergovernmental institutions. The Arctic Council is the largest platform facilitating cooperation between the governments of all Arctic states. The EU's foreign policy for the Arctic region acknowledges that, at the end of the day, the authority and responsibility for Arctic decision-making lie in the hands of Arctic Council members. All Commission and HR Communications —but in particular all Council Conclusions— underline that EU-Arctic engagement should take the form of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between the EU and its Member States on the one hand and the Arctic Council members on the other. In the theoretical context of our study, this characteristic of the Arctic policy reminds us of Liberal-intergovernmentalism above all. All Commission and HR proposals for foreign policy need to be endorsed by the Foreign Affairs Council before they could be considered an expression of EU policy. Without digging further into the history of the EU Arctic policy, we may hence be inclined to think that intergovernmental negotiations, during which each Member State represents its own domestic interests, have mattered most throughout the development of the policy.<sup>23</sup> After all, only the EU Member States can decide whether they want a common Arctic policy or not.

This study argues that, regardless of the intergovernmental nature of EU Arctic policy decision-making, Supranationalism can best explain European integration in the field of Arctic affairs. Overall, the European Commission (complemented by the EEAS from the 2012 proposal onwards) has played the largest role in shaping the EU Arctic policy as it is today. The Commission put the Arctic as an independent topic on its own and the Council's agenda in 2007 and 2008, and specified the course of the policy by drafting the 2008, 2012 and 2016 Arctic Communications. It thus developed an EU Arctic agenda before the Member States did and invited them to negotiate on a carefully selected series of Arctic issues. Before publishing the Arctic Communications, Commission and EEAS staff engaged not only with local Arctic stakeholders, NGOs, businesses and scientific institutions, but also with EU Member States with territory in the Arctic, to ensure broad support for its policy proposals. As such, the role of the Member States diminished automatically; with the three EU Member States with a particularly large say in Arctic affairs on board, it would make little sense for states less involved in the Arctic to protest against the Commission and HR's proposals. Few Member States would also have had enough hands-on experience with Arctic politics to be able to comment on the proposals, which incorporated knowledge derived from European Arctic states, from different Commission DGs and from stakeholder forums and researches organised by the Commission. Furthermore, while a majority of EU Member States might be uninterested in the Arctic region<sup>24</sup>, the Commission and HR highlight in their Communications the impact that Arctic issues could have on the entire EU. The policy proposals are framed around issues like Climate Change, the protection and development of indigenous communities and the safety of travellers and workers in the region – all delicate causes that few Member

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<sup>23</sup> We can find these processes visualised in the bottom half of Figure 1., section 3.4.

<sup>24</sup> Only few Member States seemed concerned with the EU Arctic policy according to a staff member of the Danish PERM REP to the EU (Respondent B).

State governments would publically protest against. As a result, all Council Conclusions agreed with most of the Communications' content and only encouraged the Commission and the HR to continue working on the EU Arctic policy. One exception in which the Council did clearly influence the course of the policy, especially under influence of Denmark, is that it abandoned the security rhetoric that could be found in the early documents on the Arctic policy from 2009 onwards. The fact that Member States were not very keen on developing an integrated security policy for the Arctic, however, may only further suggest that the common policy came from another, supranational direction. This is also well illustrated by the rhetoric employed by both the Commission and the Member States: the Communications and Conclusions often underline the need for a *coherent* and *systematic* approach towards the Arctic for the benefit of the region and the EU as a whole. Given that it is a specific task of the EEAS and the Commission to increase policy coherence and represent the entire EU, such phrases implicitly plead for further supranational involvement in the development of the EU Arctic policy.

The results of this study furthermore suggest that the desire for a coherent Arctic policy exists because of transnational pressures and functional spillover from other EU areas, rather than domestic economic or geopolitical pressures. As mentioned above, even though the Arctic policy is a foreign policy that came into being in the context of a security threat in the Arctic, the Member States have purposely omitted security wording in the policy documents. The content of the policy today does therefore not reflect geopolitical pressures at the domestic level. The economic interest argument seems to better explain certain aspects of Arctic policy, as the Member States with a stronger interest in the EU Arctic policy also have a domestic economy that is more engaged with the Arctic. Italy and the UK are prime examples of non-Arctic states with a national Arctic policy that strongly reflects their domestic economic interest in the region. Apart from the British national strategy for the Arctic, however, all Member State foreign policies supported EU engagement in Arctic politics. The British national policy prefers direct interaction between UK firms and Arctic states, but this has not prevented the EU from developing policies that could affect the activities of European firms in the Arctic region. The desire for a coherent European response to Arctic issues hence results from something other than domestic geopolitical and economic pressures.

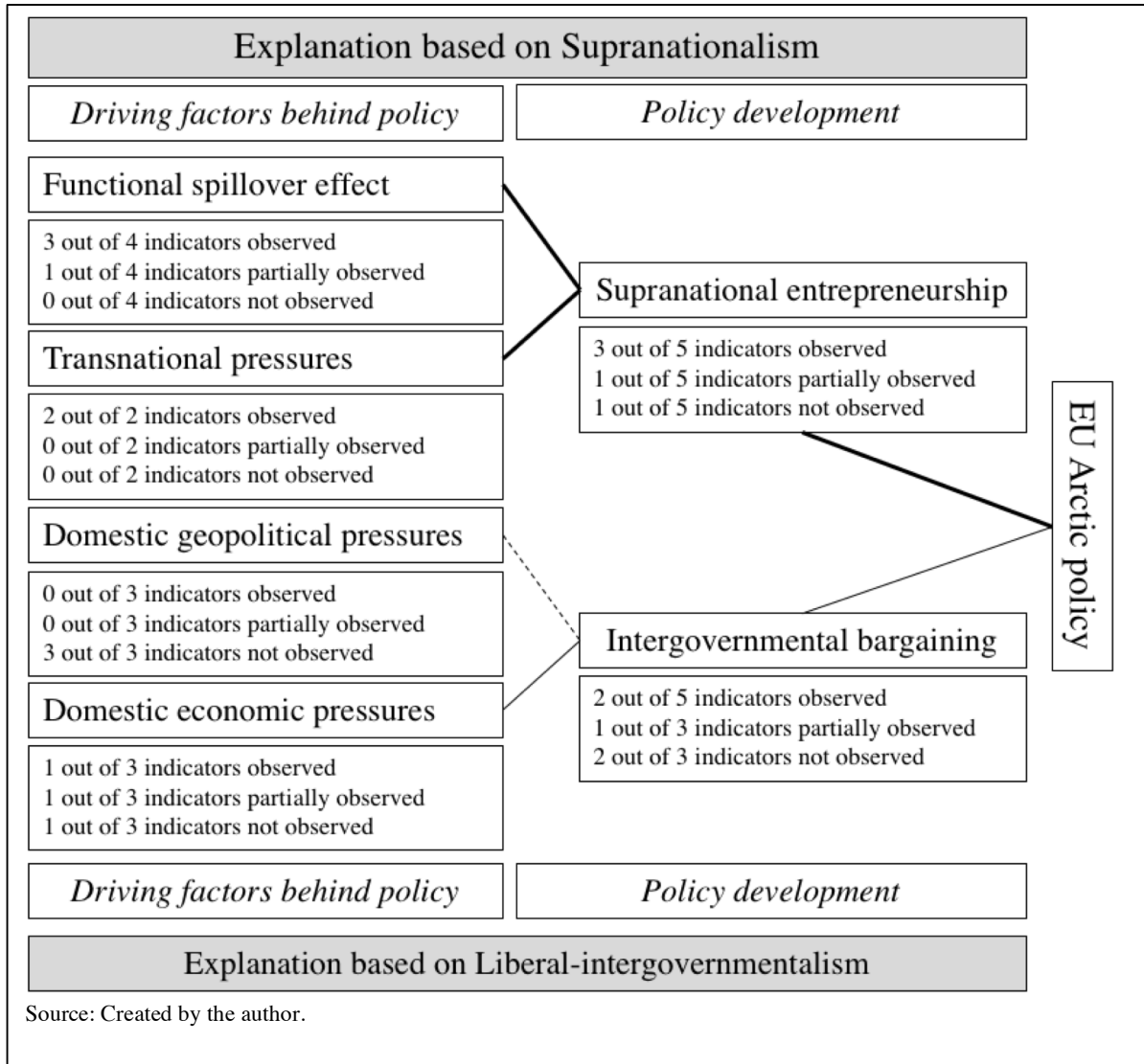
While our expectations for the Arctic policy based on the domestic interests' explanation seem mostly disconfirmed, a stronger degree of congruence has been found with the functional spillover effect. The Arctic policy is based on several original policy objectives, such as energy security, common fisheries, and Climate Change, while it is also interconnected with many other EU policies, such as transport and the environment. Once you develop a common policy on Climate Change, for example, it becomes very useful to also develop a common strategy for what is perhaps the world's most crucial region in the fight against Climate Change. Similarly, being responsible for sustainable fishing and marine conservation, the EU can hardly ignore increasing Arctic threats for the European fishing market. While these issues could each be addressed in a less coordinated fashion too, the development

of a common Arctic policy is considered, by EU and Member State officials alike, a necessary requirement for the EU to get a voice in Arctic affairs. To be considered as a relevant stakeholder in Arctic politics will be crucial for the EU if it is to meet its policy objectives in the fields mentioned earlier. At the same time, EU officials have been pushed by transnational actors to develop a common Arctic policy. Increased economic activity in the Arctic region has pushed local stakeholders such as mayors, representatives of indigenous peoples, as well as environmental NGOs to express their interests to the EU's supranational bodies. Acting as a policy entrepreneur, the European Commission has also provided platforms for these stakeholders to express their concerns and share their expertise to gain a broader support for its policy proposals. Thus, interaction between the EU's supranational body and Arctic stakeholders has increased through a reinforcing mechanism: where transnational pressures first pushed for an EU response to Arctic issues, the EU has become a more interesting actor for transnational actors to approach as it further developed a coherent Arctic policy.

Figure 2. visualises the implications of the findings of this study (as summarised in Table 2.) for the theoretical framework sketched in chapter 3. It looks similar to figure 1., but each theoretical expectation is here complimented by the number of observed or unobserved indicators. On the basis of these findings, the thick lines in this figure represent a strong explanatory power for the development of the EU Arctic policy, while the thin lines represent a weak explanatory power, and the broken line represents no explanatory power.



Figure 2. *Confirming the theoretical expectations*



## 8. CONCLUSION

This study has tested the level of congruence between empirical observations of the EU Arctic policy and falsifiable expectations derived from Supranationalism and Liberal-intergovernmentalism. Overall, Supranationalism seems to explain the development of the EU Arctic policy better than Liberal-intergovernmentalism. This paper has demonstrated that, regardless of the intergovernmental nature of Arctic decision-making, the European Commission and the EEAS have been the key actors behind the policy. The Commission has set out the course of the EU Arctic policy by placing a carefully selected set of issues on the EU's agenda for the Arctic. The EEAS has subsequently played a coordinative role, bringing different Commission DGs, stakeholders and Member States together to ensure a broad support for the policy. The role that the Council has played in the development of the Arctic policy can, nevertheless, not be neglected. After all, the EU could not have developed a foreign policy towards the Arctic without the consent of the Foreign Affairs Council. Of all the Member States with a national Arctic policy, only the UK appears to have been hesitant to develop an Arctic policy at the EU level. Other Member States did not have a strong preference towards the policy at all. This study has not found any major geopolitical or economic concessions made by any Member States or EU institutions in trade for hesitant states' approval. It has argued that a relatively quick agreement on most of the content of the Joint Communications of the Commission and HR could be reached due to these institutions' use of rhetoric and their coordinative work aimed at reaching consensus already before the publication of the Communications.

Six theoretical expectations have here been tested, each representing core concepts of either Supranationalism or Liberal-intergovernmentalism. First, the expectation that the Arctic policy results from other integrated policies through functional spillover has been confirmed. In particular, the EU Arctic policy has been developed to help the EU meet its responsibilities under its Climate Change, Energy and fishing policies. Second, the expectation that transnational actors have pressured the EU to develop a common Arctic policy has equally been confirmed. The European Parliament, NGOs and businesses have pressured the Commission to develop policies for the Arctic in accordance with their interests. The Commission and EEAS have furthermore facilitated interaction with many stakeholders, including indigenous peoples, scientists and local politicians. Third, the expectation that the EU's supranational bodies have functioned as policy entrepreneurs has been confirmed. An interservice group consisting of members of several Commission DGs and the EEAS has set the EU's Arctic agenda, drafted Arctic policy proposals and involved relevant stakeholders including EU Member States to ensure broad support for the policy. Fourth, the expectation that the EU Arctic policy originates from domestic economic interests at the EU Member State level can only be partially confirmed. Indeed, there seems to be overlap between domestic economic sectors and national strategies towards the Arctic. Furthermore, Member States seemed to be particularly interested in the Arctic when public expectations

for resource extraction opportunities in the region were high. Nevertheless, this research has not found any interaction between national governments and domestic interest groups on the EU Arctic policy specifically. Member States governments also certainly did not make major geopolitical concessions for the sake of economic benefits from a common Arctic policy. Fifth, the expectation that the EU Arctic policy originates from domestic geopolitical interests at the EU Member State level has been disconfirmed. Even though the Commission first placed its Arctic policy proposal in the context of Arctic security threats, which many Member States individually recognised, the Foreign Affairs Council removed security rhetoric from the policy. Sixth and finally, the expectation that the Arctic policy has been driven by intergovernmental bargaining has been disconfirmed. Given the active entrepreneurial role of the Commission and the EEAS, little was left for EU Member States to negotiate about before taking a common stance on the policy. The Council has, at times, amended the course of the Arctic policy, but its core has been formed by the EU's supranational bodies.

There are several limitations to this research that need to be taken into account when concluding on its results. First of all, data concerning the role of supranational and transnational actors in shaping the Arctic policy was more abundant than in the case of the Member States and domestic interest groups. This allowed for a more detailed insight in the supranational processes behind the policy, but may have unjustly underemphasized the role of the Member States in the development of the policy. Furthermore, not all data that was required to perform this research has successfully been obtained. While interviewees indicated that the negotiation processes following the 2008 and 2012 Communications were too long ago to remember, they were unable to share much information about the 2016 Communications as the Council had yet to publish its Conclusions. Further research could very well elaborate on the exact steps that were taken by both Commission, EEAS and Member State PERM REP staff to come to a common understanding of what the updated Arctic policy should contain. Another limitation to this study is the limited extent to which it can be used for generalisations, both theoretically and across policy areas. Much of the Arctic region is still unclaimed and ungoverned, while parts of the region lie within the EU's territory. This unique combination of characteristics limits the extent to which the theoretical analysis provided in this paper can be expected to hold explanatory power for other EU foreign policies too. Taken the above into account, future research building on this study could head in two directions. On the one hand, the recent publication of the 2016 policy documents provides new research opportunities that can enrich this study. Especially a close investigation of the role of domestic interest groups and national bureaucracies in influencing the position of Member States towards the Arctic policy could be a useful complement to this research. On the other hand, this research has highlighted strategies through which the EU's supranational bodies can influence EU foreign policy-making, inviting further research on whether and where similar strategies are being employed.

In conclusion, this research has contributed to our understanding of the EU Arctic policy and of the explanatory strength of Supranationalism and Liberal-intergovernmentalism in this field of

European foreign policy. While Arctic policy proposals require each EU Member State's consent, this study has demonstrated that the policy has mainly been influenced by supranational institutions. These institutions have promoted a common Arctic policy especially through agenda-setting and policy framing, using environmental, political, and socio-economic changes in the region as a starting point. In light of the general theoretical question addressed in this research, this conclusion tells us that once a window of opportunity presents itself, supranational institutions can influence European governance, even in its most intergovernmental policy domains. In many ways, the 2016 Joint Communication and Council Conclusions highlight the occasionally thin line between EU and Member State competences, especially in those fields where they are legally shared. The Conclusions remind the Commission that its Arctic activities should be in accordance with the division of competences between the EU and its Member States and acknowledges that Arctic states are, above all, responsible for Arctic governance. Such remarks underline that Member States may feel uncomfortable with Commission engagement in foreign policy, even if this policy consists of issues falling under areas of shared competence. It is perhaps also for this reason that the Arctic dialogue between the EU's institutions still takes the form of Communications and Conclusions, which taken together do express EU policy, but do not intend to have any legal intentions. Nevertheless, regardless of the legislative procedures underlying the policy, it is reality that the EU has entered the arena of Arctic politics, with the Commission and EEAS functioning as its external representation. Both the EU Member States and the Arctic states acknowledge this. In the words of HR Mogherini (2016), "the Arctic region is for us – the European Union, not only for the Member States that have and share a Nordic dimension – a key area. Be it on environmental protection, be it on economic and social development, be it on safety and security."

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## APPENDIX I – TABLES

Table 3. Required data for each theoretical expectation

EXPECTATIONS	INDICATORS	REQUIRED DATA
<i>Functional spillover effect</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Salient original policy objective</li> <li>- Interdependence with original policy</li> <li>- Requirement of further integration</li> <li>- Use of functional argumentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Historical overview EU Arctic policy</li> <li>- EU Arctic policy agenda overview with policy descriptions</li> <li>- Expressions by Member States or supranational actors that common policy is required for some other policy objective</li> </ul>
<i>Transnational pressures</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interaction between transnational actors (interest groups, businesses and elites) and European Commission</li> <li>- Transnational actors attempt to influence the Arctic agenda at the supranational level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stances transnational actors toward EU Arctic policy</li> <li>- Overview existing platforms for interaction and access points to influence EU Arctic policy</li> <li>- Insight in how and why actors made use of these platforms</li> </ul>
<i>Supranational entrepreneurship</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commission opens discussion on Arctic policy</li> <li>- Commission advocates an integrated Arctic policy</li> <li>- Commission leads negotiations on Arctic policy</li> <li>- Commission satisfies opponents with package deals</li> <li>- Commission has information and expertise advantage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insight in process that took place before first Commission proposal for EU Arctic policy</li> <li>- Temporal overview first proposals and activities Commission and Member States</li> </ul>
<i>Domestic pressures (economic)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government positions vary over time and per issue</li> <li>- Governments are pressured by domestic interest groups.</li> <li>- Governments make geopolitical concessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insight in preference variation (per issue or per country)</li> <li>- Stances domestic constituencies</li> <li>- Interaction between constituencies and national governments</li> </ul>
<i>Domestic pressures (geopolitical)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government positions are fixed</li> <li>- Governments are pressured by political threats</li> <li>- Governments make economic concessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insight in preference variation (per country)</li> <li>- Government commitment to EU integration</li> <li>- Government expressions of politico-military threat</li> </ul>
<i>Intergovernmental bargaining</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member States with strong interest open dialogue on topic</li> <li>- Member states with strong interest push for negotiations</li> <li>- Policy is a lowest common denominator</li> <li>- Opponents receive side-payments</li> <li>- Policy core reflects interests of Member States with strong interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Temporal overview first proposals and activities Commission and Member States</li> <li>- Stances Member States in comparison to the final policy outcome</li> <li>- Insight in negotiating process and eventual package deals made</li> </ul>

Source: Created by the author.

Table 4. *Research question and sub-questions per theoretical camp*

Which theory of European integration can best explain the development of the EU Arctic policy: Liberal-intergovernmentalism or Supranationalism?
<b>SUPRANATIONALISM</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Does the EU's agenda for the Arctic result from functional spillover from other policy areas?</li> <li>- Are there clear original policy objectives of which the EU Arctic policy is a consequence?</li> <li>- Are the items on the EU's agenda for the Arctic functionally interdependent?</li> <li>- Can the issues on the EU's agenda only be solved collectively?</li> <li>- Do EU (and/or national government) officials use functional argumentation to justify the need for the EU Arctic policy?</li> <li>- Does the EU's agenda for the Arctic exist because social groups that take an interest in the Arctic refocus their activities from the domestic to the supranational policy-making level?</li> <li>- Which transnational actors take an interest in the EU Arctic policy?</li> <li>- Do transnational actors interact over the EU Arctic policy with the EU's supranational institutions?</li> <li>- Do EU supranational institutions provide platforms for interaction with transnational actors concerning the Arctic?</li> <li>- Do transnational actors try to exert influence over EU supranational institutions?</li> <li>- Why do transnational actors engage with EU supranational institutions?</li> <li>- Who initiated and guided the political discourse concerning the EU Arctic policy?</li> <li>- Was the Commission involved in negotiations concerning the formulation of the EU Arctic policy?</li> <li>- How actively is the Commission engaged with advocating and furthering the EU Arctic policy?</li> <li>- To what extent does the current EU Arctic policy promote Commission preferences (further integration, increased Commission role in foreign policy)?</li> <li>- Has the Commission made concessions regarding the EU Arctic policy to opponent Member States?</li> <li>- Does the Commission have an information and expertise advantage over Member States through prior research and by consulting interest groups?</li> </ul>
<b>LIBERAL-INTERGOVERNMENTALISM</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has the EU's agenda for the Arctic been shaped through intergovernmental bargaining?</li> <li>- Who initiated and guided the political discourse concerning the EU Arctic policy?</li> <li>- Which states supported the EU Arctic policy and which states opposed it?</li> <li>- Through which institutions did consequent negotiations take place?</li> <li>- Is the current EU Arctic policy in line with the preferences of proponent states?</li> <li>- Did proponent states make concessions to opponent states through package deals?</li> <li>- Is the current EU Arctic policy a case of 'lowest common denominator' among the negotiating states?</li> <li>- Do the socio-economic items on the EU's agenda for the Arctic reflect national preferences based on domestic economic interests?</li> <li>- Which preferences did Member States hold towards common socio-economic policies toward the Arctic region?</li> <li>- Do Member State preferences vary across EU Arctic policy issue areas?</li> <li>- Do Member State preferences coincide with and result from economic trends or change?</li> <li>- Did domestic economic interest groups and elites express an opinion towards the EU Arctic policy?</li> <li>- Did interaction between domestic economic interest groups, elites and national governments regarding the EU Arctic policy take place?</li> <li>- Were major bargains economic and major concessions geopolitical?</li> <li>- Do the foreign and defence oriented items on the EU's agenda for the Arctic reflect national preferences based on government commitment to integration and perceived military threat?</li> <li>- Which preferences did Member States hold towards common foreign and defence policies toward the Arctic region?</li> <li>- Are Member State preferences consistent policies across EU Arctic policy issue areas?</li> <li>- Have government officials expressed a security concern related to the Arctic?</li> <li>- Were interstate negotiations held by foreign and defence officials?</li> <li>- Were major bargains geopolitical and major concessions economic?</li> </ul>

Source: Created by the author.

## APPENDIX II – INTERVIEWS

### 1. Interview European Commission (telephonically conducted)

1. Occupation
  - a. For which office/department do you currently work?
  - b. What is your current title/job description?
  - c. Have you worked for any other offices/departments since 2008?
2. Connection to Arctic policy
  - a. In which ways are you currently involved with the EU Arctic policy?
  - b. What is your office's/department's responsibility regarding the Arctic policy?
3. The Commission and the EU Arctic policy
  - a. Of which members did the Arctic interservice group consist during the drafting of the 2008 and 2012 Communications?
  - b. Which EU departments did the members of the interservice group represent?
  - c. Would you consider the Arctic interservice group as a coherent body with a singular objective or rather a group of representatives from different EU departments? Why?
  - d. Could you tell me about the general procedure through which the content of the Commission's and High Representative's Communications in 2008 and 2012 was decided?
    - Was there a hierarchical structure among interservice group members?
    - Were some issues more difficult to agree upon than others among the different actors involved in drafting the Communications?
    - If so, why do you think this was the case?
  - e. In general, do you think that the Commission has had a leading role in inter-institutional political discussions that followed from the Communications?
    - Can you give examples of negotiations between the Commission and other EU institutions or Member States over the content of the Communications?
    - Who initiated those negotiations?
    - Where there any concessions made by the Commission on the content of the Communications? If so, could you describe those concessions and the negotiating partners that demanded them?
  - f. Could you tell me about the ways in which the Commission has gathered knowledge and information about the Arctic region?
    - Do you think that the Commission has developed its knowledge of the Arctic region since 2008 at a faster pace than EU Member States and other EU institutions?
4. The EU Arctic policy and other EU policies
  - a. Would you consider the EU Arctic policy as a necessary development to reach objectives of other EU policies?
  - b. Which EU policies would you consider particularly interdependent with the Arctic policy?
  - c. Can you explain the type of connection between these EU policies and the Arctic policy?
  - d. Are there any specific issues discussed in the 2008 and 2012 Communications that are particularly relevant in reaching other EU policy objectives?
5. The EU Arctic policy and external influences
  - a. Which individuals from EU institutions other than the Commission would you consider particularly successful in influencing the EU Arctic policy?
    - What did these individuals succeed at?
    - How did they provide input into the policy-making process?

- b. Which interest groups or societal groups would you consider particularly successful in influencing the EU Arctic policy?
    - What did these interest groups or societal groups succeed at?
    - How did they provide input into the policy-making process?
  - c. With which interest group do you think the Commission has interacted most intensively in the drafting process of the Communications?
  - d. Which forms of interaction between EU institutions and interest groups would you consider particularly effective in the case of the EU Arctic policy?
    - Why do you think this is the case?
  - e. Would you say that, in general, it has been the Commission that has approached relevant Arctic stakeholders and interest groups or vice versa?
  - f. Which interest groups have provided most information and knowledge to the Commission and High Representative during the drafting of the Communications?
    - In which ways do you think these groups were rewarded for their efforts?
6. The EU Arctic policy and responsible institutions
- a. Which EU body would you consider ultimately responsible for today's EU Arctic policy and why?
  - b. Which other organisations do you think play a crucial role in the EU Arctic policy?
    - Could you describe the role these organisations play?
7. Do you have any other remarks or recommendations for this research project?

## 2. Interview Member States (example Denmark, telephonically conducted)

1. Occupation
  - a. For which office/department do you currently work?
  - b. What is your current title/job description?
2. The EU Arctic policy and other EU policies
  - a. Would you consider the EU Arctic policy as a necessary development to reach objectives of other EU policies?
  - b. Which EU policies would you consider particularly interdependent with the Arctic policy?
  - c. Can you explain the type of connection between these EU policies and the Arctic policy?
  - d. Are there any specific issues discussed in the 2008 and 2012 Commission Communications that are particularly relevant in reaching other EU policy objectives?
3. The Kingdom of Denmark and the EU Arctic policy
  - a. Which role does the Danish government envision for the EU in the “future international cooperation” it mentions in its strategy for the Arctic 2011-2020?
    - Arctic societies, indigenous peoples, climate and the environment are key concepts in the Arctic policy for both Denmark and the EU – which key differences does the Danish government see between its own and EU activities in the Arctic?
    - What is the single most important purpose of the EU Arctic policy in the eyes of the Danish government?
  - b. Which department/representative body of the Danish government has been responsible for contributing to the EU Arctic policy?
    - When did this department/representative body begin its task?
    - What is the core objective of this department/representative body?
    - Has this objective been consistent over time?
    - In which ways has it contributed to today’s EU Arctic policy?
  - c. Does the content of the Commission’s 2008 and 2012 Communications on the Arctic fully reflect the Danish stance towards the development of an EU Arctic policy?
    - Which items of the EU Arctic policy are particularly important to the Danish government?
    - In which ways could the existing Arctic policy better reflect the Danish vision for an EU Arctic policy?
    - Through which means has the Danish government tried to provide input to the EU Arctic policy?
  - d. Has the Danish government experienced opposition to its preferences for the EU Arctic policy by other EU bodies or EU Member States?
    - With which other EU bodies or Member States did Danish representatives negotiate about the content of the Arctic policy?
    - Which aspects of the EU Arctic policy were most difficult too reach consensus on? Why do you think this is the case?
    - Which concessions were made by the Danish government and/or other Member State governments to reach agreement on the Arctic policy?



- e. Does the Danish government interact with domestic interest groups about the EU Arctic policy?
    - Which businesses/business groups has the Danish government consulted about the EU Arctic policy?
    - Which social/societal interest groups has the Danish government consulted about the EU Arctic policy?
    - Have domestic interest groups approached the Danish government themselves regarding the EU Arctic policy? If so, why?
    - How did interaction between the government and interest groups take place?
    - In which ways has the Danish government tried to get domestic interests reflected in the EU Arctic policy?
  - f. The EU Arctic policy addresses both socio-economic and security oriented issues. Does the Danish government consider the EU Arctic policy as a means to maintain security in the Arctic region?
    - Does the Danish government have security-related concerns about the Arctic?
    - In which ways could the EU Arctic policy contribute to the maintenance of a secure Arctic region?
4. Do you have any other remarks or recommendations for this research project?

**APPENDIX III.**

**Respondents**

Respondent A:

European Commission Official with expertise on Arctic affairs

Respondent B:

Member of the Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of Denmark to the EU with expertise on Greenland and the Faroe Islands.