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Europeanization of Foreign Policy: Whither Central Europe?

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12.1 Introduction

The entry of Central European (CE) countries into the European Union (EU) has been characterized by Europeanization understood as deep, broad-based, and regionally relatively coherent adaptation processes and socialization into a set of EU standards of policymaking and governance (Ágh 1999; Schimmelfennig 2001; Sedelmeier 2001; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005; Fink-Hafner 2007). This chapter argues that foreign policymaking constitutes an important exception from this pattern, which not only calls for a rethinking of the concept of Europeanization, but also alerts us to the need to think of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as a policy domain characterized by local and varying patterns of adaptation in the member states.

Comparative research on Europeanization of foreign policy in CE countries is relatively limited. To the extent this process was studied, analyses focused mostly on specific aspects in foreign policies of individual CE countries such as their role in the formation of the EU's neighbourhood policy (Pomorska 2007; Copsey and Pomorska 2010) or more broadly on individual country case studies (e.g., the analyses featured in Wong and Hill 2011). Comparative approaches have focused on various aspects of CE countries' foreign policymaking in the EU context such as the role of strategic ideologies (Drulák *et al.* 2008), the role of EU presidencies (Drulák and Šabič 2010), and/or more broadly the role of CE countries in EU foreign policy (Šedivý 2003; Bilčík *et al.* 2009). Yet studies of Europeanization of CE countries' foreign policymaking from a regional comparative perspective are still virtually missing. This may have to do with the problematic nature of the very concept of Europeanization when applied in the context of foreign policymaking. We need to get a more proper analytical grip on what is referred to as Europeanization of foreign policy and what lessons can be drawn from the CE experience of this process so far. This chapter seeks to address this, first, by introducing a learning perspective on foreign policy Europeanization;

second, by making a set of initial empirical observations on learning processes in CE countries' foreign policymaking; and, third, by elaborating upon a set of ideas for further research. The chapter does not aspire to provide a comprehensive analysis of all aspects of Europeanization of foreign policymaking in the CE countries. Much more space would be required for that. In line with the purpose of this volume, the aim of this chapter is to serve as a research note tackling some conceptual issues, exploring some initial empirical evidence, and discussing ideas for further research on Europeanization of foreign policy in CE countries.

The chapter proceeds in the following steps. In the first part, the chapter critically assesses the uses of the Europeanization concept in studies of foreign policymaking in the member states and introduces a learning perspective on Europeanization. The second part then presents some initial empirical observations on the processes of learning in Polish, Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, and Slovenian foreign policymaking. The concluding part then elaborates upon a set of ideas for further research. The key argument proposed here is that Europeanization of foreign policymaking in CE countries leads both to convergence and to divergence in their adaptation processes.

12.2 Europeanization of foreign policy: a learning perspective

Most studies conceptualize Europeanization of foreign policy as a process of gradual convergence and harmonization of foreign policy processes, identity, and standpoints of EU-level institutions and the member states (Ladrech 1994; Tonra 2001; Aggestam 2004; Tsardanidis and Stavridis 2005; Wong 2005, 2006; Wong and Hill 2011).¹ While this approach helps to generate interesting insights on processes of foreign policy adaptation and change, it is also methodologically somewhat problematic. The problem relates to the fact that the CFSP is a consensual affair and it is hence analytically difficult to disentangle the dependent variable (Europeanized foreign policy of member states) and the independent variables (ideas and directives of EU-level actors and member states' representatives). As a number of studies show, defections and opt-outs of various kinds are relatively common in CFSP (e.g., Adler-Nissen 2008; Birnberg 2009). Various strategic approaches in the political establishments of the member states including 'Universalism', 'Atlanticism', 'Europeism', and 'Sovereignism' can have varying salience over time and across political constellations in influencing foreign policymaking (Drulák *et al.* 2008). It follows that analytical approaches conceptualizing Europeanization of foreign policy as equal with coherence, harmonization, and non-defection risk simply leaving out important aspects of foreign policymaking in the member states.

To address the limits of seeking Europeanization merely in coherence, the current study proposes to view Europeanization of foreign policymaking as a process of learning. Building on the work of March and Olsen (1975), Levitt and March (1988), and March (1999) it sees learning as a process of gradual adaptation to changes in the environment characterized by unstable equilibria, imperfect feedback loops, and limits of established structures and procedures. Seen from this perspective, experiences and perceptions are mediated by access to information, bounded rationality, local traditions, cultures, rules, and identities of national actors and thereby often end up producing divergent learning outcomes. In the context of EU foreign policymaking, learning processes are mediated by national administrative cultures and foreign policy traditions, which results in Europeanization of foreign policy as 'domestic adaptation with national colors' and misfits with the CFSP (Risse *et al.* 2001: 1). Learning outcomes can take on varying forms including the possibility of an increase in defection, special interests and domains *reservées*, and more frequent use of opt-outs. Hence, a learning perspective on Europeanization of foreign policy emphasizes a view of CFSP as a framework for managing unity and diversity in foreign policymaking among the EU institutions and the member states.

To operationalize the learning process in foreign policymaking, one can focus on the mechanisms of CFSP related adaptations in *foreign policy substance and foreign policy structures*. As for the data that can be used to study adaptations in foreign policy substance, that is, foreign policy priorities, goals, and actions of a country, one can focus on annual reports of foreign ministries, strategic speeches of foreign ministers, and other kinds of official documents outlining foreign policy goals and priorities. The focus here is on such documents in the period before and after the entry of the CE countries to the EU.

The second dimension – adaptation of foreign policy structures – involves reform of routines, organizational structures, and processes and procedures

Table 12.1 Europeanization of foreign policy as learning

Primary mechanisms	Indicators in foreign policy of CE member states
Rule following in relation to CFSP (adaptation of foreign policy substance)	Adaptation of FP agenda, goals, and conduct prior to and after entry into the EU
Domestic impact of CFSP institutions (adaptation of foreign policy structures)	Organizational and institutional change processes in foreign affairs administrations of CE MS related to EU membership

in foreign affairs administrations in the member states. The focus here is on how CE foreign affairs administrations have adapted to their new role in the context of their countries' EU membership.

Table 12.1 summarizes the mechanisms and indicators of learning in foreign policy of EU member states.

The following section explores some initial evidence on the learning processes in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Slovenia.

12.3 Europeanization of Polish foreign policy: rhetoric of national interests and reality of continuous EU harmonization

In the period prior to EU membership, Poland was required to adopt the so-called *acquis politique* and as part of that it was being asked to align its policies with those adopted in the Council by the EU-15. As Pomorska (2011: 172) observes, this related for instance to the need to freeze high-level contacts with governmental officials in Belarus or introduction of visas to Ukrainian citizens in the run-up to the joining of the Schengen zone. But on a general level, there has been rather limited change in the formulation of Polish foreign policy, which has been putting premium on the promotion of Polish national interests. This applied even before the entry of Poland into the EU. For instance, in the 2002 Annual Address, Foreign Minister Cimoszewicz argued that a stronger involvement of the president in foreign policymaking gives grounds for 'hope for continuity and new initiatives serving the Polish *raison d'état*' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland 2002). The 2011 Annual Address by Foreign Minister Sikorski follows this line of argument and makes it clear that Poland has a realist approach to its foreign policy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland 2011). Yet contrary to what the rhetoric in these official statements would lead us to believe, there has actually been quite an extensive process of adaptation of Polish foreign policymaking to the country's functioning within the framework of rules and procedures pertaining to the making of the EU's CFSP. Evidence of adaptation to EU rules could be found on the level of foreign policy goals as well as structures and working procedures in the foreign affairs administration.

Regarding the first factor, Poland has been adapting and aligning its foreign policy goals to those promoted by the EU. An example of this is Poland's engagement with its eastern neighbours, which has been seen as a decisive new element in the contribution of Poland to EU foreign policy. The European Neighbourhood Policy launched in 2004 is often regarded as a project in which Poland has managed to set the external affairs agenda of the EU (Edwards 2006). On first glance it would seem as though Poland has succeeded in what some authors term 'uploading' of foreign policy priorities

to the EU level. Yet if one explores long-term priorities of Polish foreign policy, which include the goal of providing Ukraine and possibly other eastern neighbours with a membership perspective, it becomes clear that the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and Eastern Partnership which do not foresee such steps are in fact not entirely in line with Poland's long-term strategic vision expressed in a Polish ministry of foreign affairs non-paper on the Eastern Dimension of EU foreign policy published in 2003 which included for instance a membership perspective for Ukraine and other ambitious goals (Pomorska 2011: 174). Nevertheless, despite its ambiguous position regarding the ENP, Poland was among the most active promoters of this policy framework. Hence, it seems reasonable to argue that rather than setting the rules of the CFSP, Poland continued to follow the rules agreed in this policy realm, that is, supporting initiatives agreed jointly in the Council despite the fact that this means compromising on some specific national interests. Copey and Pomorska (2010) attribute this to the difference between the Polish will to shape EU policies, which was clearly present, and the actual capacities to do so.

When it comes to Europeanization as adaptation of structures and processes in foreign ministries there has been an extensive change dynamic in the Polish foreign affairs establishment. Prior to the entry into the EU, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) had gone through a series of quite radical organizational changes in adapting its structures and procedures to EU membership. The structural change resulted in the creation of the Department for the EU and a unit for CFSP (Pomorska 2011: 169). In addition to that CFSP officers were appointed in most territorial desks and new positions such as that of the Ambassador to the Political and Security Committee (PSC) and that of the European Correspondent and his or her deputies were also established (*ibid.*). Further structural adaptations concerned the Polish mission to the EU, in which two new units for CFSP coordination and ESDP coordination were created and the number of personnel were tripled (*ibid.*: 170).

A crucial point of socialization into common working procedures and informal behavioural norms of the CFSP were the Council meetings. Polish officials learned to grasp the rules of the informal game and they started to contribute effectively to the community of diplomats from member states assembled in the Council. This type of socialization played a role also upon the return of these officials home to Warsaw as they then play the role of change agents in the foreign ministry, which is increasingly realizing that the EU is to be present in it throughout the organization and not merely in the units dealing with EU affairs (*ibid.*: 172). Moreover, officials with experience from Council meetings were also an important source of advice to various levels of Polish government learning to play by the informal rules of consensus-driven norms of Council negotiations (*ibid.*).

12.4 Europeanization of Czech foreign policy: from harmonization with CFSP to a quest for Czech national interests

There has been a relatively clear shift in the role the EU played in the formulation of Czech foreign policy prior to the country's accession to the EU and after the membership became a fact. If we compare the annual reports of the Czech foreign ministry in 2000 and 2010, we will find a significant difference in how the priorities of Czech foreign policy in relation to the EU are discussed. The 2000 report stated that EU accession is the country's primary foreign policy priority. It argued that for the Czech Republic European integration is 'the best way of safeguarding its fundamental interests' (Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2001: 13). The report furthermore argues that the Czech Republic has 'gradually harmonised its foreign policy with the CFSP of the EU, to the extent that this is made possible by its status as an associate member. It has also endeavoured to be involved to a maximum degree in formulating the Common European Security and Defence Policy' (*ibid.*: 15). Furthermore, the report lists major activities of the Czech Republic in relation to EU institutions (*ibid.*: 26). This listing of meetings apparently served to demonstrate the high levels of engagement of the Czech Republic in adapting to EU standards of governance and a readiness to participate in forming EU policies including the CFSP and the CSDP.

The Czech approach to the EU seemed to change little in the first year of membership in the EU. The 2004 annual report of the Czech MFA frames Czech foreign policy as an integral part of the CFSP and more broadly of the EU's external relations as it uses more than half of its introductory part (8 out of 15 pages) on discussing how the Czech foreign policy establishment participated on various aspects related to the CFSP (Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004: 1–8). However, the 2004 report also pointed out that the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty may not go smoothly in the Czech republic and reported that most Czech members of the European Parliament (MEPs) voted against ratification, which set them apart from most other countries' MEPs (*ibid.*: 1).

This sceptical tendency had apparently deepened in the following years and the top three priorities in the 2010 report on the Foreign Policy of the Czech Republic adopted from the governmental programme of Prime Minister Nečas were the following: intensive promotion of Czech interests in the EU; more involvement of European committees of both chambers of parliament in relations to the Union; and promotion of the 'Czech exception' from the Lisbon Treaty (Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2010: 9).² Further priorities included EU enlargement, energy security and EU competitiveness, as well as a focus on closer cooperation with the United States and the countries of Eastern Europe, and promotion of democracy and human rights in the world (*ibid.*: 10). Compared to 2000 and 2004, there

was a clear shift from the primer on harmonization of Czech foreign and domestic policy with the EU towards the need of differentiating the Czech standpoints in the context of EU policymaking. To be sure, the 2010 report does demonstrate the interwoven character of CFSP and Czech foreign policymaking as it extensively describes the CFSP activities conducted in 2010 and portrays the Czech role in these activities (*ibid.*: 20–9). But the above-mentioned focus on the promotion of rather specific Czech interests (most notably the ‘Czech exception’) suggests a shift from mere ‘rule following’ in 2000 towards attempts to make and promote own interests in EU governance as well as in CFSP in 2010. Similar observations were made by Beneš and Braun (2010) and by Baun and Marek (2010) in their study of the Czech participation in the EU’s external relations. While the volumes by Drulák and Braun (2010), Drulák and Handl (2010), Drulák and Hořký (2010) and Drulák and Střítecký (2010) provide a somewhat different conceptualization of legitimate national interests, that is, those that are also adopted as joint EU interests (Kratochvíl 2010), they are also evidence of reinvigorated interest in the notion of national interests among the Czech International Relations (IR) scholars.

Regarding *adaptation of the foreign affairs structures* to the functioning within the framework of the CFSP, the most notable changes could be recorded at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its adaptation was facilitated by the fact that since April 2003, the Czech representatives were allowed to participate as observers on the work of EU bodies dealing with issues of CFSP. Following entry into the EU, a ‘new rhythm’ of work was introduced at the Czech MFA, which started to work according to the processes of CFSP coordination (Khol 2005: 7). This included introduction of agenda relating to geographically distant areas which were previously of only marginal importance to the Czech diplomatic service (*ibid.*). The Czech MFA has been adapting its procedures and learning to operate in the new environment following the entry into the EU. This process of adaptation and learning is captured in the MFAs 2004 annual report which describes the need to prioritize in the Czech participation in the CFSP due to limited capacities of the country and the procedures that were put in place in the MFA with the aim to do so (Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004: 4).

The Czech MFA has been sharing the responsibility with the Prime Minister’s Office as the coordinators and information brokers in the Czech government’s participation in EU affairs (*ibid.*: 2). Obviously, this set high demands on the ability to acquire new kinds of expertise and adjust procedures effectively. This has also informed the training activities of the Diplomatic Academy under the auspices of the Czech MFA. In 2005, the Academy organized a 34-hour course entitled ‘Training in EU Affairs’, which was offered to 96 MFA officials and 19 officials from other ministries (Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2005: 341). Since 2006, the Diplomatic Academy participated in the organization of one of the modules of the European

Diplomatic Program preparing diplomatic staff from EU member states for common work on CFSP and other matters of the EU's external relations (Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006: 380).

12.5 Europeanization of Slovak foreign policy: learning to add value to CFSP

Slovakia has also pointed out European integration as its number one foreign policy goal in the years prior to the country's membership in the EU. Following a period of strained relations with the EU related to illiberal practices of the Slovak government led by Vladimír Mečiar in the mid-1990s, the pro-EU coalition governments that followed (led by Mikuláš Dzurinda) were swift implementers of rules, laws, and standards required for EU membership (Bilčík 2001). As the Slovak MFA states in its 2002 annual report, the Slovak Republic was noted by the European Commission (EC) as one of only two candidate countries implementing all the requirements agreed in the accession negotiations on time (Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2002: 4). In the area of the CFSP, Slovakia was a highly active rule follower prior to its entry into the EU. As the Slovak MFA argues in its annual report in 2000, 'Slovakia subscribes to the goals of the CFSP because they are identical with the aims of Slovak foreign policy' (Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2000: 8). The Ministry further points out that Slovakia expressed support to the extent requested for all the EU declarations, common positions, and joint actions in 2000 save one, that is, the EU declaration on the elections in Kosovo, where Slovakia did not express reservations about the entire document but merely about one its the clauses (*ibid.*). After its entry into the EU, this approach continued to characterize Slovak foreign policy in the EU context. As the Slovak MFA argued in 2008, 'Slovakia belongs to a group of countries which support the deepening of internal EU integration, full integration within the rules of the EU as well as the EU enlargement and spread of its influence in the world' (Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2008: 7).

If Slovakia was a relatively clear rule follower in the years prior to and immediately after its entry into the EU, the situation was changing towards seeking to define its own interests and positions in 2010. This process of 'self-identification' becomes apparent when reading the 2010 annual report of the Slovak MFA. It starts with an introduction of a 'value-based' foreign policy approach by Foreign Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda using the following motto as a title: 'Foreign policy has to be a reflection of our inner conviction' (Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2010a: 3). The article introduces three core principles on which Slovak foreign policy is to rest: (a) consistency – positions held are to be the same at home and abroad; (b) a solid basis in civic values 'upon which Europe is built' including human rights and freedoms, the right to life, and human dignity and (c) responsibility in the sense of the ability to assess the consequences of one's actions.

The 2010 evaluation report on foreign policy uses a somewhat less value-laden language and refers to 2010 as a year characterized by radical or 'breakthrough' changes in the country's foreign policy following the entry into office of the new centre-right government (Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2010b: 1). The main feature of the new foreign policy approach is 'promotion of a more *realistic* view of the functioning of the EU and of its currency' (*ibid.*, italics added). This change in attitude was supported by a change in the focus on countries with which one seeks closest cooperation. While, for instance, the 2002 report discussed relations with individual EU member states at length focusing on how they can support Slovakia in attaining its goals of EU integration and the neighbouring Visegrad countries were mentioned later (the V4 framework itself was mentioned only in passing), the 2010 report reversed the order of priority countries. It focuses primarily on regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations in the V4 as the top priority of Slovak foreign policy and calls for the nurturing of Visegrad cooperation as a way of attaining more influence in EU policy-making (*ibid.*). In the section on the EU, the 2010 report states that Slovakia 'actively promoted its own ideas on how the process of EU integration should continue' and 'concentrated on areas in which it could provide added value and tangible results including fiscal policies, structural reforms, Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership' (*ibid.*).

A CFSP issue, where Slovakia, together with four other EU member states, took on a stance explicitly countering the position of the majority of EU countries was the question of Kosovo independence declared in February 2008. The Slovak arguments in this case were based on the need to preserve the standards of international law as well as the norm of internal democracy in the CFSP decision-making.³ This position did not change with the change of governments in 2010 and seems to be a relatively stable characteristic of current Slovak foreign policy. The way the issue is dealt with in the annual reports of the Slovak foreign ministry is indicative in that it features a discursive shift towards non-recognition. While the 2008 annual report featured a subheader 'Kosovská otázka' (The Kosovo Question), the 2010 annual report discusses the issue of Kosovo independence in a section with the header 'Srbsko' (Serbia) and states that Slovakia will not change its standpoint regarding non-recognition of Kosovo and that it promotes speedy accession of Serbia into the EU as well as peaceful negotiations between Serbia and Kosovo on resolving issues related to the status of Kosovo.⁴

As may be apparent, Europeanization of Slovakia's foreign policy over the last decade follows a pattern found also in the Czech case, that is, a shift from rule following towards attempts at setting the rules and identifying domains *reservées* (see also Bátorá and Pulišová 2012).

In terms of adaptation of foreign policy structures, the Slovak foreign affairs establishment had a relatively adaptable institutional point of departure. With a foreign ministry established in 1993 and staffed to a large

extent by non-career diplomats, the Slovak MFA was readily adopting new rules, structures, and procedures (Bátora 2008). The MFA, due to its skills in international negotiations, took on the role of the lead coordinator of Slovak EU policies. Internally, the ministry had reformed its structure to connect expertise in bilateral territorial departments and sectoral EU policy departments. In this way, a section for European Affairs was created in 2004 which then worked as the main point of coordinating policy inputs from Slovak line ministries and policy conduct by the Slovak diplomatic network in Brussels and in the capitals of the EU member states (for an analysis of the reform processes see Bátora 2003). Following accession to the EU, there was a broad-based learning process in the foreign ministry resulting in a gradual adaptation to working in the CFSP context. A key element in the socialization and learning has been related to Slovak diplomats being appointed to high-level positions in CFSP institutions with a particular focus on the region of Western Balkans.⁵ The fact that Mikuláš Dzurinda, who served as prime minister twice, had become foreign minister in 2010 had brought in a new leadership style based on experience from high-level policymaking in the EU context and a non-diplomatic pragmatic approach to foreign policymaking. This and the above-discussed shift in the formulation of foreign policy priorities was also accompanied by an organizational reform, which sought to make the Slovak MFA more effective.⁶ One of the significant changes effective from November 2011 has been the amalgamation of the Section for EU Affairs and the Section for Global Challenges, Human Rights, the United Nations (UN), International Organizations and Culture into a new Section of European and Global Affairs.⁷

A new wave of organizational change followed when Miroslav Lajčák, a former managing director of the European External Action Service, took over as foreign minister in March 2012. The EU affairs section was re-constituted and oriented towards cooperation with working groups in the EU's Foreign Affairs Council. The ministry was to work in close coordination with EU bodies involved in CFSP and also strengthened its role as the central coordinator of Slovak EU policies. Connecting these functions, foreign minister Lajčák also became the vice-prime minister for EU affairs. Finally, the strengthened EU orientation in the work of the ministry was also expressed in a planned change of its official name to Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs effective as of September 2012.

12.6 Europeanization of Hungarian foreign policy: a nexus between 'European orientation' and self-centeredness

Europeanization of Hungarian foreign policymaking has had an early start as Hungary was the first country from Communist Eastern Europe to sign a Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the EC in July 1988. This was

followed by five years of negotiation and has been part of a general strategy of the Hungarian government of opening up to Western structures (Batory 2002: 2). The key foreign policy goals identified by the Antall government in the early 1990s including integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures, good neighbourly relations with the countries of East Central Europe, and representation of the interests of the Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries mostly in Romania, Slovakia, and the Ukraine have characterized Hungarian foreign policy also in the immediate pre-accession years (*ibid.*). While this was the case, the pre-accession period brought high levels of support among the parliamentary parties for speedy and effective compliance with EU norms and their swift implementation in Hungary (*ibid.*: 3). Batory (*ibid.*: 2) identified this as a nexus in Hungarian foreign policy between a 'European orientation' and the role of Hungary as a 'kin state' (*cf.* Schöpflin 2000). In the years following accession to the EU, this nexus continued to characterize the substance of Hungarian foreign policymaking. The foreign policy strategy outlined in 2010 included a primary focus on fostering a sense of national unity about foreign policy objectives including the promotion of interests and rights of Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries in the Carpathian Basin and elsewhere in the world (Martonyi 2010). While this approach seems to support the notion of Hungary as a kin state, the European orientation also continues to be present in the formulation of Hungarian foreign policy priorities. Foreign minister Martonyi's strategic statement (*ibid.*) also includes goals that are in line with a broader CFSP agenda including promotion of Croatia's accession to the Union, moving forward in the EU enlargement process,⁸ supporting the goals of the Eastern Partnership, and promoting the goals of the strategy for the Danube region harmonizing various policy aspects in the spheres of energy, development, environment, and transport in Central Europe.

When it comes to Europeanization of foreign affairs structures, overall responsibility for the management of EU affairs in Hungary has been characterized by a sharing of responsibilities between the foreign ministry and the Prime Minister's Office. Since 1996, the foreign ministry has been hosting the State Secretariat for Integration (renamed to State Secretariat for Integration and External Economic Relations – SSIEER – in 2002), a structure led by a state secretary for EU affairs, which has been in charge of day-to-day coordination of Hungary's EU policies (Ágh and Rózsász 2003: 10).⁹ The Prime Minister's Office has been seeking to play the role of a top-level strategic body, which delivered strategic direction to Hungarian EU policies. This included the establishment in the Prime Minister's Office of the European Integration Cabinet and a Strategic Taskforce on Integration involving various experts from government and from the non-governmental sector in the first half of the 1990s. These were later partly abolished and merged into a Department of European Integration by Prime Minister Orbán in 1998. Ágh and Rózsász (*ibid.*: 16) describe Orbán's approach as

'remote' – focusing only on EU agenda with high salience and with deep domestic impacts (e.g., agricultural subsidies) – which left a lot of leeway for the coordinating bodies based in the foreign ministry in shaping large parts of Hungary's involvement in EU policymaking. This seems to leave a lot of room for less politically laden and more professional and administratively skilful conduct by Hungarian diplomats and other governmental officials involved in CFSP matters. As an analysis of the role of Hungarian presidency in the 2011 Libya crisis has shown, Hungarian diplomatic service had acted highly effectively in complementing the not yet entirely efficient European External Action Service (Szabó 2011).¹⁰

12.7 Europeanization of Slovenian foreign policy: steady CFSP harmonization and no capacity for national interests

Slovenia's EU membership has had a significant impact on the formulation of its foreign policy priorities. Prior to its membership in the EU, the country had a strategic approach defined by geographical areas. After Slovenia's entry into the EU, Kajnč (2005: 5) sees a shift from this 'concentric circles' approach captured also in key strategic documents¹¹ towards what she terms 'axis and wheel' approach. The latter corresponds to a broadly conceived set of foreign policy issue areas, where foreign policy is developed in a plethora of geographic areas broadly corresponding to the EU's external affairs priorities. While there seemed to be a clear change in the formulation of strategies, foreign policy conduct seemed to follow established foreign policy priorities when Slovenia defied EU mainstream and together with Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, and a few other member states promoted the opening of accession negotiations with Croatia in mid-2005 vote in the GAERC (*ibid.*).¹² However, this standpoint may be rather exceptional. As Kajnč (2011: 206) argues, due to the need to manage and implement tasks related to broader foreign policy frameworks such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) (Slovenia held the chairmanship in 2005) and the EU presidency (Slovenia held the presidency in the second half of 2008), Slovenian foreign policy formulation had been highly open to external influences and without the extra capacity and resources needed to promote specific Slovenian interests.

In terms of adaptation of foreign policy structures, Slovenian foreign policy establishment has gone through a steady change process ranging back to the period well before membership (Fink-Hafner and Lajh 2003). In 1997, the main coordinating function along with organizational units for EU affairs were moved from the foreign ministry into the newly created Government Office for European Affairs led by a Europe minister without a portfolio, which reframed EU policies from foreign policies to internal affairs (*ibid.*: 93; *cf.* Kajnč 2011: 194). In 2004, the Slovenian foreign ministry has

gone through a major reorganization which in Kajnc's (2005) view could be directly attributed to the need to adapt to working within the EU and more specifically within the CFSP framework. The ministry reformed its organizational units previously divided into 'sectors' following Slovenian foreign policy priorities to three 'directorates' corresponding with the priorities

Table 12.2 Europeanization of foreign policy in CE countries: preliminary observations

	Adaptation of foreign policy substance	Adaptation of foreign policy structures
Poland	Continuity in rhetoric of national interests and parallel continuity in the practice of harmonization with EU partners to form CFSP objectives	MFA as the central coordinator of EU affairs Internal infusion by a CFSP dimension via appointing CFSP officers to most territorial desks New rhythm due to the COREU network
Czech Republic	Shift from harmonization with CFSP towards a quest for national interests	MFA as the central coordinator of EU affairs New rhythm of work related to CFSP calendar and COREU network Training focused on EU affairs
Slovakia	Shift from harmonization with CFSP towards an uncompromising standpoint on specific issues (e.g., Kosovo)	MFA as the central coordinator of EU affairs Socialization via high-level diplomatic appointments in the CFSP framework New rhythm due to COREU and CFSP calendar Minister of foreign affairs also vice-prime minister for EU affairs
Hungary	Continuity and stability in national interests promotion; quest for compatibility of those interests with the CFSP	MFA sharing responsibility for EU affairs coordination with the Prime Minister's Office – New procedures due to CFSP calendar and efficient in cooperation within the CFSP framework
Slovenia	Fusion of national interests and CFSP objectives; limited capacity and resources to promote own agenda, priorities contingent on the broader policy framework of the CFSP	MFA sharing responsibility for coordination of EU affairs with the Prime Minister's Office Regrouping territorial departments according to CFSP priority areas Presidency experience providing a global outlook

of EU foreign policy. This involved regrouping geographical departments 'according to the EU's logic', which in turn entailed new organization of European units, adding new geographical units dealing with distant countries, which have not been a traditional priority area for Slovenia earlier as well as adding units focusing on CFSP-related issue areas such as human security and humanitarian aid (*ibid.*: 4). Of key importance was the Slovenian presidency of the EU in the first half of 2008, which had brought important lessons for the foreign affairs administration for the rest of the governmental administration of Slovenia both in terms of learning how to conduct foreign policy in the CFSP and in terms of the skills and training needed for efficient conduct (Kajnič and Svetličič 2009).

Table 12.2 summarizes the empirical observations discussed above.

12.8 Conclusion

The core argument of the current chapter is that Europeanization understood as learning processes takes on varying forms across the CE region and there is no underlying coherence in patterns of Europeanization of foreign policy. Member states learn to operate within the framework of EU foreign policy, which requires adaptation of foreign policy goals and foreign policymaking structures. The results of these learning processes are divergent across the CE region and they do not contribute to any clear and unproblematic harmonization of foreign policy goals.

The preliminary review of empirical evidence on the learning and adaptation in the sphere of foreign policy substance suggests that CE countries can be grouped in at least two broader groups with some subtle differences within each of them: CFSP harmonizers and promoters of national interests. The former group includes Poland and Slovenia. The latter group includes the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary. From a regional perspective, this indicates that Europeanization does not seem to have produced a coherent CE approach to the CFSP. What is more, the V4 countries seems to be more fragmented in terms of their basic approaches to the CFSP than the promoters of this regional grouping would like them to be.

At the level of Europeanization as adaptation of foreign policy structures and learning of new procedures in foreign affairs administrations, there seems to be convergence across all six countries studied here when it comes to routines of CFSP coordination. This would indicate support for Ekengren's (2002) findings from his comparative analysis of time planning in CFSP and the role of the COREU network¹³ in the British and Swedish foreign affairs establishments which recorded significant procedural and temporal convergence. Moreover, the entry into the EU and the need to co-shape the CFSP seem to have created a situation in which all the CE foreign affairs establishments face a shortage of capacities and expertise on a number of CFSP priority areas relating to countries and agenda on other continents.

Most older member states from the EU-15 have had these kinds of expertise upon their entry into the EU ranging back to their colonial experience and/or their engagement in the post-Second World War developmental cooperation projects. Hence, the entry of CE countries into the CFSP may have contributed to the rise of an intra-EU capabilities–expectations gap in terms of readiness and capacities to engage in the full range of agenda encompassed in the CFSP.

Obviously, the empirical observations discussed here are merely piecemeal and in-depth comparative studies on the patterns of adaptation in substance and structures of foreign policy making in CE countries would be required to provide more solid ground for the arguments proposed here.

A more general observation based on the current study is that when studying Europeanization of foreign policy as learning, it may be useful to conceive of differentiation in adaptation processes not merely between national contexts of EU member states, but also between different aspects of foreign policymaking. The preliminary observations made here would suggest that there is more divergence between the CE countries in terms of how their Europeanized foreign policy substance is being formed than between how the structures supporting their Europeanized foreign policy conduct are organized. In turn, this raises the issue of learning to coordinate foreign policies in a CFSP environment characterized by joint organizational procedures but varying assessments of foreign policy situations among the CE member states. These are further matters requiring more thorough empirical investigation.

Notes

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1. As Wong and Hill (2011: 4) argue, Europeanization of foreign policy is ‘a process of foreign policy convergence. It is a dependent variable contingent on the ideas and directives emanating both from actors (EU institutions, politicians, diplomats) in Brussels and from member state capitals (national leaders). Europeanization is thus identifiable as a process of change manifested as policy convergence (both top-down and sideways) as well as national policies amplified through EU policy (bottom up projection)’.
2. The exception from the Lisbon Treaty that the Czech Republic sought to attain follows similar exceptions granted to the United Kingdom and Poland. It would ensure that the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, which is an integral part of the Lisbon Treaty, would apply in the Czech Republic according to Czech laws. The primary motivation is to avoid reassessment of the so-called Beneš Decrees, which led to expropriation of property owned by Germans expelled from Czechoslovakia after the Second World War.

3. 'Spájajú nás väzby z histórie i dneška' (We are connected by bonds of history and presence). Interview with the political director of the Slovak foreign ministry, amb. Igor Slobodník, in Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2009: 18–19).
4. Compare Slovak Foreign Ministry (2009: 19) and Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2010a: 18).
5. This included, for instance, Foreign Minister Eduard Kukan, who served as UN Special Envoy to Kosovo along with Carl Bildt in a similar position in the mid-1990s, and Miroslav Lajčák, who served as EU Special Representative to Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2007–09, later worked as Managing Director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia in the EEAS in Brussels and served as Slovak foreign minister in 2009–2010 and again since 2012.
6. Interviews with senior officials of the Slovak MFA, November 2011.
7. Author's interview with senior officials of the Slovak MFA, 24 November 2011.
8. It is interesting to note that the EU enlargement process is also presented here almost exclusively through the prism of Hungarian national interests conceived of in geopolitical terms. As Foreign Minister Martonyi argues, Hungary 'will carry on the enlargement process because the European integration of the West Balkans is in our fundamental interest, removing Hungary from the periphery, and reinstating it in the middle of Europe, where it used to be' (Martonyi 2010).
9. For a detailed overview of the coordination processes of Hungarian EU policies including the line ministries and the Hungarian mission to the European Communities, see Ágh and Rózsász (2003: 10–15).
10. As Szabó (2011: 24–6) reports, the Hungarian embassy in Tripoli acted as the main point of coordination on the ground as the EU did not have a delegation in Libya, the Hungarian MFA led the effort to evacuate EU citizens from the crisis country, the Hungarian minister of transport chaired the meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council meeting where sanctions were adopted swiftly.
11. *Deklaracija o zunanji politiki Republike Slovenije* (Declaration on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia), adopted by the Slovenian Parliament on 17 December 1999, http://www.mzz.gov.si/si/zakonodaja_in_dokumenti/podzakonski_akti/deklaracija_o_zunanji_politiki_republike_slovenije/ (accessed 15 December 2011). See also *Primerna zunanja politika* (Appropriate foreign policy), adopted by the Slovenia government on 10 October 2002 (Kajnič 2005: 4).
12. It needs to be noted, though, that Slovenia had also sought effective support from the EC and from member states in blocking the effects of Croatia's self-declared fishery zone in the Adriatic in the territories adjacent to the Slovenian coast. Arguably, this shows that Slovenia learned to use its membership as a leverage in its bilateral relations with its non-EU neighbours (Kajnič 2011: 205–6). Another reason for such learning was Slovenia's own experience with how Austria and Italy managed to upload what were essentially bilateral issues on the EU level and thus exert effective pressure on Slovenia during its accession negotiations (Šabič 2002).
13. COREU (Correspondence européenne) is a communications network enabling exchange of classified information among EU member state governments.

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