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by

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# NORMATIVE POLICY COHERENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT IN EU EXTERNAL POLICIES:
a case study of the European Union's development and trade policies towards Vietnam

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# Abstract

The global discourse on people-centered development appeals for a normative dimension in donor policies. As a major donor organization, the European Union (EU) presents itself as a normative actor on the global stage. However, it is often criticized for lacking normative practice. This dissertation addresses this criticism and assesses the EU's normative policy coherence for development by examining norm implementation across development and trade policies. The guiding research questions are the following: Are the EU's development and trade policies coherent in implementing norms; and if not, why are they incoherent?

Normative policy coherence for development is defined as the coherent implementation of EU norms (democracy, freedom, gender equality, good governance, human rights, justice, liberty, non-discrimination, peace, rule of law, solidarity and sustainability) across development and non-development policies. A case study of EU development and trade policies addressing Vietnam is used to illustrate normative policy coherence for development in the transition phase from an EU-Vietnam donor-recipient relationship to a mutual trade relationship.

This research contributes to existing literature on policy coherence for development, public policy, normative power Europe and regionalism through the in-depth analysis of normativity in EU policy implementation. It examines EU normative power in the EU-Vietnam relationship with particular focus on normative policy coherence and places this relationship in the context of EU-ASEAN relations.

A qualitative methodology is utilized in this dissertation is supported by the case study design within which the congruence method has been used for the analysis. The data set is comprised of European Union policy documents and semi-structured interviews conducted by the author in Brussels, Belgium, and Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, which were coded and analyzed in Atlas.ti.

The results show that normative policy coherence for development is undermined for several reasons. First, in policy implementation, norms are seen as a political matter and not as a development or trade matter. In contrast to policy guidelines, which are infused by normative commitments such as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, subsequent implementation stages do not correspond to this commitment. Second, policy networks, which could function as an opportunity for cooperation and coherence, are split

by sector, which reinforces the divide between political, developmental and economic matters and in doing so they undermine normative policy coherence. Third, the EU's relations with ASEAN do not directly undermine EU-Vietnam relations and, therefore, normative coherence in policies addressed at Vietnam is only indirectly affected by EU interests in ASEAN.

Causes of normative incoherence in EU policy implementation can be linked to the institutional divide between political and technical matters, which are reinforced by sectoral divisions in the delegations abroad.

**KEY WORDS:** Policy Coherence for Development; Normative Coherence; Development-Trade Nexus, EU Foreign Policies

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Sandra Häbel

Esch/Alzette

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# List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| AfT | Aid for Trade |
| ASEAN | Association of Southeast Asian Nations |
| BPC | Building Productive Capacity |
| COM | European Commission |
| CPV | Communist Party of Vietnam |
| CSP | Country Strategy Paper |
| DAC | Development Assistance Committee |
| DCI | Instrument for Development Cooperation |
| DG | Directorate-General (in the European Commission) |
| DG DEVCO | Directorate-General for Development |
| DG TRADE | Directorate General for Trade |
| EEAS | European External Action Service |
| EEC | European Economic Community |
| EFP | European Foreign Policy |
| EIDHR | European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights |
| EU | European Union |
| EuroCham | Chamber of Commerce of the European Union |
| EVBN | EU-Vietnam Business Network |
| EP | European Parliament |
| FCA | Framework Cooperation Agreement |
| FLEGT | Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan (by the EU) |
| FTA | Free Trade Agreement |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GNI | Gross National Income |
| GONGO | Governmental Non-Governmental Organization |
| GoV | Government of Vietnam |
| GSP | General System of Preferences |
| GWG | Gender Working Group |
| HCMC | Ho Chi Minh City |
| HRD | Human Rights Dialogue |
| HRIA | Human Rights Impact Assessment |
| ILO | International Labor Organization |
| IOs | International Organizations |
| IR | International Relations |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| MIP | Multiannual Indicative Program |
| MS | Member State of the European Union |
| MOIT | Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade |
| MUTRAP | EU-Vietnam Trade Policy and Investment Support Project |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NPCD | Normative Policy Coherence for Development |

| | |
|---|---|
| ODA | Official Development Assistance |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OTRN | Other Trade Related Needs |
| PCA | Partnership and Cooperation Agreement |
| PCD | Policy Coherence for Development |
| PCSD | Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development |
| PE | Political Economy |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SIA | Sustainability Impact Assessment |
| TD | Trade Development |
| TEU | Treaty on the European Union |
| TFEU | Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union |
| TPR | Trade Policy Regulations |
| TRI | Trade Related Infrastructure |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UN | United Nations |
| USD | United States Dollar |
| VN | Vietnam |
| WTO | World Trade Organization |

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# Introduction

The paradigmatic shift towards transformative development in recent years calls for a normative approach to development. Transformative development goes beyond traditional technical aid and aims to make changes to achieve a better future for all. Most visibly, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) depict ongoing global efforts to implement this normative approach. In line with this norm driven development approach, normative policy coherence for development (NPCD) provides a conceptual and analytical lens supportive of transformative development. NPCD is defined as the coherent implementation of a given set of norms across the development and non-development policies. It is both a fundamental element of the notion of "transformative development", which is based on policy coherence for development in the Sustainable Development Agenda, and an indicator of the contested nature of development, which has been criticized as a policy goal by many observers (see Thede, 2013). Ensuring the implementation of norms such as human rights, gender equality or freedom across development and non-development policies, which could otherwise undermine transformative development efforts, is crucial to prioritizing the "transformative" nature of development strategies so that they remain people-focused. Scholars such as Koff and Maganda (2016) have criticized the implementation of policy coherence for development (PCD) strategies by international organizations because they promote "development" without necessarily fostering the ethics and values that should accompany such strategies. NPCD addresses this need and consequently it reconciles some of the values promoted by alternative development strategies (human rights, ecological balance, etc.) with mainstream international development agendas. This dissertation aims to connect PCD, which has gained momentum in international fora since the 1990s, and the normative shift in the global development agenda, which has been introduced by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and spurred by the subsequent Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As one of the major development actors, the European Union (EU) carries great responsibility towards this normative development agenda. The official development assistance (ODA) of the EU institutions and its member states make it the largest donor on a global scale and, therefore, a crucial actor in transformative development.

How has this normative evolution translated into the EU's development policies? How normatively coherent are the EU's development and trade policies? These questions will be addressed in this dissertation, because as one of the major players in development and in trade,

the EU has the potential to not only reduce transaction costs and increase aid effectiveness, but also to set an example as a normative actor. This thesis examines the EU's normative coherence across development and trade policies directed at Vietnam, a lower-middle income country, which is experiencing the EU's transition to a non-aid relationship, in order to identify causes of incoherence in the process of norm implementation. This exercise is relevant not only to identify gaps in normative policy coherence in practical terms, but also to add to the literature on PCD and European Foreign Policy Analysis. Policy implementation per se lacks attention in the literature, despite its importance in the policy process. Implementation is one of the key phases of a policy cycle without which a policy would remain merely a document. Since the aim of a new policy is to make changes to existing legislation, non-implementation would be a failure of this policy. Similarly, the normative dimension of policy implementation is a crucial step towards translating the normative shift in global development rhetoric into concrete measures.

Incoherence, in turn, can lead to one policy undermining the potential outcomes of the other or negatively effecting its outcomes. A prominent example for this incident is the agriculture-development trade-off in the EU. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) provides subsidies to European farmers, which enables them to compete unfairly in developing countries' markets. Due to the presence of subsidies, prices for European produce are lower than those of local farmers, which has a negative impact on local economies and the lives of individuals. While the CAP supports European farmers at the cost of negatively impacting economies abroad, development policies aim to achieve the opposite in exactly those countries where negative consequences are most evident (Matthews, 2008). Arguably, the incoherence has been reduced due to some CAP reforms, but incoherence remains (Matthews, 2008). Normative incoherence can occur when policies are not formulated, adopted and implemented with a normative dimension in mind. According to the Treaty of Lisbon, the EU is committed to norms, such as democracy, freedom, gender equality, good governance, human rights, justice, liberty, non-discrimination, peace, rule of law, solidarity and sustainability, and additionally, is committed to promote those norms in its external relations. If those norms are promoted, i.e. implemented, in one policy arena but not in another, it is possible that the "non-normative" policy will significantly undermine the "normative" policy. In the era of norm-infused transformative development, development policies are understood as the normative policy, whereas agricultural, financial or trade policies are non-normative.

The next section of this introduction presents three key questions that contextualize NPCD and the EU's position in the development arena: What is development? Development for whom? How can normative development be implemented? When the term development is utilized in this dissertation, it refers to EU growth-centered definitions, which shape donor-recipient relations. Acknowledging the substantial criticism voiced over this approach and efforts to promote alternatives to this kind of development (see following sub-sections), this Eurocentric terminology is utilized here, because the study assesses the normative coherence of EU development based on the EU's declared commitment to its own proclaimed norms. This commitment takes place within the European approach and, therefore, adopting this perspective is considered the most suitable for the purpose of this dissertation.

This is followed by a brief introduction to the critical perspectives of development, such as post-developmentalism, and to the development-trade nexus. Finally, my motivation for this study in terms of academic, political and personal relevance and the structure of the dissertation are presented.

## i. Key Questions of Development

### a) What is development?

NPCD is strongly rooted in the normative understanding of development, but historically the approach to development has not always been normative. The concept of development has changed and in order to respond to "What is development?", it is helpful to have a look at the historical evolution of the understanding of development. This section briefly outlines the historical evolution of the Western perception of development and the gradual inclusion of values/norms as well as the occurrence of policy coherence for development, because development has not always been seen as an individual's entitlement to social, economic and environmental progress as it is today (Fukuda-Parr, 2014; Sen, 1999).

For this research, three major phases of Western development approaches are worthwhile distinguishing. The first phase can be called the "technical development phase", also called Keynesian Consensus phase (Nederveen Pieterse, 2010), which lasted from the end of the Second World War until the 1980s. The second phase can be called the "transitional development phase", or Washington Consensus phase (Nederveen Pieterse, 2010), which lasted from the 1980s until 2000. Despite the prominence of the Washington Consensus, the 1980s and 1990s are a transition phase between the technical and "normative development

phase" starting in the 2000s, because of the publication of the Brundtland report in 1987, which introduced sustainable development for the first time and voiced a rhetorical shift in the development paradigm, and the organization of international sustainable development summits such as the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit, the first World Water Forum in Marrakesh in 1997, etc. Sustainable development has been implemented effectively since the emergence of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, which marks the start of the "normative development phase" providing the discursive frame for this dissertation.

**Technical Development Phase**

The 1950s were shaped by the reconstruction of Europe and decolonization in Asia and Africa. While the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (later World Bank) supported the rebuilding of Europe after the Second World War, decolonization movements fought for independence from the European colonizers. Under the auspices of modernization, economic growth and nation-building were the underlying rationales of development to be brought to the newly independent states (Nederveen Pieterse, 2010). Modernization theories claimed the modern industrial society to be a benchmark for development and, consequently, only an industrial society was considered a developed society. During this time, democratic values were introduced for the first time as a norm for development to ensure for the former colonies to evolve into sovereign democratic states.

During the 1960s, the focus shifted to a vision of modernization with mass consumption as the final goal of development. A prominent interpretation are the five stages of economic growth (Rostow, 1960) that lead to a modern society of mass consumption, which claims that all societies need to pass through five subsequent stages of development to reach the final stage of mass consumption which is deemed the desired outcome. The first stage is that of "traditional societies" in which the economy is based on agriculture, power is in the hands of landowners and enlightenment has not taken place yet. This is followed by the "preconditions for take-off" stage in which industrial production begins mainly on the coastlines, as, for example, in Great Britain before the Industrial Revolution. The third stage is the "take-off" stage where economic growth is supported by appropriate infrastructure, technology and high employment rates. After this stage, the "drive towards maturity" is the next phase a country passes through. During this time, technological advancement spreads throughout the country and the country develops the skills to be self-sufficient and economic growth continues. The final stage is the one of "high mass consumption". The

economy shifts from industrial manufacturing to the services industry with the majority of jobs in urbanized areas, offices as the main space for employment, and people as consumers. Only those societies that have reached the final stage can be considered modern or developed.

From a geographical point of view, modernization was centered in Europe and decreased with distance from Europe. Traditional societies outside of Europe would take a long time to develop, i.e. to pass through the stages of economic growth, because innovations and new technology would not reach those places easily. This assumption of the West being an example of development to be used universally has been the underlying rationale for development policies for many decades. During that time, the World Bank shifted its focus from reconstructed Europe to development of the poorest countries and to eradicating poverty (World Bank, 2018).

A critical school of thinkers emerged in response to this Western development paradigm questioning the West's ambitions to modernize "Third World" countries arguing that developing countries would remain dependent on Western economies. Despite intellectual disagreements among dependency theory scholars, a common viewpoint contended the desirability of economic growth and capital accumulation in developing countries, however not in the form of second-rate economies functioning in the shadow of Western nations (Smith, 1979).

During the 1970s, the ongoing process of decolonization of former European colonies entailed the creation of the African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) group of countries under the Lomé I convention signed in 1975, and the associated aid for trade agenda (EEC, 1976). The ACP group was formed as a group of states to receive aid targeted at economic and social development in the ACP countries, whilst gaining open access to the European market. While the EU addressed structural changes to foster economic growth in the ACP countries, the World Bank applied a "basic-needs" approach that shifted the focus away from the trickle-down effect that was assumed earlier. The trickle-down logic assumed that economic gains in the upper classes would at some point seep into lower classes. In contrast to that, the World Bank provided loans to support projects aimed directly at the people in need to enable their participation in the economic system (Peet & Hartwick, 2009). As a consequence of this lending mechanism for economic growth and integration, many developing countries accumulated high debts during this phase. Even though the World Bank adopted a people-centered approach, economic development remained the primary objective of development and, again, a critical movement

occurred questioning mainstream development efforts and calling for alternative development. Alternative development thinking brought social development and community development to the forefront. Contrary to dependency arguments, which do not question economic development per se, alternative development is the umbrella term for alternative models of development such as anti-capitalism, feminism or ecological thinking highlighting the centrality of people and bottom-up initiatives (Nederveen Pieterse, 2010).

**Transitional Development Phase**

With the onset of the 1980s, a new paradigm was introduced in the development rhetoric leading to the transition into the normative development phase. The rhetoric in development circled around gender equality, individual freedoms, and democratic norms as a paradigm shift occurred with the UNDP's approach of human development, which stood in stark contrast with the World Bank's neo-liberal aspirations of development coupled with economic growth and market liberalization (Nederveen Pieterse, 2010). The UNDP promoted development as enlarging people's choices and creating an environment in which people can pursue those choices, and in doing so going beyond income and growth aggregates as the determining indicators for development. Following this rhetoric, the first Human Development Report including the Human Development Index as a measure for human development was published by the UNDP in 1990 (UNDP, 1990).

Another normative effort by the United Nations was the Brundtland Report published by the UN body World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987. This report emphasized the necessity to connect environmental sustainability and development: "Development cannot subsist upon a deteriorating environmental resource base; the environment cannot be protected when growth leaves out of account the costs of environmental destruction. These problems cannot be treated separately by fragmented institutions and policies. They are linked in a complex system of cause and effect" (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

In contrast to these normative ambitions, the World Bank turned to neo-liberal policies counteracting low economic growth presumed to result from high protectionism of the markets and inefficient administrative systems. Thus, previous Keynesian traditions of state-led development were questioned, and market-led development became the norm, which were institutionalized in the "Washington Consensus" in 1989. The Washington Consensus conferred a set of policy instruments and conditions based on market-led growth, which were

utilized by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in their relations with developing countries. Labor market reforms along with wage reduction were expected from the borrowers to meet the neo-liberalist conditions. Another criterion was the reduction of government spending, which resulted in governments cutting down social expenses. By the end of the 1990s it became clear, however, that the Washington Consensus reforms had not met the expectations of enhancing growth and that countries which had maintained a certain level of protection actually managed to grow (Peet & Hartwick, 2009).

The 1980s and 1990s were a phase of conflict between rhetorical normative debates in development and discussions around future-oriented human development based on capacitation on the one hand, and neo-liberal development practices on the other hand. In addition to the debates around Western mainstream development practices, proponents of alternative development and post-development continued criticizing the pursuit of the Western dominance over development which arguably leads to homogenization, economic prioritization and environmental destruction (Nederveen Pieterse, 2010). While alternative development criticized the operational aspects of development, post-development rejected the development approach as a whole.

**Normative Development Phase**

Efforts towards normative development practices remained technical until the United Nations took on the role as a leader in the global development arena. In 2000, the United Nations member states jointly issued a declaration to combat extreme poverty until 2015. The so-called Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) aimed at collectively eradicating poverty around the world with the particular focus on the most vulnerable by introducing seven development goals to be achieved by 2015: (1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, (2) achieve universal primary education, (3) promote gender equality and empower women, (4) reduce child mortality, (5) improve maternal health, (6) combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases, (7) ensure environmental sustainability, (8) global partnership for development (United Nations, n.d.). This vision was a revolutionary approach to development as it was the first political commitment by all UN member states to jointly combat poverty and poverty related issues such as health concerns, human rights and environmental sustainability. With this set of seven MDGs, the rhetorical debates around sustainable development and future oriented development aimed at improving individual's lives was finally put into practice 13 years after the Brundtland report on sustainability. With the UN becoming a major development platform, the conditions

for development aid changed. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the UN's body in charge of advocating for the implementation of the Millennium Agenda does not operate as a funding body by providing loans, as the World Bank, but relies on advocacy, reporting and sharing best practices to achieve poverty eradication (Peet & Hartwick, 2009). Policy implementation, however, remains at the nation state level.

While the UN advocated for inclusive development, several developed nation states deliberated about conditions for debt relief for developing countries at the G8 (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, United Kingdom and the United States) summit in 2005. "[T]he G8 version of structural adjustment disguises an imperialism of expertise in the wondrous garb of world humanity's most generous impulse, the elimination of global poverty" (Peet & Hartwick, 2009, p.98). In other words, the G8 countries set the economic and financial rules for the developing states to earn their debt relief. Notwithstanding the UN's turn away from the strictly economic dimension of development towards a human rights approach, the biggest donor countries persisted on the ideals of privatization and economic growth. Globally, this period can be recognized as a "normative development phase", but as norm implementation remains a challenge, normative research such as the one presented in this dissertation is indispensable.

In conjunction with these contradictions between the UN approach and the G8 approach, the EU evolved into a leading development actor in the global arena and with that revived the academic discussion around the EU being a normative power in international relations (Forsberg, 2011; Manners, 2002; Scheipers & Sicurelli, 2007). Proponents of the normative power Europe concept argue that due to the EU's historical development based on shared values such as democracy and peace, the EU has evolved into a new form of political system and utilizes its success to shape what is "normal" in international affairs (Manners, 2002). The ability to shape what is considered normal defines normative power Europe. This ability is also relevant in international development as the EU increased its development budget and simultaneously gained greater recognition as a legitimate international actor.

By 2015, the final year of the MDGs, a new set of global development goals was introduced to keep up the momentum of relative success in terms of extreme poverty eradication, primary school enrollment and child mortality reduction; but challenges remain in the areas of gender equality, wealth inequality and environmental protection (United Nations, 2015a). Despite these mixed results, a new set of highly ambitions goals have been set for the period 2016 to

2030. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) currently provide the framework for international development aiming to improve individuals' lives through partnership. With the SDGs, the rhetoric in international relations has started to shift away from the donor-recipient terminology to a language of mutual responsibility. The SDGs have a strong focus on transformative development, for which the UN declared 17 goals in order to achieve lasting well-being for individuals and societies in developing countries: 1) No poverty, 2) zero hunger, 3) good health and well-being, 4) quality education, 5) gender equality, 6) clean water and sanitation, 7) affordable and clean energy, 8) decent work and economic growth, 9) industry, innovation and infrastructure, 10) reduced inequalities, 11) sustainable cities and communities, 12) responsible consumption and production, 13) climate action, 14) life below water, 15) life on land, 16) peace, justice and strong institutions, 17) partnerships for the goals (United Nations, 2015b). Through this approach, the developing countries have been placed at the center of development cooperation incorporating their needs and their aspirations. "Ownership" of development cooperation has become an important issue on the global development agenda, and additionally, donor countries need to ensure that their development and non-development policies do not conflict each other. In order to endorse the 2030 Agenda, non-development policies such as trade, migration or finance policies should not undermine efforts of transformative development.

To support this transformative approach, the EU institutions have adopted a new joint statement for development entitled "The New European Consensus on Development – Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future" (European Union, 2017). This new consensus highlights the EU's support for the SDGs, acknowledges the interrelation between people, the environment, economic growth, and incorporates normative aspirations: "The EU and its Member States will promote the universal values of democracy, good governance, the rule of law and human rights for all, because they are preconditions for sustainable development and stability, across the full range of partnerships and instruments in all situations and in all countries, including through development action" (European Union, 2017, p.32). The EU emphasizes an integrated approach to development upholding everyone's dignity, largely overlapping with the UN's approach in this phase of development, which arguably can be traced back to the EU's recently gained leadership in norm entrepreneurship at the global level (Murray, 2015).

**Table 1: Historical Overview of Development Theories, Norm Representation**

| Period | | Development Theory | Key Concepts | Global Development Norms | EU development |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Technical Development** (Keynesian Consensus) | 1950s - 1960s | Modernization Dependency | Growth; consumption; Capital Accumulation | Democracy; Nation-Building | Decolonization |
| | 1970s | Alternative Development | Human Flourishing | Economic Growth; Basic needs | ACP |
| **Transitional Development** (Washington Consensus) | 1980s - 1990s | Neo-liberalism | Liberalization; Privatization; Structural Reforms | Economic Growth | Transition towards norm infused development |
| | | Human development | Capacitation; Freedom of Choice | Individual Freedoms; Equality | |
| | | Post-development | Authoritarian Engineering | Anti-capitalism; Environment | |
| | | Development as Freedom | Capacitation | Good governance; Pluralism; Accountability; Rule of law | |
| **Normative Development** | 2000 – 2015 | International development | Poverty eradication; Debt relief; Sustainable Development | Human rights; Rule of law; Peace/Security; Democracy | Normative power |
| | 2016 – 2030 | | Sustainable Development | Partnership; Mutual responsibility | Dignity; Partnership; Integrated development |

Source: author's compilation based on aggregation from Nederveen Pieterse, 2010; Peet & Hartwick, 2009

Table 1 illustrates the historical evolution of the global development agenda and the related normative discussion as described above. This overview shows how the understanding of development and the main actors in development have changed from technical development driven by the World Bank and European states that had to face decolonization to normative development driven by the United Nations and the European Union. Along with the historical paradigm shift of development, the addressees of development have changed with states as the

main target up until the 2000s and individuals being the main targets since the introduction of the Millennium Development Goals.

It is important to note that "development" is a contested paradigm, as indicated above, especially because many observers contend that global strategies do not sufficiently or effectively integrate ethical or normative considerations. Critical positions towards the overriding development discourses presented here which challenge these major development paradigms, are described in section ii below.

### b) Development for whom?

The above discussion about development reflects deeper considerations about more fundamental questions: Development of whom? Development by whom? Development for whom? These are relevant questions, because the dynamic between donor and recipient responds to the discourse about who or what needs to be developed, under what conditions, and who determines those parameters. Challenging the neo-liberal approach to development, Peet & Hartwick (2009) rightly ask: "Whose interest does it serve? Who are these free individuals, and what does freedom mean in this ideological system?" While the modalities changed from state intervention to market liberalization, the prime objective in the 1950s to 1980s remained economic growth, which emphasizes the importance of the preceding questions.

Since the 1980s, alternative approaches to development have gained prominence and it has become more intricate to draw a line between mainstream development and proposed alternatives as they have partially merged over time. Human development and development as freedom are two approaches to development that strongly emphasize the centrality of the individual human being arguing for individuals' rights to be offered equal choices to determine their own lives and shape them according to their wishes. Human development can be seen as the predecessor to development as freedom. Human development experienced a surge in popularity in the 1980s and 1990s with the UN's new approach to people-centered development. Both, the UN and the World Bank put their emphasis on individuals as the main recipients of development efforts.

In the late 1990s, Development as Freedom was coined by Amartya Sen (1999), the Nobel laureate in Economics. Interestingly, the development as freedom approach diverted from the strictly economic understanding of development to include a person's political and social capabilities in addition to their economic standing. Development, in that sense, aims to improve

a person's life by changing their political or cultural environment to create better chances for individuals to pursue the life they would like to pursue. Poverty, in the development as freedom understanding, does not only entail the lack of financial means but also the subsequent deprivation of opportunities that financially privileged people do enjoy. Poverty deprives people of nutritious food, adequate housing, health services and education, and assumedly as a result, they do not lead the life they would have chosen under different conditions. Poverty is not only seen as an average measure of national wealth or economic standing, but as a factor to limit someone's life choices.

"Unfreedom" (Sen, 1999, pp.15) is what limits persons from their free choices, and which takes shape in form of poverty, famines, political conflict, discrimination, etc. This conceptualization applies to poorer as well as to richer societies, in which the relatively wealthier have better access to health or education services and simultaneously more influence on political decisions through lobby groups or as shareholders in the national industry. Culture is also understood as a factor that might limit a person's capacity to choose their life paths freely. Only a few decades ago, in Western Europe, women were considered housewives whose job it was to raise children, keep the household in order and take care of the elderly. The cultural mindset at the time considered the man to be the only financial provider for the family. Nowadays, despite prevailing inequalities, opportunities for men and women have changed in many European countries where it has become acceptable that women and men share family and work tasks. Whether these choices are economically the most efficient or the most profitable for the national economy is a different matter and of minor concern in the development as freedom approach. Limiting capacities due to cultural behavior might be an easier solution, because people's lives are predetermined and fit into a nation's growth strategy, however, from an individualistic perspective, it might not be the person's preferred choice. Taking the example of women in the labor market, a different picture can be seen in Vietnam, for example. Women in Vietnam generally work and need to take care of the family. Both, men and women, have their daily job, but while men often go out with their colleagues after work, women need to take care of the household and the children. Often, the man is in charge of the family finances, which means that the woman earns her salary, but the man decides what is being done with that income. In Eastern Europe, it was considered normal that men and women work under the former Communist regime but having equal work opportunities does not represent the entire picture. Rather, culture determines the roles of men and women beyond earning a salary, such as responsibilities in the household or decisions about spending. These issues are mostly not

represented in the economic figures, which in turn highlights the importance of the normative development approach.

Democracy plays a significant role in development as freedom, because it contributes to a pluralist representation of people. Democracy allows for freedom of expression, multiple parties and competing opinions, which encourages decision-takers to find suitable compromises. In addition, democracy is usually closely linked with respect for human rights, separation of power between the governing institutions, independent courts ensuring fair trials, and preventing the concentration of power by a ruling minority. Authoritarian regimes, in contrast, tend to create systems in which a selected group benefits from the system but in which the majority of people are not entitled to make their own choices or are not capable to make those choices because of unfreedoms created by the regime. Democracy alone, however, does not create development as freedom. It is a political system that fosters plurality, but social, cultural, economic or environmental factors still influence peoples' lives and, hence, need to be considered. Each aspect, e.g. poverty, culture or democracy, contributes to the approach of development as freedom, but addressed separately they do not suffice to create freedom. Unfreedom has many forms and needs to be addressed in all those forms. Normative considerations are fundamental for this shift toward person-centered development, which is addressed in the following sub-section.

As mentioned in the historical overview, in the 1980s and 1990s norm implementation remained problematic. The development paradigm has started to shift and along with it the main recipients of development. Normative aspirations have become more visible in mainstream international development over the last decades in response to alternative approaches such as human development, but despite these adjustments implementing normative development effectively remained – and still remains – a major challenge. Ironically, while the global development discourse becomes more idealistic regarding development goals, such as reducing inequalities, the standard measurement for development seems to remain based solely on economic terms. The World Bank uses measures of gross national income (GNI) to determine whether a country falls within the low-income, middle-income or high-income category. These categories are a representation of the countries average wealth but fail to represent its distribution among the citizens. Nonetheless, these categories are used by donors to justify their aid allocation. As a consequence of Vietnam having been classified as a middle-income country, donors have started to phase out their aid and often relocate to

neighboring Laos. This is not to say that Laos does not deserve the support, rather to point out that – despite large income gaps and political restraints, i.e. challenges to development – the mere aggregation of macro-economic indicators suffices for a donor to leave a country. In terms of development as freedom – or providing individuals with their own capacity to determine their livelihood – the GNI standard to determine aid allocation is quite counterproductive. Again, this statement needs to be put into perspective as the donors anticipate a phase-out period and redirect their relations with Vietnam, but they also cut major financial channels that could otherwise have been utilized to encourage individual capacity development.

As the present and the previous sub-sections have shown, the political commitment to normative development and to people-centered development still meets challenges of implementation. A new tool to support the norm-based development agenda is normative policy coherence for development.

### c) How to implement normative development?

The notion "normative development" captures different approaches to development such as human development, development as freedom, sustainable development or transformative development. Normative policy coherence for development (NPCD) is a tool that can be utilized in either approach. NPCD evolved from the initial concept of policy coherence for development (PCD), which was introduced by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1991 to call for greater aid effectiveness (Forster & Stokke, 1999; Siitonen, 2016). The DAC is a group of 30 developed countries that cooperate on international development. One of the initiatives to strengthen these countries' development efforts was the emphasis on policy coherence (OECD, 2006). Since then, the OECD has contributed to the advancement of PCD by publishing reports and peer reviews and, recently, by adjusting to the new development paradigm by focusing on policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD) (OECD, 2017a).

Policy coherence in the general sense is defined as the absence of contradictions. In terms of internal coherence, policy outcomes would coincide with the anticipated goals and objectives, and the tools for implementation support the achievement of these goals. Policy coherence <u>for</u> development emphasizes the primacy of development, which implies not only that development policies should be coherent in themselves, but other policies are to contribute to development.

The term horizontal coherence describes coherence between development and non-development policies. While there are different types of PCD, such as coherence between donors' and recipients' policies or between policies by various international organizations, I would like to point out the particular case of horizontal coherence as it reflects contradicting facets of one actor representing different interests depending on the policy sector. Many scholars have rightly pointed out how the European Union's agricultural policies, fisheries policies and trade policies are incoherent with its development policies (Matthews, 2008; Stocchetti, 2013). These studies, however, strongly focus on PCD as a goal to be achieved instead of a tool to support the final goal of development. In this research, I argue that the technical approach to PCD is not sufficient to achieve normative development, such as development as freedom. Development as freedom reflects on individuals and their ability to choose their life paths, it points out that issues such as education and political participation need to be addressed in concert with poverty eradication. Development as freedom incorporates a normative dimension that attributes rights to the individual and addresses the systemic burdens on individuals. Taking on the normative development approach, PCD is not merely a technical approach, but a tool to support the normative dimension of development.

For analytical purposes, in this study, PCD is viewed as a goal to be achieved, notwithstanding the importance of political will to implement PCD and subsequently strengthen development processes and limit unfreedoms. Normative PCD addresses exactly these unfreedoms, or rather, the failure to create freedom. Development as freedom is a holistic approach, which needs to go beyond mere development policies if it is meant to induce long-lasting change. Put differently, if development policies are the sole trajectory to reduce unfreedoms, ending development cooperation will end development as freedom and consequently development cooperation efforts will lose their impact giving way to economic or other strategic interests. Normative coherence as a concept claims that the development as freedom approach, i.e. the normative agenda, the factors that enhance capabilities, need to be continuously addressed in other policies as well to ensure that each person can determine their own life.

NPCD reflects the intertwined nature between norms and PCD and is understood as the implementation of norms across an actor's various policy arenas. For this research, the focus lies on EU norms and their implementation in the EU's development and trade policies. Recent studies of EU PCD have strongly focused on the institutional dimension of PCD and less on the normative dimension (Carbone, 2007; Carbone & Keijzer, 2016; Orbie, 2007;

Stocchetti, 2016). Building on these studies, this dissertation assesses the normative dimension in the EU's development and trade nexus. Of course, these normative debates are linked to the very understanding of "development" which is a contested term. This is explored in the following section.

## ii.    Critical Review of Development

When talking about policy coherence for development and the role of European norms in development (and non-development) policies, we should not forget to consider the multitude of criticism that is voiced against the Western approach of development and against undermining non-Western traditions as alternatives to the global capitalist system. PCD is inherently embedded in the Western tradition of development understood as progress, modernization and economic growth.

Historically speaking, the relationship between the so-called Global North and the Global South has been characterized by the North's domination over the South, particularly since the 15th century. Inequalities have been identified which are not only present within development relationships but some would argue that they are perpetuated by the same development cooperation system that purports to address them (see Thede, 2013). The Marxist strand of the literature on development, for example, explains the colonial phase in the evolution towards development in terms of core-periphery dichotomies, in which the periphery plays the producer role of raw materials to supply manufacturing and consumption in the core (Frank, 1967; Hoogvelt, 1997). This was arguably one of the reasons for imperialist advances, particularly in the phase between 1875 and 1914, as capitalism requires geographical expansion due to growing consumption and the consequent need for increased production.

Following the two Worlds Wars, power relationships were realigned between the colonial powers and the United States as an emerging global power. Critics (see James, 1997) argue that the mainstream development approach described above, led by organizations such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, follows this pattern, thus underlining the need for alternative visions of development. To highlight the multitude of perspectives and diverse positions towards development, such as the discourse argument, which claims that powerful actors determine problems that then can be addressed under the cloak of development, a brief overview of the main approaches and concepts is provided here.

## a) Criticisms of Development

**Early Criticism**

One of the early critics of development was Frantz Fanon (1963), who assessed the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized in the process of decolonization. "Decolonization is the meeting of two forces, opposed to each other by their very nature, which in fact owe their originality to that sort of substantification which results from and is nourished by the situation in the colonies. Their first encounter was marked by violence and their existence together—that is to say the exploitation of the native by the settler—was carried on by dint of a great array of bayonets and cannons. The settler and the native are old acquaintances. In fact, the settler is right when he speaks of knowing 'them' well. For it is the settler who has brought the native into existence and who perpetuates his existence" (Fanon, 1963, p.36). Decolonization is a process of resistance against the external powers over a territory and social unit as a response to the colonization process, which shaped the dichotomy between the submissive, poor native and the rich, dominant foreigner. Along with ridding the territory of external actors, decolonization also involved the creation of a new identity disconnected from the dichotomous classification of colonizer and colonized, which lastly resulted in the formation of new nation states. In this struggle, some "spoilt children of yesterday's colonialism and of today's national governments" (Fanon, 1963, p.48), however, used their positions for personal enrichment through trade relations with the colonizers by supplying agricultural produce serving the demand in the Europe.

Another perspective is offered by Frank (1967), who contends that underdevelopment is a necessary product of capitalism. Frank builds on the core-periphery argument by introducing the examples of Chile and Brazil as the satellite states of Spain and Portugal. This model shows a close connection between the "metropolis" and the "satellite", which in turn acts as a metropolis with its own respective satellites. As a consequence, all metropolises and satellites are connected through a web of economic, political, social and cultural ties in which the metropolis holds the monopoly over its satellites and misuses this position for its own benefits (Frank, 1967). Generally, early critics of development focused on the era of colonization and decolonization with the argument of continuous dominance of the developed states over the former colonies. Since the 1970s, the so-called second neo-colonial phase or post-imperialist phase emerged (Hoogvelt, 1997).

**Post-development**

Post-development, as part of "post" literature, such as post-modernism or post-capitalism, expresses, generally speaking, a detachment from Western thoughts and traditions (Hoogvelt, 1997). Several authors have contributed to the discussion of post-development, which encompasses a variety of facets. Some have taken a more advocacy-based approach (Esteva & Prakash, 1998; Rahnema & Bawtree, 1998; Rist, 2008), while others have followed a more academic strand (Escobar, 1995).

Post-development is characterized by the critique of development, however, it does not offer alternatives to development (Demaria & Kothari, 2017). Most prominently, Wolfgang Sachs, Arturo Escobar, Gilbert Rist, Gustavo Esteva, Majid Rahnema and Victoria Bawtree have brought forward ideas of post-development (Escobar, 1995; Esteva & Prakash, 1998; Rahnema & Bawtree, 1998; Rist, 2008; Sachs, 1992). All argue that development should not be the central theme for societies any longer, as has been the case with the development approach: "Across the world this is resulting in the resurfacing of ancient worldviews with current relevance, or new frameworks and visions that present systemic alternatives for human and planetary well-being. It is also forcing the decolonization of knowledge systems and epistemologies, breaking down many of the dualisms that Western patriarchal paradigms have engendered, such as between humans and nature" (Demaria & Kothari, 2017).

It becomes evident that post-development is related to post-capitalism, post-growth and post-patriarchy, which will be further discussed in the sub-section below entitled "Alternatives to development". Contrary, development efforts such as sustainable development and green economy are embedded in the traditional growth-based, capitalist development model, which is being criticized. The 2030 Agenda calls for a transformation of our world (United Nations, 2015b), but lacks transformative elements such as highlighting culture and ethics, overcoming the rule of private capital, adhering to the biophysical limits of the earth, or creating a new form of democratic global governance beyond nation-states (Demaria & Kothari, 2017).

**Development Defined by the Rich**

One primary strand of literature highlights the problematic of development as defined by the rich Western cultures, both as a discourse as well as in terms of implementation (Escobar, 1998; Illich, 1998; Rist, 2008; H. Weber, 2004).

The term underdevelopment, and related to this the term development, was introduced by

Truman in 1949 referring to suffering of people in underdeveloped countries, which need to be helped out of their undesired situation with the support of the United Nations (Rist, 2008). With this statement, the term development was turned from something changing into something that can be changed (Rist, 2008, p.73).

Regarding discourse, one important aspect is the awareness of relationships between the actors in the system. "To understand development as a discourse, one must look not at the elements themselves but at the system of relations established among them" (Escobar, 1998, p.87). The discourse and the relationships are interlinked and influence each other. Progress and industrialization are defined as the routes towards modernization, i.e. consumption and materialism, and as such, the Western states can function as the model for the Global South. The development discourse shapes the relationship between the richer and poorer countries by defining the richer countries as modern and civilized, while the poorer countries need to be supported in the quest for modernization (Rist, 2008).

A particular feature is the creation of "problems" to be solved by Western states. These problems are formulated by international organizations or driving powers in the global arena. "Development proceeded by creating 'abnormalities' (such as the 'illiterate', the 'underdeveloped', the 'malnourished', 'small farmers', or 'landless peasants'), which it would later treat and reform" (Escobar, 1998, p.88). This form of problematization creates an unbalanced power relationship in which the "treated" are dependent on financial support from the "prescribers" who had labeled something as a problem to begin with. Not only do international organizations and global powers define the problems that development ought to solve, but they also shape the solutions according to their political preferences. Other discourses such as communism, for example, influenced the development discourse as the anti-communist attitude spurred the advancement of individualism and private property not only in the Western societies but also as desired models for developing countries (Escobar, 1998). Consequently, modernization was linked to ethnic groups adopting the "right" set of norms, i.e. European/Western norms (Escobar, 1998) within the context of the Cold War.

Despite the prevailing position that development improves lives of people and creates a better world for everyone, "[t]he most important exclusion, however, was and continues to be, what development was supposed to be all about: people. Development was – and continues to be for the most part – a top-down, ethnocentric and technocratic approach, which treated people and cultures as abstract concepts, statistical figures to be moved up and down in the charts of

'progress'" (Escobar, 1998, p.91). Instead of focusing on people, development is measured in terms of average schooling years or average income as is the standard procedure in Western countries.

Arguably, these measures show solely one side of the coin, namely improvements of the criteria for progress, but leaves out the negative effects on the society as a whole. "Each car which Brazil puts on the road denies fifty people good transportation by bus. Each merchandized refrigerator reduces the chance of building a community freezer. […] Each dollar spent on schooling means more privileges for the few at the cost of many; at best it increases the number of those who, before dropping out, have been taught that those who stay longer have earned the right to more power, wealth and prestige. What such schooling does is to teach the schooled the superiority of the better schooled" (Illich, 1998, p.96). Thus, the Western approach to development and the global development discourse do not take into account culture, local traditions, or any form of living that falls outside the "developed" understanding of a modern life based on economic growth, individualism, and consumption.

**Development as Planned Poverty**

Closely linked to the Western definition of development and modernization is the argument of developing countries being kept dependent on the developed countries. Targeted measures such as training doctors in the United States to be sent back to their home country opens opportunities for a selected few, but does not solve major causes of disease such as unsafe drinking water (Illich, 1998). Weber (2004) argues that the use of the "third world" or developing countries provides a tool for creating and maintaining a system of global capitalism and inequality. By focusing on the World Bank, the WTO and IMF, she contends the political utility of the third world, in which international development reinforces inequality and the third world serves as a political argument to shape international organization/architecture (H. Weber, 2004). Conceptually, the Third World is closely connected to underdevelopment and the problematizations arising from this underdevelopment and its historical origins during the time of the Cold War. "The political utility of the Third World then rested with reference to the political space (and opportunities) its (ideological) appropriation enabled for strategies of governance in global politics" (H. Weber, 2004, p.192).

**Development as a Religion**

Another feature of criticism of development emphasizes the religious character development has taken on. Similar to a belief system, development cannot be argued with as such, while the

way it is practiced is debatable (Rist, 2008). Taking the example of Truman's speech, Rist shows how the wording resembles that of religious salvation with identifying problematic behavior and offering a path out of misery if people act according to a certain prescription (Rist, 2008, p.77).

These different fields of literature correctly highlight the power relationships that characterize the global development agenda. Like all international politics, development strategies reflect imbalances that exist in global affairs. These criticisms correctly note that development cooperation strategies are often incoherent by definition, because they are undermined by international asymmetries. (Adherents to these approaches rightly ask: "How can cooperation exist amongst such evident inequality?") This begs the question: what alternative notions of development can address this situation? These alternatives are presented in the following sub-section.

## b) Alternatives to Development

The SDGS are closely connected with transformative development (Koff, 2017a; Siitonen, 2016). Critics, however, claim that alternatives to development are needed to truly transform the world; an adaptation of development does not suffice due to the continuing presence of those inequalities highlighted in the previous sub-section. Any alternatives to development "should be transformative alternatives to the currently dominant processes of globalized development, including its structural roots in modernity, capitalism, state domination, [and] patriarchy […]" (Demaria & Kothari, 2017, p.2589). A range of alternatives have evolved recently, the most prominent of which are degrowth, ecofeminism and buen vivir.

These alternatives have developed in concert with the different varieties of development, which express developmental pluralism but do have their roots in modernity, such as sustainable, human, local, or endogenous development (Gudynas, 2016). The varieties of development have emerged with a strong criticism of the mainstream but adapted to the growth-centered vision over time. Along the varieties of development, disputes between these varieties take shape in form of instrumental discussions, the suitability of a given variety of development, and arguments for alternatives to development (Gudynas, 2016).

## Degrowth

One prominent example is the concept of post-growth or degrowth, which promotes the decentralization of growth from economic and social practices (Demaria & Kothari, 2017).

This is rooted in the growing awareness of planetary boundaries and the subsequent limits to growth, which goes contrary to the traditional economics rationale (Thomson, 2011). Both degrowth and buen vivir, which is laid out below, reject growth as the main objective of development, bringing the focus to the quality of life rather than the quantity of possessions (Gudynas, 2011; Thomson, 2011). Escobar (2015) assesses the relationship between degrowth and post-development coming to the conclusion that there are a range of similarities, such as the desire for radical social transformation, critical stance towards growth as the central point for society, doubts about the capitalist and liberal economy to further degrowth or post-development, environmental justice and the support for local autonomy, but also a few major differences between the two approaches. One difference is the tradition of thought: degrowth scholars have their roots in bio-economics, whereas post-colonialism takes a prominent position for post-developmentalists. Another difference is in the practice, which is more scholarly driven for degrowth and more activist driven for post-development (Escobar, 2015).

**Ecofeminism**

The ecofeminist critique argues that ecological crisis is inevitable under the Eurocentric patriarchal culture which aims at dominating nature and dominating women (Salleh, 2017). Ecofeminist scholars argue for the unique agency of women, which is in contrast to mainstream development (Salleh, 2017). Another concern is the embeddedness of the green movement in the existing patriarchic capitalist structure and the reliance on science in the environmentalist movement. These concerns neither reflect the role of women appropriately, nor do they object to the destruction of livelihood sufficiently (Salleh, 2017). Regarding the former, ecofeminism resembles post-patriarchy. Post-patriarchy is understood as "challenging the primacy of masculinist approaches to political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of property" (Demaria & Kothari, 2017, p.2598). However, ecofeminism adds an ecological dimension, emphasizes nonviolence, and suggests a move away from Eurocentrism. "To ecofeminists, all ecologism appears light-green, partial and particularistic" (Salleh, 2017, p.35). While critics argue that feminism is a matter of internal affairs bound to the circumstances of the political system, ecofeminists argue for the global dimension of both ecological concerns and women's exploitation as issues crossing over national borders.

**Buen Vivir**

Much literature has emerged on buen vivir as a critical response to development and an alternative way of understanding social, cultural and environmental relations, mainly in Latin

American contexts (Lalander, 2016; Ranta, 2016). Buen vivir, or vivir bien, can be understood as "living well", focusing on good life, and originated from social movements in Latin America (Gudynas, 2011). In Bolivia and Ecuador, these terms have meanwhile also be adopted at the governmental level (Gudynas, 2011; Ranta, 2016, 2018). In the struggle of decolonization, indigenous groups have shaped their own form of self-governance, which is outside the realm of Western nation state conceptions. These forms of "vivir bien", commonly called buen vivir, offer an alternative to the mainstream development models by moving beyond neo-liberal globalization (Gudynas, 2011; Ranta, 2018). "They are a reaction against the conventional domination of utilitarian values, particularly expressed in the reductionism of life to economic values and the subsequent commoditization of almost everything" (Gudynas, 2011, p.445).

While there is a wide conceptional range within the buen vivir approach, two main aspects are shared among the buen vivir proponents: first, it is an open criticism to Western development, and second, it offers an alternative to Eurocentric capitalism as its roots are in indigenous traditions (Gudynas, 2011). As mentioned above, the charts and statistical figures take into account exclusively the Western approach to development, which is measured in terms of consumption patterns, and disregards any other features that are valuable for non-Western societies. Proponents of the Buen Vivir movement highlight the importance of non-material aspects, but instead emphasis the quality of life within a community and in harmony with nature (Gudynas, 2011). Cohabitation is indeed one of the major themes within the idea of buen vivir.

Similar to post-development, buen vivir "represent[s] a radical deconstruction of the cultural base of development, its legitimating discourse, its application and institutional framework" (Gudynas, 2011, p.422). This is largely due to its indigenous origin, in which concepts like progress and development were not present (Gudynas, 2011). Two well-known approaches to buen vivir are the Ecuadorian *sumak kawsay* and the Bolivian *suma qamaña* (Lalander, 2016; Ranta, 2018; Thomson, 2011).

## c) Development Critique and NPCD

It is important to understand that the European version of development is not a universal truth. Even though the major development actors largely align their efforts and agree on the discourse, and this dissertation addresses the Western approach to development, there are critical and alternative movements to growth-based development as the previous discussion shows.

Normative policy coherence for development, though, engages with the traditional approach to development due to at least two considerations. First, the "D" refers to the EU development policies, which are an adaptation of the traditional Western model. The traditional Western model of development is, as presented earlier, an approach focused on growth in a capitalist globalized world. Rather than propose alternatives to this model, this dissertation engages it as the dominant paradigm in global development debates and discusses the need to infuse this paradigm with ethical foundations based on core liberal democratic norms. Second, the "N" refers specifically to European norms, which largely disregard any other forms of social organization, even though a clear definition of European norms is lacking. The EU does refer to European norms in its treaties but does not provide an explanation of what they constitute in particular. For example, equality is promoted by the EU in terms of equal job opportunities, equal access to education, health care, but all within the Western understanding of employment, education and health care. In terms of employment, a nine-to-five position under a legal work contract is just one example for standardized employment in Europe. Similarly, children are expected to attend public or publicly recognized private schools for a minimum amount of years to attain a certificate that shows that these children have passed through the system. Alternative schooling or alternative medicines are disregarded. Thus, while equality can generally be seen as a positive attribute in terms of hitherto marginalized groups, the way in which it is promoted reflects the growth-focused approach to development and, therefore, limits the space in which non-capitalist societies can strive. For this reason, normative values are more effectively expressed and implemented with the dominant system of development cooperation. Section one above has already shown how this system has evolved from a technocratic one to a system based on transformative change. Norms, such as those expressed in these alternative development narratives, can be implemented by the system through the mechanism of normative coherence for development.

On a positive note, development efforts have made lives longer, brought more clean water to people, and decreased the mortality at birth rate (United Nations, 2015a). On the other hand, this progress report ignores the potential causes that led to this situation in the first place. Furthermore, development can be utilized as a tool for rich countries to exercise power over poorer countries. If poor countries want to be part of the globalization process, part of the game of international competition, financial speculation and ever-growing economies, they need to adhere to the rules of the rich. Given that the rules are made by the rich, the probability of poor countries getting out of this ambiguous situation is low.

There are also cases that fall into a grey area between development as something positive or something negative. In cases where a woman was able to leave the abusive household because she got the opportunity to be employed and, therefore, independent from her husband, it is a form of victory over an unfortunate situation. On the other hand, one must ask what economic opportunities await liberated women when they exit gendered hierarchical family and social situations. Current global markets do not necessarily provide opportunities to vulnerable populations who cannot be considered economically competitive due to blocked access to higher education or other resources. Another example is the urbanization caused by the constant need for higher education and better employment opportunities that are primarily provided in cities or other conglomerations. On the one hand, the majority of people have an income and are able to afford a living, on the other hand, cities are overcrowded, housing prices skyrocket and competition for jobs is high enough for employers to make employment conditions (salary, benefits, allowances, holidays…) unfavorable for the employee.

For these reasons, this dissertation addresses normative coherence for development. It not only contends that core norms must be infused into and implemented by development cooperation strategies, but it also examines the ways in which non-development policy arenas undermine these norms. Specifically, the dissertation investigates normative coherence for development in terms of the transition between development and trade. This is the focus of the following section.

## iii.    The Development-Trade Nexus

Development and trade are interconnected policy areas based on the assumption that trade fosters economic growth and economic growth leads to better living conditions. This relationship is recognized both in the development and in the trade sphere: while the aid for trade  agenda comprises initiatives to support trade, which are brought forward by the development actors, trade actors realize that developing states require a slower transition into incorporating the liberal rules and allow for flexibility in implementing the agreements.

One of the proclaimed principles of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the global leader in trade rules, is encouraging development and economic reform. For developing countries, this means that they get more flexibility in implementing WTO agreements. During the last completed round of negotiations, the Uruguay round which lasted from 1986 until 1994, the WTO was formally established, and 123 nation states joined the negotiations. In 2001, the

Doha Round was launched, which is also called the Doha Development Round, because it aims to further support trading opportunities for developing countries (WTO, 2018d). Thus, the topic of development seems to play a role in the trade arena as well, but developing countries are nevertheless expected to comply to the agreements based on flexible arrangements: "But the agreements did give them transition periods to adjust to the more unfamiliar and, perhaps, difficult WTO provisions — particularly so for the poorest, "least-developed" countries" (WTO, 2018c). This approach to development put economic growth and free trade at the center but does not incorporate other factors of development such as the normative side. The WTO also promotes aid for trade and recognizes the role of trade in the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda (as summarized in the SDGs). Since 2007, joint reports on aid for trade have been published by the WTO and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The latest joint report entitled "Promoting Trade, Inclusiveness and Connectivity for Sustainable Development" highlights how trade connectivity, i.e. a country's access to the global trade market, is beneficial for development and the current sustainable development agenda (WTO/OECD, 2017). Interestingly, the OECD, which has brought policy coherence for development onto the development agenda and supports the transformative development approach of the UN 2030 Agenda, supports the strongly trade-based approach to development, which is pursued by the WTO. These evolutions give the impression that the connection between development and trade is recognized but unbalanced towards trade interests.

Similar to the development and trade "games" taking place in international relations, academic discussions with a normative dimension in the analysis of EU development policies remains limited (Koff, 2017b; Koff & Maganda, 2016). Several studies of the development-trade nexus address the EU's internal conflicts between the different EU institutions (Büntrup, 2007; Carbone, 2007; Stocchetti, 2013, 2016). Finding the appropriate balance between protectionism and liberalization is a frequent issue that is being addressed in the WTO rounds on trade and development. In particular, developed countries still protect their own markets in the sectors of agriculture, textiles or clothing, which are crucial sectors for developing countries. Despite the liberalization rhetoric, protective measures are kept and as a result the trading system disadvantages developing countries (Stocchetti, 2016). This is also the case for the EU, which is a strong supporter of trade liberalization, but noticeably hesitant in opening up its agricultural market. This division reflects internal divides within the European Commission: DG Trade tends to support trade liberalization whereas DG Agriculture favors

protectionism. For example, agricultural products such as rice, bananas and sugar are produced within the EU market (taken into account some member states' overseas territories) and consequently opening up the market to international imports would harm the producers on the EU market (Carbone, 2007; Orbie, 2007). Not opening up the market, on the other hand, disadvantages developing countries and as a result slows down their economic development. A trade-off occurs between the EU's internal and external interests.

## iv.    Motivation for this Study and Aspired Impacts

The motivation for this study has various roots. First, the author's experience with development cooperation in Vietnam prior to this study led to the current research focus. The Master's thesis explored normative policy coherence for development within the EU's development sector. Fieldwork in Vietnam in winter 2013-2014 revealed, however, that development policy reflects just one of the pillars the EU-VN relationship is based on. Consequently, normative coherence with the sole focus on development does not reflect the EU's more complex relationship with Vietnam. The Master's thesis on normative coherence for development in the development sector offered an inspiring starting point and led to the expansion of NPCD research and to the inclusion of trade policy into the study.

My goal as an academic is primarily to contribute to the existing literature on PCD. While other strands of literature will be touched upon as described in the literature review in chapter one, this research foremost adds to existing normative PCD debates (Koff, 2017a, 2017b; Koff & Maganda, 2016) by applying this normative layer to policy implementation practices. Hitherto, discussions around the type of, and the classification of, PCD mostly occurred along structural lines, i.e. political decision-making structures (Carbone, 2008; Forster & Stokke, 1999; Hoebink, 1999b; Picciotto, 2005). While the exact terminologies vary, three main types of PCD can be distinguished. Internal coherence is understood as coherence within the EU's development policies. Horizontal coherence refers to an actor's coherence between different policy sectors, such as coherence between the EUs development and trade policies or the EU's development and agricultural policies (Carbone, 2008; Carbone & Keijzer, 2016; Hoebink, 1999b). Resulting from the EU's complex governance structure, competences for policy-making are distributed across the EU institutions and the EU member states. This can lead to vertical policy incoherence between MS policies and EU policies for development. Based on this structural division, normative policy coherence for development adds another layer to the conceptualization. It draws on the understanding of PCD as a means to achieve an

overarching goal, i.e. as a process, not an outcome, and, therefore, the different typologies of PCD offer different lenses through which to analyze the implementation of PCD. The normative dimension adds the understanding of the SDGs as normative goals calling for gender equality, sustainability, responsibility and peace. From this point of view, the current sustainable development agenda of the United Nations provides the framework for action for all countries across all policy sectors. All UN members have committed to achieving the extensive and highly ambitious SDGs by 2030, for which PCD can be used as a tool. Normative PCD reflects a mind-set and a political willingness towards the SDGs, i.e. an actor's political commitment and corresponding actions demonstrate its factual commitment to norms within the development sector, across policy sectors, and across levels of governance. While the SDGs can be understood as norms themselves, and thus, normative PCD could be understood as simply reflecting commitment to the SDGs, this is not the case here. The SDGs provide the framework in which actors set their own norms that can both, support or undermine the SDGs.

With regard to the EU in particular, normative policy coherence for development comprises a second normative aspect: the values and principles of the EU. Taking the EU as an example, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, human rights, peace, liberty and solidarity, are some of the EU guiding principles as set out in the Lisbon Treaty. As such, these principles shape, to varying degrees, EU policies from political rhetoric to actual policy implementation. Adhering to those principles across several or all levels of PCD would represent normative policy coherence for development. The SDGs, in contrast, are a set of goals to be achieved that shape the global arena in which the EU acts.

As the reader might have noticed by now, this dissertation is a strongly normative study. European norm promotion is a very contentious topic among development researchers, practitioners, activists, and from my perspective criticism is indeed necessary given Europe's colonial legacy with many of its partner countries. However, I would like to point out that this study focuses on normative policy coherence for development rather than on criticism towards EU norm promotion or criticism towards EU development cooperation per se. Stepping away from the academic discussion for the moment, my personal aspiration for this dissertation is to identify gaps in the policy cycle (problem definition / decision taking / implementation / evaluation) in order to identify and, therefore, address various incoherences. In addition to the EU's self-proclaimed commitment to norms, I consider norms as the benchmark to achieve fair, just and inclusive development. It is beyond my position to propose appropriate measures

to fill those gaps, but raising awareness is a first starting point without which some gaps might not be noticed. To phrase it in policy cycle terms, I would like to contribute to the problem definition. In the European Commission, policies are evaluated based on the impact on other policies at the policy formulation stage. While this is a useful technique to address anticipated impairments but stop before the implementation stage and, therefore, does not follow up on how potentially coherence policies are implemented in practice. Furthermore, this procedure only addresses PCD as a technical measure that needs to be adhered to and not as a tool to further the EU's normative background.

From a political point of view, this study feeds into the ongoing activities in the development and trade framework. Particularly, aid for trade is used as a tool to link those two arenas. While promoted by the WTO, the implementation remains with the nation states and funding comes from the Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget. Thus, the aid for trade efforts are largely a development undertaking, but aid for trade efforts only reflect a small percentage of the entire ODA budget. Furthermore, development initiatives in the trade sector are reduced to flexibility and preferential tariffs. As a result, both arenas are mostly disconnected despite the recognition that trade and development policies can be mutually reinforcing. Thus, this study aims to bring the two policy arenas closer together to enhance the positive effects on the developing countries.

## v.    Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is structured along two major parts, the technical part (i.e. theory, methods, and concepts) and the empirical part (i.e. data analysis and evaluation), followed by the final conclusions.

The technical part (chapters one, two and three) provide the theoretical, methodological and conceptual framework for this study. In chapter one, "Research Questions and Literature Review", the guiding research questions are presented against a brief elaboration of existing literature. The examination of *Are the EU's development and trade policies coherent from a normative perspective?* and *Why might the EU's development and trade policies be incoherent regarding the implementation of its core norms?* throughout this dissertation adds to existing literature on PCD, EU foreign policy analysis and regionalism.

The second chapter deals with methodological concerns regarding case studies as a research design, data collection and data analysis. The case study addresses coherence between EU

policies using the example of EU-Vietnam relations. For this purpose, semi-structured interviews with EU officials have been conducted in 2015 and 2016 in Brussels, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. These interviews, together with selected policy documents (for an exhaustive list see appendix 1 & 3), form the data set, which was analyzed using qualitative coding methods as described more extensively in chapter two.

In chapter three, normative policy coherence is discussed giving its origin as a concept during the 1990s. The current conceptualization for this research evolved from the initially vague term to horizontal coherence, i.e. coherence between aid and non-aid policies, with regard to the implementation of norms.

This is followed by the empirical part (chapters four, five and six), which addresses four stages of policy implementation identified by the author: policy guidelines, policy formulation, policy implementation I and policy implementation II. This empirical part examines the relationship between the European Union and Vietnam drawing on policy documents and interviews as described above and in more detail in chapter two.

Chapter four addresses the legislative dimension of normative policy coherence, which corresponds to the policy guidelines and policy formulation stages of policy implementation. This dimension is the political level, i.e. the level of formal commitments. Legislation, such as the EU Treaties and the Consensus on Development, lay the down the written commitment to norms and development, which are one indicator to identify normative policy coherence for development. Through the analysis of policy documents, this chapter shows that the written commitment is in EU global as well as EU-Vietnam specific documents is strong, but partly incoherent. Sustainable development, for example, is represented across all four policy implementation stages, whereas liberty is not mentioned at either stage (for a more detailed overview see table 12 in chapter four).

Chapter five adds to the legislative analysis by addressing the EU's policy implementation stages I and II. The examination of normative policy coherence for development in the form of policy networks among EU officials sheds light on policy practices. Policy networks are a platform for communication and consequently have the potential to influence coherence through sharing or withholding information. This chapter shows that the role of policy networks in NPCD is dependent on the type and goal of the network. Sectoral networks, such as the development network and the trade network, are largely disconnected from each other,

which in turn undermines coherence between the sectors. In contrast to the legislative dimension, this practice-oriented dimension is not strongly infused by EU norms.

Chapter six deals with the EU's interests in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), because these interests are linked to its interests in Vietnam and, therefore, shape EU-Vietnam policies. The analysis shows that EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism does not strongly influence EU-Vietnam normative policy coherence through Vietnam's membership in ASEAN. However, it shows that the EU's economic interests in the region take priority over normative matters and consequently, from the EU's perspective, Vietnam can serve as an entry point to the ASEAN market.

The conclusion shows how the expected results and actual outcomes diverge. Under the framework of sustainable development, the EU was expected to act as a normative actor in development. The results indicate that the EU promotes norms in its policy guidelines, but lack implementation in the development sector. Furthermore, it was expected that the EU does not promote norms in trade relations, which would lead to normative policy incoherence. Indeed, the results highlights that norms are not promoted in the trade sector. However, incoherence is not primarily a result of the divergence between development and trade policies, but instead between the diplomatic sectors (political relations) and the technical sectors such as development and trade. Last, the analysis of inter-regionalism shows that the links between EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism and EU-Vietnam bilateralism are weak but are driven by economic interests. This dissertation builds on existing literature on regionalism, policy networks, and policy coherence for development, and contributes through an implementation-focused approach based on actor interviews.

# Chapter 1: Research Questions and Literature Review

This chapter outlines the choice of research questions that guide this analysis and the fields of literature to which the dissertation hopes to contribute. This is followed by a brief outline of the development-trade transition in Vietnam, which serves as the case study to narrow down the policy analysis of normative policy coherence for development in EU policies.

## 1.1    RESEARCH FOCUS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Since the implementation of the Maastricht Treaty, the EU has committed itself legally to making policies more coherent on a horizontal level, i.e. across the EU policies, and on a vertical level, i.e. between EU and EU member state policies. Regardless of coherence initiatives or commitments to coherence, it is argued that perfect coherence can neither be achieved in theory nor in practice (Ashoff, 2005, p.3). Obstacles to policy coherence are manifold: the scope of a policy, national and international organizational structures, the number and type of actors involved in the policy formulation and implementation process, the spill-over effects of other policies on development policies, independent implementing agencies, or the lack of information can hinder policy coherence (Hydén, 1999).

Hoebink (1999b) identifies several causes of incoherence that are EU specific. First, given the large number of private and public stakeholders and their variety of interests, as well as political parties in the EU, perfect coherence is hardly achievable. Second, the governing body is split into several institutions, the European Commission, the Councils, and the European Parliament, which in turn are separated into units and departments. At an institutional level, the Commission, the Councils and the Parliament have their own agendas, and additionally, their internal institutional structure complicates communication and finding compromises. These structural arrangements allow for a large number of competing actors and agendas. For example, within the Commission, DG DEVCO (Directorate-General for Development Cooperation), DG TRADE (Directorate-General for Trade) and DG AGRI (Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development) tend to be in contradicting positions in terms of protecting the EU's internal market with DG TRADE favoring openness, DG AGRI favoring protection of agricultural production and DG DEVCO favoring support of farmers in third countries (Carbone, 2007; Hydén, 1999; Orbie, 2007). Third, it is often hard to predict all

effects and side effects of a given policy and, therefore, unintended outcomes might occur (Hoebink, 1999b; Hydén, 1999), which is not only an intricacy for the European Union but are a general feature of policy-making.

Figure 1 below gives an overview of causes of incoherence along the autonomy dimension and the intention dimension (Hydén, 1999). The autonomy dimension separates causes into actor-driven or structure-driven, whereas the intention dimension makes a distinction between intentional and unintentional causes of incoherence. According to this divide, "divergent interests" and "institutional arrangements" are both intentional, whereas the former is actor driven and the latter structure driven. Divergent interests may occur when specific groups or individuals exercise interests that do not correspond with the original policy and, therefore, aim to divert the policy. Institutional arrangements, on the other hand, is a structural organization to divide tasks within an institution but also across EU member states, which carry the individual responsibility to implement policies. Unintentional causes of incoherence are the "lack of information", which is actor related, and "unintentional rivalry" which is a structural cause. Lack of information is a general concern when designing policies because hardly ever can everything be known (Hoebink, 1999b; Hydén, 1999). As a result, the outcome of a policy might differ from the original intention. Last, conflicts over resources can lead to unintentional rivalries between departments. These conflicts are different from conflicts of interests as they are not expected to occur, but might arise because of certain circumstances, such as budgetary arrangements.

**Figure 1: Causes of Internal Incoherence**
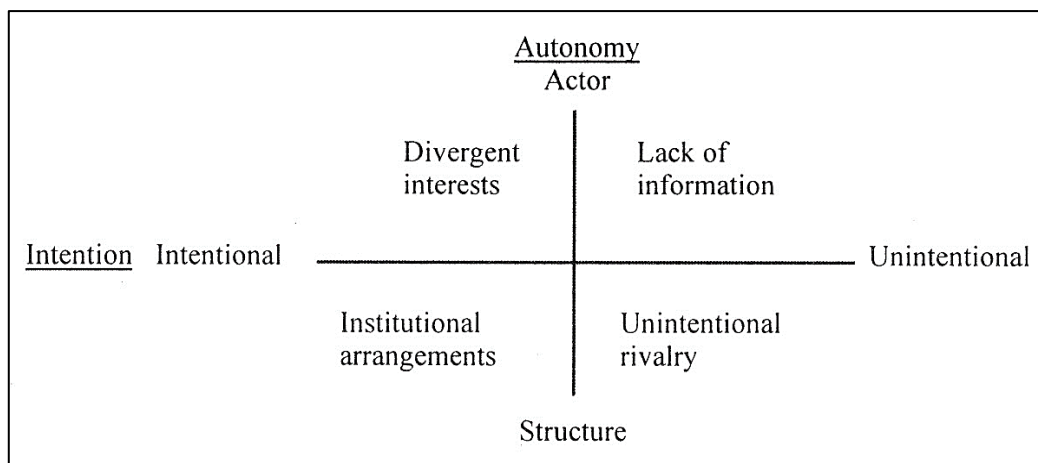


Source: Hydén (1999)

Despite the above mentioned obstacles, improving policy coherence should nevertheless remain a political goal as it not only increases efficiency and decreases costs (Ashoff, 2005, p.11), but can also create legitimacy and credibility when politicians can show their success in achieving political goals (Hydén, 1999). While incoherence between the EU's development, trade and agricultural policies has already been discussed widely, the role of norms in those discussions are notably limited (see for example: Hoebink, 1999a; Morrissey, 2006). On the other hand, the EU's normative dimension is considered in wider international relation debates about the EU's civilian power (Duchêne, 1972; Maull, 1990) or normative power (Manners, 2002, 2006), which argue that the EU lacks military power because it does not have a European army, but instead has other prerogatives it can use in international relations.

These two issues, PCD on the one hand and Normative Power Europe (NPE) on the other, seem to progress alongside each other, but have not been sufficiently integrated in existing literature yet. Merging these two ideas is based on the argument that the EU is striving for both policy coherence and norm promotion, but evidence for this kind of coherence in practice remains quite limited. To fill this gap, two main research questions guide this study.

*Are the EU's development and trade policies coherent in implementing norms;*
*and if not, why are they incoherent?*

These two questions will be addressed throughout the empirical chapters four to six and are the cross-cutting themes for this dissertation. NPCD will be assessed along the policy implementation continuum, which leads from vague policy guidelines to precise projects, and it will be put into a regional context that reflects EU-ASEAN relations. Put differently, this research examines what factors might influence normative policy coherence for development.

Hydén (1999) has presented four causes of incoherence that he relates to internal coherence, i.e. coherence between intended goals and actual outcomes. Lack of information, institutional arrangements, unintentional rivalry and divergent interests are the four causes that were singled out. Because these causes are extrapolated from internal coherence and not horizontal coherence between two external policies, these causes need to be adapted to the logic of horizontal coherence (see figure 2). In addition to actor driven conflicts of interests, conflicts can also occur due to institutional structures in horizontal policy relations. Development actors are expected to support development initiative whereas trade actors are expected to support trade initiative. Each sector has its own interests, which can conflict with each other.

As a result, lack of information can also be intentional and structural rather than only actor-driven and unintentional. Institutional divides are generally intended divides but the resulting incoherences can be intended as well as unintended. Therefore, institutional arrangements can be placed in both quadrants along the structural dimension. Unintended rivalry remains in the section of unintended and structural causes, because unexpected competition over budgets can also occur between two policies.

**Figure 2: Causes of Horizontal Incoherence**
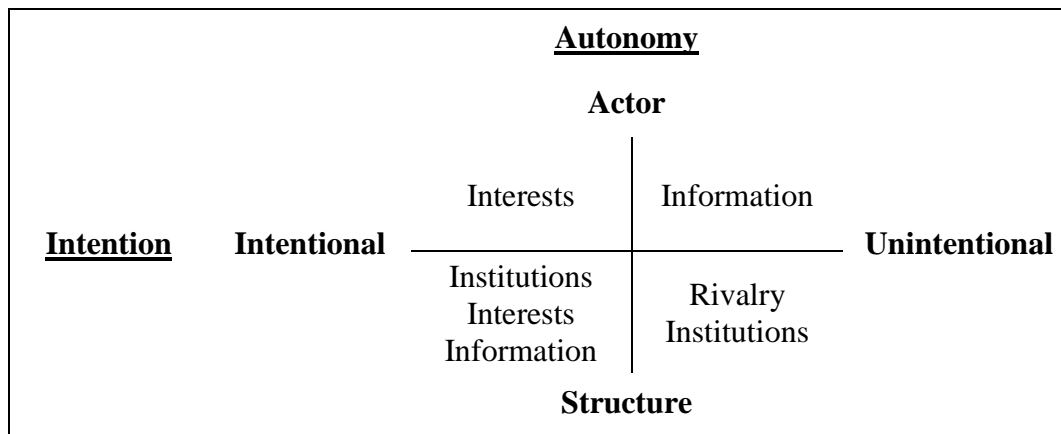


Source: author's adaptation from Hydén (1999)

Taking this classification on incoherence as presented in figure 2, all four factors form a part of this research: lack of information, institutional arrangements, diverging interests, and unintentional rivalry. Whether the EU is normatively coherent across policy sectors relates to diverging interests and institutional arrangements. Institutional arrangements and consequent diverging interests between the development and trade sector are two factors around which some sub-questions have been formulated in order to support the analysis of normative policy coherence for development. According to the European Consensus on Development, EU development aid should promote rights, norms and values. In part one of the joint declaration, the Parliament, Council and Commission state: "We reaffirm that development is a central goal by itself; and that sustainable development includes good governance, human rights and political, economic, social and environmental aspects" (European Union, 2006). As there is no major trade-off, e.g. between financial gains and norms, to be found that could limit the inclusion of norms in development policies, the first sub-question is:

*Does the EU represent itself as a normative power in the development sector*?

In contrast to development aid, trade policies evolve around the idea of economic gains,

highlighting the divergent interests. Whereas the previous sub-question is based on the idea that the EU is not tied to binding international agreements that might reduce its capacity for shaping development policies according to the EU's normative guidelines, the next sub-question addresses an adverse argumentation for trade policies. The underlying assumption arises from the idea that financial or economic benefits are able to overpower normative intentions and, thus, the EU faces obstacles to promoting norms in trade policies. With 164 members, the World Trade Organization (WTO, 2018b) is the leading international institution to set trade standards and rules for all its members, such as the standardized classification of goods – which was initially created by the World Customs Organization but used as the de facto standard based on the high number of WTO members which adhered to this classification (WTO, 2018e) – and tariffs to be applied to those goods. This means that the EU is limited in its leverage in trade negotiations, because it is tied to the international arrangements linked to WTO membership. As a member of the WTO, the EU is bound to find compromises that respect WTO regulations and support the WTO's approach to development, which is essentially the implementation of free trade (Nederveen Pieterse, 2010, p.188), and include its normative basis. Due to these limitations in the multilateral arena, the EU might show less support for the promotion of norms and rights. The second sub-question, therefore, is:

*Does the EU represent itself as a normative power in the trade sector?*

This dissertation strongly focuses on the EU's self-representation and policy implementation; whether or not the EU is successful in being a normative power and whether it can influence other actors by setting norms, are issues that fall outside the scope of this study.

Policy implementation on the ground corresponds to the institutional arrangements and diverging interests represented in legislative provisions. On the one hand, norm promotion and the EU's use of normative power shape the development sector, as provided by the commitment to normative development. On the other hand, different factors determine the negotiations in trade relations. Research suggests that policy networks reinforce existing state structures in which the government is separated into various departments with competing interests (Atkinson & Coleman, 1992, p.163), which implies that the distinction between development and trade also persists on the ground. For EU external affairs, the reinforcement logic would suggest that policy networks emphasize the structural division between development and trade. Thus, because of the systematic organization of staff into sectors, development and trade representatives are likely to remain in their own area of expertise and

create networks within their sector, which would make exchange between the different policy areas rather limited. Consequently, the third sub-question is as follows:

*Why might existing policy networks limit normative coherence between development and trade policies?*

These three sub-questions aim to further elaborate on the issues brought forward by Hydén (1999). First, he addressed the causes of incoherence as described above, which will guide the identification of gaps in the policy implementation. Furthermore, Hydén asks whether coherence is meant to satisfy the public, the client or the implementing organization. In this study, I will predominantly take the perspective of the implementing organization, i.e. the EU and its member states. The Commission is the executing agency for trade, whereas it shares competences with the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the member states in implementing international development cooperation. The European Parliament is actively involved in policy-making, in particular when human rights issues are at stake, but because of its legislative (and not executive role), it does not take a primary role in policy implementation. The client perspective, the perspective of the recipient country or trading partner, is acknowledged during the policy formulation phase, which is in this case represented by the negotiations of comprehensive bilateral agreements. An extensive study of these negotiations is not included in this dissertation, but the finalized agreements form part of the analysis, which anyhow focuses on policy implementation rather than formulation. In line with this focus on implementation, the perspective of the public is not included in this study. Both the public and the client perspective are relevant considerations in the policy cycle but are left for further studies provided the restricted scope of this dissertation.

A pertinent consideration, however, is Vietnam's role in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and ASEAN's importance for the EU. Since the 1950s, relations between the EU and ASEAN have strengthened and the EU perceives ASEAN as a strong strategic partner for the future (see EU Mission to ASEAN, 2016). Most recently, the EU and ASEAN have unsuccessfully undertaken negotiations for a regional trade agreement between the two economic blocs. Since then, the EU has started bilateral negotiations with individual ASEAN member states showing first results with the Singapore and Vietnam free trade agreements. Hence, another factor that is likely to contribute to the normative incoherence between development and trade policies is the overall interest in the South East Asian region.

*Do EU-ASEAN inter-regional relations affect normative policy coherence between development and trade in bilateral relations with Vietnam and if so, how?*

Throughout this dissertation, normative policy coherence for development is understood as the horizontal coherence between aid and non-aid policies, vertical coherence between the EU and its member states, and multilateral coherence between the EU and ASEAN, always with regard to EU norms. Although each EU member state has its own development policies, in this study the term EU development cooperation only addresses policies under the auspices of the EU Commission directorate-general for International Cooperation and Development DG DEVCO. The term development cooperation will be used interchangeably with development aid, international development or aid policy.

EU norms are not explicitly defined by the European Union. References to various concepts such as principles, norms or values are made in the EU treaties and other legislative texts. By analyzing key EU policy documents such as the EU Treaties and the Consensus for Development, I have defined a set of norms to represent 'EU norms' in this research, which are democracy, freedom, gender equality, good governance, human rights, justice, liberty, non-discrimination, peace, rule of law, solidarity and sustainable development (for more details see chapter three). If not explicitly mentioned, 'European norms' are understood as EU norms and, thus, both terms will be used.

## 1.2    LITERATURE REVIEW AND ORIGINALITY OF THIS STUDY

With this study, I aim to further knowledge based on four innovations: (1) adding to existing PCD literature, (2) applying the intention-autonomy model to a case at hand, and (3) combining different fields of literature, and (4) studying policy representatives in the recipient country. Each innovation will be presented in detail in the following sections.

### 1.2.1   Adding to PCD Literature
A broad body of scholarship on PCD has emerged in recent years highlighting its burgeoning centrality on the global development agendas (Siitonen, 2016). As previously mentioned, the PCD approach does not take on a critical stance towards development per se but addresses development policies and practices.

Initially PCD was brought up as a policy tool to improve aid effectiveness of the DAC donors

(Forster & Stokke, 1999), but since then growing interest in PCD in academia has led to critical research on PCD. Different types of policy coherence were identified in order to conceptualize the political terminology and to identify its relevance in policy-making (Forster & Stokke, 1999; Hoebink, 1999b). Research on implementing PCD has mostly focused on disputes at the EU level, either between the EU institutions (the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers), or between the member states and the EU (Carbone & Keijzer, 2016; Hoebink, 1999a, 1999b). Other case studies have focused on PCD in individual member states such as the Czech Republic (Horký, 2010), Denmark (Nyberg Sørensen, 2016), Germany (Ashoff, 1999), the Netherlands (Hoebink, 1999a) and Sweden (Danielson, 1999).

In addition to the institutional levels of implementation, other PCD studies have addressed specific policy sectors (see for example Koff, 2017b; Matthews, 2008; Nyberg Sørensen, 2016; Orbie, 2007; Siles-Brügge, 2014). Incoherence between the EU's development and agricultural policies remains a relevant research topic despite political efforts to improve policy coherence (Matthews, 2008). PCD studies on development and migration have regained momentum since the outbreak of political debates around the so-called "migrant crisis" in Europe (Koff, 2017b; Nyberg Sørensen, 2016). Research on PCD in the development and trade nexus has also advanced, particularly focusing on the Everything But Arms initiative (EBA) (see Büntrup, 2007; Carbone, 2007; Orbie & Faber, 2007). The EBA is an initiative to offer duty-free and quota-free access for least developed countries to the European market and is consequently seen as an important example for improved coherence in the European Union; however, it was criticized for not enhancing economic development as exports to the European Union have increased only slightly (Orbie & Faber, 2007). Even more so, Siles-Brügge (2014) argues that the EU's policy reforms in the developmental trade agenda are not to the mere benefit of developing countries but also a strategic step for the EU to improve its economic leverage.

As can be seen, a broad corpus of PCD literature exists already, but few of these studies have addressed the normative dimension of PCD (Koff & Maganda, 2016) or the implementation stage in the third country. Regarding the former, the primary objective is to inspire a normative discussion in the PCD debate, which has for now strongly focused on the institutional dimension of PCD. Regarding the latter, another contribution this research makes is the study of norm implementation, which adds to the existing knowledge of policy coherence for development (PCD), which in turn has largely focused on the internal coherence of policies or

internal reasons for horizontal incoherence.

## 1.2.2   Applying the Intention-Autonomy Model to a Case

By applying the intention-autonomy model (Hydén, 1999) to a specific case, I intend to contribute to the knowledge about causes of incoherence. Since its publication in 1999, this model has not been used widely, despite its applicability to public policy analysis. It offers a suitable starting point to categorize causes of incoherence, which can subsequently be assessed on a case-to-case basis, as is done here. The model was adapted to fit the analysis of external policies more precisely, as is shown above. From an academic perspective, the adaptation of the model and its application to EU foreign policies is a novelty in itself, but from a more pragmatic point of view, the identification of causes of incoherence in a real-life setting can be used to prevent future incoherence.

Other studies of causes of policy incoherence have brought forward different dimensions, such as the area of societal and political norms, the area of political decision-making, the area of policy formulation and coordination, and the conceptual area, within which several causes of incoherence are listed (Ashoff, 2005). In the political decision-making area, for example, diverging interests in a government is one of the causes of incoherence. In a democratic, pluralistic state this is a natural phenomenon, and as such it is one of the causes of incoherence. More complex decision-making due to globalization and divergent interests at the EU level are other examples in the political decision-making area. Information shortages is one of the causes of incoherence in the policy formulation and coordination area. Some of these causes of incoherence can be placed in the intention-autonomy continuum relatively easily. Diverging interests in a nation state and diverging interests at the EU level would fall into the intentional-structural quadrant at the bottom left. Information shortages would fall into the unintentional-actor quadrant in the top right corner. More complex decision-making due to globalizations is a cause, which cannot be put easily into one of the categories, because it comprises several factors. More complexity means more institutions and within those institutions more actors. It also means that more divergent interests are at stake. Globalization implies that national decisions can affect third countries more rapidly (Ashoff, 2005), and, arguably, not all effects are known, which leads to incomplete information. Thus, one cause of incoherence can comprise several aspects that would fall into different categories in the intention-autonomy model.

Re-classification of causes, e.g. from Ashoff's areas to Hydén's model, is not intended.

However, the above examples highlight the suitability of the autonomy-intention model as it does not undermine thematically driven causes such as presented in the "areas model" but applies a more structured logic for categorizing them. Therefore, the "areas model" is not used as the model for classification/categorization; instead, the intention-autonomy model is used in this study to categorize causes of incoherence.

Overall, this two-dimensional approach to classifying causes of incoherence is a suitable model, which is used in this study with the aim to contribute to a better understanding of causes of policy incoherence by applying it to a concrete case, i.e. the development and trade nexus in EU-Vietnam relations.

### 1.2.3 Combining Fields of Literature

The third contributions this study aims to make is combining the academic fields of European foreign policy, policy communities and regionalism in order to strive towards a more complete understanding of policy coherence for development.

Literature on *regionalism* shows the various forms of defining regionalism based on the conceptualization of a region. A region can be understood as a social construct, as a geographical area or an institutional arrangement. Europe, for example, has different boundaries according to the lens through which a region is defined. As a geographical area, the continent Europe has clear borders, as a social construct discussions around Turkey make the definition of Europe as a region more disputed, and based on the institutional arrangements Europe could be seen as the European Union (28 member states), the European Economic Area (EU + Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway[1]) or the Council of Europe (47 countries), for example. Thus, depending on the type of definitional lens chosen, a region comprises different characteristics. Corresponding to the understanding that a region is situated between the national and the global level (Börzel & Risse, 2016), region is defined here as a group of nation states that have institutionalized their cooperation to various degrees, such as the EU and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). This study follows the regionalism trend that places the EU at the center of regionalism studies.

Since the end of the Cold War, regionalism has seen a boost, both politically and academically (Börzel, 2016; Börzel & Risse, 2016), out of which several types of regionalism arose.

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[1] Information based on the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement http://www.efta.int/eea/eea-agreement, last consulted February 21, 2018

Hardacre & Smith (2014) have coined the term "complex inter-regionalism", which highlights a region's multitude of inter-regional relations, particularly in the case of the EU. Inter-regional relations between regions vary depending on the institutionalization of a region, some relations being more institutionalized than others, or on the sectors for cooperation. The relationship between the EU and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) notably depicts this type of regionalism. In this case, both regions have a clearly defined social, geographical and institutional setting.

Trans-regional relations are relations between an institutionalized region and a group of countries in a "broader intercontinental framework" (Hardacre & Smith, 2014, p.92), such as the EU's relations with several Asian countries in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). ASEM is a forum in which 53 participating actors (28 EU member states, 10 ASEAN member states, Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russia, the European Union, and the ASEAN Secretariat) meet on a biennial basis on political, economic and social matters[2]. Definitional precision of regions, inter-regionalism or trans-regionalism, however, seems to be lacking in the political arena. It is stated, for example, that ASEM creates cooperation between *two regions* and that it is a framework for cooperation *between Europe and Asia* (ASEM, 2016, emphasis added). Whereas geographically speaking Australia and New Zealand are considered neither Asian nor European countries, they are still included in the ASEM framework. Despite inter-regionalism brought forward in ASEM documents, the trans-regional conceptualization seems to be more fit to this framework.

In addition to the distinction between inter-regionalism and trans-regionalism, intra-regionalism is another type of regionalism, which refers to regional integration within a given region (Doidge, 2014). Asymmetric regionalism is understood as asymmetric internal relations in which some states are strong economic entities and others weaker developing regions (Baert, Scaramagli, & Söderbaum, 2014; Beeson, 2010). In other words, asymmetric regionalism can be defined as regional integration between economically strongly diverse countries. Elsewhere the term bilateral asymmetric relations is used to describe the relationship between a region and a nation state, i.e. between the EU and individual countries (Camroux, 2010). Because both cases include a region as an actor, the terms asymmetric inter-regionalism

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[2] Information based on ASEM InfoBoard http://www.aseminfoboard.org/about , last consulted February 21, 2018

will be used in this research to describe the relationship between two regions that show economic discrepancies.

Some scholars contend that states are the main drivers of regionalism and institution-building is the main goal (Acharya, 2016; Börzel, 2016; Börzel & Risse, 2016; Söderbaum, 2016). Consequently, regionalism is considered a top-down approach, whereas regionalization is a bottom-up approach. From this perspective, regionalization, in contrast to regionalism, relates to economic, social, political or cultural processes between societies, i.e. non-state actors, which can lead to regionalism in terms of institution-building (Börzel & Risse, 2016). Neither of these two approaches can fully explain the EU's regional behavior, which is why integrating the European Foreign Policy literature is useful for arriving at a more complete understanding.

Research on *European foreign policy* (EFP) comprises a variety of academic traditions, but with foreign policies as a shared thematic interest (Jørgensen, Aarstad, Drieskens, Laatikainen, & Tonra, 2015). International relations, European studies and foreign policy analysis are three prominent traditions in EFP research (Jørgensen et al., 2015). A relevant concept in EFP research is Normative Power Europe (NPE), which is defined as the EU being able "to shape what is normal" (Manners, 2002). Proponents of the Normative Power Europe concept attribute a normative behavior to the EU, which influences other actors in the global arena. In contrast to defining the EU as a civilian power (Bull, 1982; Duchêne, 1972), which assumes that the EU is a state-like entity, the NPE approach offers an approach that moves away from this traditional practice in political science to argue that the EU's creation and institutional structure are the deciding factors for its normative power: "the most important factor shaping the international role of the EU is not what it does or what it says, but what it is" (Manners, 2002, p.252). Critics question the "what it is" argument, i.e. the sufficiency of the EU's creation and institutional structure to make it a normative power. It is widely accepted that the EU is different from the United States, for example, which is considered a more traditional power, but why this is the case remains disputed (Diez, 2005; Scheipers & Sicurelli, 2007). Kagan (2003) attributes the differences between the types of power to the actors' capabilities. Scheipers and Sicurelli (2007) argue that NPE is closely connected to European identity formation vis-à-vis the United States. They show that despite the EU's discrepancy between rhetorical actions and actual behavior, the EU's normative power does not seem to be negatively affected, because its identity narrative creates credibility (Scheipers & Sicurelli,

2007). Other conceptual contributions suggest embedding the NPE concept in the hegemony framework which would emphasize the power dimension in contrast to the normative dimension in NPE debates (Diez, 2013). Normative power as hegemony fits into the EFP approach as a conceptual tool to understand EU foreign politics outside the traditional interest vs. norms divide (Diez, 2013). Empirical studies have examined the NPE concept in, for example, the EU's approach to trade agreements in which the EU has opted to promote labor standards referencing ILO conventions (Orbie, 2011).

These normative views have been challenged since its conceptual emergence in 2002. Nicolaïdis and Howse (2002) portray the image of an "EU-topia". In contrast to the "what it is" understanding of the EU, EUtopia is a reference to the EU's utopian narrative which does not correspond to the legitimacy crisis it is in. Thus, while NPE scholars argue that the EU's normative power arises from "what it is", critics claim that what is being projected is not "what it is" but an "EU-topia" (Nicolaïdis & Howse, 2002). Another challenge to the NPE argument arises from the EU's prioritization of economic interests over normative aspirations. A study of recent reforms in the EU's trade rules concerning the least developed countries suggests that the EU subordinates developing countries' needs to its own commercial interests (Siles-Brügge, 2014). As a result, it is argued that a political economy approach would be more suitable to understand the EU's political behavior than the NPE rationale (Siles-Brügge, 2014). While not challenging the NPE concept as such, Pace (2007) examines the relationship between the EU's role on cases of conflict and its global perception. By assessing six elements of constructing NPE (content, process, agents, environment, mechanisms and goals), she concludes that cases in which the EU is not able to construct normative power reflect negatively on its role as a normative power in the global arena (Pace, 2007).

This study combines conceptual aspects from the regionalism literature, which discusses the conceptual aspects of regions and regionalism more detailed than the EFP literature, and behavioral aspects from the EFP literature. Conceptually, the EU comprises all three lenses of a regional definition, because it has established institutions, geographical borders, and is built on shared values[3] and the desire for peace. Behaviorally, regionalism is understood as EU-driven, instead of state-driven, and as an integral part of the EU's global agenda instead of a separate institution-building agenda. Similar to the top-down approach brought forward in IR

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[3] See Preamble to the Treaty on the European Union after Lisbon

theory, regionalism here is understood as a top-down approach but driven by the EU institutions and not by individual member states. The EU-Vietnam relationship is an example of asymmetric regionalism, which coexists with the EU-ASEAN relationship that represents (asymmetric) inter-regionalism. Thus, this study feeds into the "complex inter-regionalism" discussion and adds to it by theoretically incorporating the EFP, PCD and public policy debates and applying the theories to a case study.

To complement EFP research, policy communities offer a link between the political discussions at the higher levels of policy-making and policy implementation. *Policy community* literature falls within the scope of public policy, but in contrast to EFP theory it focuses primarily on policy-making (Atkinson & Coleman, 1992). Definitions of policy communities and policy networks still reflect unclear perceptions of the concepts. While some argue that communities and networks are two separate categories, others claim that communities are a sub-group of networks (Atkinson & Coleman, 1992). Whether due to the lack or because of the lack of a common definition of policy networks, this concept is applied to various fields of study, which in turn emphasized its utility/usefulness in the policy related analyses. In global public policy, transnational policy communities are used to examine the actors involved in public policy-making at the global level (Stone, 2008). With the emergence of the global political arena, political decisions are not only taken at the national level anymore. Therefore, the policy community concept is applied to the global level in the framework of the public policy cycle (problem definition or agenda-setting, decision-making, policy implementation, monitoring or evaluation) (Jann & Wegrich, 2007; Stone, 2008). The transnational policy community is the umbrella term for transnational executive networks, international civil servants and transnational policy professionals (Stone, 2008).

In international relations, policy networks are seen as modes of collaboration, coordination, exercising influence or international governance (Hafner-Burton, Kahler, & Montgomery, 2009). Network analysis challenges the conventional view of power by introducing network power, which is based on social power, leverage and exit. Social power, leverage and exit are three aspects of a network defining a network's integrity and an actor's position (an individual's position, government's position, or organization's position) towards this network (Hafner-Burton et al., 2009). Social power refers to an actor's access to resources and information within the network, or in other terms, their social power within the network. Leverage or brokerage is another aspect influencing network power. An actor's exclusive ties

to an otherwise disconnected actor brings additional leverage to the network. Last, exit refers to an actor's ability to leave the network. This can be used as bargaining power within the network mostly by actors that are less interconnected with the network (Hafner-Burton et al., 2009).

With regard to policy coherence, research suggests that diverse issues and interests within one policy area lead to less coherence  (May, Sapotichne, & Workman, 2006). This is particularly the case in policy domains such as demographic policy domains, which comprise family, children or women's policies, whereas regional policies such as urban and rural policies show greater issues focus and less diverse interests which result in comparatively greater coherence. In cases in which policy networks are characterized by diverging issues and interests greater policy incoherence can be expected (May et al., 2006).

These three fields of literature are rarely combined in academia. Using the threefold literature background in order to assess normative policy coherence for development is a novel contribution to academic discussions around PCD.

### 1.2.4   New Data Set

Not only does the theoretical extension of norms and the multi-faceted literature add to the study of PCD, but also the interview data gathered and analyzed for this dissertation represents a novelty. Written documents such as the EU treaties, political reports, communications, minutes of meetings, correspondence between key actors, and reports by European NGOs have proven to be a useful source for the PCD study (Carbone & Keijzer, 2016; Hoebink, 1999b; Hydén, 1999). Public interviews are used occasionally (see Hoebink, 1999a). Interviews with Commission officials and European External Action Service officials are sometimes used for PCD studies (Keukeleire & Raube, 2013), but remain rare. Research on European norms comprises interviews with European Commission officials, member state officials and NGO representatives (Elgström, 2000). Even scarcer is the inclusion of representatives in the recipient country. Hoang and Sicurelli (2017), for example, have used interviews with stakeholders in Brussels and Vietnam in their analysis of trade agreements between the EU, Vietnam and Singapore. However, in the field of PCD and normative policy coherence for development, the use of interviews as primary data, and particularly interviews with actors in the recipient/partner country, is nominal. One of the originalities of this study is, therefore, the data set.

This study draws on interviews that were conducted in the European Commission and the European External Action Service in Brussels and in the EU and member state delegations in the recipient country Vietnam. The majority of interviews was conducted in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. More details on the data collection is given in the methodological chapter (chapter two). This data adds to the understanding of PCD, because it includes the representatives on the ground in addition to the Commission staff in Brussels. Thus, whereas most studies focus on the political "ivory tower", this study adds the implementation level of policies by drawing the focus on the European political representatives abroad.

The following chapter provides an overview of all methodological choices.

# Chapter 2: Methodology

The present chapter provides an overview of the methodological choices for this dissertation in the first section, and a presentation of Vietnam as an empirical case in the second section. Regarding methodological choices, the first sub-section shows that a case study is a suitable research design for this research. A congruence method is applied to highlight connections between various factors determined to assess normative policy coherence for development. This is followed by a detailed presentation of data collection (policy documents and interviews with relevant actors in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and Brussels, Belgium) and data analysis with Atlas.ti. Sub-section four explains the procedure with which Vietnam was chosen as an empirical case. The last sub-section presents ethical considerations related to this study.

In the second section, the relationship between the EU and Vietnam is described to show Vietnam's economic evolutions and the EU's subsequent phasing out of development aid.

## 2.1   METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

### 2.1.1   Case Study Method

This study aims to combine nomothetic and idiographic tendencies to make generalized statements based on a case-specific relationship. While the EU-Vietnam relationship serves as the case specific context, wider generalizations can be made about the EU's policy coherence and external relations in general.

**Layer 1: Case Study**

The normative policy coherence for development in EU policies is the case of this study. This case is used to get a better understanding of how policy implementation reflects normative coherence. Policy implementation is split into political commitment, policy networks and regional interests, and, hence, those three factors' relation to normative coherence. While this case study provides in-depth knowledge about the case at hand, some generalizations will be made about EU foreign policies and its role as a regional actor. While the development and trade policies under consideration for normative coherence are case-specific to EU-Vietnam relations, it is not unlikely that the EU would pursue similar development and trade strategies with other middle-income countries that show similar development processes to Vietnam's development. However, the extent to which the EU is successful in norm promotion, i.e. the extent to which the partner country accepts those norms, is largely determined by the

partner country's social, historical and cultural context and the consequent openness to non-local norms.

In methodological terms, this study is conducted as a case study, but in wider theoretical debates it can be placed in the study of EU foreign policies and as such feed into wider debates about EU policy strategies. In recent years, a shift has taken place from the traditional positivist model of hypothesis testing and modelling towards realist research in terms of analyzing causality between variables instead of co-variance (Gerring, 2007). Co-variance testing is usually done in studies with large numbers of cases, which remain on the surface of each case, whereas causality and in-depth analysis are characteristics for case studies. Despite the increasing application of case studies as a research design, skepticism towards this design remains, which is mainly due to the uncertainty of methodology that comes with case study research. Case study methods are often not clearly defined in contrast to large-N quantitative methods. "Even among its defenders there is confusion over the virtues and vices of this ambiguous research design" (Gerring, 2007, p.7). While a case study can have different characteristics, such as the qualitative analysis, the thickness of the case, the use of a particular kind of evidence (e.g. interviews), the study's position in a real life context, a diffuse boundary between concepts and reality, multiple sources of evidence, using a single observation or a single phenomenon, individually, these characteristics do not form the definition of a case study in general. None of these terms defines a case study per se but attributes a characteristic to a case study. To overcome some of this lack of clarity, I will lay out the main characteristics of the case study design at hand.

1. Small Number of Cases

Case studies can be composed of one case that is represented by one observation or by multiple within-case observations. In political science, the unit of observation often tends to be the nation state. Within the nation state, several observations can be made, but these would not form different cases but are within-case observations. Similarly, in this research, the EU is the unit of observation. Within the EU, there are different institutions and the member states, but together they form the EU. Thus, this research is a case study with various within-case observations.

2. Clear Boundaries

"A case may be created out of any phenomenon so long as it has identifiable boundaries and comprises the primary objects of an inference" (Gerring, 2007, p.19). The phenomenon of this

research is normative policy coherence for development. For the study of this phenomenon, clear boundaries are important to define the width of the case study on a temporal dimension or a spatial dimension. Spatial boundaries can be the borders of a country, and temporal boundaries a time frame in which a certain phenomenon has occurred. Here, the spatial boundaries are regional on two levels. First, the EU's spatial boundaries are its external borders. Second, because its external policies travel outside of the EU's borders, the second spatial boundary relates to the recipient of those policies, which is the ASEAN region and particularly Vietnam. The temporal boundaries are limited to the 1992-2017 period. 1992 was chosen as the starting point for analysis, because in this year the Maastricht Treaty was implemented, which was the first EU Treaty to incorporate policy coherence in its legislation (Hoebink, 1999b). The end point 2017 was chosen for pragmatic reasons in terms of allowing the researcher to take sufficient time to assess the data without constant changes in legislation as can occur, for example, during the ratification process of the EU-Vietnam free trade agreement[4], but also because the PhD project was limited to a four-year period.

3. Within-case Variation

Case studies typically focus on within-case or cross-case variation, which can in turn either vary or not vary over time. Within one case, the spatial variation within the case combined with the temporal variation results in a synchronic & diachronic single-case study (Gerring, 2007). As already stated above, this study is a case study of a phenomenon (NPCD), with one unit of observation (one case) but with within-case and temporal variation. Temporal variation is used in the analysis of the EU's political commitment in which policy documents before the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty (1992-2008) and after the Lisbon Treaty (2009-2017) are analyzed. Spatial variation is not used here as all documents are EU documents. Spatial variation, but not temporal variation, is used in the analysis of policy networks and regional interests. Strictly speaking, temporal variation occurs in the analysis of all three factors, because no document and no interviews were undertaken or published at the same time and thus temporal variation in inevitable, but because it is not the decisive characteristic for the analysis of policy networks and regional interests.

4. Thickness

The shift away from quantitative large-N analysis to small-N studies comes with the interest in

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[4] Status as of April 2019: the agreement is under legal review. Source:
http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/vietnam/ , last consulted on June 19, 2018

understanding one specific case in detail (Gerring, 2007). "[C]ase studies are characterized by their thickness, defined as multiple and diverse observations per case […]" (Blatter & Blume, 2008, p.317). These observations can be either across a small number of cases or within a case (spatial and temporal dimension), as already stated above. The variation in evidence and observations, in-depth knowledge about the case, is a particular feature of a case study, which comes with a trade-off between in-depth insights and generalizability. The idea of a case study arises from the intention to gather more knowledge about a case or a small number of cases and not to understand general patterns or behavior. Thus, by conducting a case study a choice of thickness over generalization is made. On the contrary, a large-N, cross-case analysis aims at broader knowledge that is not tied to a specific case but shares insights that are applicable to other cases (Gerring, 2007). Because of the high number of cases, detailing every case is usually unfeasible and, therefore, the depth of individual cases cannot be explored.

The case study design is an appropriate research design for this study, because normative policy coherence for development is a complex concept, which requires in-depth knowledge of the policy implementation cycle. Academic endeavors of normative policy coherence have been relatively recent, which means that detailed analysis has yet to be undertaken. A case study of EU normative policy coherence for development provides further in-depth understanding of this phenomenon. In the trade-off between internal and external validity, the case study design is stronger on internal validity. External validity means that the outcomes of the study hold true across similar studies, but as cases are usually chosen because of the particularity, outcomes are not likely to be representative for other studies, i.e. most results are valid for one study. Case studies focus on "finding out the conditions under which specified outcomes occur and the mechanisms through which they occur [...]" (Bennett, 2004, p.43). Therefore, case studies are hardly ever generalizable; the results are frequently only applicable to the case under consideration and not fit to explain other relations. The Vietnamese context provides a very particular setting given its one-party socialist governance system, which limits the generalizability of this study. Putting this trade-off into context, external validity depends on the kinds of conclusions that are drawn. While specific results might be connected to the case at hand, broader arguments and conclusions might still be found in similar case studies. Nevertheless, generalizability is not the main aim of this study and the potential problem of trade-off does not cause major drawbacks to this research.

This case analysis aims at getting a deep understanding of the "internal" cases (development

and trade) within the "main" case (normative policy coherence). In terms of this research, the interest lies with the exemplary case of transition of relations between the EU and Vietnam using a rationalist approach. This transition creates an environment, which in itself is worth studying.

Whereas some argue that case studies are research designs that address causal mechanisms based on a realist understanding of conducting social science rather than a positivist understanding (Gerring, 2007), I aim to relate these two schools by applying the four characteristics of a case study while merging them with theory-infused research questions. It needs to be noted here that causal mechanisms and causal effects are to be distinguished in terms that causal mechanisms reflect the concrete path between cause and outcome and causal effects refer to the magnitude of change in a causal relationship (Gerring, 2007). Direct causal links between a cause and an outcome will not be sought, but instead links between the proxy factors (political commitment, policy networks, regional interests) and normative policy coherence for development will be established based on the analysis of the data set. As has been suggested elsewhere, "intensive reflection on the congruence/resemblance between concrete empirical observations and abstract theoretical concepts" (Blatter & Blume, 2008, p.317) is a major part of this case study analysis. While the real-life context is still given, it will be linked to concepts and theory related to European foreign policy.

The congruence method is applied as a concrete method for this case study analysis.

**Layer 2: Congruence Method**

The congruence method is, next to comparative case studies and process tracing, a method that combines positivist and constructivist perspectives (Blatter & Blume, 2008). In other terms, the "logic of confirmation", which seeks to test existing hypotheses, is combined with the "logic of discovery", which implies the introduction and testing of new hypotheses (Bennett, 2004). Case study research designs tend to follow the logic of hypothesis-generating/logic of discovery/constructivism (Gerring, 2007). However, the congruence method allows for a divergence from this hypothesis-generating approach. On the one hand, analyzing the appropriateness of the concept of "Normative Power Europe" follows the logic of confirmation approach, whereas on the other hand, the introduction of normative coherence and its implementation follows the logic of discovery approach. Even though hypothesis-generating studies are generally based on a large data set, the results of this study can be used as a starting point for further research on generalizability. Generalizability does not necessarily imply

generalizability across all middle-income countries, as Vietnam's cultural and political context is very particular, but patterns of norm implementation from the EU's perspective might still be discovered. For example, a gap between political commitment and implementation might occur across several partner countries with various backgrounds. However, as already mentioned, further studies would have to be conducted to be able to make such claims.

Some concerns regarding the congruence method are described in the following. First, in order to analyze normative policy coherence, the actual policies on policy coherence are not examined, but instead three factors that are used as proxies for normative policy coherence. The first factor is the legislative representation of norms across several policy documents. This analysis is meant to provide insights into the actor's commitment to norms on a political level. Second, policy networks in the partner country are examined to examine how policy coherence translates from political commitment to implementation by the relevant actors in the field. These policy networks are comprised by various actors from the European delegations. The third factor is the regional context, which adds another governance layer to the initial EU-partner country relationship. These three factors help identify how coherent EU policies are and uncover where some gaps might lead to incoherence.

Second, to combine the nomothetic and idiographic approach to research, the congruence method has been selected as the research method, because it allows for an analysis that is situated between positivism on one end and constructivism on the other (Blatter & Blume, 2008). By applying the congruence method, researchers have the possibility to use case-specific patterns as a basis for making more generalized arguments about certain phenomena. "While a technique such as process tracing helps to trace events to unearth causal and micro-causal relationships to the eventual outcome, congruence analysis helps to analyze those relationships using the explanatory power of various theoretical lenses. In a way, congruence analysis helps to bridge the gap between the normative predictions and the positive observations" (Annamalai, 2012).

Third, the congruence method is another adaptation of the process tracing method, which is applied to make links between political commitment and actual implementation within the policy sectors. In contrast to process tracing, which addresses causality, the congruence method aims at establishing a relationship between two variables disregarding causality. In other words, rather than tracing each link that leads from negotiations to policy formulation to implementation and analyzing the role of each position in the process, the goal of this

method is to show whether policy implementation reflects on policy guidelines. The congruence method can be based on deterministic claims aim to uncover relationships that show a regular pattern, i.e. relationships for which it is not possible to detect the degree to which a change in X causes change in Y. Congruence analysis offers a wide spectrum from positivist approaches to epistemological constructivism. In this research, I do not make positivist probabilistic claims – for example "The more power the EU has, the more norms are included in an agreement" – as this study does not intend to measure the degree of power the EU possesses, neither do I use deterministic claims in a positivist sense. Instead, I explore a hybrid method in which sub-questions derived from theory guide the exploration in a specific context, which in turn will feed back into the theory. Congruence analysis as a method allows for this hybridity between positivist nomothetic research aimed at generalization and idiographic analysis, which aims at in-depth understanding of a single case.

Neither internal nor external acceptance of norms are analyzed in this study. Internally the EU has accepted a range of norms, which henceforth led to the understanding of the EU as a normative power. How these norms came into being, i.e. the internal conflicts and discussions that might relate to the norms, does not lie within the scope of this study. Instead, norms are represented by the Treaties of the European Union and will be understood as the guiding norms for the EU. In external relations after a policy has been formulated, the proxy factors for normative policy coherence are political commitment, policy networks and regional context. These factors are assumed to be correlated to normative policy coherence, which is why they are used as proxies.

*Choice of proxy factors.* Political commitment, policy networks and inter-regional relations have been identified as relevant aspects influencing normative policy coherence for development. Coherence as such cannot be observed or measured directly, but rather the use of language or the exercise of particular actions, which in turn can be coherent or not. Similarly, normative policy coherence for development cannot be directly observed and, therefore, three "proxy factors" were selected to be analyzed.

Figure 3 indicates how the selected proxy factors (political commitment to norms is analyzed in chapter four, policy networks are analyzed in chapter five and inter-regional relations in chapter six) relate to NPCD. These three proxy factors were selected in order to examine whether the EU implements its norms in its external relations and in order to identify potential causes of normative incoherence.

**Figure 3: NPCD, Selected Proxy Factors and Observations**
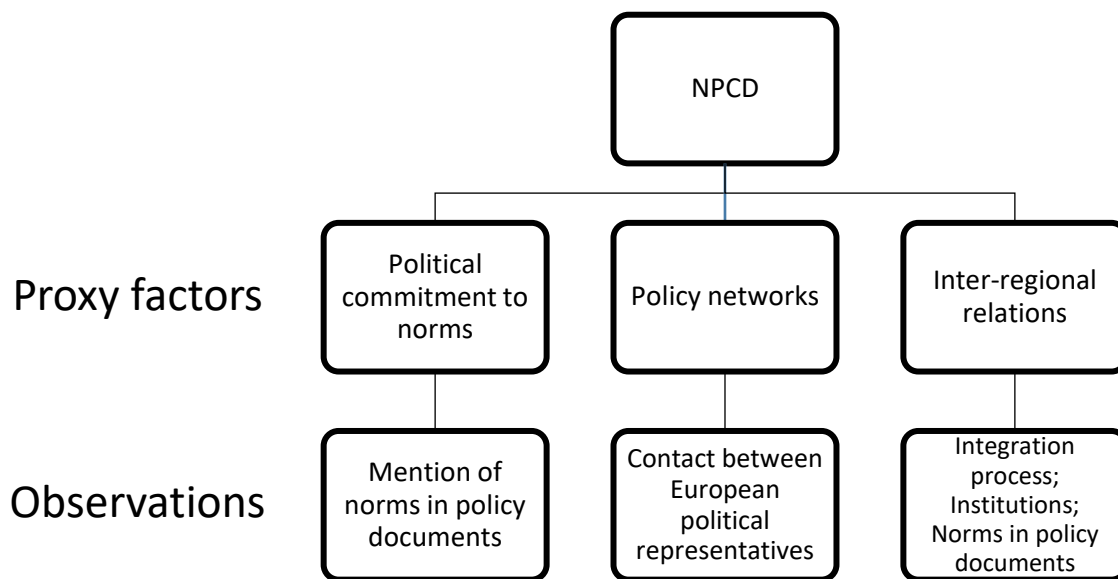


Source: author's own creation

Political commitment to norms measured by the mention of norms in selected policy documents relevant for EU-Vietnam relations reflects the rhetorical commitment to norms. Implementation of norms will be compared to the normative rhetorical commitment to identify possible discrepancies between rhetoric and action. Comparing the mention of norms across policy documents reflects one layer of normative coherence, i.e. rhetorical coherence. In order to assess whether the rhetorical commitment is reflected in the political landscape of diplomats in the field, policy networks are analyzed. These networks shed light on the frequency and thematic scope of meetings between European representatives. The third proxy factor is the inter-regional relationship between the EU the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), because of the interconnectedness between inter-regional (EU-ASEAN) and bilateral (EU-Vietnam) relations. EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism is a selected proxy factor, because the EU has often adopted its bilateral strategies to its inter-regional relations, which shows that bilateral relations are influenced by inter-regional relations. How EU-ASEAN relations influence NPCD in EU-Vietnam relations is assessed by comparing the EU's and ASEAN's integration history, their institutional set-ups and the mention of norms in EU and ASEAN policy documents. In terms of normative policy coherence for development, inter-regional interests are a third proxy factor, because inter-regional relations might overshadow bilateral relations.

Alternative proxy factors such as intra-European competition between and within the

institutions could have been chosen as the primary elements of analysis in this study, but the selection focuses on the three factors, which were deemed the most relevant in the analysis of NPCD in terms of policy implementation.

Across the three proxy factors that will help identify normative policy coherence, interdependencies between norms in EU development cooperation and norms in EU trade policies will be assessed. Thus, even though this is a case study of normative policy coherence for development, within each analytical dimension both, the development and trade sector, will be examined. The examination of the three proxy factors will show where gaps can be found in norm implementation across (a) political commitment, (b) policy networks and (c) regional interests. Each empirical chapter, chapters four, five and six respectively, applies this approach.

### 2.1.2   Data Collection:  Policy Documents and Elite Interviews

For the in-depth analysis of this case study, a variety of policy documents and elite interviews has been conducted. Figure 4  shows the data corresponding to the factor of analysis to determine normative policy coherence.

The first round of the data collection consisted of choosing relevant policy documents. A non-exhaustive list of documents include the European Consensus on Development, the EU Aid  for Trade Strategy, the Treaty on the European Union, the EU Agenda for Change, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Vietnam, the EU Blue Book on Development Cooperation Activities in Vietnam published from 2007 to 2014, the Commission's  Annual Reports on Development Assistance from 2007, the Multiannual Indicative Program for Vietnam 2014-2020, and relevant documents regarding trade relations, such as publications from the EU institutions regarding the EU-VN free trade negotiations. A more detailed list can be found in appendix 1. These documents correspond to all three factors of analysis: political commitment, policy networks and regional interests.

The European Union has set nine instruments that can be used for funding external assistance in third countries[5]. The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights

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[5] The instruments are: European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP); Partnership Instrument (PI), Instrument for Nuclear Safety and Cooperation (INSC), Instrument for Development Cooperation (DCI), European Development Fund (EDF), Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance 2 (IPA), European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI), and Instrument for Greenland (IfG). For details see https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/funding-instruments-programming/funding-instruments_en

(EIDHR) and the Instrument for Development Cooperation (DCI), which is split between geographical and thematic programs, fall under the premises of DG DEVCO and are, consequently used for quantitative data on aid allocation. OECD data on DAC members is used to complement the information regarding overall ODA commitments and disbursements. The general commitment to development cooperation can be found in the EU treaties and the general agreement between the EU and Vietnam, which is why those documents fall under the scope of political commitment, whereas the detailed disbursement plans and priority sectors are detailed in the multi-annual indicative framework and EU Blue Books fall under the scope of the policy network analysis, because the priorities have the capacity to shape who is part of which network.

The second round of data collection was dedicated to conducting elite interviews with EU officials in Brussels and EU and member state officials in Vietnam. A qualitative approach was used here by targeting specific actors in accordance with the purposive sampling method, which fits the congruence method quite well, as it is an adapted version of process tracing, for which non-probability sampling of elite interviews has been argued to be a suitable combination (Tansey, 2007). In contrast to large scale interviewing rounds or questionnaires, this will ensure the gathering of relevant information that is needed for the study and feeds into answering the given questions. Random sampling is not a suitable tool here because of the qualitative character of the study and the small sample size. However, some flexibility as to the respondents was necessary given their availability/non-availability. Suitable alternative respondents had to be found in case of non-availability to ensure a sufficient number of respondents. As is the case with elite interviews, information regarding the political system might be biased, which is why treating the provided information carefully and keeping in mind the interviewees' background and professional position is crucial.

These three stages of data collection, as presented in figure 4, correspond with the three empirical chapters. The first empirical chapter, chapter four, analyzes the political commitment of the EU. Chapter five assesses the role of policy networks in policy implementation and in the third empirical chapter, chapter six, the relationship between the EU and ASEAN is examined. These three aspects influence policy implementation and consequently normative policy coherence.

**Figure 4: Stages of Data Collection**
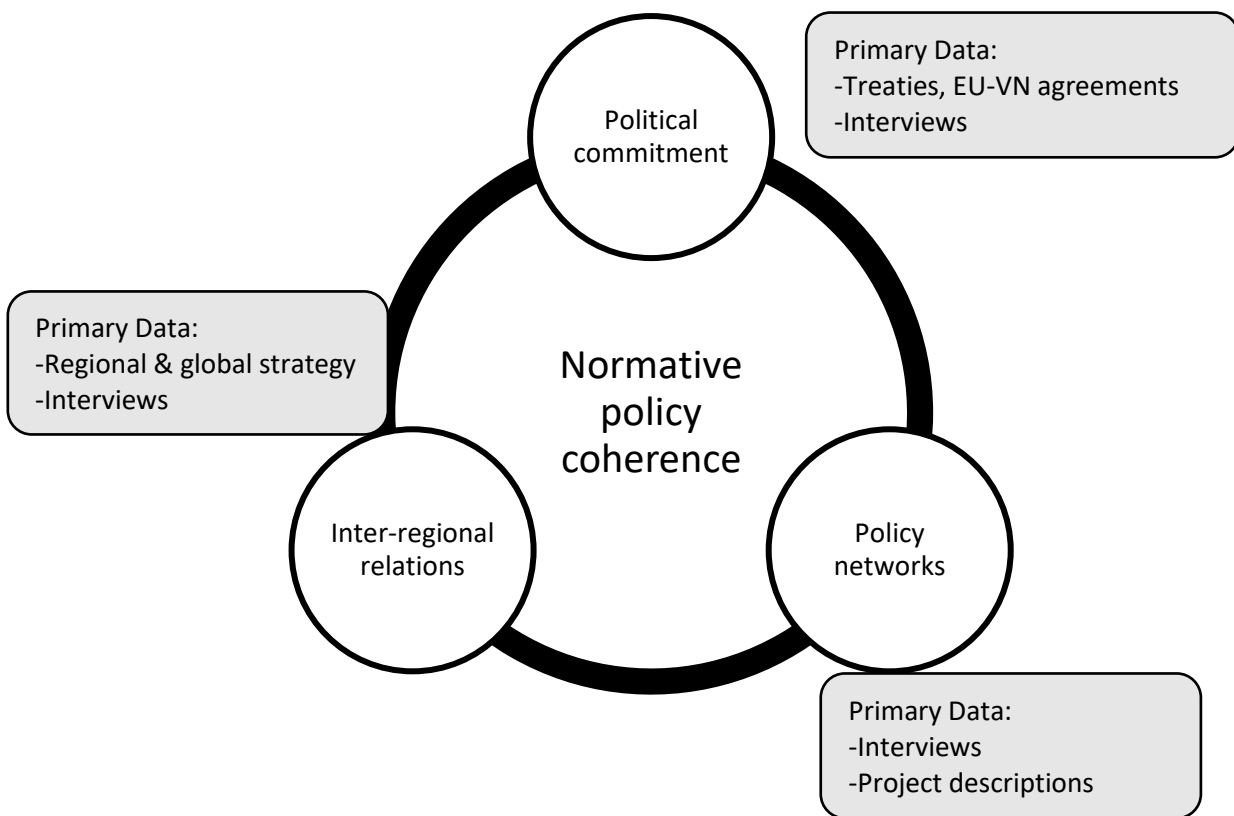


Source: author's own creation

Elite interviews in relation to data collection entail practical advantages and disadvantages for a researcher. In this research in particular, representatives from the political elite were targeted. On the one hand, bureaucrats based at the EU institutions in Brussels and on the other hand, embassy staff from European embassies in Vietnam were interviewed. In relation to that, it needs to be said that access to the political elite can sometimes proof to be complicated. Once an appointment is scheduled, the conditions are suitable for a professional research interview because most staff members have their own offices. In such a setting, the researcher is however exposed to the hierarchical structures within a given institution as well as potential hierarchical imbalances between the researcher and the respondent. This might relate to either age, gender or profession and needs to be kept in mind when conducting interviews in general.

Language is another issue, which can arise when applying interviews as a method for data collection. In this case, the two sites are Belgium, Brussels in particular as it hosts the European institutions that are of interest for this study, and Vietnam, where Hanoi represents the political center and Ho Chi Minh City the business center. For interviews with the European representatives no language barriers are expected as English or German will be the common

language. However, interviews with the political elite from Vietnam might require an interpreter due to the lack of a common language.

A third issue that needs to be mentioned in relation to elite interviews is the particular role that political representatives play. Each interview is based on the expectations that the two parties involved have towards each other. While the researcher hopes to find an honest response, the respondents might either try to give a response that they think is what the researcher wants to hear or give a response according to the official political discourse. The second point, in particular, is a concern when conducting elite interviews as the respondents might try to be politically correct rather than stating the facts. This is not to say that they will not tell the truth; instead, the meaning of their answers might be obscured and, therefore, more difficult to interpret.

Finally, a distinction is made here between experts and elites even though these two concepts are not mutually exclusive. The distinction might become clearer by specifying the terms to technical experts and political elite. A worker in a garment factory might be an expert on the decision-making processes within this factory but does not belong to the political elite. This expert might be consulted by the elite as part of their policy evaluation or formulation but is not formally part of the elite. The political elite within a country is largely concerned with broader processes rather than in-depth knowledge of particular cases. When it comes to national delegations to a third country, the situation is slightly different. Even though within the delegation there is a certain hierarchy, the status as a representative of a country per se tends to bring economic and social superiority over the local population. This is also the case for local staff employed by the embassies. While this might be less the case when posted in other European countries, in Vietnam this distinction becomes quite visible. That is to say, a project manager, who is the expert on a given project, would not be considered as political elite within a national context, but as an employee of an embassy, this project manager enters the political elite by being employed by the foreign government.

The interviews were conducted in a single round of data collection. Semi-structured questionnaires provided a guideline for the interviews. On the one hand, this semi-structured approach made the interviews comparable and led the interviewee towards the topics of interest. Carefully selected questions addressed the research questions directly and indirectly, however if relevant related topics come up, these will not be excluded from the interview. The main focus remains on the prepared set of open-ended questions, nevertheless restricting the

interview to those questions alone might leave an important detail unexplored. The interview questions are divided into three parts. The first set of questions covers background information on the respondent's position, experience and budget. The second set addresses EU-ASEAN relations and the third set, the main part of the interview, covers the type of relationship with colleagues, meeting patterns and the relevancy of norms in day-to-day work. Audio recordings were used during the interviews given the respondent's consent, which I transcribed for the analysis. In interviews, for which I have not received consent for recording, note taking had to be sufficient.

During the analysis of the interviews, certain aspects of information distortion need to be kept in mind. First, past events are reconstructed in the memory and, therefore, an interviewee's impression of an event will most likely not comprise the full picture. Second, a respondent might try to make him- or herself or his/her organization look better and present the reality in a euphemistic light. Third, the interviewee might not be aware of certain patterns or behavior and, therefore, his answer will not represent actual happenings. Fourth, this research addresses norms, which are widely accepted in Europe but often not in other cultures. Thus, the understanding and interpretation of these norms can differ from the European understanding, or it is seen as a sensitive topic. In both cases, the responses do not exactly reflect the initial aim of a question.

The data collection phase was based on the aim of increasing content and internal validity of this study. Content validity comprises the level to which a measure represents all facets of a concept and internal validity relates to the consistency of a respondent's answers across similar topics. Therefore, the interview questions were designed and structured following the causal assumptions outlined below. First, in the trade sector most general agreements are negotiated on the international level, while development agreements are held in bilateral structures. The more actors are involved and the more influential these actors are, the less power the EU has to negotiate the inclusion of norms. This assumption relates to the research question on normative power, i.e. whether the EU is a normative power in development and/or in trade, which will be the primary topic in chapter four and chapter six. Figure 5 visualizes the path from power to norm representation to normative policy coherence.

**Figure 5: From Power to NPCD**



Level of Power → Norm Representation → Normative Policy Coherence
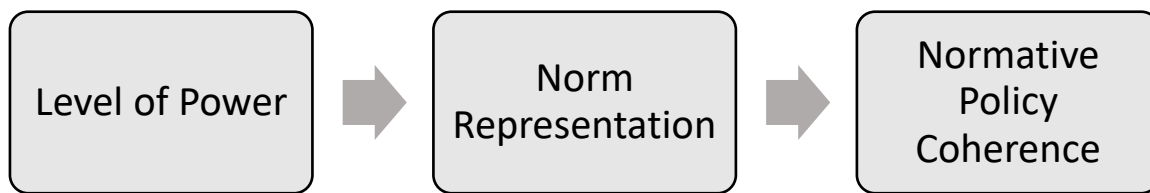
Source: author's own creation

A second path to normative policy coherence leads via communication. Communication between various stakeholders can create awareness of norms and, as a result, could potentially lead to the implementation of norms, which leads to normative policy coherence. However, due to sectorization between the development and trade arena communication is likely to be lacking. Normative spill over can only take place if existing channels allow for it, i.e. without communication between the various actors in the field, normative statements remain universally represented only on a documentation level. Figure 6 provides a visualization of this relation, which is primarily examined in chapter five by analyzing policy networks.

**Figure 6: From Communication to NPCD**



Communication → Implementation → Normative Policy Coherence

Source: author's own creation

Not only do the two sectors have two sets of norms but, even if they do, the understanding of the same norms varies among the policy arenas. While both sides emphasize their commitment to norms, the interpretation of norms is not the same, which leads to incoherence and diverging norm implementation. Hence, the need for communication and exchange between all relevant actors is even more emphasized. In reverse, the lack of communication hinders normative policy coherence for development. This assumption will be re-assessed in chapter five analyzing various policy communities and their impact on normative policy coherence for development.

In line with this structure, the interview questions posed to each individual were phrased as uniformly as possible to increase comparability between the responses. The set of questions to the Vietnamese officials differs from the questions to the European officials as they have an entirely different background from the EU representatives. All interview questions can be

found in appendix 2.

In total, 32 interviews were conducted. In appendix 3, a classification of the respondents along profession and European/national representation can be found. Due to confidentiality, any other respondent information cannot be provided here. All interviews were carefully transcribed by the author using the software Atlas.ti, except in those cases when respondents did not give their approval for audio recording. In those cases, notes taken during the interview were used for analysis. Transcripts exist for 26 out of 32 interviews and the remaining six interviews are notes-only. One audio file was deleted after transcription as requested by the respondent. The entire data set, therefore, comprises 31 policy documents, 26 interview transcripts and 6 interview notes[6]. These interviews represent European institutions in the widest sense and one Vietnamese NGO. It was not possible to interview the Luxembourgish development representative, because the office was closed due to the decision to focus development efforts on Laos, direct neighbor to Vietnam.

As mentioned above, access to the political elite can sometimes be complicated. This has also been the case with the Vietnamese government. Despite the researcher's affiliation to the Institute for Social Development Studies in Hanoi during the time of fieldwork, it was not possible to get access to a representative from the Vietnamese government. Consequently, this study exclusively focuses on the European side of the story. As a result, all interviews were conducted in English or German without the need of a translator.

### 2.1.3 Data Analysis and Coding Scheme

Given the congruence method, co-occurance of norms is the variable for analysis. Behavioral changes of individual respondents are not the target of this research. Rather, the representation of norms in the selected policy documents and the responses from elite respondents are used as indicators to make statements about the implementation of norms. The focus is not on the change of behavior on the Vietnamese side, or to measure the EU's normative impact on the Vietnamese government, but on the translation of norms from commitments on paper to individual practice on the EU's side.

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[6] A list of policy documents can be found in appendix 1. Transcripts are not published in this study due to confidentiality commitments. More information can be provided upon request to the author provided the respondents written consent.

**Table 2: Levels of Policy Analysis**

| Level | Primary Documents for Analysis* | Empirical Data |
|---|---|---|
| Policy guideline | TEU<br>TFEU<br>European Consensus for Development | Interviews |
| Policy formulation | Partnership and Cooperation Agreement<br>Free Trade Agreement | Interviews |
| Policy implementation programs | Multi-Annual Indicative Programs | Interviews |
| Policy implementation projects | EU Blue Books<br>Project Descriptions | Interviews |

Source: author's own creation

*this is an exemplary list. The full list of policy documents can be found in appendix 1.

NPCD can be identified by the presence of norms on all levels of implementation. The degree of coherence can vary from level to level. To structure the measurement of NPCD, four levels of analysis have been defined reflecting the stages to be traced in the process-tracing 'light' approach (see table 2). These four levels are defined by the level of precision they represent in the relationship between the EU and third countries. While this classification per se can be applied to various relationships between the EU and its partner countries, the selection of country specific documents and interview partners reflects the choice of Vietnam as a partner country in this study.

The first level corresponds to the highest institutional level within the EU represented by the Treaty on the European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. As indicated above, this stage of the policy process reflects a rather rhetorical commitment regarding normative policy coherence for development. The TFEU lays out technical processes of policy-making such as voting rules and decision-making procedures, which could be understood as implementing mechanisms, but as there is no reference about how to implement coherence or how to promote norms, this will be taken solely as a guideline. These guidelines apply to all EU policies.

The second level represents the major agreements between the EU and Vietnam. This level, called policy formulation, is characterized by the position between the guideline and the implementation. In other words, the agreements are more precise that the guidelines on the one hand and tailored to the contracting parties on the other hand. Nevertheless, these agreements leave room for interpretation and, therefore, for the exact implementation.

Multiannual Indicative Programs (MIPs) represent the first policy implementation stage, i.e. policy implementation on a program level. The MIPs apply to an entire country and cover a time span of five years on average.

The fourth level is the project level. This stage is the final implementation stage in this study, because projects are the smallest institutionally organized unit of implementation. Projects often tend to be technical in nature, which reflects the highest level of precision regarding the objectives to be achieved. In contrast to the multiannual indicative programs, projects have a local focus.

Within each level, the EU norms need to be identified, that is to say that a norm either occurs or does not occur in a given document or interview. Therefore, the issue of how norms will be identified when they are not mentioned explicitly remains, which is why the various coding techniques were applied in the data analysis. Norms can be named either directly through the concrete mention of a norm or indirectly by describing a situation without using the terminology. A coding scheme supports the analysis. This scheme evolved a number of coding techniques that were applied during the first cycle of coding. All coding was done using the software Atlas.ti, which was also used for the interview transcription.

The coding scheme was split by four cycle-one coding methods: grammatical methods, elemental methods, affective methods, and exploratory methods (Saldaña, 2009). Cycle-two coding methods were not applied, because their purpose is to develop broader thematic categories, which are mainly used for theory building, which in turn is not aimed at in this study.

One type of the first-cycle methods are grammatical methods whose names derive from the coding technique. Grammatical methods are attribute coding, which relates to the participant's information such as age, gender, or job experience, simultaneous coding, which allows for several codes attributed to one string of words, and magnitude coding, which reflects an attitude towards something (Saldaña, 2009). For example, the statement "I came in summer 2014" represents a string that was coded under the attribute coding method and was given the code "work experience less than 2 years", which means that at the time of the interview the respondent had worked in the position the respondent held at that point for less than two years. This information is background information about the respondent, which might be relevant when a respondent seems uncertain of their responses. A respondent who has achieved their

position only recently tends to have less insight than someone who has been working in that position for several years. Simultaneous coding implies that one string, either a full sentence or a set of words, can have more than one code attributed to it. One piece of information can be used for different categories and codes are not mutually exclusive. When asking the question "Are your relations formal or informal?" and the respondent answers "both", "both" would be coded as "formal" and "informal". Magnitude coding is used to detect a country's relationship with the EU and, in particular, whether that country would appreciate more coordination or collaboration with the EU or less. "Doing things jointly would be an advantage" is consequently coded as the country wanting more cooperation. Structural coding, one of the elemental coding methods that are used as an initial approach to qualitative data analysis, was applied to detect phrases which relate to the topic of inquiry (Saldaña, 2009). This method is a method which helps to identify passages that relate to normative policy coherence in EU development and trade policies broadly. Most of the codes were used to provide the context in which the EU operates, but some information is also more directly related to the topic as the example about policy coherence in table 3 below shows. In the example, the respondent directly addresses policy coherence, which is the topic of research.

Value coding, a coding method that falls within the affective methods that address personal experiences and subjectivity, aims to detect the respondent's values, beliefs or attitudes (Saldaña, 2009). This type of coding is particularly relevant for this study as it aims at normative representations across policy commitment and policy implementation. Even though this coding addresses subjectivity, a distinction between a respondent's personal values or professional values is not made, because it is assumed that personal values translate into professional values.

Taking the example given in table 3, the respondent stated that gender equality and human rights are substantial for the respondent's country. This is not their personal point of view, but the country's position, which in the case of delegation staff might merge. What is important is not whether that is a personal or professional statement, but whether or not norms occur in different settings. If the respondent claims that gender equality is important, then this would have to reflect in other settings as well, such as in the monthly meetings or projects. The mere statement of a norm is, thus, not sufficient to claim that norms are actually relevant in development or trade. Indirect statements of norms need to be evaluated carefully. Promoting "the idea of an open society" was coded as "freedom", because of the freedoms a society were

to enjoy in a non-discriminatory environment. As is the case with coding, and with qualitative analysis in particular, all interpretations are subjective to the researcher's understanding of what was said and what it is supposed to mean. Consequently, inferences and conclusions need to be expressed with great care.

The last type of coding methods are exploratory methods, among which is hypothesis coding. Hypothesis coding is applying codes that are derived from theories to the data set to test given hypotheses (Saldaña, 2009). The analysis can be done either qualitatively or quantitatively but was done in a qualitative manner for this study. Sub-questions were used for this research instead of hypotheses to leave room to the data to reflect reality. The sub-questions, however, were phrased to reflect on the proxy factors (political commitment, policy networks, and regional interests) and to address the relationship between these proxy factors and NPCD. Thus, the questions were derived from theory and were guiding themes during the coding phase. Regarding policy networks, for example, the question is how they influence normative coherence. One of the respondents gave an answer that gives some insight about the sectoral divisions and overlaps: "as less and less member state are involved in development, it is the commercial/economic attachés who take that place". This string was coded as "knowledge overlap".

Table 3 gives a summary of the coding methods with examples from the interviews.

For the policy documents, value coding has been used to determine the occurrence of norms in those documents. Search strings were simplified in order to provide more flexibility. For example, in order to identify whether the norm "democracy" occurred in a document, the search string did not cover the exact word. Instead, the abbreviated term "demo" was utilized to allow for variation between the words "democracy" and "democratic", which both represent the norms "democracy". Similarly, for "gender equality" both "gender" and "equality" were used as separate search strings. This allowed the recognition of "equality between men and women", which would have been excluded by using solely the precise wording "gender equality". Table 4 provides an overview of all twelve norms, the search string and positive and negative example, i.e. example that show commitment to norms and examples that do not.

**Table 3: Applied Coding Methods and Examples from Interviews**

| Coding Method | Example from Date | Code |
|---|---|---|
| Attribute Coding | "I came in summer 2014" | RESPONDENT_work experience less than 2 years |
| Simultaneous Coding | Question: "Is your relationship formal or informal?"<br>Respondent: "It is both." | REL-DEV_formal & REL-DEV_informal |
| Magnitude Coding | "So, doing things jointly would be an advantage. We also try to look for the coming year, the EU is planning a number of activities, where we could bring [our] experts." | REL-EU_country wants more cooperation with EU |
| Structural Coding | "Which means that the policy coherence improves in one direction. Probably it would improve better in the other direction if the development counsellors went to the economic counsellors meeting." | NORMS_Policy coherence |
| Value Coding | "To try to promote [our country] also with the values that we stand for: gender equality is very important for [us], human rights; trying through different means to promote the idea of an open society." | NORMS_Gender equality<br><br>NORMS_Human rights<br><br>NORMS_Freedom |
| Hypothesis Coding | Research question:<br>*Why might existing policy networks limit normative coherence between development and trade policies?*<br><br>Example:<br>"What we see is that on the development counsellors meeting, as less and less member states are involved in development, it is the commercial attachés or economic attachés who take that place." | REL-DEV_knowledge overlap |

Source: author's compilation based on Saldaña's (2009) typology

Creating the codes and revisiting the data set to ensure the rigorous application of those codes is already subject to the researcher's precision and interpretation. All responses and search strings were evaluated based on the context. The sole appearance of a term did not suffice to be taken into account as a normative reference. Taking one example from table 4 "free from discrimination" could be a reference to trade rules, but in this case taken from the EU-Vietnam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, it is under the labor, employment and social affairs heading making reference to non-discrimination at the work place based on nationality. Thus, for each normative reference in both the interviews and policy documents, the context in which the reference was made was taken into account.

**Table 4: Norm Search Strings and Examples from Policy Documents**

| Norms | Search strings | Positive Example | Negative Example |
|---|---|---|---|
| Democracy | "Democracy" "Demo" "Plural" | Democratic values | Demonstrate |
| Freedom | "Freedom" "Free" | Religious freedom | Free trade area |
| Gender equality | "Gender" "Equality" "Equal" | Equality between men and women | Equal access to markets |
| Good governance | "Good governance" "Governance" "Govern" | Good governance | Food security governance |
| Human rights | "Human rights" "Human" | Human rights | Human development |
| Justice | "Justice" "Just" | Establishing cooperation in the area of justice | International justice |
| Liberty | "Liberty" | Liberty | Liberal market economy |
| Non-discrimination | "Discrimination" "Discrim" | Free from any discrimination | Non-discriminatory commercial rules |
| Peace | "Peace" | Peace | Peace mission |
| Rule of law | "Rule of law" | Rule of law | - |
| Solidarity | "Solid" | Solidarity | Consolidate |
| Sustainability | "Sustain" | Sustainable development | Sustained growth |

Source: author's own creation

Drawing conclusions from the codes and making generalizable deductions adds another layer of difficulty, which is why the coding results needs to be evaluated cautiously. Normative policy coherence for development is qualitatively analyzed via the proxy factors indicated above. Taking the example mentioned above, involving economic attachés in development counsellor meetings would indicate that existing structural divisions between the development network and the trade network are starting to diffuse, which in turn makes knowledge transfer more fluid. The potential of normative spill-over from one network into the other is higher given the closer contact, but the direction of the spill-over remains unclear.

### 2.1.4 Country Selection

In many comparative studies, this section would be called "case selection" as one country would represent one case; here, however, the cases of analysis are two EU policy sectors and not the recipient country per se. In order to evaluate the two cases, Vietnam has been defined as the addressee of these policies. Vietnam has been chosen as the example for this comparative study of EU policies, because it has recently moved up from the World Bank

classification as a low-income country to a state with the status of a lower middle-income country. With this new status, which was achieved in 2009 with a GNI per capita of USD 1.120, Vietnam is now regarded as a country wealthy enough to support its own system and, thus, not dependent on development aid anymore[7]. Subsequently, the EU – among other donors – is currently in the process of pulling out aid and shifting the focus of its relationship with Vietnam on trade. While I will go into more detail about trade relations in chapter four, it needs to be pointed out here that the process of transition from development aid to trade is the crucial aspect of this study, which resulted from Vietnam's economic growth. Thus, the attribute of being a lower middle-income country was a crucial aspect for the selection of an example case. The transition of relations implies that it is a process of change in which some donors phase out development assistance and turn towards other policy tools to be used in bilateral relations. Hence, development aid is not stopped instantly with the status of a middle-income country. Vietnam, for example, still receives development assistance from the EU and its member states, but several member states have already terminated their programs or scaled down the financial support (EU Delegation to Vietnam, 2015).

Out of the 51 lower middle-income countries and territories, six countries (Armenia, Egypt, Georgia, Moldova, Morocco and Ukraine) are eliminated from the selection as they fall under the European Neighborhood Policy and, therefore, benefit from a different development scheme. Second, Djibouti and Kosovo drop out of the selection process, because they are not backed up by recent World Bank data. The remaining 49 lower middle-income countries and their respective year of being classified as such are presented in table 5.

Third, all countries that became middle-income countries before 2000 are eliminated, because in 2000 the approach to development cooperation changed with the introduction of the Millennium Development Goals. To be more precise, my focus is on the current state of normative policy coherence and, therefore, the country of analysis should have moved to middle-income status rather recently. Especially the time after in introduction of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 leading to the creation of the European External Action Service is of particular importance. On the other hand, if the transformation to a lower middle-income country has taken place too recently, the time span under analysis would be too short to identify any

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[7] World Bank (2013). http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD/countries/VN-4E-XN?display=graph; Note: World Bank classification: "middle-income economies are those with a GNI per capita of more than $1,045 but less than $12,746", see: http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups

transition in political relations.

**Table 5: Lower Middle-income Countries (GNI per capita between USD 1.046 and 4.125)**

| Before 2000 | Cabo Verde, El Salvador, Egypt, Guatemala, Kiribati, Micronesia, Morocco, |
|---|---|
| Since 2001 | Syria |
| Since 2002 | Honduras |
| Since 2004 | Armenia, Bhutan, Georgia, Indonesia, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka, Ukraine |
| Since 2005 | Guyana |
| Since 2006 | Bolivia, Congo, Timor-Leste |
| Since 2007 | Moldova |
| Since 2008 | Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, India, Lesotho, Mauritania, Nigeria, Papua |
| Since 2009 | Sao Tomé and Principe, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Zambia |
| Since 2010 | Pakistan |
| Since 2011 | Lao, Solomon Islands |
| Since 2012 | Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic |
| Since 2013 | Senegal |
| Since 2014 | Bangladesh, Myanmar, Tajikistan |

Source: World Bank (2016). http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups#Lower_middle_income

Coinciding with the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty and the subsequent change in the EU's foreign relations, Sao Tomé and Principe, Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Zambia attained the status of lower middle-income country. Out of these four states, Vietnam has been chosen for the study of normative policy coherence in the transition from EU development cooperation to trade relations, because of its location in a remarkably dynamic and fast-growing region. After the EU has failed in negotiating a free trade agreement (FTA) with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), it has to develop a new strategy for its trade relations in which Vietnam is playing a vital role.

To sum up, the classification as lower-middle income country in 2009 and resulting from this ongoing development cooperation with and increased transition to trade relations, and its placement in a politically and economically interesting region for the EU make Vietnam a suitable exemplary case for the study of EU normative policy coherence for development.

### 2.1.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical questions are inevitable in qualitative research. The interaction with interview partners poses several concerns, particularly the hierarchical asymmetry between the researcher and the respondents. In the case of elite interviews, which represent a major share of data for this research, the asymmetry can vary from case to case. On the one hand,

respondents have their professional rank, such as the position as an ambassador for example. On the other hand, the researcher poses questions, which the respondents might not be able to answer according to their own expectations. This kind of setting requires careful attention from the researcher in order to manage the hierarchical balance.

Each respondent received the question form and consent form before the interview. Whereas this proceeding can have effects on the responses and thus bias the data, for ethical reasons I chose do inform the respondents beforehand in case they have any doubts about confidentiality. The respondents were asked to sign the consent form before the interview to be aware of their role in the study and the possibility to withdraw from the study at any given point.

According to Vietnamese standards, some questions about norms would have been considered sensitive and would not have been asked during a meeting with a Vietnamese government official. Since it was not possible to meet any Vietnamese government officials, this did not turn out to be a problem. Apart from one Vietnamese NGO representative, all respondents were employees of Western organizations and, therefore, I did not see any potential threat in asking norm related questions, because in most Western societies freedom of thought and freedom of expression are not a sensitive issue. Some of the questions might nevertheless be perceived as sensitive, if they make the respondent feel incapable of answering according to their own expectations or according to what they believe the researchers' expectations are. To avoid any unwanted tension between the researcher and the respondents, the respondents always had the opportunity to decline answering a question.

Conducting the fieldwork interviews, both in Vietnam and in Brussels, has been approved by the Ethics Review Panel based at the University of Luxembourg.

The publication of the results of the study are not expected to have any impact on the individual respondents due to anonymization and data aggregation. Anonymization has been applied through interview numbering according to the chronological order of interview conduction.

## 2.2   VIETNAM AS THE EMPIRICAL CASE FOR EU POLICY ANALYSIS

The focus of the study remains on the policy analysis of EU policies, but Vietnam has been chosen as the addressee country of EU policies, due to the transition phase it is in, which leads to changing donor behavior. Concretely, the EU and EU member states are phasing out development aid and replacing the donor-recipient relation with a more mutual political and trade relationship. This section briefly describes the recent changes in ODA and trade flows between the EU and Vietnam to give an idea about this transition, which is the context for the NPCD study.

The relationship between the EU and Vietnam started out with humanitarian aid, then moved on to development cooperation under the Framework Cooperation Agreement (FCA) in 1996 and has now reached a stage where trade relations are increasingly important. Especially in middle-income countries, where development aid is usually being phased out because the country is perceived as having enough own resources (Embassy of Luxembourg in Bangkok, 2017), other (donor-) policies are required to maintain the effort towards achieving freedom or abolishing unfreedom. Put differently, how can development as freedom be ensured if the primary channel for its implementation is terminated?

In the case of middle-income countries, it is generally assumed that those countries have reached a level of income with which they can maintain themselves and, therefore, continued development aid is no longer required. The initial donor-recipient relationship subsequently undergoes a transformation to a more mutual trade and diplomatic relationship between the two partners in which the risk of prioritizing economic benefits over sustainability is high. In this scenario, previous results achieved through development cooperation are likely to be undermined by commercial interests and, hence, progress towards a sustainable future will be slowed down. To minimize this risk, other donor policies – particularly trade policies – should be aligned with development policies and strive towards achieving the SGDs even after development aid is phased out. This is not to say that trade generally has a negative effect on development. On the contrary, it can be supportive as it might generate economic growth in the developing country if combined with appropriate aid measures (Morrissey, 2006). One possibility would be the financial support for measures to create a more dynamic and diverse economy that enables the developing country to participate in the global market even after aid programs have ended.

As one of the major donor groups, the European Union institutions and the EU member states have started to address this challenge of coherence (European Commission, 2011, 2015b; European Union, 2017), which is particularly relevant in countries where the transition from development cooperation to trade takes place. The large ODA capacity brings advantages and disadvantages in terms of policy coherence. On the one hand, because of the EU's large ODA and trade capacities, implementing normative policy coherence across development and trade policies could have positive effects on aid effectiveness by reducing negative impacts on development efforts. On the other hand, as mentioned above, the multitude of actors in the EU's policy implementation makes coherence harder to achieve.

Figure 7 indicates that ODA disbursements to Vietnam, which is a middle-income country since 2009[8], are slowly decreasing. France, Sweden and the UK have reached their highest disbursement level in 2009 with approximately EUR 208 million, EUR 17 million and EUR 55 million respectively, the EU and Finland in 2010 with EUR 81 million and EUR 39 million respectively. France has traditionally been the biggest ODA donor towards Vietnam out of the EU member states. This has historical roots given that Vietnam has been a French colony from the mid-1880s until the mid-1950s. Japan occupied Vietnam during World War II, but France regained its former territory after the end of the war. Thus, for roughly sixty years, France controlled Indochina, among which was Vietnam. Despite the persisting large share of ODA that France provides to Vietnam, there has been a gradual decrease from over EUR 200 million in 2009 to roughly EUR 140 million in 2015.

The decline of ODA is merely one of the indicators for the shifting relationship between the European donors and Vietnam as a recipient of aid towards a more reciprocal relationship. Another indicator are the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and the Free Trade Agreement that were negotiated between the two parties. All Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states apart from Brunei and Singapore are classified as middle-income countries[9] according to the World Bank categories, but not all of them are

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[8] The World Bank groups middle income countries into lower middle-income and upper-middle income countries. Vietnam has reached a GNI per capita of $1,120 in 2009, passing the GNI threshold of $1,045 to become a lower middle-income country. Source: World Bank data.

[9] Lower middle income: Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines, Vietnam (Source: World Bank Data https://data.worldbank.org/income-level/lower-middle-income (last accessed on 07 February 2018)); Upper middle income: Malaysia, Thailand (Source: World Bank Data https://data.worldbank.org/income-level/upper-middle- income (last accessed on 07 February 2018)); High income: Brunei, Singapore (Source: World Bank Data https://data.worldbank.org/income-level/high-income (last accessed on 07 February 2018))

experiencing a shift in their relationship with the EU towards reciprocity. In Laos, for example, the development efforts are being strengthened, i.e. the donor-recipient relationship maintained or even emphasized. The EU has pledged EUR 162 million for the period 2016-2020 (Ambassadors to Laos, 2016, p.74), whereas from 1993 to 1999 the EU disbursed EUR 57 million and from 2000 to 2006 EUR 43 million (European Community, 2007, p.32). Chapter six will give a more detailed overview of the EU-ASEAN relations, but the precise reasons for this particular divergence between Laos and Vietnam remain unclear.

**Figure 7: ODA Disbursements to Vietnam**
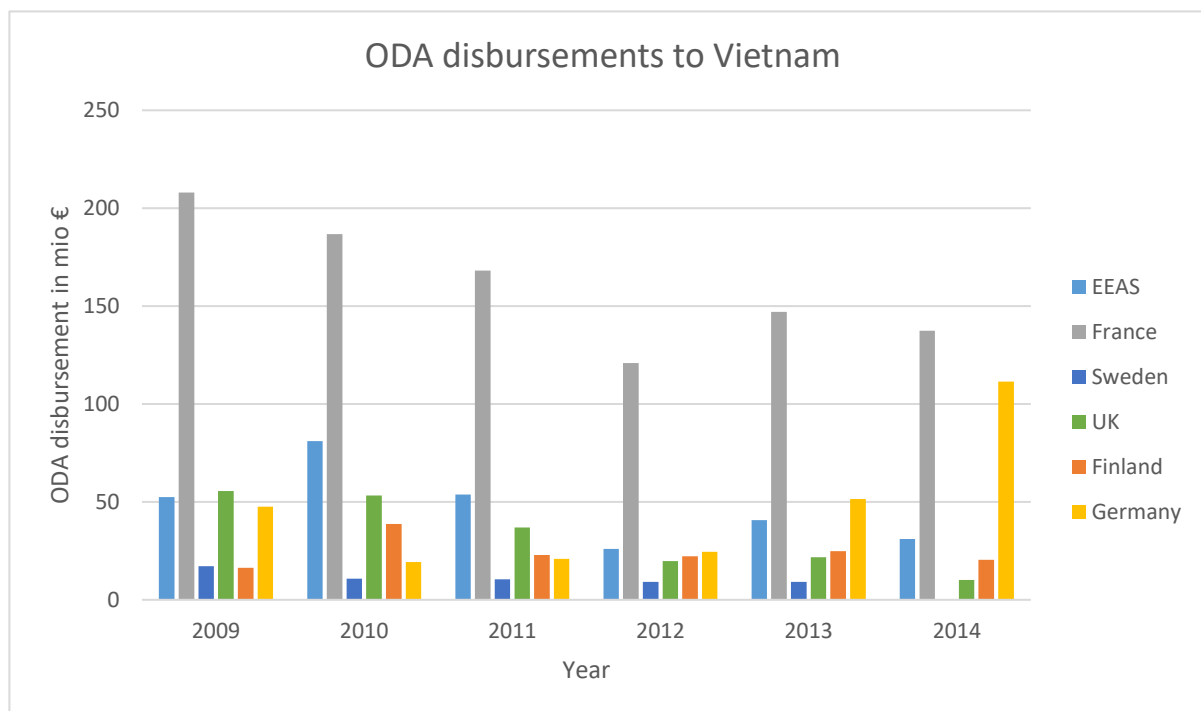


Source: author's compilation based on EU Blue Books 2010-2015

A final aspect are the trade volumes with Vietnam, which have steadily increased, as can be seen in figure 8. EU statistics show a fast increase in imports of goods from Vietnam to the EU internal market from EUR 5.58 million in 2009 to EUR 39.98 million in 2015 (DG TRADE, 2017). The value of exports in goods has grown at a slower pace from EUR 1.89 million in 2009 to EUR 8.45 million in 2015 (DG TRADE, 2017). In other words, within seven years, the trade volume has changed to the extent that in 2015 the total trade was six times the trade volume of 2009.

**Figure 8: EU-VN Trade in Goods**
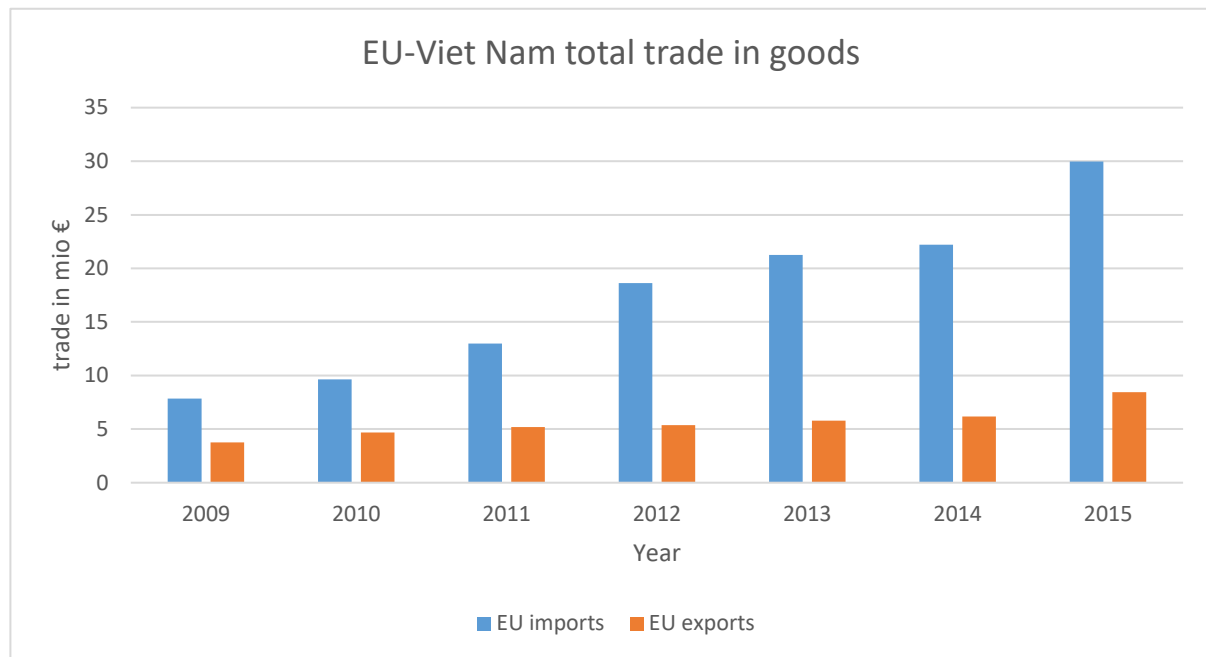


Source: DG TRADE, 2017

However, not only ODA and trade volumes indicate the strengthening of the trade relationship and decline of the donor-recipient relationship. Additionally, from a political perspective, i.e. a perspective that relates to security concerns and regional integration, the EU has put its focus on emphasizing economic tries and improving its economic relationships with several third countries. "Only through intensified ties and coordination with partners in Asia, the EU will be able to address major global issues such as security, trade, energy, nuclear safety, non-proliferation, cyber security, migration, marine pollution and climate change" (European Union, 2014b, p.1). The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Vietnam, in particular, are a main target area for the EU as, for example, represented in the EU's Global Strategy (European Union, 2016a).

As this transition from development cooperation to stronger trade relations takes place, the question of normative policy coherence for development becomes more important, because without policy coherence "development as freedom" is inclined to be addressed only partially, which would limit the approach's full potential and, therefore, limit development efforts. Aspiring policy coherence for development as a goal in itself might distort attention from the actual goal of development as freedom. Focusing on the technicalities of achieving policy coherence, understanding PCD as an end in itself, can hardly lead to development as freedom when development as freedom is not the goal. Instead, policy coherence can be used as one of the tools to support the development as freedom approach and be understood as a process

that will lead to a goal which is shared by all policies involved (Carbone, 2008). The following chapter will provide a deeper explanation of policy coherence, normative policy coherence for development, EU norms, the role of normative power and the distinction between NPCD as a means or end in itself.

# Chapter 3: Conceptualizing and Theorizing Normative Policy Coherence for Development (NPCD)

This chapter gives an overview over conceptual and theoretical discussions related to policy coherence for development, norms and normative power to highlight this dissertation's contribution to the PCD literature. Normative policy coherence for development is an understudied concept despite its increasing relevance in international development cooperation, which is presented in the first section. The second section provides a definition of EU norms and their distinctiveness from other international organizations' norms, which forms the first component of NPCD. This is followed by a critical overview of terminology and conceptualizations of the second component of NPCD, namely policy coherence for development. Norms and PCD are the two conceptual components of NPCD. In terms of implementing NPCD, the fourth section relates NPCD and normative power Europe (NPE). NPE is one part of NPCD in terms of implementation highlighting the EU's rhetorical self-representation as a normative actor. This, however, needs to be complemented by normative actions to achieve normative policy coherence for development.

## 3.1   RELEVANCE OF NPCD

Normative coherence, coherence between policy-making in the development arena, non-development arenas and democratic norms, is recognized as a driver for transformative development (Koff, 2017b; Koff & Maganda, 2016). Legally speaking, the EU is bound to promote the norms of its own creation "in the wider world" (Art. 21 TEU). Thus, with the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the EU has reaffirmed its commitment to its founding values, i.e. democracy, freedom, gender equality, human rights, justice, non-discrimination, rule of law and solidarity (Art. 2 TEU), and actually created a legal obligation to advance those norms abroad (Art. 21 TEU). Additionally, political commitment to norms, particularly related to development policies, was reinforced by the EU through the European Consensus on Development (European Union, 2006) and the subsequent New Consensus on Development with which the EU showed its support for the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development (European Union, 2017). The post-2015 development agenda is considered to be an agenda of transformative development which calls for a normative approach to policy coherence for

development (Siitonen, 2016).

How does this translate into policy practices? What happens when development cooperation is phased out? Do external policies still have to be coherent with the global development agenda? Through the normative lens of PCD, external policies would still have to be coherent after the phase-out of development policies in their support of developing countries. In lower-middle income countries development aid efforts are shifted to stronger trade ties (Carbone & Orbie, 2014), which might imply that development norms are being lost. Due to the international paradigm shift towards normative development and the transformative development agenda, development efforts are not solely understood as technical development anymore but as individuals' capacitation to make free choices (Fukuda-Parr, 2014; Sen, 1999; Uvin, 2007). With this broad understanding of normative development, other policy arenas are called upon to contribute to development. Therefore, also non-development policies need to be coherent with this normative approach if donor countries are sincerely committed to long-term development.

The EU plays a crucial role in this discussion for several reasons. First, as already mentioned above, the EU has based its external actions on the values of its own creation (Art. 21 TEU). Consequently, all external policies, not solely development policies, are guided by those values according to the Lisbon Treaty. This can be described as the legal dimension of normative policy coherence for development. Second, an important shift in development cooperation has taken place at the global level. International cooperation guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has shaped international relations since 2016. Contrary to the preceding Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the SDGs encourage responsibility of all to achieve sustainable development worldwide. Third, the EU acts and portrays itself as a norm-driven actor. In relation to the SDGs, for example, the EU has strongly shaped these goals and "will lead by example by implementing its commitments on sustainable development and climate action" (European Union, 2016, p.40). Because of these three reasons, the EU's legal commitments, the sustainability agenda at the global level, and the EU's self-portrayal as a moral actor, the EU is an important actor for implementing normative development. Normative policy coherence for development is more than just an initiative that demands attention while aid programs are in place. NPCD goes beyond the limits of development and should be understood as an underlying attitude/characteristic/position that affects the EU's relationships with all countries.

However, who can and who should benefit from NPCD, the partner country or the EU? Some negative effects of policy coherence, as other forms of coordination, can be prolonged policy-making processes, higher expenditures and complicated coordination mechanisms. Despite those bureaucratic complications, NPCD could nevertheless benefit the EU at a political level, because it can shape a more consistent picture of the EU vis-à-vis third countries. Since the EU is not a strong military power, but relies most on its economic resources, i.e. it's civilian power (Bull, 1982; Duchêne, 1972), adding a stronger normative layer could strengthen its position in the international arena through greater legitimacy (Langan, 2012; Manners, 2002). For the partner country, NPCD could also have positive and negative impacts. On the one hand, partner countries that already have a democratic system might be able to create stronger links to the EU, which could result in closer relations both bilaterally but also in international negotiations. On the other hand, the EU would have to suspend its relations to countries that do not meet its normative standards. This has been the case with Myanmar, for example, with which the EU suspended most of its relations between 2010 and 2013 due to Myanmar's human rights abuses[10].

In this research, normative policy coherence for development is defined as the implementation of European values within and across the EU's external policies. Drawing from Manner's (2002) categorization, normative policy coherence for development can be defined as internal and horizontal coherence regarding the implementation of values. Values, which are broad statements of ideas with low political commitment, can be turned into norms by implementing those values into practice. Consequently, the concept of normative policy coherence for development addresses the translation of values into norms, i.e. the translation of ideas into practice. In the EU's case, normative policy coherence for development means the implementation of democracy, liberty, peace, good governance, sustainability, justice, non-discrimination, the rule of law, human rights, fundamental freedoms, gender equality, and solidarity in its external policies. According to Art. 21 TEU on general provisions on the EU's external actions, "the Union's action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality

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[10] Restrictive measures were introduced in April 2010 by Council Decision 2010/232/CFSP and lifted (with the exception of military equipment) in April 2013 by Council Decision 2013/184/CFSP

and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law".

Before entering a more detailed discussion on normative policy coherence for development, the two main concepts comprised in the notion of normative policy coherence for development will be examined: norms on the one hand, and policy coherence for development on the other.

## 3.2 NORMS

This sub-section presents norms as one of the two components of NPCD. First, a semantic distinction between norms, principles and values is made to highlight this dissertation's focus on implementation related to norms. Second, this is followed by a specification of the EU's norms, which are under study here. Third, in order to place the EU's norms into an international norm perspective, norms from other international organizations (WTO, UN, OECD) are presented.

### 3.2.1 Defining the Difference between Norms, Principles and Values

A set of characteristics (see Kelsen, 1990) will guide the identification of a norm. First, a norm indicates that something should be done or provides an understanding of how something should be done (Kelsen, 1990, p.2). Someone 'should' act according to a norm when a norm is set and instructs a certain behavior. Subsequently, a norm refers the duty to act accordingly (Kelsen, 1990, p.108). In other words, the difference between a norm and any other kind of rule is its "oughtness" which attaches the dimension of proper behavior to a norm (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p.981). In the following, I present several features of what constitutes a norm and how these relate to the EU.

In the EU's case, the Lisbon Treaty provides norms, which refer to institutional behavior (see Art 2 and 21 TEU). The EU's legal basis comprises a set of norms that stimulates the EU's behavior as an institution and, consequently, all EU actions are expected to follow those norms. In addition, for this dissertation I assume that EU officials also follow this normative commitment due to their representative function. In the Treaty, EU officials are not directly addressed by those norms, but as they are embedded in the bureaucratic system of the EU, they are likely to act accordingly. Interviews have been conducted on an individual basis, but the aggregation of the responses reflects the institutional behavior, which is the level of analysis for this dissertation. Thus, the focus is on institutional norms.

A second feature is a norm's restriction of another norm. A trade-off between utilitarian norms,

aimed at maximizing utilities, and maxim norms, which are prescriptive moral norms (see Manners, 2013), can occur in cases where democratic principles, for example, increase financial and procedural burdens. Concerning NPCD, this feature plays an important role as it is likely that norms, which are promoted through EU development cooperation, may restrict desired trade deals between the EU and third countries and vice versa.

Third, norms can arise either as a new stimulus for behavior or out of existing habits of behavior in society (Kelsen, 1990). In the case of the EU's external policies, norms have been introduced formally in the form of guiding values enshrined in the EU Treaties that are to be implemented. In terms of institutional norms, they give a new stimulus for all subsequent agreements, programs and projects. This kind of actively set norm is called positive norm (Kelsen, 1990). Fourth, normal behavior does not equal normative behavior. "[S]omething is normal, because it is not objected or changed by anyone and subsequently can be defined as something that 'should' happen" (Kelsen, 1990, p.3). Contrary to this, in this study, normal behavior is not automatically considered as something that 'should' happen, i.e. as normative behavior. A certain behavior that does not represent a specific set of prescribed norms cannot be defined as something that 'should' happen, because this behavior would disregard values and norms that were explicitly set as rules of behavior. For example, corruption might be a normal, but illegal, action in country A in which the EU conducts business. Participating in this kind of behavior would be normal according to local standards but would not reflect the EU's value of rule of law and, thus, would not be normative behavior. However, normal behavior can be normative behavior and authors argue that the EU is a normative power because it can "define what passes as normal in world politics" (Manners, 2002, p.236). Furthermore, a norm does not always have to be desired. In order to achieve a certain objective, the right thing to do might not be suitable for achieving that objective. In trade agreements, for example, human rights notions might not be desirable as they complicate economic relationships due to the involvement of sensitive topics, and simultaneously increase the costs of production if human rights are effectively implemented.

Last, implementation plays a crucial role. A crucial aspect of the effectiveness of a norm is the distinction between the mere existence of a norm and the actual implementation. On the one hand, legal norms, or laws, are implemented through punishment in case of norm adverse behavior. On the other hand, the implementation of moral norms, becomes visible through approval or disapproval of a certain behavior (Kelsen, 1990, p.3). In the political arena,

however, the morality of norms is sometimes undermined by the strategic use of norms for non-normative purposes (Pedersen, 2002), or the non-implementation of norms despite political commitments. How the EU can implement its norms is the topic of the next sub-section.

### 3.2.2 EU Core Norms and the EU's Institutional Potential to Implement Them

Following the outline of norms in general, specificities of EU norms in contrast to other Western norms will be addressed below. I want to highlight again that Western or EU norms are not considered to be the universal truth, but for this study EU norms are the focus.

Often no distinction is being made between European norms and Western norms (see Leben, 1999). However, I argue that norms promoted by the EU can be distinguished from norms promoted by other Western actors such as the US, but also from international organizations such as the UN or the OECD. Even though Leben (1999) equates European and Western norms, he concludes that the EU's approach to the role of norms is certainly distinct from other Western countries. On the one hand, it takes over the position of a pioneer in the legalization and implementation of human rights and, on the other hand, the majority of European countries assumes a positive position towards the strengthening of human rights. Both features are uniquely represented in Europe (Leben, 1999).

The origins of universal human rights lie in European nation states, from which they spread to the wider Western world. "It is not difficult to show […] how the invention of human rights, which was to lead to the publication of the Universal Declaration, is linked to the political, religious, and philosophical history of Europe […]" (Leben, 1999, p.73). The more general term of Western norms, however limited to human rights, can thus essentially be based on European norms. Since the peace of Westphalia, Europe was governed by the principles of sovereignty, non-interference, self-determination and balance of power. While these principles spread across the globe over the past centuries, Europe developed norms that go far beyond those initial principles determining peaceful co-existence of nation states. Democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are among the most prominent norms that the EU currently embodies. Already in 1969, the European Court of Justice decided that fundamental human rights are included in the legal basis of the European Community (Lenaerts & de Smijter, 2001).

Manners (2002) distinguishes between 'core' norms and 'minor' norms; the former

representing peace, liberty, rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, and democracy, and the latter social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development, and good governance. Peace and liberty came into play after the Second World War to prevent another war outbreak in Europe. In the preamble of the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 the commitment to peace has been highlighted and transferred to the Treaty of the European Community in 1957. As a countermeasure to the Communist Bloc, democracy, the rule of law and human rights were promoted as a symbol of Western values. These values are still among the priorities of the European Union. The most recent Treaties on the European Union and the Functioning of the European Union implemented in 2009, the so-called Lisbon Treaties, entail the before mentioned values as well as freedom (TEU Art. 2), which can be called 'core' norms. To keep up the distinction between 'core' and 'minor' norms, the Lisbon Treaties also list solidarity and non-discrimination as minor norms (TEU Art. 2). These are the principles that each member state has incorporated, however the EU as such is not founded on those values. Nicolaïdis and Howse (2002), however, argue that European norms are inclusion, participation, transparency, tolerance and governance.

In current international relations the EU largely uses a form of conditionality in order to promote human rights in contrast to many other actors in the global arena (Manners, 2002). Despite criticism that conditionality is used solely strategically, conditionality reflects the EU's commitment to its founding values. This is not to say that the EU solely promotes its norms without having other interests. Even though other interests might be at stake, adding this normative layer goes beyond traditional interest-based negotiations. Several norms, principles and values have been suggested by the EU. In order to focus on the most important ones, the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) as the legal basis of the EU, and the European Consensus on Development (ECD) and the Agenda for Change as development-specific legislation have been selected to identify the EU's central norms.

As shown in table 6, eight norms out of Manner's core and minor norms are recurrent throughout the selected documents: freedom, democracy, rule of law, human rights, peace, gender equality, solidarity and good governance. Sustainable development is a critical case, because this concept has only recently been adopted as a guideline for all policies. Thus, the TEU and the ECD refer to environmental sustainability rather than sustainable development. Applying those norms to Manner's system, freedom, democracy, rule of law, human rights and peace fall into the core norms category, while solidarity and good governance are minor norms.

Even though gender equality was not classified by Manners as one of the EU norms, it is included in the EU's list of norms for this dissertation, because it occurs in all three texts and because gender equality has become a norm in international development (Elgström, 2000), which is a primary topic in this dissertation. Justice, which occurs in the Lisbon Treaty and the Consensus on Development, is also included in the list of norms, because those two texts are the guiding documents for EU development policy and the inclusion of justice in those two documents highlights its importance. In contrast, liberty, one of Manner's core norms, and the minor norm anti-discrimination do not appear in the Agenda for Change. Nevertheless, they will remain part of the list of norms, which is used throughout this dissertation, because the Lisbon Treaty and the European Consensus as the major policy documents for EU development policies mention the two norms.

To summarize, for the scope of this research, the focus lies on twelve norms: democracy, freedom, gender equality, good governance, human rights, justice, liberty, non-discrimination, peace, the rule of law, solidarity and sustainability.

**Table 6: Classification of Norms in the European Union Divided into Core, Minor and Additional Norms**

| Manners (2002) | TEU (2009) | Consensus on Development (2006) | Agenda for Change (2011) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Democracy<br>Freedom<br>Human Rights<br>Liberty<br>Peace<br>Rule of Law | Democracy<br>Freedom<br>Human Rights<br>Liberty<br>Peace<br>Rule of Law | Democracy<br>Freedom<br>Human Rights<br>Liberty<br>Peace<br>Rule of Law | Democracy<br>Freedom<br>Human rights<br>-<br>Peace<br>Rule of law |
| Anti-discrimination<br>Good governance<br>Solidarity<br>Sust. Development | Non-discrimination<br>Good governance<br>Solidarity<br>Environ. sust. | Combat discrimination<br>Good governance<br>Solidarity<br>Environ. Sust. | -<br>Good governance<br>Solidarity<br>Sust. Development |
| | Gender Equality<br>Justice | Gender Equality<br>Justice | Gender Equality<br>- |

Source: author's compilation

Norms take on an integral position in the analysis of normative policy coherence for development. However, as demonstrated earlier, development is not a universally agreed upon concept, and neither are EU norms. Therefore, while both concepts are contested, it is relevant to show the relationship between both concepts in order to determine to what extent norms

(democracy, freedom, gender equality, good governance, human rights, justice, liberty, non-discrimination, peace, rule of law, solidarity, and sustainability) represent the content of development. The goals of development, as understood by the European Union, are manifold (for example poverty eradication, improving health, strengthening the economy, providing education, etc.). However, all of these goals are embedded in the neo-liberal understanding of perpetual economic growth and competition between markets, which indicates that development is subordinated to economic interests (Siles-Brügge, 2014). On a legal basis, however, a link between norms and all EU external relations exists. The EU Treaty claims freedom, democracy, rule of law, human rights, and equality to be among the founding norms of the European Union (TEU Art.2). Furthermore, it provides for the EU's external actions to be guided by its founding norms (TEU Art.21), including also its development policies. Whether the EU indeed implements its norms in external policies is assessed in this dissertation.

In order to ensure norm implementation, the EU has put enforcement mechanisms in place. It has sanctioning mechanisms to ensure third countries' implementation of norms, for example, through the suspension of trade in case of non-compliance (Hoang & Sicurelli, 2017). Sanctioning can also occur before concluding agreements by halting the negotiations in case of severe human rights violations (Camroux, 2010). Discontinuing negotiations or suspending trade relations does come at an economic cost both for the sanctioned party as well as for the EU. In these cases, the EU needs to decide whether to prioritize norms or economic interests. The EU-ASEAN agreement has been influenced by normative disagreements which finally led to the end of the inter-regional negotiations (Camroux, 2010), which will be further discussed in chapter six.

It is important to recognize that the EU is limited in the extent to which it can implement its norms, particularly in non-democratic countries such as Vietnam. Implementation requires acceptance by the partner country, which always has to consent to the bilateral programs. Thus, programs that do not reflect the partner country's normative position are likely to be rejected. According to its constitution, Vietnam is a socialist republic governed by the Communist Party of Vietnam, i.e. a socialist one-party state, "acting upon the Marxist-Leninist doctrine and Ho Chi Minh's thought" (Art.4) (Government of Vietnam, 2001). This underlying rationale of state governance does not correspond to the Western ideas of pluralism and democracy. Consequently, some political norms, particularly related to democracy, do not receive the same

recognition as in Europe. As a result of this divergence, the EU tends to face stronger challenges to its proposals when they include democratic notions. Despite Vietnam's significant transition in terms of economic and political openness, it remains a socialist country governed by the Communist Party of Vietnam, which creates a barrier to EU norm promotion as Vietnam is by default not a like-minded state in certain areas such as democracy. As Hoang (2016) demonstrates, Vietnam is more open to adopt economic and social norms promoted by the EU, i.e. norms such as free trade, market economy, poverty reduction, and gender equality, and adapt those to the Vietnamese context rather than political norms such as democracy and human rights. However, it cannot be said that Vietnam is generally not in favor of political norms as promoted by the EU. For example, it tries to reduce corruption and appreciates the support in anti-corruption measures, which arguably attracts high sums of EU funding (Hoang, 2014). Thus, Vietnam tends to be reluctant in implementing political norms in general, however, with some exceptions such as fighting corruption.

Conversely, norms related to sustainability or gender equality, so-called social norms, are less likely to be challenged as Vietnam does not have a strongly opposing position towards these norms. Equality, including gender equality, is already enshrined in some Vietnamese legislation, such as the Vietnamese Constitution, and, therefore, does not pose major challenges to the EU's promotion of gender equality. The extent to which the EU can promote gender equality in a country that has already introduced equality at a legal level is a different concern. On a societal level, awareness of gender equality might still require improvement (e.g. in terms of managing household budget, sharing responsibility for raising children, …), which the EU might be able to enhance through its programs. Obviously, the Vietnamese identity and context plays a major role in Vietnam's readiness to adopt European norms, which in turn limits the EU's potential to successfully promote those norms in the first place. Similarly, the extent of openness towards EU norms also depends on the types of norms at the inter-regional level. In negotiations between Europe and Asia, tensions regarding political norms such as human rights persist (Manea, 2008). In the case of ASEAN, confrontations between ASEAN and the EU relating to human rights supported the creation of an ASEAN identity (Manea, 2008). Social, economic and cultural norms tend to create less tensions than political and civil norms. These tendencies assert Vietnam's position towards EU norms as briefly laid out above.

In addition to the partner country's readiness to accept a norm depending on whether it is a social, economic or political norm, a general complication in terms of norm promotion is the

EU's potentially imperialist character vis-à-vis the partner country. By promoting norms, the EU suggests that its norms are superior to Vietnam's norms and, therefore, norm promotion can take on an imperialist character. However, Vietnam's membership in the United Nations, its commitment to the UN Declaration of Human Rights, and its membership in the WTO suggest that Vietnam is generally open to adopt Western economic, social and political norms. Norm promotion by the EU could, therefore, be understood as supporting Vietnam in its norm implementation rather than imposing European norms on a former colony.

To conclude this section, the income level, according to which Vietnam is a lower middle-income country, is not the defining variable shaping the EU's potential for norm implementation. Rather it is the partner country's openness to Western norms. In this study, Vietnam's lower middle-income status has been a major factor for choosing it as an EU partner country, because it provides a setting of transition, however, this does not imply that the level of income is the defining variable for the EU's success or failure in implementing norms coherently. Each partner country has its own history, culture, political system, which shape its openness to external norms. Consequently, the results from this study, which are results shaped by a Vietnamese context, are not generalizable across all lower middle-income countries. Further studies need to be conducted in order to determine common variables and to be able to make claims about generalizability across lower middle-income countries.

The EU norms, however, do not operate in a vacuum. As an international player, the EU is exposed to other organizations with their own set of norms to which the EU is a signatory. Thus, while the EU can be considered as a normative actor, other organizations have different backgrounds, which are presented in the next sub-section.

### 3.2.3   Norms of Other International Organizations

In the previous sub-section, it was established that the EU is a normative actor and as such its position towards other international organizations is vital in international relations given their interrelations. For example, the EU took the role as leader in global normative debates during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Lightfoot & Burchell, 2004). This sub-section briefly outlines the normativity of other international organizations and their institutional capacity to implement them.

In the global arena, the World Trade Organization (WTO), United Nations (UN) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) are important actors in

trade and development. The EU is both a member to those organizations but also acts outside the realm of these organizations, which has evolved into a complex set of relationships. As a result, the relationship between the norms, which the organizations adhere to, or aspire to adhere to, is complex. The organizations' normative stances are taken into account here by reviewing their legal basis, institutional structure, and sanctioning mechanisms. The legal basis gives insight about the norms an organization is built on. The institutional structure and sanctioning mechanisms indicate how much power an institution has vis-à-vis its members and how much power an organization has towards third countries, which is crucial for the implementation.

**The World Trade Organization (WTO)**

As a trade organization, the WTO's normative basis is strongly trade-related: non-discrimination of products, trade liberalization, openness and connectivity are among the main principles the WTO adheres to (WTO, 2018g). The primary objective for each new member to the WTO, regardless of whether it is a developed country or a developing country, is to liberalize its market (Wang & Winters, 2000). Due to the primacy of trade, these principles can also be called trade norms. Other non-trade principles, such as environmental protection and transparency, are also important principles for the WTO (WTO, 2018c). Thus, while the WTO favors open trade, it also recognizes that non-trade principles play an important role, and that developing countries require additional support when merging into the global trade system, even though this support system was changed during the Uruguay Round (Wang & Winters, 2000). One problem arising with the free-trade rhetoric is that developed countries still protect their markets despite their commitment to open up (Stocchetti, 2016). Another problem which comes to the detriment of developing countries is that aid for trade commitments are often not implemented: "The Uruguay Round Agreement is replete with promises of technical assistance to developing countries to help them undertake the agreed reforms, but most of these promises were not binding and many have not been delivered" (Wang & Winters, 2000, p.15).

In 2014, a Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) Facility was set up to support developing countries in their efforts to implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement, which in turn aims to bring disconnected countries onto the global market. In his speech at the launch of the TFA facility, WTO Director-General Azevêdo pointed out that this facility helps developing countries find donors to support their trade facilitation efforts, but funding for this facility remains on a voluntary basis (WTO, 2018a). Again, support for developing countries is

pledged, but implementation lacks behind. In terms of norms, this behavior implies that trade norms are prioritized over development norms.

Another example for the WTO's recognition of development processes is the publishing of joint reports with the OECD (WTO/OECD, 2017). The WTO and OECD jointly publish biennial reports on aid for trade, with the most recent publication dedicated to the interaction between trade, inclusiveness, connectivity and sustainable development (WTO/OECD, 2017). Physical and digital connectivity are important factors to reduce trade costs, which has been the primary topic in the last joint report (WTO/OECD, 2015). The scope of this dissertation does not allow for in-depth tracing of contributions either of the two organizations have made, that is to say that it remains unclear how themes and phrasing were decided and which organization contributed to which results, but nevertheless the reports seem to bring together two organizations that tend to be rather different.

Regarding the sanction mechanisms, the WTO has set up a Dispute Settlement Mechanism which can be used to sanction countries to ensure their compliance with their commitments (King, Keijzer, Spierings, & Matthews, 2012). Dispute settlement applies to trade rules and is a practice to find agreements between the disputing parties through consultation and are rarely referred to the Dispute Settlement Body, which serves as the last instance (WTO, 2018f). According to the WTO, a "dispute arises when one country adopts a trade policy measure or takes some action that one or more fellow-WTO members considers to be breaking the WTO agreements, or to be a failure to live up to obligations" (WTO, 2018f). Even though technical assistance for trade facilitation is an integral part of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (European Commission, 2017a), those commitments often remain merely a promise and lack enforcement (Wang & Winters, 2000). Overall, the WTO recognizes sustainability and inclusiveness as goals to be achieved, but their primary objective remains trade liberalization.

**The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**

The OECD originated from the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) which was founded in 1948 to implement the Marshall Plan for European reconstruction after World War II (OECD, 2018b). It was established with 18 European members, the United States and Canada (OECD, 2018d). After two destructive World Wars, economic cooperation was considered to ensure lasting peace. In 1961, the OEEC was reframed to continue on a global scale and with that the OECD was created. Currently, the OECD has 35 members and five key partners (Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, and South Africa) covering different world regions

(OECD, 2018d). Regarding development, the most relevant group within the OECD is the Development Assistance Committee (DAC). In light of the Millennium Development Goals, improving aid effectiveness was one of the major goals for the DAC, which was highlighted by committing to the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda adopted by the OECD in 2005 and 2008 respectively (OECD, 2018c). The Paris Declaration emphasized ownership, alignment, harmonization, results, and mutual accountability as the fundamental principles to increase the development impact. Ownership allows developing countries to determine their own strategies for development. Alignment implies that the donor countries support those strategies and use local systems to achieve them. Harmonization refers to donor coordination to avoid duplication. The focus is on development results and both donors and recipients are accountable for achieving those results.

Referring to the comprehensive MDG development agenda, the Accra Agenda for Action highlighted ownership and result oriented development and added inclusive participation and capacity development to improve developing countries' capacity to manage themselves in the future (OECD, 2008). The OECD seems to make a difference between development on a broader scale as the UN suggests and aid as one part of development:

"*We need to achieve much more if all countries are to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Aid is only one part of the development picture. Democracy, economic growth, social progress, and care for the environment are the prime engines of development in all countries. Addressing inequalities of income and opportunity within countries and between states is essential to global progress. Gender equality, respect for human rights, and environmental sustainability are cornerstones for achieving enduring impact on the lives and potential of poor women, men, and children. It is vital that all our policies address these issues in a more systematic and coherent way*" (OECD, 2008, underscore added).

This quote shows that the OECD sets benchmarks for aid effectiveness, recognizing the wider sphere of development, but remains focused on the aid channel disconnecting it from other issues such as gender equality or human rights. Simultaneously, it also determines policy areas of action with governance and gender equality as key areas of development. This prioritization becomes particularly visible with the Social Institution and Gender Index, an index developed by the OECD Development Center, to measure discrimination against women in social institutions (OECD Development Center, 2018).

Policy coherence for development is also an important principle for the OECD. Since 2017, this principle was adapted to the UN SDGs and is now named policy coherence for sustainable development (OECD, 2017b). "The SDGs cannot […] be achieved through single-sector goals or approaches" (OECD, 2017b) and policy coherence for sustainable development provides a lens for inter-linkages between the goals (OECD, 2017b).

The DAC does not have a sanctioning mechanisms for members that do not meet their commitments (King et al., 2012). DAC members have agreed to spend 0.7 percent of their GDP as ODA, for example, but only a minority of the countries tends to meet this target (Stocchetti, 2016). In 2016, merely six members reached the 0.7 percent target: Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom (DAC, 2017). Not meeting this target does not have any negative consequences for the DAC members. Thus, while the OECD and DAC might have an ambitious normative aspiration, implementation remains with the sovereign states and effective mechanisms to ensure implementation do not exist. The Paris Declaration set out commitments to be achieved by 2010 and a monitoring survey to monitor the countries' progress. Signing up to the Paris Declaration is not limited to OECD members and currently 137 countries and approximately 30 multilateral development institutions committed to adhering to the Paris Declaration (OECD, 2018a). Three monitoring surveys were undertaken between 2006 and 2011 concluding that only one out of twelve commitments was fully achieved (OECD, 2012a). These monitoring surveys were conducted solely in the developing states, participation in the survey was voluntary, and yet 78 countries participated in the 2011 monitoring round (OECD, 2012a). A high level of participation despite the rather unsuccessful outcomes highlights that bad performance is not penalized. Rather, it seems to indicate that aspirations towards transparency are just as appreciated as good performance.

In addition to the Paris Declaration monitoring, DAC peer reviews are conducted for each member roughly every five years to identify how a country could improve its aid effectiveness. The EU, for example, has been reviewed four times up to now with the next peer review foreseen in 2018 (OECD, 2018e). The latest peer review on the EU shows that streamlining efforts of financial instruments had a positive impact on the EU's aid effectiveness, but the distribution of responsibilities between the EU institution remains unclear and, therefore, a challenge to aid effectiveness (OECD, 2012b). In both cases – the Paris Declaration monitoring survey and the DAC peer review – publishing the results is the official end goal of the exercise and as such do not insist on policy change. However, peer reviews have the potential to create

policy dialogue and transparency, share best practices and enhance compliance with the agreed-to measures (Pagani, 2002).

To summarize, the OECD prioritizes aid effectiveness in terms of ownership, alignment, harmonization, results oriented management and mutual responsibility, which is applicable to all development fields including human rights or equality. The norms are, thus, more technical in nature and serve as procedural standards rather than promoting democratic values or fundamental rights.

**The United Nations (UN)**

The United Nations is a global organization with many institutions that cover a wide range of issues, such as security in the UN Security Council, development in the UN Development Program (UNDP), children's issues in UNICEF, or humanitarian aid through the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). The focus in this sub-section is on the general UN legislative framework, such as the UN Charter, and the UNDP, because of the development-trade focus in this dissertation.

The primary purpose of the United Nations is to ensure peace, based on the respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and non-discrimination (United Nations, 1945, Art.1). A separate declaration on human rights was drafted to further enhance the UN's commitment to human rights and emphasize the universality of those rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights set out human rights to be protected as a universal standard for the first time and since then has inspired "a rich body of legally binding international human rights treaties" (United Nations, 2018). The UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are agreements applicable to all UN activities, which sets out a normative framework for the UN and presents a strong political commitment to peace and human rights.

Shifting the focus to specific development interventions, the UNDP is the primary development actor within the UN and, therefore, the primary advocate of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Sustainable development, democratic governance, peace building, climate action, and gender equality comprise the UNDP's key focus areas (UNDP, 2018b). The UNDP shows a slightly different set of norms from the overall UN framework. Democratic values and environmental concerns are added to peace and human rights promoted under the UN umbrella. The development agency, therefore, can be considered a more normative actor than the UN as a whole.

Institutionally, the UN is based on the principle of sovereign equality between the member states (United Nations, 1945). The Security Council, however, can enforce economic sanctions, such as trade embargoes, and diplomatic restrictions, such as travel bans, in cases where peace is threatened and diplomatic efforts have failed (United Nations and the Security Council Affairs Division, 2018). Within this framework, special sanction committees have been set up for Libya, Yemen, Guinea-Bissau and South Sudan, for example (United Nations and the Security Council Affairs Division, 2018). Furthermore, the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda are two UN bodies dealing with the enforcement of justice related to war crimes. Another form of ensuring implementation is through peer review by creating peer pressure or sharing best practices (Pagani, 2002). Several bodies for evaluations and peer reviews in place at the different UN levels. The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) is the overall evaluation agency for the UN, which reviews the evaluation functions of UN bodies such as UNDP (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2006). Within UNDP, the Independent Evaluation office has the responsibility to conduct thematic and programmatic evaluations and publish annual reports on evaluation standards (UNDP, 2018a). Evaluation and peer review prove to be the main mechanisms to ensure policy implementation and compliance with legal commitments.

**How are EU Norms Different from WTO, OECD and UN Norms?**

Given the threefold characteristic presented above, the EU's difference from the WTO, OECD and UN can be determined by comparing the legal basis, institutional structure and sanctioning mechanism.

The EU is an institutional arrangement that covers economic and political arena. Trade policies are both an economic and political issue, especially in cases where sanctioning a country is used as a tool to achieve other goals. The EU has the political power to take such decisions. The WTO, however, sets merely technical rules for trade related to trade barriers, it sets the trade norms, but it does not take political decisions about when to sanction a country. As such, the WTO sets the rules, but the political actions remain with individual nation states or the EU. This distinction makes the EU norms as defined above markedly different from the WTO norms. As a WTO member, the EU follows the WTO trade norms, but the political decisions related to human rights violations, which can lead to trade sanctions, are the responsibility of the EU. The OECD is an inter-governmental body with low implementation force. Its norms

are technical instead of value-driven. These two aspects make the EU different from the OECD. Democratic aspirations lack in the OECD approach and monitoring is the primary tool for implementation. The UN is another normative actor in terms of political commitment as represented by the UN Charter and the Human Rights Declaration. One notable difference between the EU and the UN is the lack of democratic norms in UN documents (overview given in table 7). Human rights, peace and freedom are recognized by both actors, but the EU adds more emphasis on democracy or democratic values as an additional norm by including it in the EU Treaties. In contrast, democratic values are not incorporated in the UN Charter.

**Table 7: IOs, Their Norms, Institutional Structure and Sanctioning Mechanisms**

|  | Norms | Institutional structure | Sanctioning mechanism |
|---|---|---|---|
| **EU** | Democracy<br>Freedom<br>Human rights<br>Liberty<br>Peace<br>Rule of law | Supra-national,<br>Inter-governmental | Trade Sanctions,<br>Isolation |
| **OECD** | Ownership<br>Alignment<br>Harmonization<br>Managing results<br>Mutual accountability<br>PCSD | Inter-governmental | Monitoring,<br>Peer Reviews |
| **UN** | Freedom<br>Human rights<br>Non-discrimination<br>Peace | Inter-governmental,<br>"sovereign equality" | Tribunals<br>Evaluations/Peer Reviews<br>Trade and diplomatic sanctions |
| **WTO** | Trade liberalization | Inter-governmental | Dispute Settlement |

Source: author's compilation

Not only are the EU's norms different (to varying degrees) from the other organizations' norms, but also the institutional structure and the sanctioning mechanisms are distinct as shown above and summarized in table 7. Taken together, these three factors make the EU a potentially stronger normative actor than the other organizations. First, the EU has a substantial normative basis. Second, its institutional structure is partially supra-national. Third, trade sanctions and political isolation are two mechanisms to ensure that third countries implement EU norms. Whether and how the EU implements its normative basis across its external policies will be analyzed in the following chapters. In terms of normative policy coherence for development,

policy coherence for development is the tool that links the various policy sectors with each other.

## 3.3  POLICY COHERENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT: DEFINITIONS, TYPES, AND LIMITATIONS

The second component of NPCD is policy coherence for development, which is dealt with in this sub-section. First, an overview of PCD in the political arena is presented, which is followed by a structured overview of PCD typologies. Finally, this sub-section is concluded with a discussion about PCD limitations and causes of incoherence.

### 3.3.1  Policy Coherence for Development in the Political Arena

Policy coherence for development was first brought onto the political agenda by the OECD in 1991 as a measure for greater aid effectiveness (OECD, 2006). Despite continuous efforts by the EU and the OECD, a clearly defined understanding of policy coherence is still lacking. Broadly speaking, coherence exists where there is no incoherence – whether it be intentionally or unintentionally. To be more concrete, policy coherence is the "interaction of all policies that are relevant in the given context with a view to the achievement of overriding development objectives" (Ashoff, 2005, p.1). In other words, a policy should not undermine other policies in achieving a given development goal. Agreement on the exact definition of policy coherence for development, however, has not been reached. While development scholars debate whether development is a process or an outcome, which subsequently leads to the question of PCD being a process or outcome, giving the overall perspective for analysis, policy-makers might not even be interested in a clearer definition and precise indicators to measure their efforts towards PCD (Carbone & Keijzer, 2016). Other challenges to PCD range from the measurement issues due to the lack of data to wider discussions about the priority of development over other policy fields. I will consider each challenge in more detail in the following.

Within the EU, the Commission, along with some member states (Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden), is one of the strongest advocates for PCD (Carbone & Keijzer, 2016). The Commission strongly advocates PCD with the result that the concept has been included in major EU policy documents, above all the Lisbon Treaty. Commitment to PCD, i.e. PCD as an end in itself, seems to be the current goal in EU policy-making. In contrast to using PCD as a means to reach an overarching goal in broader development perspectives, PCD as an outcome sets a different focus. As a means or a tool, PCD could be utilized to achieve the UN Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs) which provide a global framework for action until 2030. Under this aspect, PCD has a wider scope than simply avoiding incoherence. If achieving sustainable development is the main goal, every policy that does not foster the transition to social, economic and environmental sustainability causes incoherence. Instead of aligning policies to each other, which would be the PCD-as-an-outcome approach, shaping all policies coherently under the umbrella of sustainability would be more effective in light of the SDGs. Consequently, the PCD-as-an-outcome approach has not been very successful in the quest for sustainable development. Initially, the Commission was to receive biennial reports from its member states on PCD according to the EU Consensus on Development (European Union, 2006). Those reports, however, lost their significance due to their ineffectiveness on policy change. Already before this effort to effectively reintroduce PCD in the member states, the EU members did not show great interest in implementing PCD on a national level (Carbone & Keijzer, 2016). Consequently, some member states did not approve the EU's and DAC's initiatives to introduce PCD indicators to measure national progress that would publicly show the national government's failure to implement PCD (King et al., 2012).

On a technical level, the idea of indicators or measurement poses a different concern in itself (King et al., 2012). On the one hand, measuring progress requires a starting point. Progress, whether improvement or deterioration, can only be assessed if the follow-up results can be compared with to the initial setting. On the other hand, state-of-the-art reports can be used to determine the current policy setting at a national level. The Commission, for example, has tried to measure PCD with its impact assessments (IAs). These assessments are designed to capture the impact of one policy on other policy areas, but their quality remains low and the impact on developing country is considered solely in the minority of the reports (CONCORD, 2015).

In addition, on the political level, the question of policy priorities remains. Why should development be the leading objective? Within the Commission, among member states and between the Commission and the Council, conflicting interests shape the political debate. In a democratic environment, this is a normal, and possibly a desirable, situation. Different actors represent different groups of interests. In the light, of sustainable development, the role of PCD could be strengthened, and other interests reconsidered. This, however, requires a shift from the PCD-as-an-outcome to a PCD-as-a-means approach, as already mentioned earlier.

### 3.3.2 A Literature Review of PCD Typology

Since its emergence at the beginning of the 1990s, PCD has been discussed widely among academics and practitioners. Though many attempts have been made to organize the concept of PCD (see for example Hoebink, 1999b; Hydén, 1999; van den Hoven, 2004), three major contributions are considered here, which are summarized in table 8 below.

Type 1: Coherence between aid and non-aid policies. **Horizontal coherence** (Carbone, 2008) refers to the relation between policy arenas. With regard to development policy, it is defined as coherence between aid and non-aid policy. As already mentioned above, a country's trade interests might conflict with its own development interests leading to counter productivity. Existing literature often refers to horizontal coherence pointing out that this type of coherence becomes more difficult to achieve as more levels of governance are involved (Ashoff, 2005). In Picciotto's (2005) work horizontal coherence is labeled intra-country coherence. In other terms, it's the "coherence of donors' policies towards the South, and of aid policy in particular" (Forster & Stokke, 1999).

Type 2: Coherence between the EU and its member states' development policies. Especially with growing globalization local, regional and international layers are introduced to the existing political system. The relationship between the EU and its member states is dealt with when analyzing **vertical coherence** (Carbone, 2008). Put differently, it refers to different policies across the member states with regard to their overall contribution to EU development.

Type 3: Coherence of development policies across countries. This type of coherence refers to development policies from different nation states. "Coherence of donors' aid policies towards the South" (Forster & Stokke, 1999), also called **inter-country coherence** (Picciotto, 2005), comprises one governance level between the donor states. In doing so, this type of coherence complements vertical coherence between national governments and the EU.

Type 4: **Internal coherence** (Carbone, 2008; Picciotto, 2005) is a third type of coherence which refers to a policy's different objectives. In the case of development policies, the focus is drawn to the purposes of this policy, the channels of aid (e.g. NGOs or state aid), and the functions of aid (e.g. supporting the private sector). Bilateral aid is the primary mechanism addressed by internal coherence, whereas state agencies, NGOs or private actors can be the implementing agencies. Forster and Stokke's (1999) definition also includes multilateral channels in internal coherence, as it is an additional channel to bilateral aid under the same

government policies.

Type 5: **Donor-recipient coherence** refers to the interaction of policies that have been adopted in the donor country and those that have been adopted in the developing country (Carbone, 2008; Forster & Stokke, 1999; Picciotto, 2005).

Type 6: The last type of coherence is **multilateral coherence**, which is defined as the interaction between various international organizations (Carbone, 2008). International organizations, for example the UN or OECD, tend to pursue different goals, which negatively effects the level of policy coherence. Multilateral coherence cannot be found among neither Picciotto's (2005) categories nor Forster & Stokke's (1999) as a separate type, but is included in internal coherence in the latter's categorization. Multilateral coherence is partly comparable to donors' aid policies or inter-country coherence, because both address a variety of donors. The first, however, refers to international organizations whereas the latter refer to nation states.

**Table 8: Systematic Overview of Types of Policy Coherence for Development**

| Terminology used by Carbone (2008) | Terminology used by Picciotto (2005) | Terminology used by Forster & Stokke (1999) | Short description |
|---|---|---|---|
| Horizontal coherence | Intra-country coherence | Coherence of policies towards the South | Coherence between aid and non-aid policies |
| Vertical coherence | - | - | Coherence between EU and member state development policies |
| - | Inter-country coherence | Donors' aid policies | Coherence of development policies across countries |
| Internal coherence | Internal coherence | Coherence of a donor's aid policy | Coherence between objectives and goals within development cooperation |
| Donor-recipient coherence | Donor-recipient coherence | Donor-recipient coherence | Coherence between policies in providing and receiving states |
| Multilateral coherence | - | - | Coherence of development policies/strategies among international organizations |

Source: author's compilation

Table 8 gives an overview of the classifications of PCD, the different terminology used by various authors and a short definition of the type of PCD as described above. Coming back to the PCD-as-an-outcome or PCD-as-a-means debate, the different types of PCD as described above have different effects on policies depending on the approach taken. While policy coherence can be seen as a goal in itself, it is mostly used as a mechanism for achieving other objectives (Carbone, 2008). The NPCD approach goes beyond the PCD "as an outcome" and "as a means" debate by arguing that focusing on the technical aspects of development comes to the detriment of normative positions (Koff & Maganda, 2016). Normative coherence is, therefore, important for achieving transformative and sustainable development (Koff, 2017b, 2017a; Koff & Maganda, 2016). However, in these studies of normative coherence, the black box of policy implementation has not been opened. This dissertation addresses NPCD in the framework of the policy cycle with particular focus on policy implementation. Analytically, NPCD is understood as the outcome of policy implementation. Conceptually, NPCD is understood as a means for transformative development.

### 3.3.3   Conceptual and Practical Limitations of PCD

The previous sub-sections might give the impression that PCD is an uncontested concept and policy tool. This, however, is not the case. A substantial critique arises from the fact that PCD is embedded in the dominant development structures, which are heavily criticized by proponents of post-developmentalism, degrowth, ecofeminism or buen vivir (Escobar, 1995, 2015; Gudynas, 2011; Ranta, 2018; Rist, 2008; Salleh, 2017), to name but a few. While not criticizing PCD as such, the Western approach to development is challenged based on the arguments that development reinforces old colonial power imbalances, that development centralizes the economy but fails to acknowledge the human being as the central actor of society, and that development is a patriarchic system in which women, culture and nature are dominated by Western attitudes (ibid.). Therefore, PCD's underlying idea of being more coherent in favor of development is challenged, given that development is considered to be a strategy in favor of wealthy nations.

Notwithstanding the development critiques, with the Western approach to development governing the relations between the Global North and the Global South, PCD is a concept that is currently on global political and academic agendas. Why is policy coherence important when it comes to development aid? There are several reasons for this. First, the lack of coherence in the past has led to a lack of success in the development sector. Trade relations are often in contrast with necessary aid programs, but also other economic interests like the

production of cheap goods are a reason for the missing success even though development aid is provided. By applying policy coherence, trade relations could be shaped in a new way, which supports the development of poor regions actively. This can happen in two ways: either non-aid policies directly influence development policy by altering their objectives, or non-aid policies indirectly support development policies by ensuring that their policies are not conflicting the objectives set by the development policy.

A second type of justification is called strategic justification. Here coherence is seen as a tool, which can be used to shape globalization. Substantive-programmatic justification is a way of reasoning which arose from the "demand for sustainable development as the supreme guiding concept of global governance" (Ashoff, 2005, p.1). Since there is increasing interaction among countries all over the world and, therefore, increasing risk of exploitation, it is necessary to support countries, which are not as well of as the Western states. This approach was laid out by the Millennium Development Goals in 2000. Even though, however, there is a legitimate argument to apply policy coherence, the problem remains that states' economies are not driven by development aid but largely by economic interests. Another problem that arises is the question of defining when policies are coherent. There is no framework yet, which offers standards to make policies coherent and hence it is rather difficult to implement and evaluate. Regardless of the difficulties to measure PCD, the OECD considers PCD as a norm (OECD, 2017b). This approach is not pursued in this dissertation. Rather PCD is a concept and a tool to assess and improve coherence of the norms outlined in section two of this chapter.

A third point of critique arises with the argument that other policies might also require coherence. Health policies for example can be implemented changing the treatment of lung dysfunctions, but they would be much more efficient if industries would produce more environmentally friendly not causing those problems in the first place. If a new health care system is set up and a new factory built, it is a problematic task to keep everything coherent with sustainable development aid.

Nevertheless, "policy coherence is considered desirable for government action because deficient coherence may lead to ineffectiveness (failure to achieve objectives), inefficiency (waste of scarce resources) and the loss of credibility of policies" (Ashoff, 2005, p.11). In order to improve development aid, it is, hence, necessary to increase coherence within one policy, but also among different policies involved in the policy process.

Often incoherence can emerge even though it is tried to reduce incoherence, because there are

many actors involved which tend to pursue different goals and among which misunderstandings can occur. Policy incoherence can arise due to a large number of reasons which can be grouped into four categories (Ashoff, 2005): (1) societal and political norms, (2) political decision-making/divergent interests between EU and national level, (3) policy formulation and coordination, and (4) increasing complexity of development conceptualization. Since incoherence can occur in each of these areas, it is particularly difficult to achieve a high level of coherence. According to Ashoff "perfect policy coherence is [...] possible neither in theory nor in practice" (Ashoff, 2005, p.3). As however already mentioned earlier, it is still desirable to make policies as coherent as possible, since on the one hand, costs for the donating country can be reduced, and on the other hand, effectiveness in the receiving country increased. As Carbone puts it: "The task for policy-makers is to avoid unnecessary incoherence, which implies that win-win solutions are possible, whereas necessary incoherence, which results from the aggregation of legitimate conflicting interests, is more acceptable" (Carbone, 2008, p.326).

In this dissertation, several types of incoherence are taken into account: internal coherence within EU policies, horizontal coherence between development and trade policies, but vertical coherence between the EU and its member states and multilateral coherence between the EU and ASEAN. Together, these types of coherence shape the EU's normative policy coherence for development. NPCD and normative power are closely related, as the following section will show.

## 3.4   NORMATIVE POWER AND NPCD

### 3.4.1   The Relevance of NPE for NPCD

Policy coherence has been recognized as shaping a new phase in international power relations as it links policy arenas such as development and security (Thede, 2013). Traditionally, development and security were considered to be two distinct policy arenas, but particularly since the 9/11 incident, development has been utilized as a channel for security strategies and, as a consequence, development programs have been adapted to fit the new purpose (Thede, 2013). Expanding the argument that PCD re-shaping international power relations, this would also affect the EU's normative power. For now, the Normative Power Europe discussions have largely evolved around the argument that the EU presents itself as a normative power, it creates a narrative around its normative role, but does not reflect this rhetoric in its policy practices (Nicolaïdis & Howse, 2002). Some scholars have argued that "inconsistency [between internal and external policies] does not inevitably lead to a loss of

credibility" or normative power (Scheipers & Sicurelli, 2007). While incoherence might not lead to a loss of normative power, I contend that coherence can strengthen normative power. Power dynamics are an inherent feature in the discussions around normative coherence and in particular the EU's self-representation as a normative power gives impetus to assessing its normative coherence (Koff & Maganda, 2016). Normative incoherence between policies, regardless of internal-external or external-external, vertical or horizontal, does have a negative effect on policy implementation with regard to norms, and potentially undermines EU's normative aspirations. On the contrary, normative coherence supports the EU's normative self-representation by transferring norms from development into non-development arenas.

Implementing normative policy coherence for development effectively requires the EU to exercise its powers over the partner country. If the partner country disregards the normative dimensions of the EU's activities, NPCD cannot be achieved since NPCD requires the incorporation of norms from the inter-governmental level down to the project level. This dissertation assesses the norm representation in the implementation stage of the traditional policy cycle from the EU's perspective and not from the partner country's perspective. Whether the partner country implements the EU's norms is, therefore, not in the scope of this research. However, given the selection of policy documents that were jointly agreed on between the EU and Vietnam, a certain acceptance from the Vietnam's side can be assumed, but the extent to which the EU was able to exercise its power cannot be deducted from this analysis. The focus remains on norm implementation and normative policy coherence for development in the framework of the normative development phase from the EU's perspective.

Before turning to the EU's role as a global actor, i.e. the EU as a normative power, the term power needs to be defined. The next sub-section presents the different types of power and how they are different from NPE. The following sub-section briefly describes the EU's NPE position in the international arena.

### 3.4.2   Traditional Perceptions of Power and the Evolution of NPE
**Traditional Perceptions of Power**

According to Max Weber (1946), power is "the chance of a man or a number of men to realize their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action" (Weber, 1946, p.180). Many scholars provide different variations of power, however, reflecting the essence of Weber's definition. One variation focuses on power and exchange, with power being defined as "the ability of persons or groups to impose their will

on others despite resistance or in the form of punishment, inasmuch as the former as well as the latter constitute, in effect, a negative sanction" (Blau, 1964, p.117). The concepts of exchange and power are kept apart despite the fact that exchange can lead to a certain type of power relation. Initially, exchange of services or goods is reciprocal and based on voluntary actions, while power is related to opposition. However, if a person is not able to provide equal services, he has to comply with the other person's wishes to achieve the balance between the two traders.

While for Blau this is part of the exchange, Baldwin argues that every exchange can be described by power relations (Baldwin, 1978). According to Baldwin's example of person A buying bread at person B's shop, even this exchange is based on power since person A had the choice between using violence, threatening person B or begging for bread. It was A's choice to pay with money which makes it look like exchange, but essentially A influenced B in such a way that B does what A wants. Yet another definition relates power to change of behavior: 'A gets B to do what B would not have done without the influence of A' (Dahl, 1957). Yet another definition adds the dimension of resistance and choice. In that sense, slavery does not show any power relation since the slave does not have any alternatives. Power becomes visible only in cases where a variety of options is available (Foucault, 1983). The reaction on the exercised power plays important roles and subsequently, the reversal of power becomes a possibility in power relations. While the examples above point out different facets of power, they all represent Weber's core aspect of "realiz[ing] their own will in a communal action" (Weber, 1946, p.180).

**Evolution of Normative Power Europe**

Contrary to traditional definitions of power in which one actor tries to make another actor do what they otherwise would not do (Dahl, 1957), others consign more importance to an actor's self-representation (Ringmar, 2012). "That is, what matters is not what A can make B do but instead how such arm-twisting is interpreted by other actors and by the members of the audience. Their reaction is far more important than the action itself and their reaction is what the exercise of power ultimately seeks to influence. To be powerful is less important than to appear to be powerful" (Ringmar, 2012, p.19). Self-representation is a prominent feature in Normative Power Europe debates as NPE is defined by "what the EU is" more than "what it does" (Manners, 2002).

"Normative Power Europe" has recently developed into a widely accepted term for the

European Union. Ian Manners (2002) provides an extensive analysis of the EU as a normative power, in which a normative power is an actor that can "shape what can be 'normal' in international life". It could be argued that every state has its own norms and consequently can be labeled a normative power, however, to be considered a normative power a state or organization needs to have the position to influence others in a way that the other actors will consider these external habits as normal. In other words, a normative power is able to set the outline of what is acceptable in international and national arenas. Three aspects are linked to normative power. First, the underlying principles of the normative power should be legitimate. Second, every action taken by the normative power should be seen as convincing by the target state. Third, the effectiveness of the power should arise from socialization (Manners, 2010).

The concept of normative power Europe arose from the discussions around whether Europe can be seen as a civilian or a military power (see Maull, 1990). Maull (1990) defines civilian power as a state that bases its foreign policies on certain values and principles, but uses special forms of influence and power. This distinction resembles Nye's (1990) observation of soft power after the end of the Cold War vis-à-vis military power competitions between East and West during the Cold War. Both scholars bring forward a new type of power in contrast to military power, but Nye emphasizes economic traits such as technology and education (Nye, 1990), whereas Maull emphasizes values, such as solidarity, on which the economies are based (Maull, 1990).

Bull (1982) does not identify the Western European states as civilian powers due to their lack of military power. He argues that a state can have civilian power solely as long as other states with the capacity of military power do not use their power. Thus, once a third country decides to show its military power civilian power is non-existent. Therefore, civilian power can be exercised under the condition that the necessary military capacity is in place to back up the economic position. Specifically with regard to the Cold War and Europe's dependence on the US after the Second World War, Bull outlines the importance of increasing Europe's military power. In contrast, Maull suggests three features defining the EU as a civilian power: economic power, diplomatic cooperation to solve international problems, and the willingness to use supra-national institutions.

Similarly, a distinction can be made between economic power, military power and power over opinion (Carr, 1942). A state is generally built out of conflicting issues and acts upon those.

"Utopia and reality, the ideal and the institution, morality and power, are from the outset inextricably blended in" (Carr, 1942, p.124). "Morality and power" is the conflict most relevant to this thesis. Out of this conflict a state decides which actions to take and, therefore, which type of power to use. Put differently, "[p]olitical action must be based on a co-ordination of morality and power" (Carr, 1942, p.125). The actions that can be taken are of civilian, military or normative nature. Military power relates to the size of the military, military equipment and its effectiveness with the final goal of fighting and ultimately winning a war if necessary (Carr, 1942). Consequently, a country's foreign policy is largely dependent on its military capacity. Pushing the national agenda in international affairs becomes rather challenging without the supporting military capacity. As a result, throughout history, economic power and military power have been closely linked since wealthy states were able to finance a strong military. However, with the emergence of modern states industry and trade became a symbol of power. The so-called mercantilist approach defines power relations based on the assumption that increased national production and a low volume of imports would turn a country into a great power, which implies that economic power is just as important as military power. As a result, the government is expected to take on the role of a facilitator of wealth. Once prosperity is established, it can be used as an instrument in international policy-making through various mechanisms as foreign direct investment, regulation of the internal market or trade opportunities and embargos.

The third type of power is the **power over opinion**. Rhetoric and persuasion are just as vital to political strength as the previous two types of power. Accordingly, an actor with strong power over opinion is able to spread specific opinions among politically relevant individuals as well as large numbers of people. Especially with the broadening of the electorate, the opinion of the masses becomes politically important. While democracies are assumed to take public opinion into account, totalitarian regimes set standards for society.

However, as both systems use education and mass media for spreading ideas and opinions, this distinction cannot be upheld in reality. Regardless of the regime type, it is necessary for the government to shape general perceptions, because strong oppositions can lead to unwanted revolutions and, thus, to a loss of power. "The issue is no longer whether men shall be politically free to express their opinions, but whether freedom of opinion has, for large masses of people, any meaning but subjection to the influence of innumerable forms of propaganda directed by vested interests of one kind or another" (Carr, 1942, p.171). Table 9

summarizes the academic interpretations of three types of power: military, soft, civilian and normative power.

**Table 9: Different Types of Power**

| Authors | Hard/Military Power | Other forms of power | | |
|---------|--------------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| Nye (1990) | Hard Power: arms/war | Soft Power: technology, education, economic growth | | |
| Maull (1990) | Military Power | Civilian Power: Foreign policies based on values | | |
| Bull (1982) | Military Power | Civilian Power: Economic capacity with military backup | - | |
| Carr (1942) | Military Power: arms/war | Economic Power | Power over Opinion | |
| Manners (2002) | Military Power: Ability to use military instruments | Civilian Power: Ability to use civilian instruments | Normative Power: Ability to shape conceptions of 'normal' | |

Source: author's compilation

As Tocci (2008) points out, normative power from a neutral point of view simply implies the ability to shape what is normal in the international arena, independent of any moral considerations. This in turn means that any country, especially regional hegemons, could be considered as normative powers (Tocci, 2008). However, in most of the literature, the NPE concept implies a normative dimension. Practically speaking normative power is the use and communication of ideas and opinions (Diez, 2005). This makes this type of power dependent on its context, thus the arena in which it can be used. The effectiveness of normative power strongly depends on the subjective understanding of the other actors involved in the relationship (Wolf, 2011). Respect and mutual trust relevant factors to establish cooperation between actors and this respect arises from virtues, qualities, rights, values and interests accepted by the actors involved (Wolf, 2011). Hence, "shaping what is normal" (Manners, 2002), the prerequisite for normative power, in international relations requires acceptance by other actors. Actors whose cultural background varies greatly from the EU's will be less likely to simply accept the EU as a normative power. The costs of adaptation are too high in this

case. On the other hand, countries that are culturally close to the EU will have less resistance to EU ideas as the mindset resembles to a great extent. It is exactly this acceptance that a normative power seeks to achieve.

The former Communist states in Eastern Europe are a prominent example of this interrelation. While the EU wanted to foster democratic rights and freedoms, the Eastern European countries were willing to adapt to EU standards in order to increase the chances for future accession to the EU. At the same time the unsuccessful Communist regime was something that needed to be changed. Thus, the collapse of the Soviet Bloc created favoring circumstances for the EU to become a normative power. But is the EU also a normative power outside geographical Europe? Kavalski (2013) argues that "Brussels does not seem capable of formulating relations with countries beyond the realm of membership and privileged partnership that would sustain the socializing influence of its normative power" (p.251). While conditionality is the main policy tool for transferring norms and values to prospective member states, on a global scale the EU needs to build relations with third actors to be able to convey its ideas successfully.

As can be seen, defining the EU exclusively as one of the three mentioned powers is practically impossible. While the EU intervenes in countries where human security is endangered, hence acts as a military power, it does not overemphasize its military capacity (Diez, 2013). In contrast, military intervention is rather limited (Youngs, 2004) and remains limited under the Lisbon Treaty. To overcome this divide between the EU's different roles, normative policy coherence creates a link between the EU's normative dimensions, i.e. its normative power, and other policy areas. This dissertation aims to contribute to a better understanding of the EU's commitment to norms and its efforts to implement norms across policy areas.

### 3.4.3 NPE in an International Context

Normative Power Europe is a widely used concept in academic discussions about the EU's international and global interests and strategies (Diez, 2013; Manners, 2002; Nicolaïdis & Howse, 2002; Scheipers & Sicurelli, 2007). In the assessment of normative policy coherence for development, the topic of this dissertation, normative power Europe plays a central role in the analysis of EU policies, because of the rhetorical character the NPE concept implies. In order to implement policies coherently with EU norms, the rhetoric has to be put into practice. Whether NPE is a narrative/rhetorical tool used by the EU or whether the EU

follows up on its normative commitment is analyzed in this dissertation. Consequently, NPCD can strengthen the EU's normative power by introducing norms in other policy arenas.

The normative bases for these four organizations are vastly divergent as was shown in the presentation above. The WTO's main norms are trade related norms of liberalization; the OECD's norms are also strongly efficiency driven. The UN, on the other hand, shows norms similar to the EU's norms. Based on the legal basis, therefore, it could also be seen as a normative power. However, normative power is defined as "what it is" and "what it does" and in terms of "what it is" the UN does not apply the same normative rhetoric as the EU portraying itself as a normative actor. During the World Summit on Sustainable Development, for example, the EU was the leading proponent of the sustainability agenda (Lightfoot & Burchell, 2004). Contrary to the EU's goals, other UN members (Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States) were convinced that economic development is the solution for environmental challenges (Lightfoot & Burchell, 2004). Given this diversity of actors, the UN is bound to be less able to be considered a normative actor, let alone a normative power. Rather, the EU can shape agreements at UN level, it "can shape conceptions of normal in international relations" (Manners, 2002), as it did to some extent during the WSSD (Lightfoot & Burchell, 2004).

Despite the prominence of normative power in academic debates, military power has not ceased to exist. Up to now military power mainly lies with NATO and rarely any operations take place that are solely organized by the EU (Tocci, 2008). The European Security and Defense Policy has not gained greater importance with the Lisbon Treaty. Whereas the EU largely remains a non-military power, during the 2003 in the Democratic Republic in Congo and the 2004 operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, military action was prioritized over economic or normative power (Manners, 2006). It is argued that this military intervention is expected to strengthen the EU's political role in the target countries and foster security and political integration (Manners, 2006, p.191). Claims that military intervention or military capacity building is necessary to insure human security including the protection of human rights remain a weak link between military intervention and the EU's normative role (Youngs, 2004). These developments highlight the EU's significant status as a normative actor. Normative policy coherence for development supports the EU's normative aspirations. The EU's political commitment to norms will be assessed in the following chapter.

# Chapter 4: The EU's Political Commitment to Norms

The previous chapter has outlined normative policy coherence for development from a conceptual and theoretical point of view. One aspect of tracing the implementation of norms across the different policy levels is the political commitment represented through official policy documents. A second aspect is the structural set-up of the entity, which is to implement norms. Both aspects are relevant indicators in the assessments of NPCD as they reflect the actor's commitment on the one hand and structural capacity to implement this commitment on the other.

The EU's legislative framework has changed considerable since its creation in 1952 where it was established as a European Coal and Steal Community (ECSC). The ECSC established a community of six countries that favored cooperation in the coal and steel sector, but also envisioned a peaceful Europe based on mutual cooperation. Several years later, the European Economic Community was created which expanded cooperation in the steal and coals sector to a broader range of economic sectors (Treaty of Rome, 1957). The Treaty of Rome gave legal personality to the European Community (EC) for the first time, transferring political power from the member states to the EC institutions. Ever since, the community fostered further integration by deepening its relationship and widening the scope to include more European nation states.

Another important milestone in the evolution of the EU's legal basis is the creation of the European Union in 1992 with the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, which succeeded the European Community and comprised three pillars of policy-making, which covered areas from economic cooperation as envisioned in the beginning phases of the European Community to judicial cooperation in unlawful matters. The first pillar of policy-making was the EEC and covered the single market, the common agricultural and fisheries policies, social policies, and immigration. The second pillar was the Common Foreign and Security Policy, which covered cooperation in areas such as foreign aid and promoting human rights and democracy, but also peacekeeping missions. The third pillar was the pillar on Police and Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters, which covered cooperation in activities fighting drug trafficking, organized crime or terrorism. In comparison to the founding ECSC, the Maastricht Treaty's scope had broadened extensively and covered not only economic issues but also political issues. Most

interestingly, a common foreign and security policy was introduced among which "develop[ing] and consolidat[ing] democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" was one of the objectives in foreign policies of the newly established European Union (Art. 11 TEU-post-Maastricht).

A European Constitution was rejected by several referenda in the member states, but an adapted version of the text remains in form of the Lisbon Treaty (Kostanyan, 2016). The effects of this new Treaty in terms of normative policy coherence will be assessed in the following sub-section by first introducing the legal/administrative system and subsequently analyzing norms representation in EU policy documents and the EU's institutional structure after Lisbon.

## 4.1   INTRODUCING THE LEGAL/ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

The first steps towards NPCD are taken "within" each actor, i.e. an actor's legal and administrative system. This legal and administrative framework consists of laws, treaties, agreements, regulations, directives as well as the institutions, which form the governing body. In the EU, this would be reflected by the institutional set-up and the division of competences between the EU institutions and member states, the EU Treaties, Commission Directives, and agreements with third countries. The second system refers to policy communities, which are considered in chapter five. Policy communities are a sub-set of political systems in which different like-minded actors come together for dialogue in a certain policy area to shape actions/activities. The third policy system is the inter-regional area as part of the international political area, as discussed in chapter six. These three normative policy coherence systems can be utilized to trace policy implementation and identify gaps in the system, which might lead to incoherence.

Keeping the focus on the first system, the legal/administrative framework, the question arises whether the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty has had any effects on the EU institutions and legal arrangements with regard to NPCD. In other words, do the institutions, treaties and agreements show an increased commitment to norms across policy sectors compared to the legal/administrative framework under the Maastricht Treaty? The Maastricht Treaty is seen as the first Treaty that formally stated the EU's emphasis on policy coherence for development. Taking this as the starting point for effectively implementing PCD, results or changes can be expected to occur consequently over time. With the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, this commitment has been strengthened formally, but it remains unclear whether the legal

commitment has transgressed into administrative changes. Without administrative adaptation to NPCD and corresponding procedures to improve coherence, formal commitment will remain exactly that: formal commitment.

The European Union (EU), i.e. the European Commission together with all EU member states, has become the biggest aid donor on a global level. The EU institutions alone, for example, show an increase of net Official Development Assistance (ODA) disbursements from USD 7.8bn to USD 16.3bn in the years 1999 and 2014 respectively (OECD, 2016). Similar developments are seen in German ODA, British ODA and to a lesser degree French ODA (for exact data see OECD, 2016). Given this role as a strong donor community, and especially under the current Agenda 2030 strategy, the EU shares great responsibility for sustainable cooperation with its partner countries.

To increase effectiveness of these development efforts, the EU introduced basic measures for closer cooperation between the development sector and other policy sectors in the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. This initial effort has gradually evolved into the concept of policy coherence for development. Policy coherence for development (PCD) is a concept about drawing synergies between development and non-development policies that could otherwise lead to contradictory outcomes. Consequently, increasing PCD aims at reducing those discrepancies that would undermine the objectives and results of development policies. If PCD were implemented effectively, this would imply in return that other policies acknowledge the aspirations of the development initiatives and adopt measures to support or at least not to harm development strategies. One needs to mention here that each actor can strive towards more coherence, but PCD cannot be achieved perfectly. Nevertheless, in light of the recently agreed United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) PCD could be a useful tool in approaching these goals practically, and as an element of transformative development analytically (Siitonen, 2016). In this sense, the SDGs provide the umbrella setting development policies as the overarching priority over other policies can be justified on several levels. First, the SDGs call for responsibility amongst all actors. In contrast to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs, the predecessor to the SDGs) which focused solely on the developing countries performance, under the SDGs, the developed nations need to take responsibility for sustainable growth as well. In other terms, providing aid to developing countries for sustainable farming but simultaneously protecting one's own industry cannot be justified under the SDGs anymore. Second, the notion of sustainability accrues an expansive spectrum of policy fields that have

direct or indirect effects on sustainable development. The SDGs comprise 17 goals ranging from eradicating hunger, to quality education, to life below water, to gender equality, linking all aspects to achieving a better life for everyone. As such, development has become more than just technical aid to developing countries. It is the interconnection between policy sectors, between the private and public sector, between levels of governance, between sectoral and crosscutting issues, that define sustainable development and, thus, each sector has its share in either contributing to reaching the SDGs or at least limit negative externalities. Third, from a moral/humane perspective coherently implementing sustainable development would benefit developing countries. The EU is one of the largest aid donors in the world, but similarly it damages the economy of developing countries through its own agricultural or fishery policies. Subsidized food is exported to developing nations lowering the prices that local farmers cannot compete with, but coincidentally, the EU gives financial support for development. If those subsidized products were not exported, local farmers would have the opportunity to sell their own products and grow their own business.

Normative policy coherence for development is the implementation of certain values across various policies. With the Lisbon Treaty in place for almost a decade, it is time to review its effects. As mentioned in chapter one, the guiding research question for this chapter on the EU's political commitment to norms is the following:

*Is the EU's commitment to norms coherent between the development and trade sectors?*

Research has suggested that lack of normative commitment has led to poor policy outcomes in the field of water management (Koff & Maganda, 2016). In other words, poor policies can be the result of poor commitment. Especially in the area of norms, such as human rights, formal commitment matters. Commitment does not subsequently lead to flawless implementation, but rather shows a step towards reaching the goals. Whether the EU has improved its normative commitment between policies can thus be seen as an indicator of the quality of the policy outcome.

Policy coherence for development and the recently emerging concept normative policy coherence for development are broad concepts that cover a variety of topics from conceptual clarification to institutional reforms and political conflicts between the EU and its member states, sector analysis of development and trade, and policy evaluation of the EU's commitment to the human right to water (Ashoff, 2005; Carbone & Keijzer, 2016; Forster &

Stokke, 1999; Koff & Maganda, 2016; Picciotto, 2005; Siitonen, 2016; Stocchetti, 2016). In this research, PCD is considered as a goal to be achieved. Despite formal reforms, commitment to PCD has remained at a rhetorical level lacking implementation efforts. To successfully promote PCD political willingness is required, i.e. the implementation of PCD needs to be transformed from a technicality to a political goal.

Figure 9 below indicates a simplified overview of policy implementation. Policy guidelines, such as the European Treaty, give broad principles and a political vision for the future. This is followed by a second stage that I have termed policy formulation. This policy formulation takes place between the EU and Vietnam in bilateral negotiations. For example, the FTA negotiations have been led by DG TRADE and the Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT).

**Figure 9: Stages of Policy Implementation**

| Policy guidelines | | Policy formulation | | Policy implementation I | | Policy implementation II |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| •Maastricht Treaty •Lisbon Treaty | ➡ | •FCA •PCA •FTA | ➡ | •MIPs | ➡ | •projects •meetings |
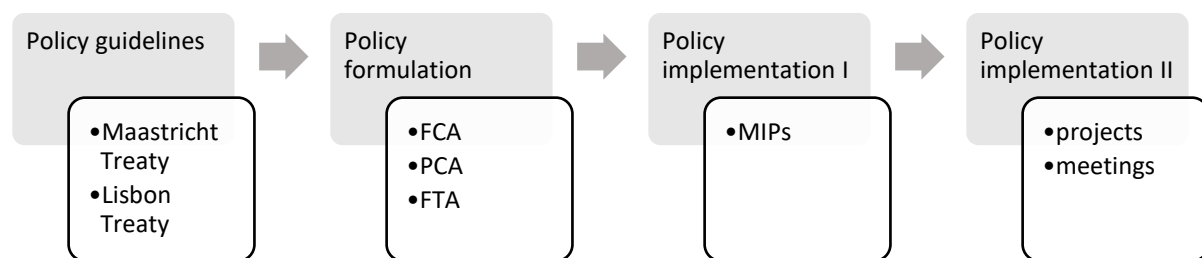
Source: author's own creation

These agreements cover key areas for cooperation and are broad frameworks that direct future relations specifically regarding the country in question. Thus, whereas the Treaties are applicable to all EU actions, the agreements are specifically designed for cooperation between the EU and a third country. The third stage is the "first" implementation stage in the sense that these documents are concrete plans for a short-term time-frame. Multi-annual indicative frameworks are programs that cover activities of the EU in Vietnam, and in accordance with Vietnamese priorities, for a time of four to seven years. In contrast to the first two stages, this stage is the first stage that could be called implementation due to the fact that clear goals are set for a defined time frame. Finally, clearly defined projects and the relationship between the actors in Vietnam that do the day-to-day work is the final implementation stage. Day-to-day work here does not refer to the project implementers, which are often NGOs or local partners, but to the day-to-day work of EU/MS officials in the delegations. The first three stages are strongly related to policy documents, which is the focus of this chapter, whereas the

last stage covers both written documentation and interview material, which is further analyzed in the subsequent chapter in terms of policy networks.

In the following sections, the normative dimension of the primary documents is assessed through their mention of norms. Mentioning norms is one indicator, which shows the EU's commitment to them. Taking this indicator, several policy documents covering the four policy implementation stages are qualitatively assessed for their normativity.

## 4.2   NPCD IN THE TREATIES AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

The structure of this sub-section follows the implementation stages presented above. First, the norm representation in the policy guidelines such as the EU treaties, the EU Global Strategy and the European Consensus on Development are analyzed. This is followed by a section on the policy formulation and the first implementation stage represented by the governing agreements between the EU and Vietnam and the multi-annual programs. The second implementation stage is covered in a separate section. All results relating to norm representation in the policy documents are summarized in sub-section 4.2.4.

### 4.2.1   Normative Reflections in the Policy Guideline Stage
**From the Maastricht Treaty to the Lisbon Treaty**[11]

With the introduction of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU has legally committed itself to policy coherence for development and the promotion of norms in all its policies. As the Lisbon Treaty is presented and viewed as the document that most closely resembles a European constitution, it is worth considering its effects on normative policy coherence for development. The Maastricht Treaty is the treaty that established the European Union, which was previously the European Communities, highlighting the European integration process. Therefore, Maastricht and Lisbon are the two Treaties under study here, leaving out the changes made in Amsterdam and Nice, because those two treaties had merely a minor impact on development policies, policy coherence and norm representation. Consequently, the Maastricht Treaty will be used as the first benchmark and the following period is, therefore, called post-Maastricht. This period is marked by early stage diplomatic relations between the EU and Vietnam as these were only established in 1990. During this time period Vietnam had the status of a low-income

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[11] The consolidated versions after the Maastricht Treaty and the Lisbon Treaty are used through the entire analysis. Source for Maastricht Treaty: EU Official Journal 97/C 340/02; Source for Lisbon Treaty: EU Official Journal 2010/C 83/01

country. On the contrary, since 2009, the year of ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, Vietnam is a lower middle-income country[12]. Furthermore, during this second period the relations between the EU and Vietnam had time to develop and expand as represented by the recently signed free trade agreement. The second period is referred to as post-Lisbon and ends – for this research project – in July 2017.

"The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail" (Art. 2 TEU-post-Lisbon). In comparison, the Maastricht Treaty stated: "The Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States" (Art. 6 TEU-post-Maastricht). As can be seen, the Lisbon Treaty expanded on the foundational norms of the European Union, reinforcing the commitment to democracy, freedom, human rights, and the rule of law, and adding human dignity, equality, pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, and solidarity. Liberty, a norm brought forward in the Maastricht Treaty, was moved to the preamble of the Lisbon Treaty. In terms of external relations, the "Union's action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law" (Art. 21 TEU-post-Lisbon). Those two articles in the Lisbon Treaty clearly lay out the EU's commitment to its founding norms and their applicability in foreign policies.

With regard to human rights, in particular, the Lisbon Treaty is the first EU Treaty, which included a list of human rights to be adhered to by the EU and its member states. The Maastricht Treaty had already converted respect for human rights, which was previously a matter of case law under the auspices of the European Court of Justice, into treaty obligations for all EU members (Defeis, 2017). The Maastricht Treaty made reference to the European

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[12] The World Bank adapts the threshold for country classification each year. In 2009 Vietnam surpassed the threshold of USD 996 GNI per capita to become a lower middle-income country. (For details see "Historical classification by income" https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups )

Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in terms of respecting this convention, but it did not comprise the legal basis for the EU. Since Lisbon, however, the Charter of Fundamental Rights is an integral part of the Treaty: "The Union recognizes the rights, freedoms and principles set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union of 7 December 2000, as adapted at Strasbourg, on 12 December 2007, which shall have the same legal value as the Treaties" (Art. 6 TEU-post-Lisbon). This change has a strong normative statement emphasizing the EU's commitment to norms not only in a preamble to the Treaty, but by integrating the human rights charter into the legally binding foundation of the EU. It entitles EU citizens to bring the EU or individual member states to court for breaching human rights (Defeis, 2017). As a result, it is rather unlikely that the EU or a member state would be confronted with breaching human rights in development policies, because those policies are not addressed at EU citizens. Nevertheless, the Human Rights Charter and the EU's commitment to norms in external relations are a strong sign of normativity.

**Table 10: Normative Change from Maastricht to Lisbon**

|  | Core Norms* | | | | | | Minor Norms* | | | | Other* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | D | RoL | HR | F | P | L | S | GG | SD | ND | J | GE |
| Change from Maastricht to Lisbon | 0 | 0 | + | 0 | 0 | - | + | + | + | + | 0 | + |

Source: author's creation
*Definition of norms (Manners, 2002): Core norms – Democracy, Rule of Law, Human Rights & Fundamental Freedoms, Peace, Liberty; Minor Norms – Solidarity, Good Governance, Sustainable Development, Non-Discrimination; Other (not in Manners' distinction) – Justice, Gender Equality

Table 10 shows, that norms have increased from Maastricht to Lisbon. Three measurements are used: 0 indicates no change, + indicates strengthening or adding a norm, - indicates weakening or cutting back on a norm. Regarding the core norms, respect for human rights has been strengthened, most visibly by the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Similarly, sustainable development was strengthened by the Lisbon Treaty. In Maastricht, sustainable development was limited to the EU's internal market and its own citizens (Art. 2 TEU-post Maastricht), which was expanded to cover internal as well as external affairs in the Lisbon Treaty (Art. 3 and Art. 21 TEU-post-Lisbon).

Liberty, on the other hand, has been less represented in the Lisbon Treaty. Democratic values,

the rule of law, peace, justice and freedoms are fundamental values in both treaties. Solidarity, good governance, non-discrimination, and gender equality were not mentioned in the Maastricht Treaty on the European Union but mentioned in the Lisbon Treaty. With regard to the EU's normative power, which was brought up in 2002 (Manners, 2002) and, therefore, before the Lisbon Treaty, the Lisbon Treaty has overall strengthened the EU's founding basis and consequently strengthened the NPE argument in highlighting "what the EU is".

Progress towards normative coherence can be witnessed in the change from Maastricht to Lisbon. The institutional changes to support policy coherence will be discussed below, but regardless of the institutional arrangements, the EU's strengthened normative basis does already indicate the EU's position towards norms and its commitment in internal and external matters. It can be argued that the paradigmatic shift from the global transitional phase of development to the normative development phase is being reflected by the changes from Maastricht to Lisbon. This is not to say that the new development paradigm has influenced the EU Treaties, but it underlines the relevance of normativity at both the international level and the European level. Whether other EU's policy guidelines, which have a shorter-term character, reflect the normativity presented in the Treaties, will be assessed in the following.

**Policy Guidelines in the Normative Development Phase**

Next to the European Treaties as policy guidelines are the EU's global policy strategies, such as the EU Global Strategy, the Agenda for Change, the EU Trade for All initiative, and the European Consensus on Development. These types of policy documents provide broad input on a variety of topics and give insight about the EU's general position and aspirations in global affairs. As such, they provide a guiding basis and represent part of the first stage of policy implementation, namely policy guidelines.

Five documents, the 2016 EU Global Strategy, the 2011 Agenda for Change, the 2006 European Consensus of Development, the new European Consensus on Development entitled "Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future" (published in 2017), and the Commission's 2015 EU Trade for All proposal were analyzed through their mention of norms. The results show, that out of the core norms identified above, the rule of law, human rights, and peace are present in all five documents. Liberty is not present in any of these documents contrary to the commitment in the Lisbon Treaty. Peace is mentioned in the Global Strategy, the Agenda for Change and the two Consensus on Development, but not in the Trade for All document. Democracy/democratic values are present in four out of five documents with the exception

of the Trade for All proposal. Here, reference is made to internal processes of EU's policy-making ensuring democratic procedures. "As co-legislator alongside the Council, the European Parliament also has a central role in ensuring full democratic scrutiny and accountability of trade policy. The Parliament and the Commission have intensified their interaction, ensuring the close involvement of the Parliament at every step of the negotiations" (European Commission, 2015b, p.18). This statement does not reflect on the EU's external relationship with third countries but rather reinforced the EU's policy-making procedures and, thus, will not be considered here as a normative mention.

These five documents are important guidelines for the EU's external relations. As part of the EU's normative rhetoric, including norms into these documents would support its normativity and provide normative guidelines for more specific policies. The rule of law, human rights and peace are incorporated in those guiding documents and this mention underlines the EU's normative position. Freedom is mentioned in all five documents, however, again, in the trade policy paper, freedom does not refer to the fundamental freedoms, but to the freedom of association. Liberty, peace and democracy are not mentioned in either of the documents and this lack leads to first gaps in normative policy coherence. This normative presence reflects the EU's commitment to norms as indicated in the Lisbon Treaty. With regard to the minor norms, good governance and sustainable development are mentioned in all five documents. Solidarity is not included in any of the documents. The presence of non-discrimination is subject to the definition of non-discrimination. Non-discrimination is used in the Trade for All paper as a reference to the labor standards, i.e. no discrimination at the work place, but also in relation with trade matters in terms of open access to other markets, for example. Overall, the minor norms are included in all five guiding policy papers.

In the case of "other norms", i.e. those not classified by Manners (2002), gender equality and justice can be found in the majority of documents. Justice occurs in all documents part from the Agenda for Change. Gender equality is present in all documents apart from the Trade for All document. Including the norms, which were not initially defined in the Normative Power Europe concept, into the analysis re-shapes the understanding of the EU's normative position by highlighting norms that are included in the documents but were disregarded in the original NPE discussion. The majority of the documents regarded as policy guidelines mention all norms, with the exception of liberty. Thus, the policy guidelines stage can be said to be strongly infused with EU norms.

In terms of normative policy coherence, the policy documents are palpably coherent with the Lisbon Treaty. Justice and liberty are the sole two norms not represented across all four documents leading to incoherence between the Lisbon Treaty and the policy guidelines level. Thus, the loss of norms in the "translation" from the Treaty into policy guidelines is the first cause of normative policy incoherence. The loss is not substantial, because the rule of law, human rights, peace, solidarity, good governance, sustainable development, non-discrimination, freedom and gender equality are present across the Treaty and the guiding policy documents. However, this tendency of drop-out could occur across the other implementation stages as well leading to gradual normative incoherence along the implementation process.

The following sub-section addresses whether norms are also present at the policy formulation stage, which is the first stage in implementing policies at a bilateral level, and the actual first implementation stage as represented by bilateral multi-annual strategies and programs.

### 4.2.2  Normative Reflections in Policy Formulation Stage and Implementation Stage I

Given that the Treaties are the basis for norms, values, and principles, they were considered in the previous sub-section together with the EU's broad strategies on a common future, which serve as the guiding basis for all sub-sequent policy documents. Having established this basis, this sub-section assesses the documents representing the following two stages of policy implementation: policy formulation, policy implementation I.

As mentioned in chapter two, content analysis will be used for the analysis of selected policy documents, which comprise country-specific documents regarding EU-Vietnam bilateral agreements and programs. These documents refer to both development and trade related matters, which is why no separation is made between development-related documents and trade-related documents. Figure 10 below gives an overview of the documents and the generational classification into the global development phases. As can be seen, only the Framework Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Vietnam was ratified before the turn of the millennium, which marked the beginning of the normative development phase. However, paradigmatic shifts take place over a longer period and, therefore, it cannot be assumed that all policies after 2000 are boasting with norms. Similarly, relationships between two parties evolve over a period of time. The FCA remained the governing agreement of EU-Vietnam relations until the implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement in 2016 and, as a result, this agreement falls into the transition phase as well as the normative

phase. As the goal of this dissertation is not to show that the EU is more normative now than it was in the transitional development phase, these overlaps are of minor concern.

**Figure 10: Timeline of EU-Vietnam Policy Documents**
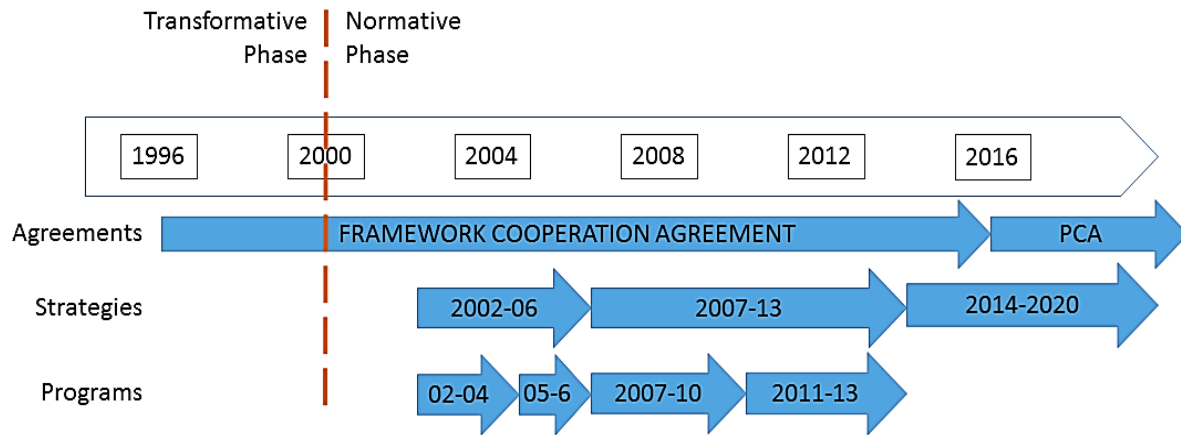


Source: author's own creation

The implementation of norms in EU policies is the focus of analysis in this dissertation and to identify gaps in the implementation process. Therefore, the split is made between policy formulation and the first implementation stage, to discover whether political commitments are translated from broad country related agreements into the multi-annual programs. The Framework Cooperation Agreement (FCA), Partnership Cooperation Agreement (PCA) and Free Trade Agreement (FTA) are the three documents representing the formulation stage. The FCA was replaced by the PCA and the FTA has not been implemented yet, but negotiations were concluded in 2015. Nevertheless, all three documents are assessed to in order to trace the EU's normative tendencies in its relations with Vietnam overall.

Two country strategy papers (CPSs) (2002-06 & 2007-13) and five multi-annual indicative programs (MIPs) (2002-04, 2005-06, 2007-10, 2011-13 & 2014-20) represent the first implementation stage. The latest MIP (2014-2020) functions as a country strategy paper and, therefore, was aligned with the country strategies in the visualization in figure 10. A list of all primary documents used in the analysis for this dissertation can be found in appendix 1.

**Norms in the EU-Vietnam Agreements (Policy Formulation)**

The Framework Cooperation Agreement, Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and the

Free Trade Agreement[13] are the three documents under consideration here. The FCA was the first agreement between the EU and Vietnam to cover the bilateral relationship. This agreement was signed in 1995 and entered into force in 1996. It lay down the core norms of democracy and human rights, but left out the rule of law, peace and liberty. In terms of minor norms, it addressed sustainable development and non-discrimination. Thus, out of nine norms categorized as core and minor norms, merely four were mentioned in this initial EU-Vietnam agreement. With the implementation of the PCA, which is the follow-up agreement to govern all EU-Vietnam relations, the incorporation of norms has increased. Now, democracy, the rule of law, human rights and peace, i.e. four "core norms" (Manners, 2002), are integrated, and good governance, sustainable development and non-discrimination are mentioned, which reflect the "minor norms" (Manners, 2002).

The least normative out of the three agreements is the FTA, which makes only indirect references to human rights and peace agreements in terms of core norm. Direct obligations in the FTA per se are not included. For example, regarding peace, it is stated that "nothing in this agreement shall be construed […] to prevent either Party from taking any action in pursuance of its obligations under the UN Charter for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security" (European Commission, 2016b). Human rights are not directly mentioned in the actual agreement, but a reference to the UN Declaration of Human Rights is made in the preamble:

*"REAFFIRMING their commitment to the Charter of the United Nations signed in San Francisco on 26 June 1945 and having regard to the principles articulated in The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948"* (bold added)

Furthermore, a mention is made to the commitment to ILO rules to abolish child labor. Thus, human rights values are somewhat integrated into the text, but only in the form of a reference to other commitments. While human rights and peace are mentioned, but not included as a direct political commitment for both parties, liberty, democracy or democratic values and the rule of law are not incorporated in the document at all. References to rules in general are

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[13] The text is the agreed text as of January 2016 but the final version is subject to legal revision. Source: European Commission http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1437

made in relation to WTO rules or rules of origin for certain products.

Minor norms are slightly more represented, i.e. two out of for norms are incorporated in the document: sustainable development and non-discrimination. Solidarity and good governance are not mentioned, rather corporate governance and recognizing environmental governance are the two types of governance brought forward in the FTA. Sustainable development, for example, is an integral part of the free trade agreement while good governance is not explicitly mentioned. The preliminary text of the free trade agreement[14] shows an entire chapter dedicated to trade and sustainable development. Article 1 of the sustainability chapter states:

*"The Parties recall the **Agenda 21 on Environment and Development** of 1992, the Johannesburg **Plan of Implementation on Sustainable Development** of 2002, the Ministerial Declaration of the UN Economic and Social Council on Full Employment and Decent Work of 2006, the ILO Decent Work Agenda, the Outcome Document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development of 2012 entitled **"The Future We Want"**, and the outcome of the UN Summit on Sustainable Development of 2015 entitled **"Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"**, and reaffirm their **commitment to promote the development of international trade in such a way as to contribute to the objective of sustainable development, for the welfare of present and future generations**, and will encourage the integration of this objective in their trade relationship".* (bold added)

The sustainability chapter makes a clear link to the UN SDGs and sustainable development in general that international trade should contribute to integrating sustainable development and trade is the central argument in this excerpt. Incorporating a sustainability chapter in a trade agreement supports the paradigm shift towards global normative development as introduced at the beginning of this dissertation. This excerpt reflects the global development agenda, which implies that the norms are not strictly European. Nonetheless, as the EU has been the major promoter of sustainability, as shown above, the global norms have been infused with European norms. International relations are a web of relationships between different actors and the outcomes of agreements are a compromise between the different positions. Including sustainability into the global agenda even though it was not supported by everyone, as shown in the example of the World Summit for Sustainable Development, can in this case be considered as accepting European norms at the global level. The EU making reference to those global agreements is, thus, a reference to its own norms which it brought onto the global agenda. This norm driven behavior supports the need for the analysis of normative commitment

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[14] Ibid.

in policy implementation.

The analysis of core and minor norms shows that the PCA is more normative than the FCA and the FTA, because it incorporates more of the norms previously defined as core and minor norms. Solidarity and non-discrimination play a minor role in the EU's relation to Vietnam as based on the selected documents. Both are not mentioned in the country specific EU-VN agreements. Similar to liberty, this might indicate that solidarity is in internal principle between the EU member states, but not a norm that is sought for in external policies.

To expand the picture on norms, for this analysis three norms were added to the original core and minor norms distinction (Manners, 2002). Manners (2002) defines core norms as the norms, which are part of the "acquis communautaire", namely peace, liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. In addition, Manners defines "minor norms" as norms which are "within the constitution and practices of the EU, although these are far more contested" (Manners, 2002). These are social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development and good governance. The additional norms are to the core and minor norm categorization are gender equality, justice, and freedom. Gender quality is present in all three agreements. Justice is mentioned in the PCA and FTA with an entire chapter in the PCA dedicated to cooperation in the area of justice. Freedom is mentioned solely in the FTA in the form of freedom of association for workers as agreed to under the ILO conventions. Thus, on the one hand, freedom of association is recognized, but again only in the form of restating the commitments under the ILO regulations. This type of wording gives the impression that the EU has not added its own norms to the agreements and, therefore, failed to incorporate its norms in the agreement. Because it is unknown how the wording came about and who brought up the ILO and UN conventions, it is not possible to claim that the mere mention of those conventions is a representation of EU norms. The EU and Vietnam are both committed to those conventions regardless of their bilateral agreements and, therefore, those mentions do not add much to the EU's normative character.

As FTA will be an integral part of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement it could be argued that legally speaking the PCA rules also apply to the FTA, but from a critical point of view it might be an indication for trade-offs between economic interests and normative commitment based on the norms above. This is not to say that trade is not based on any norms, but rather that the sets of norms do not overlap and hence lead to incoherence. To what extent the norms are represented at the following implementation stage will be examined in the

following section.

**Norms in the Strategies and Programs (Policy Implementation I)**

The national indicative program 2002-04 set at the EU's two focal points human development and Vietnam's integration into the global trade system. The following excerpts of the EU-Vietnam national indicative program 2002-2004 show a certain commitment to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. However, it is merely a mention, which refers to general EU (formerly European Community - EC) policies, but not to the relations between the EU and Vietnam in particular:

*"Article 177 of the Treaty of the European Communities sets out the three broad objectives for Community development co-operation. These are: fostering of sustainable economic and social development; the smooth and gradual integration of the developing countries into the world economy; the fight against poverty. This article also states that Community policy should contribute to the general objective of developing and* **consolidating democracy and the rule of law and encouraging the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms**. (bold added)

*Further to the Commission's Communication on "The European Community's Development Policy" (1), the Joint Council and Commission Declaration on Development Co-operation of November 2000 states that Community development policy is grounded in the principle of sustainable, equitable and participatory human and social development.* **Promotion of human rights, democracy, the rule of law and good governance are integral elements of EC policy**.*"* (bold added)

The NIP 2005-2006 shows a similar pattern for the rule of law by including the EU's Asia strategy as a reference point for Vietnam but leaving out clear initiatives as part of the NIP. Similarly, in the Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013, a reference is made to the rule of law in the appendix to the CSP which lays out what the EU's general policy objectives are according to the EU Treaties, Commission Communications and the EU-Vietnam FCA. Those references cannot be considered as normative mentions in the strategy, because they make reference to other documents which fall into the policy guidelines level of implementation. Peace and liberty are considered to be core norms but are rarely or not at all represented in the selected documents. They might comprise the acquis communautaire but not define the EU's external policies towards third countries.

An interesting outcome is the divergence between Country Strategy Papers and the National Indicative Programs. Country Strategy Papers are medium term strategies agreed

between the EU and Vietnam, which set out overall goals of cooperation. They range from 5 years to 7 years. National Indicative Programs translate the medium-term strategies into more concrete tasks and assign budgets. NIPs cover two to four years. Under the CSP 2002-2006, for example, the NIP 2002-2004 covered the first four years while the NIP 2005-2006 covered the latter two. Both, across generations and across norm categories, the commitment to norms remains rather weak as the commitment tends to be formal and lacks implementation. For example, the NIP 2002-2004 refers to the EU's commitment to fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law, however, solely referring to the Treaty of the European Communities and a Commission Communication. This reference leaves out any practical effort to translate these commitments into action undermining their implementation.

An exception is gender equality, which was initially not included in the core norm-minor norm distinction. Nevertheless, it is the norm that is mostly reflected in the documents, including in the free trade agreement. Gender equality appears in all policy document under analysis either as a cross-cutting theme or as an individual work package.

While overall normative coherence across policy documents might be questionable, human rights, sustainable development and gender equality are the three norms that occur in all documents and for which the implementation seems to be rather coherent. The results, therefore, suggest mixed success in the implementation of normative policy coherence for development.

### 4.2.3  Normative Reflections in the Implementation Stage II

The EU Blue Books are a series of publications by the EU delegation in Hanoi to report on the development activities in a given year. The first Blue Book has been published in 2007 but covered the reporting period 2004 to 2006. Since then, annual Blue Books were published on the EU's and member states' development priorities in, and disbursements to Vietnam. Recently the Southeast Asian individual Blue Books have been merged into one common ASEAN Blue Book, the first of which was published by the EU Delegation in Jakarta in 2016, and which replaced among others the Blue Book on Vietnam. Similar publications, namely the Green Books were published by the European Commercial Counsellors in Vietnam. However, these Green Books do not give information about the EU's trade and economic activities in Vietnam, but about the status of Vietnam's economy. Therefore, they are not suitable for this analysis. Consequently, the results of this analysis will be biased towards development-related policies, programs and projects, as the analysis includes development activities but not trade

activities. Under the scope of this dissertation, which is to assess normative policy coherence for development, this bias does not compromise the study but rather reinforces the focus on "for development".

Having a look at the Blue Books gives an indication about policy implementation as the Blue Books are a retrospective compilation of aid disbursements by country and sector, thus, showing the EU member states' individual sector priorities, but at the same time it shows the EU's overall commitment in development. Strictly speaking, the Blue Books do not represent policy documents in the sense that they prescribe a new policy. Nevertheless, this section is a complementary analysis to the previous sections to the extent that it is at the implementation level. In terms of the analytical levels above, this would fall into the second implementation stage, even though the Blue Books represent aggregated data from various project in combination with budget support to the Vietnamese government. Policy implementation stage I, however, is understood as the multi-annual indicative programs, or long-term programs tailored to the Vietnamese interests. The second implementation stage is short term and more detailed.

The annual compilation of normative priorities as shown in table 10 below visualized the EU's preferential shift over the years. Each Blue Book starts with a general explanation of the EU's development policies which are based on the "common values" that are "respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, peace, democracy, good governance, gender equality, the rule of law, solidarity and justice" (EU Delegation to Vietnam, 2009). This commitment is taken from the European Consensus on Development and does not address EU-Vietnam specific relations. Nevertheless, it reflects some sort of commitment to the values, or norms as they are termed in this research, simply by incorporating and emphasizing the Consensus and its vision for the EU's development policies. However, a vision is merely a rhetorical strategy, which does not suffice for implementation. Vietnam-specific commitments only are the basis for the discussion below.

Within each Blue Book, the member states' priorities are described in addition to the EU policy priorities in Vietnam. Taking a closer look at the EU's policy priorities, excluding the individual member state's priority sectors, shows that donor coordination, democratic governance, the rule of law, human rights, economic reforms, policy coherence, gender equality and economic sustainability were among the EU priorities from 2007 to 2009. An overview of the priorities from 2007 until 2015 is given in table 11. In the 2010 Blue Book,

gender equality was particularly emphasized as the theme for all European Union policies and, consequently, was integrated into the relations with Vietnam. Similarly, environmental protection was included, which remained a priority throughout the year 2011.

**Table 11: (Non-) Normative Evolution Represented by the EU Blue Books 2007-2015**

| 2007 – 2009 | 2010 & 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Democratic governance | Good governance | Governance | Good governance | Governance | Governance |
| Rule of law | | Corruption | Corruption | Rule of law | Rule of law |
| Human rights | Human rights | Human rights | Human rights | Human rights | Human rights |
| Economic reforms | | Trade | FTA | FTA aid for trade | FTA aid for trade |
| Gender equality | Gender equality | Inequality | Inequality | Ethnic minorities | |
| Environmental sustainability | Environment & climate change | Green growth | Environment | Environment | Energy |

Source: author's compilation based on the EU Blue Books 2007-2015

Environmental considerations, despite varying key words, remained important throughout the entire sequence from 2007 to 2015. Gender equality was incorporated into the priorities to a large extent, but to different degrees. In the year on gender equality in 2010 special emphasis was put on the issue, whereas low formal commitment was voiced in 2009, where gender equality is mentioned on the sidelines to policy coherence. In 2012, green growth was the most prominent topic, and in 2013, the post-2015 agenda with sustainable development was at the center. As this overview has shown, the focus of the EU's development agenda in Vietnam varied slightly from year to year by putting different emphasis on the individual norms (as during the year of gender equality), but the norms remained the same over the period from 2007 to 2015.

In addition to the development priorities examined above, inter-regionalism has gained prominence on the EU's agenda. In 2012, special attention was paid to EU-ASEAN relations. Interestingly, peace, which had not been an EU priority according to the Blue Books before 2012, was brought to the agenda in relation with ASEAN integration. The Blue Books show that the EU

has tried to promote itself as an example of regional integration, which has already brought peace and stability to a regional grouping and, consequently, can support other regions in the integration process. More recently, wider inter-regional relations between the EU and ASEAN, in particular economic cooperation, have become more important. Broader relations outside the scope of traditional donor-recipient relations with actors the Southeast Asia region is also reflected by the EU-VN Partnership and Cooperation and the EU-VN Free Trade Agreement negotiations, which have formed a significant topic in EU-Vietnam dialogues according to the 2013 Blue Book. Thus, development cooperation seems to have moved to the background, whereas political and economic relations have been strengthened. Similarly, the normative dimension seems to be of lesser importance. Human rights, equality, good governance, the fundamental freedoms and the rule of law are still being mentioned in the introductory part of the Blue Book in relation to general EU development cooperation but moves into the background in the EU-Vietnam specific parts of the Blue Book. In the 2013 Blue Book, for example, good governance is listed between other areas of cooperation such as technology and tourism: "[The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement] will further the scope of bilateral cooperation in areas such as trade, the environment, energy, science and technology, good governance, as well as tourism, culture, migration, counter terrorism and the fight against corruption and organized crime" (EU Delegation to Vietnam, 2013, p.32). This excerpt shows that cooperation between the EU and Vietnam aims at addressing one norm in particular, i.e. good governance. Fighting corruption can be interpreted as a form of implementing the rule of law and as such constitutes a second norm. Most of the areas of cooperation, however, reflect technical cooperation such as energy, science, technology, organized crime, and tourism.

Another interesting aspect arising out of the timeline assessment of the Blue Books is the replacement of gender equality by ethnic minority concerns in 2014. Neither "gender inequality" nor "inequality between men and women" occurred in that report, i.e. in the EU-Vietnam relations during that time. Instead, the focus was placed on ethnic minorities, which, is obviously an issue not to be ignored. Prioritizing ethnic priorities certainly also addresses inequality, however, not in the sense of gender equality. While normative aspirations play a role in the 2014 Blue Book, it is worth mentioning that economic inequality guides the discussion. Two observations need to be made in this regard. First, if the two policy areas ethnic minorities and economic inequalities have just been linked in 2014, it is likely that prior to the thematic inclusion of ethnic minorities, the "average" Vietnamese inhabitant had been addressed by initiatives to reduce economic inequality leaving out the minorities that live in

mountainous, hard to reach places. Second, the linkage between ethnic minorities and economic inequalities raises the question as to why economic aspects are addressed solely while raising their political stakes would be just as important in order to create long-term change.

This brief analysis reflects the EU's overall attitude towards Vietnam in as much as the assessment of EU Blue Books give an overview of the EU's priorities in Vietnam. In contrast to broader policy strategies, the Blue Books are annual publications and as such can reflect changes in the political landscape faster than medium- or long-term strategies. Notwithstanding this potential flexibility, a trend towards prioritizing energy, environment and trade is noticeable. Simultaneously, gender equality, inequality and ethnic minorities have lost their priority status, which again highlights the economic superiority over norms.

### 4.2.4  Translating Norms from Guidelines into Programs: Normative Coherence?

The content analysis of the above-examined policy documents shows changing commitment to norms across the implementation stages as presented in table 12. The green color indicates that at least 71 percent of the number of documents per implementing stage refer to the norm in question. For example, human rights were mentioned in 100 percent of the policy documents at the guideline level. On the contrary, liberty occurred in only one out of six documents (16 percent). The cut-off for the "traffic-light" visualization is 0-40 percent (red), 41-70 percent (orange), 71-100 percent (green).

Based on the distinction between core norms, minor norms and norms that fall outside of these two categories, table 12 shows that the commitment to norms has changed across the implementation stages but independently from the norm category. Only one of the core norms, namely human rights, has been mentioned across all four implementing stages. In other words, human rights is present in at least in 71 percent of all documents at each implementation stage. Democracy is the core norm, which falls under the 71 percent cut-off only at the policy formulation stage. At the other three stages is it mentioned at least 71 percent. The freedom, rule of law and peace show mixed representation. Liberty is not mentioned at either stage.

Regarding minor norms, sustainable development is the most present across all four stages. Good governance was barely mentioned at the policy formulation stage but occurred with over 71 percent at the guideline stage and both implementation stages. Non-discrimination is only mentioned at the guidelines level and the formulation level but disappeared at the

implementation levels. Solidarity is not represented apart from at the guideline level. Out of the "other norms", those not initially classified by Manners (Manners, 2002), gender equality is the more present than justice, but both are not constant across policy implementation levels. Gender equality is mentioned across most policy documents from the guidelines level to the first implementation stage (multi-annual strategies), but not that regularly in the second implementation stage (Blue Books). Thus, regardless of the norm classification, the mentions vary between the different norms. Overall, human rights, democracy, sustainable development, good governance and gender equality are the most present.

**Table 12: Norm Representation at Each Stage of Policy Implementation**

|  | Policy Guidelines | Policy Formulation | Policy Implementation Stage I | Policy Implementation Stage II |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Democracy** | green | yellow | green | green |
| **Freedom** | green | red | yellow | yellow |
| **Human Rights** | green | green | green | green |
| **Liberty** | red | red | red | red |
| **Peace** | green | yellow | red | red |
| **Rule of Law** | green | red | yellow | yellow |
| **Good Governance** | green | red | green | green |
| **Non-discrimination** | green | green | red | red |
| **Solidarity** | green | red | red | red |
| **Sustainable Development** | green | green | green | green |
| **Gender equality** | green | green | green | yellow |
| **Justice** | green | yellow | yellow | yellow |

Source: author's own creation

Table 12 shows that translating norms from one policy implementation stage to the next does not function smoothly. The major loss of norms occurs between the policy guidelines and the policy formulation stages. Out of 11 norms mentioned at the policy guidelines stage, merely four are represented to the same extent at the policy formulation stage. However, the overview also shows that general conclusions about the correlation between the policy implementation stage and norm representation cannot be made. Norm representation does not decrease with increasing practicality of the document, except between policy guidelines and policy formulation. At the policy guideline level, all norms were mentioned in the majority of documents except for liberty. At the other three levels, norm representation is mixed. Thus,

norm representation tends to decline from guidelines to formulation, but then remains stable, i.e. mixed, across the implementation levels.

Regarding policy coherence, already in the first Blue Book, the EU emphasized the aim to increase coherence between development and trade policies. A reason for this could be Vietnam's selection as a pilot country for aid effectiveness, which was to be achieved through stronger coordination and harmonization between ODA donors. The theme remained prominent until 2015 but to varying degrees. Similar to the themes and norms represented in the table above, policy coherence takes different stances in the report. In some reports, entire sections are dedicated to policy coherence, while in others it is only a mention. Furthermore, the general development strategy by the EU tends to be norm driven, whereas the EU-Vietnam strategy in particular takes a turn towards trade cooperation and sectoral cooperation after 2013 in particular.

## 4.3   NPCD IN THE EU'S INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

### 4.3.1   The European External Action Service

One of the major institutional changes in the Lisbon Treaty regarding policy coherence for development is, as already briefly mentioned earlier, the creation of the post of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The High Representative, who is also one of the Vice-Presidents of the Commission, is the head of the newly created European External Action Service (EEAS). The HR could play a crucial role in implementing PCD and normative PCD for two reasons. First, the HR is one of the vice-presidents of the European Commission and as such the direct link between one of the major legislative institutions on the one hand and one of the major executive institutions in external relations on the other. Furthermore, the HR has been given the explicit task to ensure the consistency of EU external policies as well as coordinating the EU's external actions:

**Lisbon Treaty Art. 18**

*[…] 4. The High Representative shall be one of the Vice-Presidents of the Commission. He shall ensure the consistency of the Union's external action. He shall be responsible within the Commission for responsibilities incumbent on it in external relations and for coordinating other aspects of the Union's external action. […]*

While the Maastricht Treaty introduced policy coordination within the EU for the first time, the responsibilities for coherence have changed with the post of the HR. In Art. 3 TEU-post-

Maastricht the following statement is made regarding policy coherence for development: "The Union shall in particular ensure the consistency of its external activities as a whole in the context of its external relations, security, economic and development policies. *The Council and the Commission shall be responsible for ensuring such consistency and shall cooperate to this end*" (italics added). The "consistency of EU external policies" was taken up in the Lisbon Treaty as well, but the responsibilities for consistency were transferred from the Councils and the Commission to the high representative as shown in Art. 18 above. While the High Representative has the oversight over all external policies of the EU, the Commission remains the main legislative initiator in the development sector. Despite retaining the co-decision procedure ("ordinary legislative procedure" since Lisbon), which states that the Commission initiates legislation, the Council and the European Parliament revise and approve/disapprove, the creation of the EEAS seems to have had some influence on the Council's perceived legislative powers (Interview 2).

Criticism regarding the creation of the EEAS is not only voiced with regard to the creation of a new arena for competition of power, i.e. between the Council and the EEAS as well as between the Commission and the EEAS, but also regarding staff redistribution between the Council, the Commission, national diplomats and the EEAS (Gräßle, 2011). Administrative issues, i.e. budgetary oversight, have come up as the Commission used to be the budget manager. Since the creation of the EEAS, the EEAS can decide about part of the budget with the respective Commissioner in charge of the development budget, neighborhood budget and human rights budget (Gräßle, 2011).

"*The Commission shall promote the general interest of the Union and take appropriate initiatives to that end. […] It shall execute the budget and manage programs. It shall exercise coordinating, executive and management functions, as laid down in the Treaties. With the exception of the common foreign and security policy, […] it shall ensure the Union's external representation. It shall initiate the Union's annual and multiannual programming with a view to achieving inter-institutional agreements*" (Art. 17 TEU post-Lisbon).

The Commission's executive power in external affairs was reduced to budgetary issues as consequence of the introduction of Article 17 TEU. While the Commission could make political statements through its budget allocation prior to the Lisbon Treaty, the EEAS has started taking those political decisions since 2009. As a result, the Commission remains in charge of sole budget administration.

In addition to the competence struggles, issues related to normative debates have arisen due to the creation of the EEAS. The Commission is the actor within the EU initiating wider strategies and specific policies and in doing so brings in normative elements into the proposals (Hardacre & Smith, 2014). According to one of the respondents, however, the Commission's perceived moral stance in development has been weakened ever since the creation of the EEAS (Interview 2). While the actual legislative decision-making procedure has not changed, the role of the High Representative and the EEAS might influence the Commission's proposals, in the least when it comes to the execution in terms of budgetary allocations. As a result, the role of DG DEVCO as the expert in development in being undermined by the EEAS and the roles of each actor become unclear (Interview 2). In other terms, the EEAS is claimed to bring more policy coherence into the EU system, but simultaneously it causes uncertainty. On the one hand, this might merely be a temporary state during which the institutions and member states need to adjust to new processes, but which might lead to more coherence in the long term. On the other hand, it could be a strategic measure from the member states to regain political power in EU affairs (Interview 2). The complications, uncertainties and struggles between the different EU institutions are aptly summarized by Kostanyan (2016, p.27): "The outcome of the compromise is evident in the EEAS's sui generis nature of being neither a supranational nor an inter-governmental body: having unique linkages with the EU member states; being somewhat accountable to the European Parliament; and receiving a requirement to cooperate with the European Commission".

While the creation of the High Representative aims to ensure horizontal coherence between different policy arenas, despite existing difficulties, vertical coherence between the EU and its member states is covered in the Treaties as well: "In order to promote the complementarity and efficiency of their action, *the Union and the Member States shall coordinate their policies on development cooperation* and shall consult each other on their aid programs, including in international organizations and during international conferences […]" (Art. 210 TFEU-post-Lisbon, italics added). The institutional structure to improve this type of coherence, however, is not given.

In terms of normative coherence, the creation of the EEAS has for now not yet brought more coherence as issues over responsibilities still prevail. Linking all external actions via one service has the potential, though, to create horizontal coherence between policy arenas once the competences and responsibilities are clearer. Vertical coherence between the EU

and member states remains at consultation basis. Another institutional measure to increase coherence is monitoring implementation, which can be done in the form of impact assessments. When and how impact assessments are conducted in the EU is described in the following sub-section.

### 4.3.2 Impact Assessments: Improving Development, Sustainability or Human Rights?

The Commission report on the EU's and member states' implementation of PCD covering the period 2013-2015 somewhat contradicts this impression of more policy coherence (European Commission, 2015b). The report focuses on the policy areas trade and finance, food security, climate change, migration, and security. In this report, the Commission points its efforts to conduct impact assessments for policies that might have major effects on economic, social and environmental aspects, but at the same time admits that assessing the impact on developing countries remains a challenge. The impact assessments of development policies are only one type of impact assessments.

Another PCD initiative are the Sustainability Impact Assessments (SIA) designed for trade policies and their impact on economic, social and environmental aspects. These were already developed in and conducted since 1999, thus in terms of the above categorization "post-Maastricht". Impact assessments are a tool to be used to assess policies expected effects on a certain sector or group of people. Sustainability Impact Assessments and Human Rights Impact Assessments (HRIA) are two tools to ensure that negative externalities are kept at a minimum. Problematic, however, that the HRIA is not integrated in the EU policy-making procedure. According to the Commission, "[t]he Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) is a DG Trade-specific tool for supporting major trade negotiations. SIAs provide the Commission with an in-depth analysis of the potential economic, social, human rights, and environmental impacts of ongoing trade negotiations" (European Commission, 2018).

The Trade Sustainability Impact Assessment has been conducted for the FTA between the EU and ASEAN and was published in 2009, the year in which negotiations were stopped. The assessment was led by ECORYS, a Dutch consulting company, and executed in cooperation with other independent institutions, but financed by the European Commission. According to the report, substantial positive impacts were expected for ASEAN but only minor impacts for the EU. Positive aspects for ASEAN were the expected trade growth due to trade liberalization, rise in GDP, and increased income due to the removal of non-tariff barriers. For the EU, the services sector and trade sector were expected to expand. Thus, the overall economic outcomes

for both regions were expected to be positive.

With regard to the social impacts, issues such as poverty rate, income distribution, employment rate and household income were considered. Short-term poverty and unemployment were expected to occur due to more competition between the regions, but also expected to be overcome by retraining staff to meet new labor market demands. Health and education levels were expected to increase as a result to general economic growth. Equality was also dealt with in the assessment, but only related to labor force, income distribution and skills-dependent employment opportunities. These issues highlight that even the social impacts seem to have solely an economic dimension that is measured in the sustainability impact assessment.

With regard to environmental impacts, the focus was placed on increased production and related pollution, land use and effects on biodiversity. The modelled results showed that minor negative effects were to be expected but could be mitigated by appropriate support from the EU. Illegal logging was listed as an area of particular concern that would have to be addressed with measures such as the EU's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan (FLEGT).

Overall, the Trade Sustainability Impact Assessment pointed out the limited negative effects on both regions and highlighted that positive effects would outweigh the negative effects. These results are not surprising for three reasons. First, the Commission as the issuer and financer of the assessment can define the terms and conditions for such an assessment. In light of the then ongoing negotiations, it probably would have been inappropriate to discourage the FTA. In the case of unemployment, for example, the emphasis is laid on retraining to overcome unemployment instead of the fact that unemployment would increase as a first result of fiercer competition under the FTA. This is not to say that the assessment is incorrect, but that terminology plays a role and negative implications can be reformulated according to needs. Second, most of the impacts were measured according to economic standards such as household income as previously mentioned. This measure, however, was used under the social impacts heading instead of the economics heading, which raises doubts as to how the social impact assessment indeed represents social aspects. Issues like, healthcare systems, pension funds, or unemployment benefits would be aspects that reflect the social dimension, but these are hardly predictable and highly political concerns and, as a result, difficult to measure, assess or model in such a consultation. Third, the human rights dimension has been left out in the impact assessment. Contrary to what the Commission states, the EU-ASEAN

SIA did not cover human rights aspects apart from a mention of the current critical state in ASEAN: "The migration flows are again related to the relatively high unemployment levels that remain in Philippines and Indonesia. Migrant workers in turn bring with them a host of social and human rights problems and issues, that need addressing in the wider context of sustainable economic and social development" (ECORYS, 2009, p.11). Not addressing sensitive topics is a way to emphasize positive effects over negative effects. For those reasons, highlighting expected positive results over negative ones is not surprising. No separate sustainable impact assessment has been undertaken for the EU-Vietnam FTA.

This example illustrates how flexibly the impact assessments can be applied. In theory, it is a suitable tool to raise awareness about issues that would not be considered otherwise, such as social implications of a trade agreement, but the voluntary basis leaves too much room for tactical behavior. If it can be decided freely when to apply an impact assessment, many cases will go unnoticed and negative effects might occur which could have been prevented if the assessment had been conducted. In term of normative coherence, these assessments, both the SIA and HRIA, would make a contribution to greater coherence as they push for a commitment to certain standards. Those technical standards, in turn, are created to ensure a decent quality of life for humans and as such are a normative matter.

### 4.3.3 Examining Aid for Trade with the Examples of EU-MUTRAP and EVBN

A particularly interesting feature in the institutional set-up are two EU projects that aim to improve the economic landscape in Vietnam, but which are actually financed through development aid channels. Those two projects are the European Trade Policy and Investment Support Project (EU-MUTRAP) and the EU-Vietnam Business Network (EVBN). Strictly speaking, the EVBN is financed by the Instrument for Cooperation with Industrialized Countries (ICI) and not by the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) as usual development projects, but because it is managed by the development section in the EU delegation, it is considered here as a project which widely represents aid for trade. EVBN clearly does not fall into the classical understanding of aid for trade as a particular program geared at certain countries to improve their trade capacities, but because it brings European companies into the country and, therefore, strengthens the economy and trade relations, it is still considered here. This contradiction is interesting by itself given that Vietnam received development assistance, which in turn would mean it is a developing country, but at the same time receives funds under an instrument, which is aimed at developed countries. Placing Vietnam among the developed countries while it is currently classified as middle-income

country reflects Vietnam's expected economic role in the future. On the other hand, it also reflects that funds can be made available from different sources if the interest in a given country is strong enough, which seems to be the case here. This special treatment of Vietnam as an economically interesting country implies the EU's prioritization of its economic interests over other commitments such as norm promotion.

In its Aid for Trade Strategy, the EU has committed to support developing countries in integrating into the global trading system. Aid for Trade to Vietnam has fluctuated over the years. In 2015 the EU provided roughly EUR 50 million to Vietnam, mainly in "building productive capacity" (BPC), whereas in 2014, Vietnam received roughly EUR 330 million with the major share being "trade related infrastructure" (TRI), which is similar to 2013, when Vietnam received approximately EUR 260 million with the major share attributed to TRI (European Commission, 2015a, 2016a, 2017a). The share between the ASEAN countries seems to fluctuate notably between the years. Indonesia, for example, received roughly EUR 70 million in 2014 and EUR 830 million in 2015. Figure 11 gives an example of the aid distribution from the EU to ASEAN countries.

In general, Aid for Trade, i.e. funds, are allocated by category, which have been defined by the WTO. Category 1 is Trade Policy and Regulations (TPR), category 2 Trade Development (TD), category 3 Trade Related Infrastructure (TRI), category 4 Building Productive Capacity (BPC), category 5 is Trade Related Adjustment and the last category covers Other Trade Related Needs (OTRN). TPR and TD together are considered as trade related assistance, which is AfT in a narrower sense. Together, all categories cover AfT in a wider sense (Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, 2015).

As figure 11 shows, in 2014, Vietnam has received the largest share of aid for trade disbursements with the majority of funds going to trade related infrastructure. Funds to Cambodia and Thailand were solely allocated to building productive capacity. Malaysia received the smallest share of aid for trade funds in 2014.

From an economic development perspective, MUTRAP aligns perfectly with the aid for trade objective that aims at improving a country's economic landscape and support the country's integration into the global trade market. "The EU, through its bilateral "Multilateral Trade Assistance Program" MUTRAP II, supported Vietnam in its accession to the WTO and in implementing its WTO commitments.

Currently, MUTRAP III aims to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Industry and Trade to further implement and develop Vietnam's trade and economic integration strategy" (European Union, 2010). How, though, do the EVBN and EU-MUTRAP projects foster EU norms such as human rights, the rule of law, fundamental freedoms, or gender equality?

**Figure 11: Aid for Trade from the EU to ASEAN Countries in 2014**
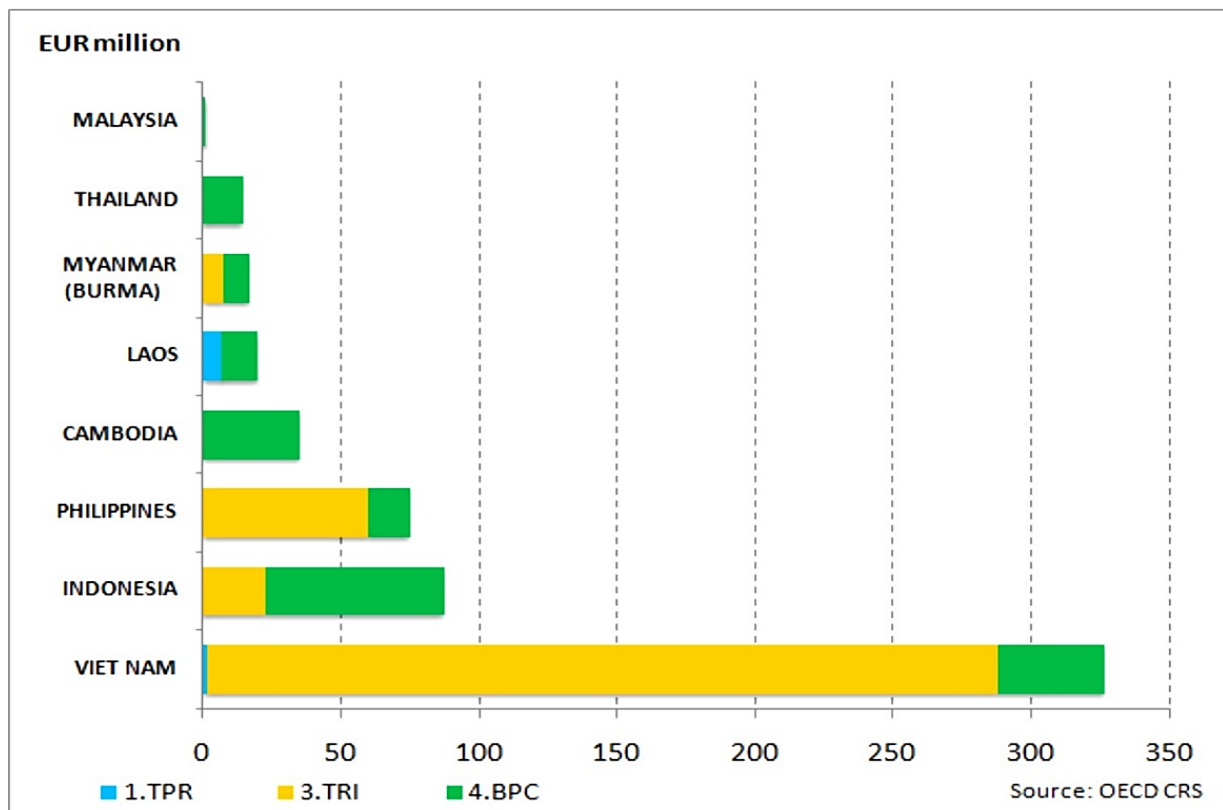


Source: European Commission aid for trade report 2016

**EU-MUTRAP**

EU-MUTRAP is a continuation project to finalize the previously implemented Multilateral Trade Policy Support (MUTRAP), which was in place from 2001 to 2012. In the 2010 Blue Book, the EU delegation announced the initiation of MUTRAP II to support Vietnam's capacities to meet WTO requirements and implement trade related measures and simultaneously showing the EU's role as a donor in Vietnam:

*"[…], the MUTRAP III project was conceived. It is a project, which is focused on strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT) in its core responsibilities of trade policy-making, WTO coordination, negotiation of regional and free trade agreements and the implementation of integration commitments and enforcement of competition policy. It allows the EU to further consolidate its leading role among the donor*

*community in the trade-related assistance area*" (EU Delegation to Vietnam, 2010).

The MUTRAP project not only aims at supporting Vietnam in its process of integrating into the international trading system but is also a tool for the EU to strengthen its position in the Southeast Asian region. The current EU-MUTRAP phase is scheduled for the period 2012 to 2018 with the Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT) as the implementing agency and aims to improve Vietnam's capacity to enter the free trade agreement and to integrate Vietnam into the global trading system as well as into the ASEAN region. This project is heavily funded by the EU with EUR 15 million out of a total budget of EUR 16.5 million. Compared to the overall AfT funds that are allocated to Vietnam, the MUTRAP project is just a small project, which is nevertheless worth paying attention to. The following five goals are envisaged as the main results as presented on the project website[15]:

1. *EU-Vietnam trade and investment relations are strengthened through enhanced dialogue and co-operation, and the negotiation and implementation of a **future EU-Vietnam FTA***
2. *The institutional capacity for the negotiation and **implementation of** multilateral, **regional** and sub-regional **trade commitments** is strengthened;*
3. *Investment policy frameworks are improved, with a particular focus on the environmental and social issues in trade and investment related policies and legislation;*
4. *The access to information, regulations and market opportunities relative to Vietnam's international trade and investment commitments is improved; with the increased stakeholders' participation in the trade and investment policy development process; and enhanced capacity among SMEs to comply with **European market access** requirements; and*
5. *EU-VN dialogue in economic areas of the **Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Partnership and Cooperation** (**PCA**) is supported; and flexible assistance is provided to address important urgent trade issues.* (bold added)

This project indicates that not only does the EU support Vietnam's capacity building in the economic sector, but particularly with focus on the European market and the agreements between Vietnam and the EU. The aid for trade project seems to be strongly pushed by a European agenda aimed at stronger trade relations that focuses on the EU's interests rather than Vietnam's ambitions. Of course, the interests of both actors do not have to be mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they can overlap and be beneficial for both actors. A stronger Vietnamese economy is beneficial for Vietnam in the first place, but also for the trading

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[15] MUTRAP: http://mutrap.org.vn/index.php/en/about-eu-mutrap-2 Last accessed on November,08 2017

partners. Thus, supporting Vietnam in its negotiating powers or capacity building can be profitable for both the EU and Vietnam. Since AfT is part of the official ODA to Vietnam, development cooperation is strongly instilled by an economic scope rather than a normative scope.

**EU-Vietnam Business Network (EVBN)**
EVBN is a project that has been set up in 2014 to support small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) establish a network between European and Vietnamese companies to establish cooperation and foster exports to Vietnam. EVBN also provides physical space for European companies that have not yet opened an office in Vietnam but aim to do so. "The overall objective of EU-Vietnam Business Network (EVBN) is to increase exports and investments of the European Union (EU) to Vietnam in particular by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as well as strengthening the EU Business sector in Vietnam by facilitating market access. […]" (EVBN, 2018).

Given this strong trade focus, the question arises why this project is co-funded through the EU development funds. The argument could be made that strengthening the Vietnamese economy supports economic growth and, therefore, development, however, the quote above clearly shows that the EVBN works in favor of European business and trade.

### 4.3.4   Final Remark about the Institutional Structure
Overall, the Commission remains hesitant about the success of PCD implementation. For example, within member states, institutional barriers remain towards the coordination of policies. Especially coordination between ministries can still be improved. The Commission lists several challenges for itself as well: improving mechanisms to identify implications on development objectives, increasingly integrating development objectives into other policies, systematic impact assessments and progress reports, and raising general awareness about the importance of PCD. A cause for hesitation could be the internal division of the Commission. The Commission is predominantly viewed as the promoter of PCD within the EU, but internally its Directorate Generals (DGs) do not always align (Carbone & Keijzer, 2016). Next to internal challenges, the relation between the EU institutions and the member states often shows political conflicts as well with the result that some member states are not in favor of the supra-national nature of the EU and consequently blocking progress in some policy sectors (Carbone & Keijzer, 2016).

The links between the EU's institutional set-up and normative PCD remain fragile. Previous

studies have indicated that the Lisbon Treaty has not had the reformative character in PCD but rather reinforced traditional mechanisms (Keukeleire & Raube, 2013). While there are efforts by the Commission to increase PCD in the EU institutions and also in the member states, actual practices remain weak. This implies that normative policy coherence for development remains weak as well. The report does address the three main norms identified above (human rights, sustainable development, and gender equality), but with a lack of PCD implementing mechanisms the chance of norms remaining at the rhetorical/political level are high. On top of that, this report gives the impression that PCD is embedded in a general effort towards the SDGs, suggesting the conceptual understanding of PCD as a process, but the Commissions efforts point towards a PCD-as-an-outcome approach, which is likely to limit PCD to the commitment level but does not encourage PCD at the policy implementation stage. The results feed into the critical scholarship that recognizes that policy coherence for development still requires major efforts by various actors to implement the idea and move beyond the technical or managerial implementing procedures (Carbone & Keijzer, 2016; Keukeleire & Raube, 2013; Koff & Maganda, 2016).

## 4.4   NPE, NPCD AND NORM REPRESENTATION

This section links the above undertaken policy document analysis to the assumed path from normative power to normative policy coherence as presented in chapter two. As stated above, the mention of norms in documents is a first indicator for normative policy coherence. However, the mention of norms cannot be equated with normative power.

The line of argumentation used in this analysis started out with normative power, which leads to norm implementation, which in turn leads to normative policy coherence for development. This line of argumentation presumed that normative power pre-exists norm implementation. As the analysis above shows, a hierarchical distinction can be made between the European Treaties, which represent policy guidelines, and the agreements/policy programs, which are two layers of implementation (formulation and implementation I). Taking the NPE approach, the EU gets its normative power from "what it is", i.e. its creation and institutional arrangement (Manners, 2002). The creation and institutions are represented by the Treaties and, therefore, the Treaties are a representation of what the EU is and consequently its normative power. In this sense, normative power, as represented by the Treaties, precedes norm implementation in agreements, programs and projects. Critics have argued, though, that inconsistency between what the EU represents itself to be and what it actually practices has

negative implications on NPE (Diez, 2005). Therefore, "what the EU does" is equally relevant for normative power as "what the EU is". "What the EU does" is represented by the remaining three stages of policy implementation, i.e. policy formulation, policy implementation through programs, and policy implementation through projects. Normative policy coherence is influenced by both aspects of normative power as visualized in figure 12. Policy guidelines (treaties/what it is) give the framework for agreements that the EU concludes with other countries and those agreements set the framework for any programs or projects developed under this bilateral relationship. At the same time those policy guidelines are guidelines on the normative basis and on policy coherence. Consequently, "what it is" shapes "what it does" and normative policy coherence. The treaties, however, are only considered as a guideline and not as putting rhetoric into practice.

Thus, policy implementation is another factor which shapes normative policy coherence. NPCD is a result of both "what it is" and "what it does". The relationship between NPCD and policy implementation is reciprocal.

**Figure 12: NPCD requires Rhetoric and Practice**



Source: author's own creation

Having this scheme in mind, norm representation falls within the scope of NPE at two levels. Norm representation at the "what it is" level remains the same for development and trade policies. The treaties set guidelines, which are applicable for all EU policies. A special section dedicated to external relations highlights the EU's normative character in external affairs, as the previous analysis has shown. Norm representation at the "what it does" level becomes more complex, because two agreements are in place which disconnect trade from all other cooperation between the EU and Vietnam.

Norm representation strongly remains at the guideline level. That is to say that having a look at the implementation levels, normative references are made in relation to the guiding policies and are not integrated into the actual 2-3-year programs or the projects. In many cases, norms are only referenced in relation to the EU Treaty and the general EU commitment to norms. In other terms, the EU presents itself as "what it is" and lacks behind with the implementation,

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"what it does". Thus, across the four implementation levels, norms are often not translated into action. This incoherence can decrease the EU's normative power as it affects "what it does", which is part of what constitutes normative power. Simultaneously, the EU's actions lead to normative policy incoherence.

The NPE-NPCD relationship differs between development and trade policies. Norm representation in trade is less at the policy guidelines level and the policy formulation level than it is in development. Comparing the Trade for All strategy to the New European Consensus on Development, the rule of law, human rights, good governance and sustainable development are the core and minor norms represented in both documents. On the contrary, democracy, peace and solidarity are only mentioned in the Consensus. Both documents do not refer to liberty. Interestingly, in the Trade for All proposal, gender equality, which is strongly represented across the policy implementation levels, is not included. A similar divergence can be noted at the formulation level, i.e. between the PCA and FTA. While the PCA, which governs the development relationship between the EU and Vietnam, already makes less reference to norms than the Lisbon Treaty and the European Consensus, the FTA only makes direct reference to sustainable development and non-discrimination. As already mentioned, peace and human rights are referred to by both parties' commitment to UN conventions. Thus, the FTA includes comparatively less norms than the PCA. On the other hand, having a look at development practices, norms are not represented coherently. Human rights are represented throughout all Blue Books, but gender equality efforts were discontinued after 2012. As a result, incoherence does not only occur between development and trade but also within development.

Whether and how the EU utilizes the norms for strategic purposes is not examined in the scope of this research. It is worth mentioning though, that given the NPCD definition used in this research the strategic use of norms for other purposes would not lead to more incoherence or less NPCD. On the contrary, this practice might even enhance NPCD because it could potentially bring norms into areas that are not the commonly known to be strongly normative. NPCD and policy analysis are not tool to measure whether the EU is a strong or a weak normative power, neither how the EU sources or the quality of normative power. Instead, NPCD is a concept through with the EU's policies mirror its rhetorical commitments. The EU is committed to human rights, for example, and not including human rights in its development and trade policies would result in normative policy incoherence. The underlying reasons why

norms are included or excluded a give policy is of minor importance in this case. It is certainly a relevant question to consider but falls outside the scope of the NPCD conceptualization applied here.

Regarding the question *"Does the EU represent itself as a normative power in the development sector?"*, this chapter showed that the EU uses different strategies for expressing normative commitment. This is linked to the different levels of policy implementation and the policy arena. At the policy guidelines level, the EU uses a strong rhetoric continuously pointing out the shares principles and founding values, which have led to the creation of the European Union and now guide all EU policies. At the policy formulation level, a distinction is made between the agreements that cover trade relations and the agreement that covers all other relations. In the EU-VN FTA a mention is made towards the PCA, which in turn refers to the EU Treaties and the Charter of Human Rights, but the distinction between the two is made clear, which gives some answers to the question *"Does the EU represent itself as a normative power in the trade sector?"*. Despite the seemingly universal character of the EU "values" and "principles", they are not visibly relevant in trade policies. Neither at the policy formulation level, nor at the policy implementation level. In contrast, the more trade relations become prominent, the less do norms seems to play a crucial role.

This interest divide is one of the causes of incoherence presented in chapter one. In external relations, coherence between different policies is important for policy effective and from a normative dimension, it is crucial to not undermine norm driven policies. As the previous section shows, normative PCD in EU policies with Vietnam is uneven in the EU's legal/administrative framework. Various policy documents show that norms are integrated, but similarly the majority of norms is not clearly incorporated in the texts and, therefore, the representation of norms is mixed. Despite the fact that the lack of normative policy coherence for development might be intended or unintended (Picciotto, 2005), the Commission report shows that initiatives to improve coherence exist and that norms do play a role in policy implementation (European Commission, 2015b). The results of the suggested improvements remain to be seen.

Placing the above analysis in the actor-intention model, the causes of incoherence become clear. Given the focus on the legal and institutional structure, the actor driven reasons for incoherence do not apply to this chapter. This will be dealt with in the following chapter. Unintentional structural incoherence arose through the rivalry between DG DEVCO and the

EEAS over budget allocations. This can also be seen as an unintentional institutional incoherence presented in figure 13.

**Figure 13: Applying the Framework of the Intention-Autonomy Model**
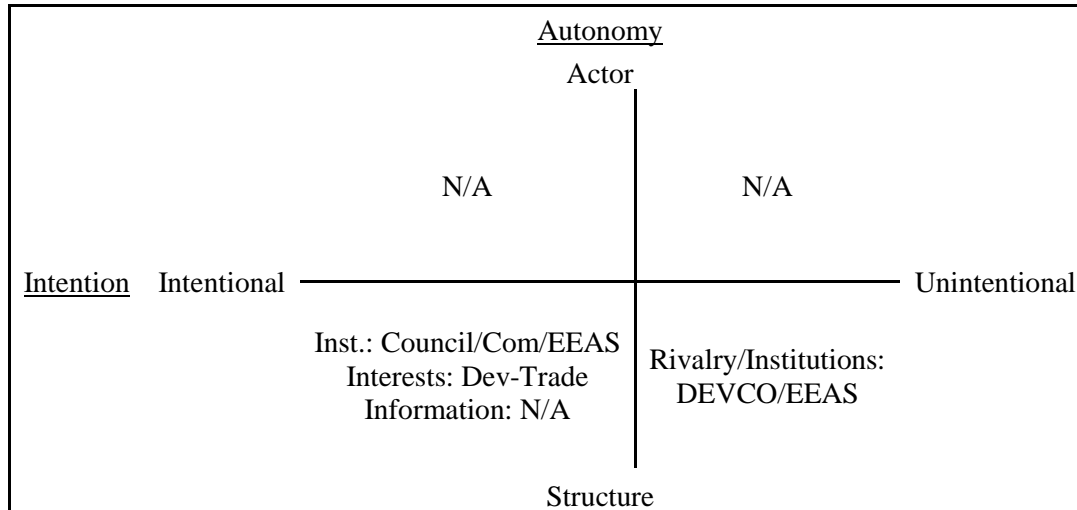


Source: author's application of Hydén's (1999) intention-autonomy model

Intentional incoherence due to structural reasons are the divide between the European institutions (Council, Commission) and the new EU service EEAS, and within the institutions. In addition to this institutional incoherence, an interest-based separation between development and trade is made. The lack of information was another structural intentional cause placed in the bottom-right quadrant. However, given the impact assessments and the position of the High Representative, lack of information does not seem to be an intentional cause anymore.

The following chapter will add the implementation layer to the preceding discussion and, furthermore, argue how sectoral separation between diplomatic, political, development and trade networks limit normative coherence.

# Chapter 5: NPCD and Policy Networks – Empirical Evidence from Vietnam

Normative policy coherence for development is a result of normative policy implementation, which in turn implies that norms are implemented at all levels, among which is the foreign community level in Vietnam. National delegations from European countries are represented in Vietnam to implement policies at the local level. In addition to the policy commitment to norms as shown in the previous chapter, policy networks that shape around a certain sector or around a certain issue play an important role in the NPCD study, because the diplomats are the links that connect policy documents to activities in the field. Therefore, this chapter addresses the following sub-questions:

*Do the EU and member state officials view the EU as a normative power in the development sector?*

This question aims to address how the EU is perceived in the development sector by the very people working in the development sector such as the development counselors at the embassies, the implementing agencies or national development organizations. It is expected that the EU presents itself as a normative actor, because development policies are a tool for external policies and due to its flexibility and minor economic relevance compared to trade, it would be a suitable measure for the EU to promote norms like human rights, democracy, freedom, or equality as part of their development strategy.

*Do the EU and member state officials view the EU as a normative power in the trade sector?*

In contrast to development, the EU aims to improve its trade relations with its partners and is dependent on imports and exports from third countries. As a result, imposing non-trade rules might hamper the trade relationship as these are conventionally not part of any trade agreement. Labor standards as brought forward by the International Labor Organization (ILO) have recently been included in trade agreements. Apart from those, it is unlikely that the EU initiates normative discussions, and as a result, it would not present itself and not be perceived as a normative actor in the trade sector. The actors that, for this research, are part of the trade sector are economic/trade/commercial counselors at the embassies and representatives from the chambers of commerce. Businesses have not been included here.

*Why might existing policy networks limit normative coherence between development and trade policies?*

Linking the two prior inquiries, this last question addressed in this chapter inquires whether norms cross the two sectors or whether sectoral isolation exists. This could go both ways, but given the assumption that norms are apparent in development and not in trade, the spill-over should be unidirectional. However, chapter four has shown that the sectors operate separately, so normative spill-over from development to trade is likely to not take place.

Before turning to the analysis, two remarks should be made. Diplomats are not the only actors implementing policies in the field. They are part of a wider group that comprises non-governmental organizations, international organizations, individual action, grassroots activities and others, but the focus on diplomats draws attention to the official national and European approach as diplomats are expected to follow the formal guidelines included in the treaties, strategies and programs discussed in chapter four. The relationship between actors and systems is another aspect to consider as policy communities can either be actor driven or system driven. For example, sectoral networks are in place because the different sectors dictate the separation. That is, there might be a health sector, an education sector, an agriculture sector, as well as the development and trade sectors. These sectors are part of a larger political system that divides the tasks of a government into manageable areas. Whether there are smaller networks within each sector might then depend on the internal organization. In addition to these structural divisions, there are issue networks, which are more actor driven. Issue networks evolve around a group of people that share the same interest in a given topic, either inside a sector or crossing over several sectors.

In the previous chapter, the normative power understood as normative commitment in the EU's legal and administrative framework has been discussed and its relations to normative policy coherence examined. This chapter will add to that discussion by introducing the implementation stage to the analysis. Implementation is understood as the practice on the ground, i.e. in the embassies, development agencies and trade missions. This is to address the issue of normative policy coherence between development and trade being limited due to their sectoral isolation. Isolation is defined here as limited awareness about other policy sectors and separation of responsibilities between the sectors limited knowledge in one policy sector about other policy sectors. As this study only analyses the EU's side of the relationship, all terminology used in this chapter only refers to European (EU + member states) networks, such

as the monthly meetings, or the European perception of inter-relational networks, such as the European narrative about meetings with the Vietnamese government. The Vietnamese government was not open to receive researchers. Researchers, so it was impossible to implement interviews with officials from that country during periods of field research. The findings presented below are based on the interviews conducted with EU and member state officials during field research in Hanoi and Brussels as detailed in chapter two.

## 5.1 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLICY NETWORKS AND NPCD

For now, literature on policy communities and policy networks has largely focused on policy-making at the agenda setting and policy adoption level in a national, European and global setting (Atkinson & Coleman, 1992; Falkner, 2000; Kisby, 2007; Stone, 2008; Wray, 2009). This chapter aims to contribute to this strand of literature on the policy cycle approach by examining the policy implementation level more closely, specifically through the lens of policy networks in relation to normative policy coherence for development.

As stated in chapter one, policy communities are a sub-set of political systems in which different like-minded actors with a shared belief system come together for dialogue in a certain policy area to shape actions/activities. Policy networks are defined as groups of actors, which interact under a common theme. Sector networks are a form of policy network, which assemble actors from within an institutionally designed policy sector. Issue networks are groupings of actors who share an interest in a common topic, but of which the structure is not pre-defined.

Theories of governance related to these approaches contend that actors in specific policy arenas establish a system of interest-representation through formal and informal interactions in which they work together to promote sectoral interests in political agendas (Rogowski, 1989). This study examines how actors in development and trade pursue these sectoral agendas and how norms evolve based on sectoral understandings.

### 5.1.1 Communication Can Improve Normative Policy Coherence

In the previous chapter, it was shown that institutional settings in the EU undermine NPCD in many cases. However, individual actors have the possibility to act outside the institutional settings and create networks across sectoral or hierarchical boundaries. This chapter addresses the question: *Why might existing policy networks limit normative coherence between development and trade policies?*

Going back to Sen's (1999) understanding of development as freedom, economic capabilities are not only as relevant as political and social capabilities, but they are mutually reinforcing each other. Thus, increasing economic capabilities in a country, i.e. strengthen trade relations, without simultaneously supporting political and social development does not fulfill the full potential of the capabilities available. That is to say that all five aspects of freedom (political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security), as defined by Sen (1999), are necessary to provide individual human beings with the possibility to exercise his capabilities. Focusing on only one aspect, for example the economic dimension, will limit the individual in terms of the other freedoms such as political and social freedom, transparency, and security. The importance of all five freedoms to achieve normative development highlights the interconnectivity between social, political economic, security and environmental concerns. Due to this interrelation, these five types of freedoms could become more important in trade policies, which usually tend to focus on trade related issues only, given the exchange between the development and trade networks. NPCD suggests strengthening the exchange and cooperation between the development and trade networks in the interest of development policies to improve coherence *for* development. As demonstrated in the previous chapter though, the new trade agreements between the EU and third countries do include a chapter on sustainability, which shows a move beyond the traditional trade scope and towards an expanding trade agenda. Institutional commitment to norms and coherence is not sufficient though to improve NPCD throughout all levels of policy-making. Therefore, the role of policy networks needs to be examined to shed light on potential gaps in the implementation system.

The analysis of policy networks in this case feeds into the study of underlying power relationships within the EU and the consequent decisions that are made regarding external relations. Policy coherence for development by definition prioritizes development over trade, for example, but EU policies do not always represent this conceptual understanding despite the EU's strong commitment to PCD. Thus, a closer look to policy communities, networks, and their interaction can shed more light onto the gaps of PCD implementation.

Coming back to the two-dimensional classification of causes of incoherence (as presented in chapter two, Figure 2), the analysis of policy networks can help identify some underlying factors that are related to these causes of incoherence. Autonomy, on the one hand, and intention, on the other hand, frame the distinction of four causes of incoherence: divergent

interests, lack of information, institutional arrangements, and unintentional rivalry. The policy networks are fit into divergent interests, lack of information and institutional arrangements. Institutional arrangements are the sectoral divisions between development and trade. This is a structural set-up, which has been created intentionally to divide tasks and responsibilities. Lack of information is a result of the institutional arrangement. I would not fully agree that lack of information is unintentional. The "intensity" of lack is a factor to be examined in further detail. For example, in this case there are monthly meetings for all the EU member state delegates on development, which are attended by the development counselors. They do share information, but it remains within the sector. How much of this information is later shared with the colleagues from their embassy depends on each actor and can often be an unintended act. The structural division foresee a lack of information though by creating those sector-specific meeting. Thus, lack of information can be intended and unintended. Last, divergent interests are sometimes a cause of incoherence. Each sector has its own interest in the sense that development is responsible for development programs such as educational initiatives or rural development, whereas trade is concerned with commercial or business-related activities. By definition, they have different interests, which are not actor driven though as suggested in Hydén's (1999) classification. Interests can be actor driven, but this might be more within a sector network than between sectors. Unintentional rivalry is not considered a cause of incoherence related to networks, because it can be assumed that most competition happens intended.

In addition to the sectoral networks, there are issue networks, which bring together individual actors outside the traditional sectors or within a sector but on an issue that is not systematically addressed within the sector. For example, the gender advocacy group in Vietnam was formed after a number of member states have phased out their development funds and, as a result, gender related projects could not be funded anymore. To overcome this gap, this gender advocacy group was formed to continue working on the issue and develop ways in which to address gender without the development sector's official support. Given the lack of structural organization, the institutional arrangement and unintentional rivalry can be ruled out as cause of incoherence, which in turn means that issue networks are by default a tool that decreases incoherence. That is not to say that is increases coherence, but two causes of incoherence can be taken out of the equation. Competing interests and lack of information is also a concern with issue networks. Interests can compete with other issue networks as well as with the sector networks. While energy consumption might be the primary goals within the

development sector, gender issues are the main concern for the issue network. Similarly, actors in the trade networks are most likely not too concerned about gender issues, but instead work on establishing a network between the Vietnamese companies and the companies as home. The lack of information, again, can be intentional or unintentional. Intentional due to the deliberate separation of the issue network and other networks, and unintentional because individuals might not be able to attend a meeting, for example.

The pattern on communication influences the presence of norms are in a given network and how important norms are in this network. Based on this, norms are present (or not present), which in turn alters norm implementation. If norms are not addressed or do not play a role within and across networks, norms will most likely not be implemented. This would cause normative incoherence with the policy statements, which were presented in the previous chapter, but also normative incoherence between the networks, e.g. the development and trade networks, which would reinforce the claim that structural arrangements are a cause of incoherence.

### 5.1.2 Policy Communities or Policy Networks

Before entering the policy network analysis, a conceptional border needs to be drawn between the two terms. Researchers are frequently prompted by the trade-off between generalizations and in-depth studies. In the study of policy processes, the emphasis tends to lie on generalizability of outcomes across various policy spheres, across different countries or policy systems (Atkinson & Coleman, 1992). The study of policy processes has shown over time that policy-making varies greatly between policy domains and even within a political system different sectors have different policy-making procedures (Atkinson & Coleman, 1992). The concepts of policy networks and communities allow some generalizations to be made across those variations, because both concepts are sufficiently broad to encompass the differences.

Policy networks, a concept that originated in the sociological study of communication in small groups and large organizations, are widely understood loose relationships between actors. Frequent contact between the actors occur within one policy arena. As such, policy networks can also constitute an umbrella term, which also covers the narrower term of policy communities, which are characterized by a shared code of conduct, a belief system or certain pattern of behavior (Atkinson & Coleman, 1992). Others have placed a range of types of policy networks on a continuum from highly integrated policy communities to loose issue networks (Rhodes & Marsh, 1992).

The role of policy communities in the policy-making process is particular. Communities in a broad sense, disregarding the community-network distinction for a moment, reflect the following six qualities that make them distinct from other decision-making processes (Epstein, 1997). First, a community is limited to a certain number of actors within one sector limiting the access to actors from other sectors and the public. Second, a stable membership in this community supports this exclusivity and furthermore cultivates an environment of consensus decision-taking. Third, mutual cooperation and balance of power between the participants lead to an uninterrupted functioning of the policy process. Fourth, community participants favor policy programs around the status quo to maintain their position of power and avoid controversy. Related to this, the fifth quality is depoliticization. Politicized issues draw attention from actors outside the community and, therefore, will hamper the policy-making process. On the other hand, technical debates remain largely within the sector. Consequently, the sixth quality is sectorization, which is the limitation of a policy program to strict sectoral boundaries including specialized experts but excluding related issues that spill over into other sectors and, therefore, cause a bigger debate.

In the sub-sections below, the definitional aspects of networks and communities will be applied to sectoral groups and issue groups to classify them as networks, however, limiting this exercise to characteristics relevant to this analysis only. For example, the number of actors within a community or a network is not strictly defined. It is a continuum from a small community to a global network, and either extreme can be easily recognized, but where those two extremes approximate, they can hardly be distinguished. A description of characteristics of sectoral networks and issue networks will be given in the respective sub-sections.

### 5.1.3 Policy Networks and NPCD

Policy networks are a form of communication between the members within the networks but also between the network and non-members. In the case of normative policy coherence for development and the prioritization of development over other policies, particularly the relations among the actors within the development network and relations between the development and other networks are important. Merging or creating connections between policy networks could increase NPCD because the information flow between the development policy staff and trade policy staff could improve and awareness vis-à-vis the other sector strengthened.

NPCD, by definition, involves at least two separate policy sectors, as horizontal coherence aims to connect aid and non-aid policies. More specifically, officials from both development

and trade policies come together under the umbrella of NPCD. In contrast, a policy community mostly unites actors that are active within one sector and create policy positions based on a win-win consensus seeking process, which is facilitated through a continuous and exclusive membership. As explained in the previous section, policy communities reflect a rage of distinct qualities that distinguish them from other policy-making processes. The last quality of sectorization – a flaw from the NPCD perspective – is of particular importance here as its effects contradict the NPCD approach. While NPCD is a tool to bring policy communities together, policy communities are eager to limit their sectoral boundaries and consequently do not allow external actors and issues to cross that boundary.

In light of EU's policy-making procedures some aspects need to be considered that have an impact on the shaping of policy communities or policy networks. First, the EU's trade policies are under the sole competences of the EU, which is to say that the EU represents entire European single market during trade negotiations, for example, without having to consult the member states during those process. Negotiated agreement still need to pass a vote in the European Parliament, and thus are under a review procedure, but this takes places solely on EU level. Additional ratification by the member states is also not required. In contrast, development policies are a shared competence in which the EU has the right to form legislation, but in addition to that, each member state has its own development policies and strategies. This could be understood two parallel processes operating in the same field, with overlaps occurring, but the two processes remain relatively separated.

Since these two processes are rather distinct. It is highly likely that structure of policy networks also varies across the two sectors. Since trade is a sole EU competence, it can be expected that a strong unified trade community exists that shapes policy outcomes. On the other hand, in the development sector it is more likely that loose issue-networks exist that form around certain temporary topics. These issue-networks are a web of relationships between the actors engaged in a certain issue that otherwise do not necessarily come together. In addition, stronger linked policies are likely to occur within the EU and within each member states given the institutional structure. In that sense, policy communities and issues-networks co-exist under a broader sector-specific development network.

## 5.2 SECTORAL POLICY NETWORKS

As shown above, shared norms are most strongly represented in policy communities, as contrasted to the loose relationships that define policy networks. Consequently, different policy communities have different sets of norms, which define a community, and due to the closed character of policy communities, norms hardly travel across communities. Normative policy coherence for development, however, requires the exchange of actors within and across sectors, i.e. across policy communities and policy networks. The existence of policy communities limits the exchange between communities and hamper the spill-over of norms between the communities and, therefore, cause a gap in the process of norm implementation. Consequently, NPCD remains low. On the other hand, the formation of issue-networks around PCD and in particular NPCD, could foster the cross-cutting applicability of EU norms such as human rights, gender equality or rule of law.

### 5.2.1 Sector Networks: Diplomacy, Politics, Development and Trade
**Sectors as Networks**
No agreement has, as yet, been found on a mutual definition of policy network and policy community (Atkinson & Coleman, 1992). However, there are a few characteristics that emphasize that actors within a sector form a network rather than a community, which is particularly the case for the European diplomats from the EU and the member states who are posted in a third country.

Maintaining stable relationships, for example, is a characteristic for policy communities (Epstein, 1997). In the case of delegation staff, these relationships are not stable, because each individual is posted for three to four years on average. There are exceptions when someone's post is prolonged, but even in those cases, the period of being part of this group abroad is limited. This time span of roughly four years still allows for close contacts between the actors but it is broken as soon as the posting terminates and a new person takes this position. From an institutional point of view, the relationships are nevertheless stable, because the country itself does not withdraw its relations. If a German development counselor's post is over, for example, someone else will take this position and as a result the German spot at the table will remain occupied, but the person that occupies that spot changes. From an actor point of view, the relationships are not stable because of this rotational system. From an institutional point of view, they are stable. Therefore, this characteristic strongly depends on whether the focus is on individual actors or on institutions. In the case of sectoral divisions, the institutional

arrangements prescribe who meets whom in what setting and the individual actors are not the driving forces. In this respect, sectors would fit the characteristic of policy communities according to Epstein (1997), but because these contacts are of a structural nature (Atkinson & Coleman, 1992, paraphrased from Benson, 1982), rather than based on a common belief, these relationships fit the definition of policy networks better. Despite institutionally stable relationships, the structural nature of the relationship characterizes sectors as a network.

A common belief system is another criterion for a policy community, which actors within a policy sector do not meet. On the contrary, within policy sectors each actor represents their own national agenda, which might overlap with other national agendas, but which does not shape a common belief system. Cooperation in fields of joint interest among different delegations is not unlikely, but cooperation does not suffice to argue for a common belief system. It might be argued that the shared commitment to development and the responsibility to eradicate poverty might be sufficient to shape a community on development, but a common goal is not a belief system. A common goal or interest does not have the same depth and, therefore, is not considered a belief. Another aspect to define sector networks is compare its position to policy communities and professional networks, which are two classifications suggested by Rhodes and Marsh (1992). Policy communities are based on stable relationships, restrictive membership, insulation from other networks, vertical interdependence, and interested in the governments' internal functioning. Similar groups with a territorial focus are called territorial communities. The other classification is that of professional networks which are primarily characterized by their profession, enjoy some degree of independence from the government, and insulate themselves from other networks (Rhodes & Marsh, 1992). Despite the political responsibility of delegation staff towards their home government, the sectoral groups resemble professional networks more than policy communities. They do enjoy some degree of independence and build their relationships around their shared profession such as economic counselors, for example. Territorial interests are inherent to the extent that all actors in the network are based in Vietnam and represent national activities in Vietnam, but their territorial interests are not the main driver for the creation of the networks. Given those characteristics, the sectoral groupings are defined as sector networks or sectoral networks and not as sector/al communities.

**Sectoral Isolation and Overlap**

In relation to that, it is questionable how isolated the different sectors are in reality. The

more exchange between the sectors, the more likely is it for coherence to occur. Given this study's focus on normative policy coherence, particular attention is paid here to the normative dimension within each sector and whether this normative dimension crosses over to other sectors. This spill-over effect can take place between all four sectors shown in the figure below. A distinction is made between the diplomacy network, politics network, development network, and trade network. Despite the focus on development and trade. The diplomacy network and the politics networks are part of this analysis because of the structural organization encountered while doing field research. This classification (as shown in figure 14) represents the structural organization of most European delegations in Vietnam. While most of the embassy staff are considered as "diplomatic core" due to their duty to represent their home country abroad, the diplomacy network defined here is meant to comprise ambassadors and deputy ambassadors only. It is their task to supervise the overall embassy activities and maintain the relationship with the host country.

**Figure 14: Sectoral Isolation of Policy Networks**
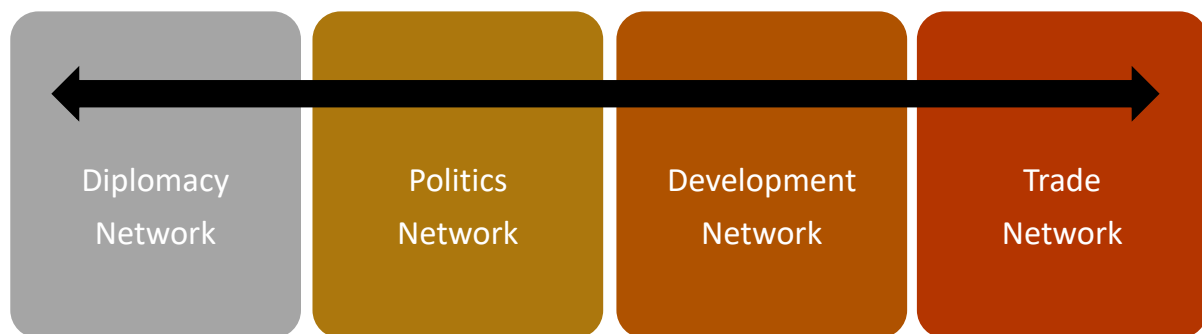


Source: author's own creation

The diplomatic sector is not a policy sector in the strict sense, but data showed that ambassadors, so-called Heads of Mission, gather monthly to exchange and inform each other about given developments in the country. These meetings are limited to Heads of Mission only, which keeps the number of participants low, but the topics that are discussed cover a wide range of issues. The second sector is the political sector, which are the political counselors at the different embassies. Similarly, the development sector comprises development counselors and the trade sector the economic counselors. In addition to these four sectors, counselors and officers for consular affairs, for example, can be part of the embassy staff.

As figure 14 indicates, exchange takes place between the different sectors. This exchange does not follow the hierarchy or distance that might be indicated in the figure. Having

diplomacy and trade at two opposite ends does not indicate that these two sectors communicate the least. However, from a norm perspective this would be the channel that norms pass through.

The interviews conducted with EU and member state officials in Vietnam indicate a strong distinction between the sectors, which does not mean that they are perfectly mutually exclusive, but rather separate.

### 5.2.2 Structural Separation Leads to Normative Incoherence

Structural separation takes various forms and as a result can lead to different causes of incoherence. As shown in figure 1 (chapter one) on incoherence, institutional arrangements and unintentional rivalries have been classified as the two causes of incoherence based on structural organization. To this, I have added competing interests and lack of information on the intentional side (bottom left corner) and institutional arrangement on the unintentional side (bottom right corner) (see figure 2, chapter one). In this section, I aim to show that several types of organization structure lead to those four reasons of incoherence. These causes are not definitive in the sense that they are not the only causes that lead to incoherence, within this structure-actor divide, they are most prominent.

The different types of organizational divides are the following: (1) Separation of roles within an embassy understood as the split of tasks between delegation staff; (2) geographical and linked to that a political-technical divide of foreign staff between North and South Vietnam; and (3) a supra-national/inter-governmental divide between the EU and the member states.

**Separation of Roles: Ambassador, Political Counselor, Trade Counselor, Development Counselor**

Depending on the size of the countries, the first indication is the separation of tasks. In each embassy, the usual tasks correspond to diplomatic, political, economic, development and other affairs. In smaller embassies these tasks might overlap, whereas in bigger embassies there are often different departments. Each task usually handled by a so-called counselor or Head of Mission, who attends the monthly meetings organized by the EU delegation in Hanoi. The Heads of Mission, political counselors, trade counselors and development counselors each have monthly meetings whereas consular counselors meet once every quarter. In these meetings, participants exchange about recent developments in their field or changes in the Vietnamese legislation that might also be relevant for the other attendants. Sharing and

coordinating are the main objectives of these meetings, especially in situations where the EU and the member states share their interests. These meetings are not a platform for negotiation. As a result, a seemingly clear distinction is made between coordination and cooperation since larger cooperation projects being decided in the headquarters in the home country. Within the realm of coordination, financial resources are rarely fused (Interview 12).

The interviews reflect a strong tendency to separate between the different kinds of counselors insofar as development is generally *not* considered a mechanism for any normative discussions. Instead, normative discussions are left to political counselors or ambassadors. Development counselors mostly work on the supervision of development projects. Responsibilities often overlap in smaller embassies and fewer staff, consequently political and development responsibilities are merged in one person. In embassies where this is not the case, each counselor has their distinct role. In the monthly development meetings organized by the EU, donor coordination is the main objective with particular focus on ensuring that projects are not being duplicated (Interview 9, 12). This highlights the technicality of development instead of its potentially normative character. Additional examples for the non-normativity of the development sector are the multi-annual development programs. The EU's 2014-2020 multi-annual development program for Vietnam focuses on sustainable energy and governance/rule of law (European Union, 2014a). Promoting the rule of law and good governance are two of the norms the EU is committed to and that are comprised in the set of norms relevant to this research. The fact that the EU makes this one of their priority sectors indicates a normative dimension in development to a certain extent. However, the budgetary contribution via the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) – the main development instrument next to thematic programs – shows how strongly sustainable energy is prioritized over governance and rule of law: out of the total commitment of EUR 400 million for the period 2014-2020, 86.5 percent are estimated for sustainable energy and 12.5 percent for governance and rule of law (and one percent for "other measures"). Under the thematic programming, the two main areas are human rights & democracy and civil society & local authorities, but further initiatives are not specified in the MIP.

Smaller programs are on environmental issues and sustainability (Interview 14). Smaller projects in cooperation with NGOs are along the thematic lines and can cover human rights concerns, minorities or illegal logging, whereas the big projects under the DCI are in cooperation with the Vietnamese authorities. To put the two instruments into perspective:

under the DCI EUR 400 million are allocated for seven years, which amounts to roughly EUR 57 million per year, whereas under the thematic instrument EUR 4 million were allocated for two years (Interview 14). Again, this reflects the EU's priorities and indicates that non-normative projects are emphasized.

The separation between the sectors reflects the separation of responsibility towards norms promotion. Each sector has its own norms and those relevant for this research, most prominently human rights and freedom of speech, are under the premises of the political counselors or ambassadors (Interview 1, 12, 14). Reality, however, is a bit more complicated than this simplistic separation of responsibilities. There are quite a few "grey zones" where responsibilities do overlap to some extent. The Human Rights Dialogue (HRD) is a case in point for this blurred separation. The HRD is a political dialogue between the EU and the Vietnamese government to share views on human rights policies and discuss the implementation of human rights measures. Especially political freedoms, such as a multi-party system, a fair chance to stand for elections[16], a fair voting system, and freedom of speech and the press are a major concern. The HRD is held annually bringing together the EU Delegation under leadership from the EEAS and the Government of Vietnam. In addition to that, the EU and Vietnam have a Joint Commission with a sub-group on Cooperation in the Areas of Institutional Strengthening, Administrative Reform, Governance and Human Rights (EU Delegation to Vietnam, 2007).

In terms of structure, the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is the contact point for the HRD. For development relations, the Vietnamese Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) is responsible (Interview 14). Thus, while there is not only a separation from the European side, the Vietnamese also make this distinction. Given this official separation, there are specific measure in place to ensure development projects do not entail any risks such as human rights violations. Every EU project needs to be validated by this measure, the so-called risk management framework, before any funds can be disbursed to the Vietnamese government. As can be noticed already, the language used for this procedure is rather technical and implies that there are certain standards that a project needs to meet, but apart from that there are no pro-active activities towards norm promotion in the field of development. However, it needs to be kept in mind that legislative changes do not always represent societal

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[16] Independent people, people that are not member of the Communist Party, can stand for elections, but the process favors party members are consequently the chances of a non-member to be elected are very low.

changes. The Human Rights Dialogue is a political tool with which formal changes might be achieved, but the actual implementation in the society needs to follow to accomplish real change. In recent years, for example, Vietnam has changed their legislation about lesbian and gay people decriminalizing being homosexual and by doing so following the Western example. The donor countries were satisfied about the success but in reality, a son of Vietnamese parents is not allowed to be gay but needs to marry a woman and have children (Interview 1).

Another example of a grey zone of separation between the sectors relates to the phasing out of development programs, which lead to trade counselors attending the development meeting, because the delegation does not have a development counselor anymore (Interview 2). This is not the case for all the meetings, but important sessions are usually attended by a delegation representative other than the development counselor.

The separation of sectors does make sense from an efficiency point of view, but in turn has negative effects on the coherence between the policies. Spill-over from one sector to another does not seem to be desired. Ambassadors and political representatives are in charge of diplomatic affairs among which are normative discussions, while development staff in responsible for technical tasks and trade representative manage business relations between their home country and Vietnam. Because of this separation, norms do not constitute a major concern in the development and trade sector. Of course, there are exception, but general tendencies point towards a conscious split between each sector's responsibilities.

As can be seen, development programs primarily emphasize technical support, leaving out the normative dimension that would cover human rights, equality, or democratic issues. With regard to the sub-question "*Does the EU represent itself as a normative power in the development sector*", it can be said that this does not hold entirely true. Rather, development is a sector that focuses on economic development mainly, comprising all sectors from health to environment, but largely leaves our normative discussions. Instead, Heads of Mission and political counselors are in charge of normative exchange with Vietnam.

### Normative Coherence within Sectors

The above discussion might indicate that there is no normative coherence between the sectors, but at least within each of the sectors given the fact that there are monthly coordination meetings between the EU and EU member state delegates. But how coherent are the positions within each sector network? Out of the interview respondents, only two have an official

double position combining a political sector with a technical sector (Interview 2, 3). The political sector is underrepresented in the available pool of data, which is why no general arguments can be made, but in this case, a strong normative dimension is inherent to this political post (Interview 1, 12). Regarding the diplomatic network, the common norms are the support for human rights, for example through support of dissidents or human rights lawyers, the rule of law in relation to the death penalty, gender equality, but also economic topics (Interview 4, 7, 17, 24). Norms can best be addressed at occasions such as the EU-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue, the German reunification celebrations or together with the United Nations, which are occasions that offer the space to discuss normative aspects, which are normally not observable in-day-to-day work (Interview 4, 17, 24). One respondent highlighted that human rights are a significant topic for all EU representations and plays a prominent role in the relations with Vietnam (Interview 24).

For the development network, norms can have different meanings to the development actors in the networks depending on their professional position. Naturally, the Head of Development in a big embassy is in charge of tasks, which differ from the tasks a project manager is responsible for at a national development organization. In their daily work, their professional priorities strongly differ. Similarly, the national development banks operate on other terms as embassy officials or development organizations do, and as a result, they prioritize other norms such as cost norms (Interview 5, 8, 9, 13). Environmental and social norms do play a role nevertheless in the selection process of a potential project to be funded but are often undermined by the project plans. As one respondent explained, in cases of resettlement in order to build a hydropower dam it will be considered how to maintain the standard of living of the resettled persons (personal interview not identified numerically in order to ensure anonymity). This example poses a difficult scenario in which access to electricity is weighed against resettlement, and a certain set of norms are in incorporated in the project selection and project implementation even though the project is such does not promote norms, but cost norms seem to dominate the decisions.

For economic representatives, i.e. in the trade network, the normative dimension is not observable. Instead, these issues are left to their colleagues at the embassy who are responsible for norm promotion (Interview 6, 11, 16). One respondent explained that the economic representatives' task is "pure business". In the trade network, norms as they are understood in this dissertation are not incorporated. Therefore, it cannot be said that the trade sector is

coherent in norm implementation.

**Geographical & Political-Technical Separation between Northern and Southern Vietnam**

The separation between northern Vietnam and southern Vietnam in terms of responsibilities between third country representatives reinforces the above-mentioned divide between sectors. More specifically, the separation of sectors strongly overlaps with the divide between representatives in Hanoi and representatives in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC). In general, HCMC is the city for business and Hanoi the city for politics. This is because all the Vietnamese ministries are located in the capital. 70-80 percent of the Vietnamese business is in the South (Interview 6). As a result, foreign representatives adapt to this internal distinction by placing the embassies in Hanoi and general consulates or commercial offices in HCMC. Germany, for example, has the embassy in Hanoi as well as an office of the Delegates of German Industry and Commerce in Vietnam (Außenhandelskammer AHK), and a consulate, the German Business Association and another AHK office in HCMC. Denmark and Finland have their embassies in Hanoi and commercial/trade offices in HCMC. As a result, political and economic processes are rather kept apart, which is also reflected by the interview responses. The majority of respondents based in HCMC indicate that their tasks are primarily non-political, i.e. either trade or development related (Interview 6, 7, 8).

Interestingly, the EU does not have a separate office in HCMC. One of the respondents pointed out that this is one of the reasons why contact between the representatives in HCMC and the EU delegation in Hanoi is extremely rare (Interview 7). Similarly, visits from economic representatives based in HCMC might be just as rare and short, ranging from one day every couple of months to up to 5 days every month depending on the representative (Interview 2, 6, 14, 16).

Another issue to consider is that even development representatives HCMC are mainly focused on technical tasks and leave political tasks, such as the discussion around norms, to their colleagues in Hanoi (Interview 6, 8). Monitoring the implementation of infrastructure, education or environmental projects are among the daily concerns.

**Supra-national/Inter-governmental Separation between EU and Member States**

One of the major debates of European integration has been about supra-nationalism and inter-governmentalism. While the latter emphasizes national sovereignty, for former vouches for competences at the EU level. This debate does not materialize in those exact terms in EU

external relations, but in terms of member state's support for the EU. A few member states are supportive of the EU, particularly of the EU delegation's presence in Vietnam, whereas others did and still do not see the need for an additional delegation.

Therefore, one further layer of separation is the distinction between the EU and its member states. Only in 1996 did the EU open a representative office in Vietnam. By that time, some of the member states had already established their relationship with Vietnam and deepened their cooperation with the host country. Bilateral relations have shaped and still shape politics between the donors and the recipient. For some, the EU was an additional burden in the development sector as many donors were already present in Vietnam. Yet another donor was not appreciated by all, and, as a consequence, not all of the member states were and still are fully supportive of EU activities in Vietnam. The monthly coordination meetings are aimed to share information and avoid duplication of projects especially in those sectors where long-standing relations with Vietnam have already proofed to be successful. The meetings are based on consultation and consensus, and in some cases, certain member states have to be convinced of an EU project (Interview 9). It is unmistakable, that the member states do not follow any EU instructions, but that coordination takes place between equal negotiation partners. Member states report to their home countries and receive instructions from their headquarters. In that sense, any EU legislation or policy would make a detour via the member states' government, which in turn would direct the delegations abroad. Some of the member states are more supportive of the EU delegation and the EU in general (Interview 3, 17), whereas others are more critical (Interview 2, 7).

Under a member state's umbrella, cooperation between the different sectors appears to be quite good in terms of regular exchange. On the one hand, there are regular meetings among different development representatives, and, on the other hand, there are regular meetings between the development, trade and political representatives (Interview 6, 7 & 9).

Another measure that reflects on cooperation are the annual Blue Books that the EU delegation compiles. These Blue Books are documents that compile information about development activities pursued by the member states and the EU delegation and are publicly available since 2007. However, reporting mechanisms vary between the member states and, consequently, the data provided is hardly comparable. While the delegation has been working on a joint template, mechanisms to measure aid allocation and aid disbursements remain distinct (Interview 14). This practice illustrates the relationship between the EU and the

member states quite accurately: on the one hand, coordinating strategies are in place, but on the other hand, each member state adheres to its national rules and regulations.

Power relations between the member states and the EU institutions as introduced in chapter three, are broadly reflected by the practices in Vietnam. Earlier, it was mentioned that the member states are seeking more influence in the EU policy-making through the newly created EEAS. This is not to say that the member states generally undermine EU policies, but that governments enjoy their sovereignty and might not want to give a large share of their responsibilities to the bureaucratic staff in the Commission. Similarly, the monthly meetings initiated by the EU are attended by most delegations in Hanoi, but simultaneously, each member state pursues its own national development program. There may be coordination on shared interests, but where interests do not overlap, each actor follows its national strategies.

A common interest from a normative point of view, for example, is anti-corruption. Legislation still varies between member states (Interview 2), but anti-corruption seems to be of interest to all actors, including development and trade actors (Interview 2, 3, 7, 8, 14, 17).

**No Spill-over between Sectoral Policy Networks**

Spill-over from one sector network to another was not identifiable. Diplomatic and political counselors do deal with norms such as freedoms, rule of law, equality, but in development they are quite underrepresented. In trade, these norms were of no importance. This is due to the above-explained structural separation between counselors, between North and South Vietnam, and between the EU and the member states. All four causes of incoherence – diverging interests, institutional arrangement, lack of information, and rivalry – can be attributed to the organizational structure of EU-Vietnam relations. In terms of norm implementation, the structure seems to play a great role again. As already presented in the previous chapter, norms seem to be a political matter, to which less attention is paid to when policy guidelines are made more concrete. Policy networks reflect a similar pattern: norms are relevant at the political level, i.e. in the ambassadors' and political counselors' professional work, but less so for the development counselors and not of importance for trade representatives. Structurally, the EU is coherent in separating the various tasks, but incoherent in implementing its norms. As a result, normative coherence between the sector networks is quite low.

Furthermore, norms are understood differently in the different sectors and the norms addressed

in this research are mostly represented by the ambassadors and political counselors. In addition to the disconnection between the four sectors on structural grounds, the interpretation of norms varies. In the diplomacy network, the political network and the mixed diplomacy-political network norms such as human rights are addressed (Interview 1, 4, 7, 12, 17). On the contrary, norms in development and trade were often understood standards of accounting or transparency issues, organizational structures, financial regulations, food safety or following Vietnamese legislation on labor law (Interview 2, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14). This might lead back to the training that development project managers receive. As project manager, the emphasis is on financial regulation and procedures and, consequently, these are the standards or "norms" that need to be adhered to (Interview 8, 13, 14).

In line with the Vietnamese Green Growth Strategy, a lot of emphasis is put on environmental concerns and governance issues (Interview 2, 3, 14). Vietnam's Green Growth Strategy 2011-2020 is a national program to incorporate sustainable growth and environmental protection into its plans for economic growth (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2012). Among the primary goals of this strategy are reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption, as well as improved waste and wastewater management and sustainable urbanization in terms of urban planning and transport. Some of the member states have taken up on those plans and support the Vietnamese in building a new metro line in HCMC and Hanoi, promoting renewable energy, and implement wastewater projects (Belgium, Denmark, EU, Finland, Germany, Sweden, UK). Governance and sustainable development are addressed in the wider sense, but in terms of project management, those issues do not come up. Corruption might come up as a normative issue to be addressed in the project implementation phase (Interview 2, 3, 7, 8 11, 14, 17), which could be interpreted as implementing the rule of law. Overall, reactions from the respondents about norms when asked by the researcher varied greatly from stating that norms are automatically integrated in everything, because norms are intrinsic to European actors (Interview 14, 24), to norms not being relevant in the day to day tasks (Interview 6, 11, 16).

Contrary to the assumption that each sector has its own norms and, therefore, normative incoherence would be unavoidable, norms are not particularly prominent during daily working routines in either sector. Two gaps of incoherence can be identified. On the one hand, the lack of norms in daily practices highlights the incoherence between the political commitment as presented before and policy implementation according to the interviewed actors in the field.

Another gap is the separation of sectoral networks, which emphasized the division of labor causing incoherence between development and trade, but more significantly between the normative diplomatic and political sectors and the seemingly technical sectors development and trade. In both cases, normative incoherence is not absolute, but the tendency towards incoherence is visible.

In addition to sectoral networks, issue networks around topics of importance exist. These are not as structurally fixed as the sector networks and are, therefore, considered separately in the following sub-section.

## 5.3   ISSUE NETWORKS

The previous sub-section has shown how sector networks constitute gaps in the implementation of normative policy coherence. This sub-section will follow up on the previous analysis by expanding to issue networks, which fall outside the scope of sectoral policy networks. Issue networks can be a mechanism to create coherence between various actors under the umbrella of a certain topic, but simultaneously they can create more incoherence by adding another network to the existing sector networks. How issue networks in Vietnam contribute to normative coherence in EU policy implementation is assessed in the following analysis.

Issues networks do not follow the same structural set-up as sectoral networks do. Instead, they are organized around a joint theme or issue that is of temporary importance and as such requires particular attention. Some have defined issue networks as being composed of a large number or participants with a limited degree of interdependence (Rhodes & Marsh, 1992). As already mentioned in the previous sub-sections, I consider the number of participants in order to define a network as a network not as a suitable feature to characterize a network. Rather, the shared interests are what brings issue networks together, which to some extent resembles the features presented as principal shared interests in the territorial communities or professional networks (Rhodes & Marsh, 1992). In contrast to sector networks, issue networks are defined here as being driven by the actors participating in the networks instead of the structures/systems that define the sector networks. Furthermore, issue networks can take different shapes in terms of membership stability, power relations, and longevity. What issue networks have in common is the actor driven character, which unites the actors under a joint theme.

### 5.3.1   National Governments and Their Impact on Normative Coherence
This section is dedicated to the role of governing parties' ideologies and the consequences

these ideologies have on development and trade policies and consequently on the policy community formation abroad. Development and trade policies both can be used as a tool to execute power in foreign policies. As such, it is crucial to note how a government has used this tool. Furthermore, a government's ideologies influence the working habits of its delegations abroad. Each delegation/embassy reports to its home government and is in constant contact with them. Briefings are undertaken in both directions and while the embassy reports on developments in the host country, the governments provide the overall strategy towards the recipient country. Host country and recipient country refer to the same country, however, host country relates to the role of the embassy in the given country whereas recipient country relates to the overall relation between the developed country (donor) and the developing country (recipient). As the embassy has to report to its home country, the donor, their projects are influenced by the home countries political strategies. In other words, if a developed country's government has a strong focus on climate action and green energy, the development projects and the businesses undertaken abroad are likely to reflect this priority. Especially when it comes to the promotion of norms, a party's ideologies play a crucial role. Conservative parties tend to be less favorable of LGBT rights, for example, as liberal parties might be. Consequently, the conservative party will not see the need to implement policies promoting LGBT rights either at home or abroad. While this is only one example, the relationship between a party's ideology and its role in the formation of policies, issue focus and, as a result, issue networks becomes clear. A party in power in the donor country influences actions in the recipient country and, therefore, also the grouping around a topic, which in turn shapes the issue-related communities. These issue networks are different from sectoral networks as they shape around a certain topic, which can be an ad-hoc action. Sector networks are set by the existing policy sectors and leave little space for variation in topics or members. Issue networks are more flexible as they are created around an area of concern and can be dissolved once this concern disappears.

To determine a party's ideological stand, there are two distinctions to consider: the left-right dimension of the governing parties and the center-extreme dimension. A party can be placed along the left-right dimension, but often the governing parties remain around the center. Thus, despite their left-right placement, compared to other parties that are placed more on the extreme, these centrist parties are not that different. What that means is that whether a center-left or a center-right party is in power will not have that much influence in foreign policies as a far-right or a far-left party would have. Therefore, combining the two

dimensions is necessary to draw some valuable conclusions.

The timeframe considered for this part of the research is 2015 and 2016, during which time the fieldwork has been conducted. The interviews are used as a snapshot for this period and as a reflection on the governing parties at that particular moment, which was influenced by the Lisbon Treaty, which brought a strengthened set of norms to the EU, and by the global normative development approach under the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Table 13: Governing Parties in EU Member States in 2015 and 2016**

| Country | Governing Party: center/left | Governing Party: center/right |
|---|---|---|
| Austria (2013-2017) | Social Democratic Party of Austria | Austrian People's Party |
| Belgium (since 2014) | | New Flemish Alliance Reformist Movement Christian-Democratic & Flemish Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats |
| Czech Republic (Since 2014) | | ANO |
| Denmark | until Nov 2016: Social Democratic Party Social Liberal Party Socialist People's Party | since Nov 2016: Liberal Party (c-r) Liberal Alliance Conservative Party (c-r) |
| Finland (since May 2015) | | Center Party Finns Party National Coalition Party |
| France (until Dec 2016) | Socialist Party Radical Party of the Left | |
| Germany (2013-2017) | Social Democrat Party | Christian Democrat Party |
| Ireland | Labour Party (until May 2016) Independent politicians (since May 2016) | Fine Gael (since 2011) Independent politicians (since May 2016) |
| Luxembourg since 2013 | Luxembourg Socialist Worker's Party The Greens | Democratic Party |
| Sweden (since 2014) | Social Democrat Party Green Party | |
| United Kingdom (2015-2017) | | Conservative Party |

Source: author's own creation

As table 13 shows, some of the governments have had elections during the 2015-2016 timeframe and, therefore, the government constellations have changed. These countries are Denmark and Ireland. In the case of Ireland, the main party Fine Gael, which is a center-right party, remained in power. In Denmark, the governing parties have changed completely from the socialist parties to liberal-conservative parties. However, because the new government is in power since November 2016, it cannot be expected to observe major legislative changes during the remaining two months of the study period. Consequently, the previous government will be taken into consideration. This leaves four center-right, three center-left and four mixed governments for 2015-2016. In order not to create any problems with anonymity and confidentiality, the interviews will not be represented by numbers as in the other sections. Due to the small number of countries and small number of interviews, additional attention needs to be paid to this issue.

Aggregating the data collected via interviews, it cannot be said that the governments' placement on the left-right continuum has an impact on normativity. Both, right leaning and left leaning governments are supportive of human rights, for example. Similarly, mixed governments do not show any particular exceptions. As already shown earlier, though, normativity does not always transcend the political boundaries and, therefore, cannot always be found in development and even less in trade. Some countries are considered "pusher-countries", i.e. countries that push norms stronger than others, whereas other do not have a political role and consequently lack a normative dimension. This, however, seems to be independent from the party ideology and more dependent on a country's traditional behavior which remains rather constant despite elections.

The lack of influence of party coalitions on external policies can have several reasons. First, in terms of external relations, a stable relationship is the basis of cooperation between two countries. Therefore, despite changing governing the relationship to Vietnam would remain the same broadly speaking. Second, the like-mindedness of European delegates, as suggested by some respondents, could be another explanation. Even though there is competition between the member states and the member states and the EU, given the similarities in culture, the approach towards third countries does not vary greatly. Third, the delegations enjoy a degree of sovereignty from their national governments and given their local expertise, some policy proposals might be diverted, or revisions suggested by the delegation. As a result, the diplomatic core has some policy-making power in their home country and is, to some extent, able to

influence national positions if they are considered unfit (Interview 17).

For the European Union, the situation differs from the member states, as policy-making and policy implementation strongly depends on all institutions. While the European Parliament, the only directly elected EU body, is part of the policy-making process and as such can be taken as a political barometer, the European Commission is the body to propose legislation and the corresponding Council needs to approve together with the Parliament. Thus, the Commission has its preferences depending on the Head of the Commission, the EP has its position due to the elected candidates and the Councils have their position depending on the national governments, which they are comprised of. Because of these intertwining positions, I would argue that as long as there is not a European mind-set that changes the direction of politics, the EU policies remain stable due to this intricate policy-making process. Thus, contrary to the expectations that a government's new agendas directly influence relationships abroad, the priority is given to the overall relationship between the partner countries.

A political decision that does have an impact on networks in the field is the decision to cut development funding and close the development offices. This was the case for Luxembourg and for the UK, for example, who were in the process of closing their offices during the field visit. Luxembourg's office in Bangkok is now in charge of relations with Vietnam. Luxembourg ended its development cooperation with the 2011-2015 Indicative Program (Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, 2017), under which some projects are currently still being finalized. Two new projects supporting Vietnam's Green Growth strategy have been initiated in 2016, but these are not financed by Luxembourg's development cooperation funds but by Luxembourg's Fund for Climate and Energy (LUXDEV, 2017).

Sweden has officially phased out its development cooperation in 2013 (personal interview not identified numerically in order to ensure anonymity), but started this process in 2007, when the government at that time decided to cut the number of partner countries with which Sweden would engage in development cooperation (McGillivray, Carpenter, & Norup, 2012). During this time, the Moderate Party, a center-right party in Sweden, held the majority of ministerial positions in the government (Regeringskansliet, 2008).

As a result of these cut-offs, the financing capacity for development projects decreased and alternative channels needed to be found if activities in a given sector were to be continued

(personal interview not identified numerically in order to ensure anonymity). This has been the reason for creating the gender working group described below.

### 5.3.2 Examples of Issue Networks in Vietnam

Based on the fieldwork conducted in Vietnam, two examples of issue networks are most prominent. First, the Gender Working Group or Gender Advocacy Group is one example of an issue network of European actors in Vietnam. Second, EuroCham, the Chamber of Commerce of the European Union, is an example of a hybrid version between a sector network and an issue network.

**Normative Network: The Gender Working Group**

While democratic values, freedom of speech and freedom of press are sensitive topics in Vietnam and, consequently, in the relationship between the donor countries and Vietnam, gender equality is an area of relative openness.

The Gender Working Group in Vietnam is an informal group of donors that created this format as a result of budget cuts in national development cooperation funds. This group brings together Ambassadors and Heads of Agencies to discuss women's empowerment and domestic violence issues. Prior to the Gender Working Group, for example, the Swedish government had specific development projects in the Central Highlands of Vietnam designed to support equality measures with regard to female political involvement (Interview 17). However, after the governments phasing-out of development in Vietnam the development budget was not available anymore for these kinds of projects. Alternative tools had to be found to continue working on this issue and as a result several working groups were formed, one of which is focused on women's empowerment and gender advocacy. This group is co-chaired by one Ambassador and the UN Resident Coordinator and meets every two months. As has been pointed out by one of the respondents (Interview 25), the demand for such a working group exists as shown by the high participation rate in the meetings. This demand highlights the importance of gender-related activities and the need/desire for coordination, especially because it is not a formal mechanism but based on voluntary participation. Similarly, due to the informality of this group, it could easily be resolved if the demand were to cease to exist.

**Business Network: EuroCham**

EuroCham is a good example for a hybrid version between a sectoral network and an issue network. EuroCham is the Chamber of Commerce of the European Union, which was

established to address the need of a Chamber of Commerce for all the businesses from countries that do not have their own chamber in Vietnam. EuroCham falls within the policy area of trade and economic affairs and can be seen as a sub-network within the sector. However, due to the creation of EuroCham to meet a specific need, I argue that EuroCham can also be considered an issue network around the topic of creating a platform for European businesses established in Vietnam. This is different from the EU-Vietnam Business Network (EVBN), a Commission funded project to help European companies establish their business in Vietnam. EuroCham is dedicated to already existing European companies in Vietnam. Thus, on the one hand, EuroCham is a more or less institutionalized entity within the trade sector and, therefore, shares traits of a sectoral network. On the other hand, it is structured around a distinctive topic and was set up to meet a particular need, which reflects characteristics of an issue network. As discussed above, issue networks reflect two types of causes of incoherence: diverging interests and lack of information. This also holds true for EuroCham. Taking both the Gender Working Group and EuroCham, they clearly do not represent any common interests. Furthermore, the GWG meets in Hanoi, whereas EuroCham is located in HCMC, reinforcing the political-technical divide of the country.

**Implementing Normative Policy Coherence via Civil Society**

Vietnamese NGOs are an interesting issue for consideration because of their limited independence in Vietnam. All Vietnamese NGOs are in some way connected to the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) and, therefore, cannot be considered as non-governmental organizations per se. The term governmental-non-governmental organizations (GONGOs) is instead used to refer to those organizations to imply this connection to the government (Interview 1). Due to this oversight, it is often difficult to set up meetings without government involvement and, consequently, sensitive topics are unlikely to be discussed. Similarly, meetings with dissidents – despite being organized spontaneously – are generally attended by a government official. These procedures restrict normative discussions between European representatives and Vietnamese activists. As already mentioned, freedom of speech is rather limited in Vietnam and meeting with dissidents who might not agree with the Government of Vietnam's (GoV's) approach can face serious charges if they voice their criticism.

From a donor perspective, NGOs are used to implement comparatively small projects. Major funds are usually allocated as budget support to the Vietnamese government (Interview 14). The limited funds to finance international NGOs and the limited independence of the so-

called GONGOs are obstacles for the development work. Civil society nevertheless can be supported through exchange with dissidents, human rights lawyers, human rights activists or artists, which can be done on a smaller scale and, therefore, seems less invasive to the Vietnamese Government. This, however, is not part of development cooperation but is considered as political activities as they fall under the responsibilities of the political section.

## 5.4 TYPE OF NETWORK SHAPES NPCD DIFFERENTLY

This chapter showed the negative effects of sectoral networks and mixed effects of issue networks on normative policy coherence for development. Revisiting the questions guiding this chapter, the following can be said.

Due to the sectoral separation, which takes different forms, EU and member state officials do not represent the EU as a normative power in the development sector. The normative role of delegations abroad is attributed to the diplomatic staff, i.e. ambassadors and vice-ambassadors and the heads of the political department. Development staff is mainly in charge of technical duties such as project management or calls for proposals. This normative separation becomes even more visible in comparison to the trade sector. Given the fact that the four sectors (diplomacy, politics, development, and trade) are kept separate on purpose, I argue that the willingness to integrate a normative dimension into the trade arena is low. Improved communication between the sectors might be a first step towards spill-over of information, but at the moment this is kept at a minimum at most of the delegations interviewed. This split between the sectors is reinforced by the geographical divide between Northern and Southern Vietnam and as such supports the claim of lacking willingness. It can be argued that the delegations respond to the existing split within the country in which Hanoi is the political capital and Ho Chi Minh City the business capital.

Nevertheless, within the delegations the responsibilities are clear and tend to be sectoral, which leads to the final question "*Why might existing policy networks limit normative coherence between development and trade policies?*

This last question needs to be answered very carefully. On the one hand, data shows that sectoral isolation form part of the cause of incoherence, but on the other hand, it also shows that reducing sectoral isolation would not increase normative policy coherence. That is to say, normative policy coherence between development and trade would not be increased through intertwining the two sectors, because both sectors do not carry the political responsibility of

promoting norms. Thus, sectoral isolation can be observed, as already mentioned earlier, but this cannot be understood as the reason for normative incoherence. Instead, the sectoral isolation between the diplomatic-political sector and the development sector seems to be one of the causes of normative incoherence between the political objectives and implementation. Similarly, a link between the diplomatic-political sector and the trade sector could initiate a spill-over of norms into the trade sector. Restructuring the responsibilities would require major changes in the current diplomatic services and, therefore, is highly unlikely. In addition, the EU and the member states do have a trade agenda, which might be undermined by the strengthening of a normative dimension in trade affairs. Whether such a shift would be desired can be questioned given the EU's wider interest in global affairs, which is the focus of the following chapter.

# Chapter 6: Empirical Study of the Relationship between EU-ASEAN Inter-regionalism and NPCD

The previous chapter has shown that policy networks have varying impacts on normative policy coherence for development. Institutional structures create divides between regional sectoral policy networks and, consequently, limit communication between actors. The lack of communication and exchange undermine NPCD by limiting norm exchange and norm spill-over. Analyzing policy networks from an NPCD perspective provides insights into the internal processes of EU policy implementation abroad. However, EU-Vietnam relations do not take place in a vacuum. On the contrary, the EU engages in inter-regional relations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which Vietnam is a member, and for this reason, a chapter on EU-ASEAN relations is required.

This chapter analyzes the inter-regional relationship between the European Union and ASEAN in order to understand how inter-regionalism affects the normative relationship between the EU and Vietnam. This inter-regional level of governance plays an important role for NPCD for two reasons. The relations between the EU and ASEAN affect the bilateral policies between the EU and ASEAN member states, such as Vietnam, because the EU has often adapted its bilateral policies with ASEAN member states according to the progress in EU-ASEAN inter-regional relations. For example, after the free trade negotiations with ASEAN stagnated, the EU turned to bilateral negotiations with Vietnam. Conversely, these bilateral relationships have an impact on EU-ASEAN relations, because the EU can get access to the region "through the back door" and political disagreement on a bilateral level can create a hostile atmosphere at the regional level. Therefore, the research question for this chapter is the following:

*Do EU-ASEAN inter-regional relations affect normative policy coherence between development and trade in EU-Vietnam bilateral relations and if so, how?*

Inter-regional relations are often presented as being inherently different from traditional state-centered international relations as a new form of politics (Hänggi, 2003). Conversely, critics argue that inter-regionalism merely introduces new actors to a realist political world (Camroux, 2010; Gilson, 2005; Roloff, 2006) by assigning actorness – the capacity to act – to regional organizations. Actorness presupposes a certain degree of autonomy to act in inter-regional

relations, and the capacity to set and achieve goals (Hänggi, 2006). This approach highlights regions as polities unto themselves, which are more than the aggregation of member states and their interests. Obviously, the existence of regional norms, discussed in previous chapters, is a key element to this actorness. Furthermore, the transmission of norms in inter-regional relations includes two dimensions. The internal dimension of actorness, identified as agency, refers to a regions ability to transmit norms. It is a region's integration process, the institutional set-up and supra-nationalism, which shapes a region's norms and the capability to act according to those norms. The external dimension of actorness reflects on how third countries or regions receive and shape these norms for their own internal purposes (Hänggi, 2007). Inter-regional relations are shaped by both the internal and external dimensions. In this chapter, the internal dimension is reflected by the EU's self-portrayal as a normative actor and the external dimension by ASEAN's public reception of norms transmitted by the EU. Does the EU promote norms in its EU-ASEAN relations and does ASEAN accept EU norms? If so, how? To be able to answer these questions it is helpful to consider why regions engage in inter-regionalism in the first place.

Research on inter-regionalism has often addressed the relevance of inter-regional relations and regions' incentives to engage in inter-regionalism. Hänggi (2000) makes a useful distinction between three forms of inter-regionalism. Relations between regional groupings are the traditional form of inter-regionalism shaped by institutionalized regional organizations, such as EU-ASEAN relations. These relations are often marked by an interest to justify the existence of regional actors in the global arena and norm reinforcement plays the role of shaping the identities of these actors. Bi-regional and trans-regional arrangements are arrangements in which membership exceeds the traditional regional groupings to include states from other regions. Actors often engage in such arrangements for policy purposes, in order to pursue more effective policy strategies in response to inter-regional or trans-regional threats. The relevance of norms in these groups is subdued compared to the inter-organizational relations. Hybrid relations between regional groupings and single powers characterize asymmetric regionalism between a regional actor and a regional hegemon. Even though power relations underlie these arrangements, norms are often utilized as foreign policy tools in order to maximize strategic bargaining positions. In terms of international relations theories, inter-regionalism can be articulated in the following ways. A realist explanation for inter-regionalism is the need to counterbalance other regional powers. The liberal institutionalist approach identifies inter-regionalism as a response to increasing globalization by way of creating new forms of

managing interdependencies. Constructivists highlight identity-formation through inter-regional relations.

These complex inter-regional relations create further challenges to policy coherence for development by adding another layer of governance. For this reason, the literature on PCD does not sufficiently address inter-regionalism even though the development relationships impacted by incoherences are inter-regional in nature. This chapter aims to contribute to the research on inter-regionalism by adopting a PCD lens and examining the influence of EU-ASEAN relations on normative policy coherence for development in EU-Vietnam relations.

EU-Vietnam bilateral relations can be understood as a gateway for the EU to the ASEAN region. Depending on Vietnam's standing in the region, it can serve as an entry point for EU norm promotion in ASEAN. In 1998 and 2010, for example, Vietnam was the chair of ASEAN and as such had the possibility to shape ASEAN's visions and position. With the regular rotation of the ASEAN chair, Vietnam will take on this position again and could engage in discussions that are of interest for the EU, Vietnam, as well as ASEAN. This is not to say that Vietnam executes the EU's demands, but instead Vietnam might have reached an agreement with the EU (or any other third country), for which it might be useful to discuss related issue at an intra-regional level. Of course, Vietnam is a sovereign nation state and operates according to its own set of norms, but issues such as corruption, for example, are a concern of the EU, of Vietnam and of ASEAN alike.

Figure 15 illustrates the system-driven interactions between inter-regionalism, bilateralism and regional membership. The separation of arrows indicates that influence can take place through different channels such as development and trade. ASEAN membership influences EU-ASEAN relations not only by shaping an ASEAN position vis-à-vis the EU, but also through a member state's behavior that the EU does not support. For example, political tensions between the EU and ASEAN arose out of the political and human rights situation in Myanmar in the early 2000s (Camroux, 2010; Yeo, 2009). As a member of ASEAN, Vietnam can function as a gateway for the EU to the ASEAN region through its political standing in cases such as the ASEAN chair and as a member of the ASEAN internal market, which provides low tariffs to intra-ASEAN trade. It is expected that norms in inter-regionalism affect bilateral relations directly and indirectly. Direct impact refers to the EU's adaptations in response to ASEAN behavior, such as the EU's changing strategy after EU-ASEAN trade negotiations came to a halt, which led the EU to conduct bilateral relations with Vietnam. Indirect impact

is expected from the ongoing inter-regional dialogues, which can lead to joint communications that serve as reference documents for the regional institutions and member states. ASEAN membership serves as an interlocutor in this scenario.

**Figure 15: Triangular Relations between the Inter-regionalism, Bilateralism, and Regional Membership**
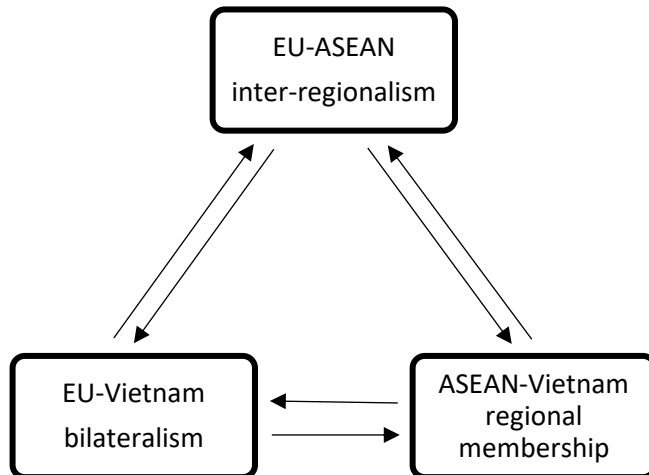


Source: author's own creation

EU-ASEAN relations are strongly focused on economic issues, which undermine the normative dimension of inter-regional relations and consequently undermine normative policy coherence for development. This chapter will show that ASEAN has resisted the EU's normative power, and that the EU negotiates with ASEAN members bilaterally to circumvent this resistance. The analysis of EU and ASEAN inter-regionalism is important for normative policy coherence for development, because the prioritization of economic interests in EU-ASEAN relations not only undermines norm-driven inter-regionalism but can also undermine normative coherence in EU-Vietnam policies.

This dissertation focuses on NPCD in EU policies towards Vietnam, and this chapter examines how EU-ASEAN inter-regional relations affect NPCD in EU-Vietnam bilateralism. By doing so, this chapter adds to the study of inter-regionalism by placing attention on norms in inter-regional relations, which is as of now still an underexplored area (Rüland, 2014) and by adopting a NPCD perspective towards inter-regionalism.

The remainder of this chapter is structured as follows. The first section introduces different approaches to norm transmission in inter-regional relations, such as norm reinforcement, norm diffusion and cooperative hegemony. The second section provides a brief introduction of ASEAN's evolution, its relationship with its member states, the political, economic and

religious diversity of ASEAN members. In the third section, EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism is examined in terms of political, economic and development relations. This is strengthened, first, by an analysis of Vietnam's position as a gateway to ASEAN, and second, by a normative comparison of the two regions using historical evolution, legislative frameworks and negotiation strategies as indicators for institutional commitment to norms. Last, the conclusion highlights how this inter-regional relationship affects NPCD in bilateralism.

## 6.1 NORM TRANSMISSION IN INTER-REGIONALISM

This section introduces the relationship between inter-regionalism, norm transmission and normative policy coherence for development. As stated above, NPCD is the implementation of norms in development and non-development policies. As inter-regional relations affect bilateral relations, norms in inter-regionalism affect NPCD at the bilateral level. In order to analyze the relationship between norms in inter-regionalism and NPCD, conceptual clarifications regarding inter-regionalism and norm transmission are required, which are presented in turn in the following sub-sections.

### 6.1.1 Conceptual Discussion of Inter-regionalism

As stated above, inter-regionalism is defined as the interaction of (at least) two institutionalized regional actors. The international political economy (IPE) debate considers the role of regions located governmentally between the nation state levels and global economic and capital markets and studies regions in view of ongoing globalization processes (Hettne, 2005; Robles, 2004). Similarly, inter-regionalism is "a means of managing relations in a globalizing world" (Gilson, 2005). From an international relations perspective, the creation of inter-regional relations and the underlying reasons for inter-regional activities are questioned (Rüland, 2014). (Re-) Balancing power is one reason for inter-regionalism and it is understood as a reaction to changes in global power relations, whereas identity building aims to specify a regions character in relation with other regions, and institution-building aims to create a new governance level in the global multi-level system (Rüland, 2014). Norms are not prioritized in this vision, which focuses on exchanges and negotiating positions.

This inter-regionalism includes political, trade and development relations (Hardacre & Smith, 2014). These three pillars are also reflected in the sectoral divisions between policy networks presented in the previous chapter. Because of this rather comprehensive inter-regional relationship, some consider EU-ASEAN relations to be "the model of inter-regional cooperation" (Hänggi, 2006). Within this comprehensive framework, however, the EU is more active in

economic and development cooperation than as a political actor. This undermines the EU's normative power, because norms are a political concern managed by political representatives instead of economic or development representatives (see chapter five). Moreover, the economic pillar has currently also experienced a setback. The EU has arrived at a stage where its inter-regional strategy has not played out as envisioned with the region-to-region free trade negotiations, which is why the EU has moved on to bilateral relations with some of the ASEAN member states, including Vietnam. Despite the recent setback in the EU-ASEAN negotiations, the regionalism rhetoric is continuously deployed by the EU as part of the wider external policy strategies (Hardacre & Smith, 2014). This dissertation examines NPCD in policies, which are already in place and, therefore, the inter-regional (EU-ASEAN) policy-making procedure falls outside the scope of this study.

Despite different approaches to inter-regionalism, research has strongly focused on the European Union. EU centered inter-regionalism, i.e. the relationship between the EU and other regional organizations, for which the EU-ASEAN relations are a good example (Camroux, 2010; Murray, 2015; Rüland, 2014), features most prominently in the academic literature. The role of norms in inter-regionalism, however, is an understudied topic to which this chapter aims to contribute.

Table 14 shows the triangular relationships presented above in terms of inter-regional conceptualization. EU-Vietnam bilateral relations can be understood as hybrid inter-regionalism as one region engages with a single state. EU-ASEAN relations are termed inter-regionalism or occasionally asymmetric inter-regionalism, which is characterized by economic divergence between the regions. Last, Vietnam's regional membership in ASEAN can be categorized as regionalism, i.e. regional integration, or asymmetric regionalism (Beeson, 2010), which highlights the economic diversity between the states involved in the regional integration process. Strictly speaking, regionalism is not a form of inter-regionalism, but Vietnam membership in ASEAN plays an important role in terms of providing access for the EU to the ASEAN market. Because of this interplay between the three actors, Vietnam-ASEAN regionalism is included in the wider inter-regional dynamics between the EU and ASEAN.

**Table 14: Types of Inter-regionalism in EU-ASEAN-Vietnam Relations**

| Actor A | Actor B | Form of inter-regionalism | Example |
|---|---|---|---|
| Regional organization | Third country | Hybrid inter-regionalism | EU-Vietnam |
| Regional organization | Regional organization | (Asymmetric) Inter-regionalism | EU-ASEAN |
| Regional organization | Regional member | (Asymmetric) Regionalism | Vietnam in ASEAN |

Source: author's compilation based on Baert et al., 2014, Beeson, 2010, and Hänggi, 2006

This brief overview shows the complexity of inter-regionalism and academic aspirations for enhanced understanding of inter-regionalism and actors' underlying rationales to engage in inter-regionalism. Norm promotion is one feature of EU external relations, which is understudied in inter-regional research, despite its political prominence in EU external relations: the Treaty of Lisbon emphasizes EU norm promotion in EU external policies, including inter-regional relations. The following sub-section presents various approaches to norm transmission in order to conceptualize EU-ASEAN normative dynamics.

### 6.1.2 Approaches to Norm Transmission in Inter-regional Relations

Norm transmission plays an important role in normative policy coherence for development, because it reflects the EU's normative power vis-à-vis other regional actors and because inter-regionalism affects EU bilateral relations. The normative dimension of inter-regionalism remains understudied, but three approaches to norm transmission in inter-regionalism can be distinguished: norm reinforcement, norm diffusion and cooperative hegemony (Rüland, 2014).

**Norm Reinforcement**

Norm reinforcement draws on social constructivism arguing for regional identity-building based on self-reflection in the process of exposure to or interacting with other regional actors (Gilson, 2005). To enhance bargaining power, the regional actor needs to speak with one voice, which creates greater international recognition and simultaneously shapes regional identity. Norm reinforcement does not equal norm transmission or acceptance, but rather can take shape in differentiation, which Gilson (2005) demonstrates with the example of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in which East Asia responded with their Asian values to the EU's normative power. Similar to this example, EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism does not lead to EU normative dominance but can actually strengthen ASEAN's own identity.

**Norm Diffusion**

The norm diffusion debate adds the argument that the EU uses inter-regionalism to promote its norms through normative power (Manners, 2002, 2013). Most prominently it argues that inter-regionalism advances regional integration infused with EU values in geographical areas outside of Europe (Murray, 2015), however, the internalization of norms in other regions, i.e. a region as the recipient of EU norms, is understudied (Acharya, 2016).

Among international relations and EU scholars, three mechanisms for norm diffusion (with the end goal of norm internalization) within regions have been considered: strategic calculation, role playing and normative suasion (Checkel, 2005). Strategic calculation is a rationalist approach to norm diffusion, which utilizes incentives and rewards as tools for changing an actor's behavior. Conscious role-playing is an instrumental tool an actor adapts to meet certain norms that are accepted in a given setting. Normative suasion corresponds to communicative action, which in turn refers to norm sharing through repeated interactions.

Similarly, three inter-regional forms of norms diffusion can be identified (Rüland, 2014). Rationalist scholars claim that norms can be advanced through economic incentives or sanctions. Structuralist scholars claim that other regional organizations adapt the EU's organizational structure, norms and integration rhetoric through imitation. Communicative action theory examines how regional actors persuade each other through interaction to change regional interests and identities (see Manea, 2008). Both the structuralist and the communicative action approach form part of the constructivist approach to norm diffusion.

The constructivist approach considers norms to be shared standards of appropriate behavior in a group of actors (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). Constructivists highlight norm reproduction as a form of norm diffusion characterized by imitation, and accelerated through persuasion or information sharing (Checkel, 1997). Norms entrepreneurs play an important role in these approaches as they are the actors which actively promote norms and persuade resisting actors (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). During the phase of norm emergence, norm entrepreneurs try to bring norms onto the policy-making agenda. Once they are established in the bureaucratic system, norms have reached a 'prescriptive status' (Risse-Kappen, 1996). Elgström (2000) contends that "new norms have to fight their way into institutional thinking" (p.458), because of the difficulty of changing existing norms and, therefore, this process would be better understood as a negotiation process rather than an imitation process. Finally, a norm is institutionalized in an organization when it is referred to continually and it forms part of routine

behavior (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998).

Rationalist approaches and instrumental approaches to norm diffusion most often do not lead to norm internalization, because strategic calculations determine actor behavior (Checkel, 2005). Instead, norm internalization is closely related to the logic of communicative action, i.e. argumentative processes lead to consensual ideas and consequently to shared norms (Elgström, 2000; Rüland, 2014).

## Cooperative Hegemony

The cooperative hegemony approach combines realist, political economy, institutionalism and constructivism in what is termed ideational-institutional realism (Pedersen, 2002). As such, the cooperative hegemony approach argues for the use of soft power in cooperative arrangements, which in turn are linked to long-term strategies (Pedersen, 2002). This theory was developed to explain regionalism and cooperation between nation states and, therefore, research on cooperative hegemony in inter-regionalism is quite limited. However, Farrell (2004) argues that the EU seeks to maintain its position in the global arena through its economic strength and uses inter-regionalism as one way of achieving its economic interests. To do so, the EU uses soft power. In normative terms, it is argued that the EU promotes its norms abroad to foster regional integration and inter-regional relations to gain economic benefits. This form of norm transmission is particularly interesting for this dissertation, as the preceding two chapters have already shown that the EU often only promotes norms when they do not undermine the EU's economic interests.

Even though critics have questioned the suitability of creating the concept of a regional hegemon distinct from a nation-state centered hegemon (Rüland, 2014), the interplay between norms and economic interests in the EU's inter-regional relations forms an argument which requires further analysis.

## Resistance to Inter-regional Norm Transmission

Norms are shared values by a group of actors and norm diffusion refers to the negotiation process related to creating shared values in a given group of actors. Agreeing on shared norms is less difficult when actors share similar normative positions at the beginning of the norm negotiation process. Conversely, diverging actors can be more resistant to new norms. Resistance to new norms in inter-regional relations has a variety of reasons. For one, changing existing behavior, and subsequently changing existing norms, is challenging (Elgström, 2000).

Furthermore, in inter-regional relations, the difficulty of changing norms is augmented by the bureaucrats' training to resist norms (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). Once different actors agree on a set of norms, the next steps include text negotiation and implementation negotiation (Elgström, 2000). Text negotiation is characterized by formulating and reformulating a given text to define a norm, which is followed by negotiations about implementing the formalized norm (Elgström, 2000).

In EU-ASEAN inter-regional relations, the results of text and implementation negotiations can be found in joint documents such as joint agreements, joint statements or joint programs. These documents will be used to analyze whether inter-regional documents are normatively coherent with EU norms. This analysis will show if there is a gap between norm implementation in formalized EU-ASEAN relations and norm implementation in EU-Vietnam relations.

## 6.2 INTRODUCING THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS

The preceding section introduced the conceptual discussions around inter-regionalism and norm diffusion. Given this chapter's focus on EU-ASEAN relations, this section introduces the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in terms of its historical evolution and its diversity among member states to help understand the regional differences, which complicate norm transmission and consequently normative policy coherence for development.

### 6.2.1 Brief History of the Institutionalization of ASEAN

The history of ASEAN shows slow but continuous integration despite persisting reluctance by the member states to give up national sovereignty. For a better understanding of the relationship between the ASEAN institutions and its member states, a brief historical overview of the creation of ASEAN and its institutional evolution is given here.

The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was founded in 1967 as a group of five Asian states: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Since then, this group has expanded to ten member states including Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.

The ASEAN Declaration, also known as the Bangkok Declaration, is the founding document of this regional organization, and spells out cooperation between the member states in the fields of economy, social matters, culture, technology, education and stability in the region (ASEAN, 1967). Thailand initiated talks between Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia, which

led to the Bangkok Declaration on a new regional association replacing the first regional association for cooperation in Southeast Asia called Association for Southeast Asia (ASA), whose members were Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines (ASEAN, 2018a; Khoman, 1992). Singapore also showed interest in this regional cooperation and was added as a fifth member two ASEAN. With the driving force of Thailand, this new regional association ended years of separation under the colonial powers, political struggles and territorial disputes, which brought previous attempts of regional cooperation to a halt, as was the case with ASA (Khoman, 1992).

Several stages of deepening and widening integration have taken place since ASEAN's initiation in the 1960s. Brunei was the first state to join the founding five ASEAN states in 1984. During the period of the Cold War, ASEAN experienced a phase of deepening in response to expanding Communism in the region (China, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos). Political and security cooperation came to be the two major components of ASEAN during this time (Gates & Than, 2001). Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea in 1978 was one of the crises which strengthened ASEAN cooperation and "compelled ASEAN member states to cohere politically, enhance interaction and deepen political dialogue with each other to form a united front" (Maier-Knapp, 2016, p.97). Despite this political discord between ASEAN and Vietnam during the Cold War, Vietnam was the first country out of the remaining four Southeast Asian states to join ASEAN. It joined ASEAN in 1995, shortly after fall of the Communist bloc, widening regional integration. Laos and Myanmar joined ASEAN in 1997, whereas Cambodia's accession was postponed to 1999 due to political instability (Gates & Than, 2001).

Economic integration has shaped ASEAN from the beginning, but political security was a priority until the end of the Cold War. Opening up trade and cooperating on industrial, technological and infrastructure development shaped the early stages of economic cooperation. Since then, ASEAN has strengthened its role in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and its member states joined the World Trade Organization, both of which show ASEAN's openness to integrate in to the global economic market (Gates & Than, 2001). One of the key changes to economic cooperation was the initiation of the ASEAN free trade area (AFTA) in the early 1990s, which aimed at reducing tariffs for a wide range of manufactured and agricultural goods.

Economic integration did not result in deeper institutionalization. Decisions are taken at the ASEAN summits, which bring together the Heads of States. The annual Foreign Ministers Meeting is a platform to discuss regional integration. A joint communiqué is produced at each

meeting to present future visions, but these communications do not have any legally binding character, thus reducing their normative impact. The most recent joint communiqué, for example, emphasized the member states' commitment to finalize the implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 (ASEAN, 2018b) The ASEAN Secretariat plays a coordinating role between ASEAN stakeholders. This institutional arrangement shows that ASEAN policy-making remains inter-governmental despite the recent creation of the ASEAN communities. The three "traditional" areas of ASEAN cooperation (political, security and economic cooperation), have been transformed institutionally into the ASEAN Political-Security Community and the ASEAN Economic Community. In addition, the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community was created. These three communities form the pillars of the ASEAN Community, which was established in 2015.

Deepening and widening regional integration in Southeast Asia has been a slow process. Great disparity between political systems and economic development can be considered as the main reasons for paced regional integration and low institutionalization, which is presented in the following sub-section.

## 6.2.2   Diversity of ASEAN Member States

This sub-section addresses the diversity of ASEAN member states, because as the discussion above indicates, regional membership affects the emergence of regional norms. Consequently, diversity between ASEAN members contributes to the shaping of ASEAN institutions and ASEAN norms, which in turn affect EU-ASEAN inter-regional relations.

ASEAN members strongly emphasize their right to self-determination and non-interference. Sovereignty and diversity are two priorities within regional cooperation in South-East Asia, which is largely due to the substantial heterogeneity between the ten member states. Particularly visible is the difference between ASEAN-6 (Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) and the four member states that joined in the 1990s (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam) (Gates & Than, 2001).

Religion and political systems are two characteristics, which shape the diversity between ASEAN member states. From a religious point of view, differences lie between Muslim countries, such as Indonesia and Malaysia, and Buddhist countries, such as Thailand and Myanmar, for example. Politically speaking, ASEAN countries represent a variety of different government types. Brunei, a small country on the island of Borneo with 423,196 inhabitants

is governed by an absolute monarchy. Cambodia, Malaysia and Thailand, on the other hand are constitutional monarchies in which the monarch serves as the Head of State and the parliament takes legislative decisions. Thailand, however, is currently under military rule since the coup in 2014. Singapore is a parliamentary republic; Indonesia and the Philippines are presidential republics. Neighboring countries Laos and Vietnam are both one-party socialist republics governed by the Communist Party of the respective country. Obviously, diverse forms of government affect the definition and implementation of norms and political identities.

In addition to political and religious differences, economic diversity ranges from lower middle-income countries such as Myanmar with a GNI per capita of 1,190 USD and Laos with a GNI per capita of 2,150 USD to high-income countries such as Brunei with a GNI of 32,860 USD and Singapore with a GNI per capita of 51,880 USD. Vietnam, with a GNI per capita of 2,100 USD in 2016 Again, these numbers only represent an average that the World Bank uses to classify a country according to its income scheme. Income distribution or the quality of public services is not regarded here. As one respondent claimed, Vietnam would not be classified as a middle-income country if those measures were taken into account (Interview 9). Based on World Bank data, eight out of the ten ASEAN member states have reached middle-income status as per the 2016 figures shown in figure 16, but even within this group income differences amount to up to approximately 8,000 USD in GNI per capita per year.

Malaysia is the country with the highest GNI per capita since 1996 reaching roughly 10,000 USD in 2016, and Cambodia and Myanmar are situated at the bottom with 1,140 and 1,190 USD respectively in 2016. Laos and Vietnam can be grouped together at around 2,000 USD in 2016 and Indonesia and Philippines at 3,500 USD. Thailand is situated between Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia with 5,640 USD. Brunei and Singapore are classified as high-income countries. Brunei shows a GNI per capita of almost 32,860 USD and Singapore 51,880 USD (World Bank, 2018a). In total, the divergence in gross national income between the poorest ASEAN member state Cambodia and the richest member state Singapore amount to 50,000 USD per person per year.

**Figure 16: GNI per Capita in Middle-income ASEAN Members (in 1,000USD)**
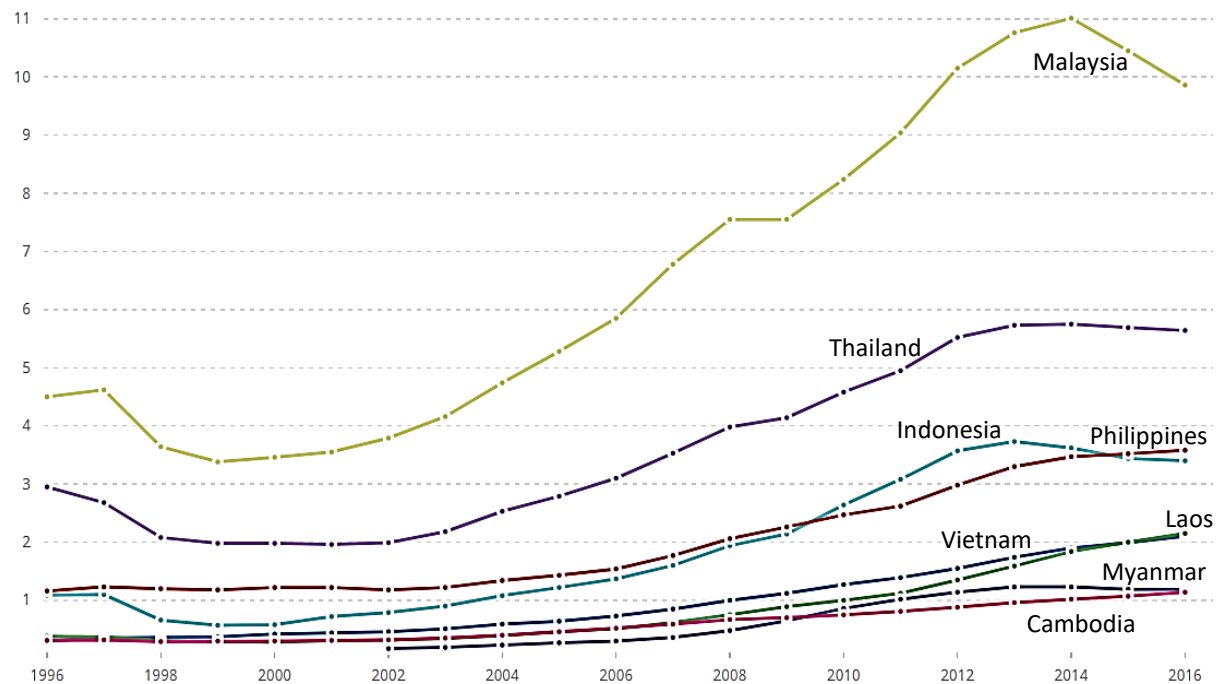
The diversity between the member states highlights the difficulty to find a shared normative vision within ASEAN and underlines potential reasons for the slow pace of integration and institutionalization. "The political diversity of member states underpins their disparate interpretations and visions of ASEAN's role and mandate" (Poole, 2015, p.153). Internal complications shape ASEAN's position towards external actors and, therefore, affect inter-regional relations between ASEAN and the EU. Despite this political, cultural and economic divergence between the ASEAN members, regional integration and cooperation has taken place since the 1960s, nevertheless. In the following sections, the relations with the EU are further examined.

## 6.3   EU-ASEAN RELATIONS

After having shown how diverse the ASEAN member states are and under what principles they operate, I will now turn to EU-ASEAN relations in order to examine which areas of cooperation could function as a platform for EU norm promotion in the EU-ASEAN inter-regional relationship. Scholars of EU-ASEAN relations have explored various aspects of this relationship by focusing on norm promotion from the European perspective (see Murray, 2015). Murray (2015) argues that the EU often fails to break the "fourth wall", i.e. fails to bridge the distance between itself and other actors. In actorness terms, the external dimension is challenged. The EU presents itself as a norm promoter (internal dimension of actorness), but

other regions do not follow this lead (external dimension). Murray shows that EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism is mainly regulatory economic regionalism with some agreement on trade norms, but reconciliation, trust, good governance and human rights are not shared norms between the two regions. This economic priority is also emphasized by the EU delegation in Jakarta: "The concept of connectivity is central to EU-ASEAN cooperation, with the overall objective of bringing businesses, people and institutions closer together to boost trade, investment, and to promote smart, sustainable and inclusive growth" (EU Mission to ASEAN, 2016). Because of the differing regional norms, the fourth wall might not be possible to overcome (Murray, 2015), which creates normative incoherence between the regions. Trying to overcome EU-centrism, Acharya (2016) shows how EU regionalism does not fit non-Western regions and calls for new approaches to include a normative constructivist perspective. He highlights the differences in regionalism between the EU and other regions and criticizes the assumption of universality of EU regionalism.

Approaches to EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism might vary, but one prominent commonality regards the structural dissimilarities between the EU and ASEAN. The political, development and economic pillars of EU-ASEAN relations are further examined in this section in order to explore how the EU and ASEAN shape their relations, especially in normative terms. As the previous chapter on policy networks showed, norms are a task under the political or diplomatic sector in EU-Vietnam relations. Examining inter-regional political, development and trade relations will show which sector the EU prioritizes and, hence, how much focus is put on norm promotion.

### 6.3.1 Political Relations

EU relations with the ASEAN countries are strongly influenced by Europe's former colonization of ASEAN countries (with the exception of Thailand) (Camroux, 2010). This heritage still shows repercussions in current relations, however in different forms. French-Vietnamese and British-Malaysian political and economic relations have benefitted from previous colonial relations, whereas in the Dutch-Indonesian relationship or the British-Burmese relationship this is not the case (Camroux, 2010). The strong relationship between France and Vietnam is shaped by France's political activities, which have led to the Vietnamese authoritarian regime's "constructive engagement" in human rights related issues, particularly since Vietnam's economic reforms that started in the 1980s (Camroux, 2010). Thus, France was a main driver of Vietnam's engagement in human rights dialogues. On the contrary, the British government has supported Burmese isolation sought for by the (formerly)

governing military junta (Camroux, 2010). While this type of normative pressure is based on isolation rather than support, the UK showed its disapproval of the military regime. Both France and the UK, despite using different strategies, showed their normative stance towards the two Southeast Asian countries. Vietnam and Myanmar joined ASEAN only in the 1990s, but bilateral relations still influence the EU's policy-making towards ASEAN as some member states lobby more strongly for policies towards one country than to another (Camroux, 2010).

Informal ties between the EU and ASEAN were established in 1972. The EU (then European Economic Community, EEC) signed the first inter-regional agreement with ASEAN (with then five member states) in 1980, which formalized relations between the two regional organizations. The 1980 ASEAN-EEC Cooperation Agreement aimed at developing commercial, economic and development cooperation between the regions (EEC & ASEAN, 1980). Thus, it was a strictly technical agreement regarding development and trade rules, but without any political aspiration. A political dimension, which is used to promote norms as the previous chapter has shown, lacks in this initial agreement. Consequently, normative commitment lacks in this agreement. One normative mention is made in the preamble by stating the international economic cooperation is desired "on the basis of freedom, equality and justice". Non-discrimination is mentioned in relation to foreign investment, i.e. as an economic technicality instead of a person-centered quality. Thus, at the beginning of EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism, political relations including norms did not play a role in the relationship as economic growth and trade cooperation were prioritized instead.

The EU has followed an inter-regional agenda to broaden the relations from trade cooperation to political dialogues by supporting regionalization processes in ASEAN (Yeo, 2009). As a sign of growing inter-regionalism, the EU has opened a delegation to ASEAN in Jakarta, Indonesia, the main seat for ASEAN, in addition to the EU delegation to Indonesia. However, some scholars have challenged the process of further inter-regionalism claiming that the EU is moving away from inter-regionalism to bilateral relations in Asia (Hardacre & Smith, 2014). As I presented above, the EU-ASEAN inter-regional relationship and EU-Vietnam bilateral relations are not mutually exclusive. Rather, the EU could potentially promote norms through political dialogues with both actors highlighting a rather successful integration process based on peace and democracy. The 2012 Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action for enhanced cooperation highlights the ambition to continue the relationship between ASEAN and the

EU, but political cooperation remains limited (EU & ASEAN, 2012). In normative terms, the inter-regional relationship is kept at a technical level, leaving political issues such as norms on the sideline. Regarding the political dialogue between the regions, the following is stated in the Plan of Actions:

"*Continue to hold biennial ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meetings (AEMM) and the annual ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference with the EU (PMC)+1, supported by regular meetings of the ASEAN-EU Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) and the ASEAN-EU Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC)*" (Section 1.1, Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action).

Norms do show up in the Plan of Action to a strikingly limited extent. The EU and ASEAN plan to cooperate to maintain peace (one of the EU core norms) in the region by initiatives such as enhancing ASEAN's mediating capacities and supporting the implementation of ASEAN's Counter Terrorism Convention. Cooperation on human rights is also in the Plan of Action:

"*Support the work of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), as the overarching body for the promotion and protection of human rights in ASEAN through regional dialogues, seminars, awareness raising activities, exchange of best practices and other capacity building initiatives aimed at enhancing the promotion and protection of human rights through technical cooperation programs as well as giving support to the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC)*" (Section 1.3.1, Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action).

The exchange of best practices is also suggested in relation to gender equality. The 2012 Plan of Action refers to peace, human rights, gender equality, and sustainability, but not to freedom, rule of law, solidarity, democracy, justice, non-discrimination, good governance, or liberty.

Continuous effort is made to advance the relations between ASEAN and the EU. While scholars have argued that the cooperation process between the two regions has not evolved significantly until recently (Yeo, 2009), the EU presented its accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia in 2012 as a major success in the relationship between ASEAN and the EU giving impetus to wider dialogues and cooperation (EU Mission to ASEAN, 2016). This accession might constitute one of the reasons why the 2017 Plan of Action shows some more commitment to norms (EU & ASEAN, 2017). In the 2017 Plan of Action, peace and gender equality are integrated as was done previously, but the section on human rights has become more comprehensive:

*"1.7. Promote Cooperation on human rights and good governance*

*(a) Enhance the promotion and protection of <u>human rights</u> and <u>fundamental freedoms</u> in accordance with relevant international and regional human rights instruments to which all ASEAN and EU Member States are parties;*

*(b) Continue to hold ASEAN-EU Policy Dialogues on Human Rights;*

*(c) Strengthen the cooperation between the EU and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) through training, regional dialogues, awareness raising activities, exchange of best practices and other capacity building initiatives to enhance the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms;*

*(d) Promote cooperation between ASEAN and the EU to implement relevant UN conventions and instruments on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms which all ASEAN Member States are parties to, the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) and the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the AHRD;*

*(e) Promote capacity building for and support ASEAN's efforts in strengthening <u>democracy</u>, <u>good governance</u>, <u>rule of law</u>, and judiciary systems, through sharing of experiences and best practices;[...]."* (EU & ASEAN, 2017)

The commitment to sustainability and sustainable development, reflecting the shift towards sustainable development at the global level, has been strengthened as well throughout the action plan. Thus, an increase in normativity can be witnessed from 2012 to 2017. This highlights the increased political nature of EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism. However, in terms of implementation, the action plans are not legally binding and proposed actions are often rhetorical in nature, e.g. sharing of best practices, dialogues or cooperation are proposed as actions without providing specific means to do so. As a result, a political dimension is slowly integrated into EU-ASEAN relations, but it is limited by economic interests and the lack of implementing mechanisms.

A factor that challenges cooperation between the EU and ASEAN is their way to react to crises. As Blizkovsky (2012) describes, ASEAN's reaction on the economic crisis 1997-99 was widening, whereas the EU's reaction to the financial crisis 2008 was deepening. ASEAN established the ASEAN+3 together with China, Japan and South Korea which provides a platform for greater regional cooperation representing the desire to widen the regional cooperation, while the EU, on the other hand, tried to improve its fiscal and monetary policies to prevent future shocks as a deepening measure (Blizkovsky, 2012). A limited number of

deepening processes also took place in ASEAN as shows the common emergency fund for ASEAN+3 members. The extent of this type of cooperation is however by far not reaching the regional integration level that the EU has achieved.

Cooperation among the ASEAN member states is based on an inter-governmental approach with a strong focus on sovereignty and the principle of non-interference, which is enshrined in the ASEAN Charter. As a result, national legislation of the sovereign state prevails and is protected from external interventions without the state's prior agreement. As such, ASEAN's political power over the member states is stifled. Despite dialogues between the EU and ASEAN, these might not show effects in ASEAN member states due to their sovereignty clause. ASEAN and ASEAN+3 are mainly based on political will, while the EU has legislative ground. ASEAN members are, therefore, not legally bound to implement measures that have been decided on ASEAN level whereas the EU member states can be held liable before the European Court of Justice for not putting measures into practice. These differences in approach towards regionalism in terms of sovereignty slows downs the cooperation between the two regions (Yeo, 2009).

Economic cooperation does not seem to be challenged by the differences between the regions, as the next sub-section will show.

### 6.3.2 Economic Relations

The starting point for EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism was economic cooperation, as presented in the previous sub-section. Critics argue that cooperation between the two regions has not moved far beyond economic ties despite roughly five decades of inter-regional cooperation (Yeo, 2009). Thus, economic interests still dominate inter-regional relations, undermining the political dimension, which can be utilized as a channel for norm transmission, and consequently undermining normative coherence.

EU-ASEAN economic relations were formally initiated by the EEC-ASEAN cooperation agreement, which called for diversification of trading products (Art.2) and increased investment and expanding markets (Art.3). Currently, ASEAN is the seventh largest economy in the world (EU Mission to ASEAN, 2017) and the fourth largest in Asia after China with a GDP of 11,199bn USD, Japan with a GDP of 4,940bn USD and India with a GDP of 2,263bn USD in 2016 (World Bank, 2017). Not only the size of the ASEAN market, but also the increased trade volume between the EU and ASEAN highlight ASEAN's economic potential.

Trade in goods between the two regions has increased from 134,39bn€ in 2007 to 227,39bn€ in 2017 (DG TRADE, 2018).

An attempt towards further cooperation and a strengthened relationship has been made with the launch of free trade negotiations initiated in 2007. However, after only two years of negotiations, the process came to a halt in 2009, with reasons that have been kept vague by the EU. According to the European Commission, negotiations were paused "to give way to bilateral FTAs negotiations, conceived as building blocks towards a future region-to-region agreement" (European Commission, 2017b). Underlying reasons for the shift from an inter-regional agreement to various bilateral agreements, however, is not commented on further. The so-called "new generation FTAs" (Garcia & Masselot, 2015a; Orbie, 2011; Young, 2017) include a standard clause linking the FTA with a norm-infused Political Cooperation Agreement (PCA). ASEAN's resistance against EU norms might have been one of the reasons for failed inter-regional negotiations.

The region-to-region rhetoric is being maintained despite the recent failure to negotiate the EU-ASEAN free trade agreement (European Commission, 2017b). Even though the EU's inter-regional efforts were strong in economic affairs, the trade agreement might have been too ambitious. The "natural partners" argument (EU Mission to ASEAN, 2017) sounds like a captivating notion to make diplomatic statements and to maintain a friendly relationship with ASEAN, but in fact, ASEAN has found its own way of regionalism and as a result does not meet the EU's desired objectives.

Instead of a regional free trade agreement, the EU has since then been negotiating bilateral FTAs with several ASEAN member states. New generation FTAs with Singapore and with Vietnam have already been concluded and signed. Negotiations with Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines are still ongoing. Due to ASEAN's diversity, some member states are more in favor of FTAs with the EU than others are. Bilateral negotiations, however, might give more leverage to the EU in terms of negotiating norms due to its economic size. From an economic perspective, the failure of the EU-ASEAN agreement might not be favorable. From a normative perspective, bilateral negotiations could be more beneficial for norm promotion due to EU leverage, and consequently serve as a backdoor to promote norms at a regional level since new generation FTA negotiations are linked to political agreements such as the partnership and cooperation agreements. A study of new generation trade agreements showed that the weaker partner tends to converge towards the EU's position (Young, 2017). Thus, in

terms of norms the failed regional agreement could serve as an opportunity for the EU to enhance normative policy coherence for development. Hardacre and Smith (2014) have identified the strategy of circumventing stagnated inter-regionalism with bilateralism as the fifth stage of inter-regionalism.

The third pillar of EU-ASEAN inter-regional relations is development cooperation, which will be presented in the following sub-section.

### 6.3.3   Development Cooperation

Development cooperation between the EU and ASEAN has formed a substantial pillar in EU-ASEAN relations since the beginning by incorporating it into the first cooperation agreement between the EEC and the five ASEAN members. Both regions acknowledged the economic gap between them and the need to address this imbalance. Article 4, which is dedicated to development cooperation, primarily covers the EU's support for regional integration and economic development in ASEAN.

The EU has set out its most recent development cooperation initiatives in ASEAN in its Asia Regional Multi-Annual Indicative Program 2014-2020 (European Union, 2014b). Various cooperation programs under the Regional MIP cover 19 countries in Asia but highlight regional integration with the example of ASEAN. It is considered "one of the most successful integration initiatives" and a "natural and reliable partner" for the EU (European Union, 2014b). Continuous integration initiatives in ASEAN are supported by the EU's Development and Cooperation Instrument (DCI), while simultaneously funding for other regional cooperation initiatives such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) are scaled down (European Union, 2014b). In total, EUR 196 million are allocated to developing regional cooperation in ASEAN in the period 2014 until 2020 (EU Mission to ASEAN, 2016). Prioritizing ASEAN integration by allocating development funds to the region emphasizes the EU's interest in the region once more.

The EU's development interests in ASEAN are further highlighted by the publication of the first EU Blue Book covering the entire ASEAN region. Previously, the annual Blue Books were published by country (e.g. annual Blue Books for Vietnam, which were analyzed in chapter four), but since 2016, the EU has merged efforts into one regional publication. Aid efforts in 2015 and 2016, as presented in the EU Blue Book 2016 and 2017 respectively, show the strategic incentives of EU development cooperation to increase trade and

investment, as the section entitled "EU-ASEAN Development Cooperation – A Modern Partnership with a Strategic Purpose" (EU Mission to ASEAN, 2017) most prominently shows. The EU's development aspirations presented in the 2016 Blue Book have a strong economic character: "Connectivity is central, with the overall objective of bringing businesses, people and institutions closer together to boost trade, investment and exchanges" (EU Mission to ASEAN, 2017, p.10). However, the interplay between economic benefits and sustainability plays a prominent role. Fifty percent of the 2014-2020 regional budget, for example, is allocated to connectivity through sustainable and inclusive economic integration and trade (EU Mission to ASEAN, 2017). Three thematic ASEAN programs cover the areas of agriculture, biodiversity and urban development combining economic incentives with environmental issues. Which share out of the regional and thematic funds goes to each individual country is difficult to estimate, because the funds are not allocated by country (Interview 14). The regional program, however, emphasizes economic gains combined with environmental concerns. This reflects a minimum amount of normativity, i.e. the EU's development cooperation does not strongly promote EU norms at a regional level based on the 2016 Blue Book. At the beginning of the document, the EU presents itself as an actor who "actively promotes human rights and democracy", but any further mention of these two norms is credited to the Dutch–Indonesian initiative to organize public debates under the ASEAN Inter-governmental Commission on Human Rights (see EU Blue Book 2016). This again highlights the normative gap between EU's political rhetoric and its actions as was presented in the preceding chapters.

The 2017 Blue Book, similar to the previous one, highlights economic interests in regional cooperation, political and security cooperation, but also puts special emphasis on sustainability (EU Mission to ASEAN, 2017). In addition to EU-ASEAN cooperation, the Blue Book demonstrates the EU's bilateral interests with each individual ASEAN member state as a manner to achieve a more resilient EU-ASEAN development cooperation. Health and trade are the two sectors singled out for Vietnam (EU Mission to ASEAN, 2017). Both regional and bilateral development cooperation are not norm-driven.

In fact, this section has shown that normative coherence is most present in the political cooperation between the EU and ASEAN. However, this sector is the least influential as this section has shown that norms are less influential in the economic and development domains which are the priorities for EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism. The relative absence or presence of

norms in a political domain can be considered the outcome of the behavior of political actors. The following section will examine EU-Vietnam relations within the context of inter-regionalism. It will show how EU actions undermine normative inter-regional PCD through the establishment of bilateral relations.

## 6.4 VIETNAM AS A GATEWAY TO ASEAN

The EU has started distancing itself from the "classical" inter-regional approach. Classical in the sense that the EU used to export its model to other areas and set an example of how regionalism should play out. In the recent global strategy, however, the tone has been different: "We will not strive to export our model, but rather seek reciprocal inspiration from different regional experiences. Cooperative regional orders, however, are not created only by organizations. They comprise a mix of bilateral, sub-regional, regional and inter-regional relations" (European Union, 2016). This fits the fifth stage of inter-regionalism (Hardacre & Smith, 2014), in which inter-regional ambitions are withdrawn and bilateral relations prioritized. In turn, this means that the EU can maintain bilateral and regional opportunities simultaneously, which would not be possible without this flexible approach.

Vietnam takes a special role in the relations between the EU and ASEAN, because it is considered one of the fastest growing economies in the world with comparatively low labor costs and a stable political environment. This makes Vietnam particularly attractive for the EU and European businesses. As such, Vietnam could potentially serve as an economic gateway for the EU to the ASEAN market. As the preceding chapters have shown, Vietnam's economic strength undermines normative policy coherence for development in EU-Vietnam relations because the EU prioritizes trade and economic growth over promoting democratic norms in both the development and trade sector.

### 6.4.1 Economic Gateway

Vietnam seems to be a particularly interesting partner country for European donors in terms of economic cooperation, because of its recent 'promotion' to a middle-income country (Interview 11, 17, 24). Economic growth is steadily evolving, yet labor costs are still low, even lower than in China. The role of Vietnam in a wider ASEAN dimension, however, does not seem to be important for EU member state delegations in Vietnam. Whenever asked about their opinion on EU-ASEAN relations and Vietnam's role in it, the general response from the member states was rather hesitant, pointing out their lack of expertise on those matters, or a

response was declined (Interview 1, 3, 4, 12, 13). This reflects the lack of information sharing between EU actors despite monthly meetings of the EU delegation with the member states. Consequently, the information in this section is mostly derived from documents.

One of the indicators that the EU has a clear economic interest in Vietnam is its early prognosis about Vietnam moving up into the middle-income category and its changing relationship as a result of this. Already in 2007, the EU voiced its vision of Vietnam and the EU-Vietnam relationship:

"*Vietnam has a good chance to advance to the level of a Middle-Income Country within the next few years. This would change the nature of our development co-operation in favor of other forms of partnership and increased international trade and investment. The road towards future should be such that prosperity is not endangered by economic insecurity, social problems or environmental problems, or emerging health risks, such as avian influenza. In the words of national leaders, the current and future policies strive to improve the 'quality of growth'. Modern Vietnam has a diversity of people and successful economic development should include all of them: young and old people, different ethnic groups and people with different personal talents*" (EU Delegation to Vietnam, 2007).

In this example from the Blue Book 2007, which was published two years before Vietnam was classified as a middle-income country, the impression of economic interests outweighing the EU's normative interests is underlined. Already then, it was stated that the nature of the relationship will change and future economic growth should be inclusive. This statement alone does not show that the EU prioritized economic interest over other matters, but it demonstrates its strong economic interests in the country by emphasizing "trade and investment", "prosperity", "economic insecurity", "growth", and "economic development", while social, environmental and health problems seem to be mentioned on the sideline. The EU manages to navigate through the different interests and bring them together but at the same time economic aspects take the forefront.

A second, more recent, indicator is the EU's financial distribution between energy and governance as laid out in the 2014-2020 multi-annual indicative program. Eighty percent of the budget is allocated to energy while only twenty percent are allocated to governance (European Union, 2014a). Economic, demographic and geographical indicators make Vietnam a country with high potential for economic growth and, therefore, high returns for

the investors and businesses. However, as a self-proclaimed normative actor, the EU should move beyond these economic interests and take a political role as well. That is to say, instead of an 80:20 ratio between energy and governance as indicated in the 2014-2020 multi-annual indicative program for Vietnam, the ratio could actually reflect the EU's normative position more strongly by shifting the weight. Hence, economic interests are clearly prioritized by the current budget allocation.

Another indicator for Vietnam's favorable role in ASEAN is the existence of policy networks such as the EU-Vietnam Business Network (EVBN). Vietnam's prominent economic role in ASEAN is highlighted by the EVBN project, which shows interest in the ASEAN region and emphasis of trade with ASEAN. The EU-Vietnam Business Network is a project, which was established in December 2013 (and planned until October 2018) and which focuses on European companies' access to the Vietnamese market. The project is primarily funded by the EU who provides eighty percent of the overall budget. The financial coverage by the EU shows the EU's interest in the Vietnamese economy and in the ASEAN market. Curiously, the budget allocated to the EVBN comes from the Instrument for Cooperation with Industrialized Countries (ICI), and not from the Development Cooperation Instrument. Nevertheless, it is managed by the development cooperation section in the EU delegation. The ICI normally aims at industrialized countries such as Brunei, Singapore, South Korea, or Hong-Kong in Asia, as well as the United States, Canada or Australia (European Commission, 2013). The financial and organizational complexity of the EVBN does not serve the enhancement of normative policy coherence for development. Furthermore, it is questionable whether norm promotion under the ICI as a non-development instrument takes a normative development stance.

"EVBN will promote Vietnam as a high-potential trade and investment market to assure that EU companies, in particular SMEs, are better able to exploit the growing opportunities in Vietnam and Vietnam as a gateway to the SEA regional market. EVBN seeks to contribute to a more coherent and effective EU strategy for supporting European businesses, specifically SMEs with their endeavor in and to Vietnam. ASEAN in general and Vietnam in particular are considered to offer significant potential for European businesses. Trade statistics from 2013 underline that the EU has become the major exporting market for Vietnam (21.3 billion EUR) whereas exports from the EU to Vietnam only amounted to 5.8 billion EUR in 2013 underlining the rational for establishing the EVBN." (EVBN, 2018). A curious detail of this project is the

handling of funds. On the one hand, the EVBN budget is managed by the development cooperation section in the EU delegation in Hanoi. On the other hand, after an additional inquiry, it was confirmed that the EVBN budget comes from ICI, which is an instrument for developed countries. The ICI has been renamed Partnership Instrument (PI).

For now, it remains unclear, why a developing country receives funds under the instrument for industrialized countries. Regardless of the (probably technical) reasons for funding under the ICI/PI, it is also interesting to note that the PI is considered one of the instruments for "shaping global change and promot[ing] its core values" (EEAS, 2017). Given that fact, the EVBN would be a project that shapes global change or promotes the EU norms. Cynically speaking, the project does initiate change to the extent that it supports European companies in Vietnam and, therefore, changes the companies' opportunities abroad. However, given the idealistic notion of that statement, the EVBN does lack those goals. A document that was handed over during the fieldwork interview substantiates the EVBN's business approach (see appendix 4). The information leaflet about a green technologies trade mission to Vietnam organized by the EVBN strongly points out Vietnam's promising economic market. Furthermore, Vietnam is portrayed as the "gateway to ASEAN". While this might be a marketing strategy for EVBN to call for more businesses, the viewpoint that Vietnam enjoys a favorable strategic location has also been expressed in some of the interviews (Interview 6, 11, 12 14). As a result, from a European perspective, Vietnam seems to have a special role in the region with regard to economic, geographical and political attributes.

Early economic visions, budget allocation and the economic policy network are three indicators for the EU's understanding of Vietnam as a strong actor in ASEAN. Particularly the EVBN strategy shows that the overarching goal for the EU is access to the ASEAN market, which seems to take precedent for norm diffusion. This is discussed in the following sub-section.

### 6.4.2 Normative Doormat?

Three pillars (political, development, trade relations) form the EU-Vietnam as well as the EU-ASEAN relationship. Can one of these pillars serve as a normative gateway for the EU to transmit norms to ASEAN via EU-Vietnam bilateral relations?

**Political Pillar**

In EU external relations, norms are considered to be a political concern, as the previous chapters have shown. As a member of ASEAN, Vietnam is part of the annually rotating

chairmanship of the regional organization. The ASEAN chair hosts and presides the ASEAN Summit of all member states' Heads of State, which is the highest policy-making institution in ASEAN. One of the chair's functions is to "actively promote and enhance the interests and well-being of ASEAN, including efforts to build an ASEAN Community through policy initiatives, coordination, consensus and cooperation" (ASEAN Charter, Art.32). Under this heading, each chair has the opportunity to bring in its own vision of ASEAN to be developed, however, in close communication with the other ASEAN members. Vietnam used its chairmanship in 2010 to promote further action towards establishing the ASEAN communities. Nguyen Tan Dung, Vietnam's prime minister and ASEAN chair in 2010, presented Vietnam's contribution as a chair:

"*Therefore, based on extensive consultation and broad consensus of all ASEAN Member Countries, Viet Nam has come up with the theme of the ASEAN Year 2010 as "Towards the ASEAN Community: From Vision to Action". [...] Along that line, the priorities Viet Nam has set for its ASEAN Chairmanship Year are to strengthen ASEAN solidarity and integration, effectively implement the ASEAN Charter and Roadmap for building the ASEAN Community, further expand and deepen the cooperation between ASEAN and its partners, and work actively to promote the profile and enhance the role and position of the Association on the global stage. We will also work hard to deepen cooperation within ASEAN and between ASEAN and its partners to tackle the global challenges, including the consequences of the global economic and financial crisis, food and energy security, climate change, natural disasters and pandemic diseases*" (Nguyen Tan Dung, 2010).

This excerpt shows on the one hand that the ASEAN chair does not have sole decision-making power, but consults with all the other ASEAN members, and on the other hand, that Vietnam has focused on economic and environmental issues. Both aspects do not contribute to Vietnam's potential position as a channel for European norms.

**Development Pillar**
EU-ASEAN development cooperation is rather insignificant in EU-Vietnam bilateral relations. For the development work in Vietnam, ASEAN in general seems to play a minor role for the various European delegations (Interview 2, 13, 28). Their tasks are largely focused on the relationship between their home country and Vietnam and developments in Vietnam. In turn, development relations with ASEAN are not part of their responsibilities, and consequently, the broader relations between the EU and ASEAN do play a minor role. This is different for the

EU delegation in Vietnam, which also monitors EU relations with ASEAN (personal interview not identified numerically in order to ensure anonymity). However, a large part of the respondents agrees that Vietnam has a strategic position in the South East Asian region and has, economically speaking, a lot of potential. From a political point of view, Vietnam is an interesting country because it has some influence on the neighboring countries Laos and Cambodia (Interview 9). Therefore, not all donors chose to phase out their development aid to Vietnam. Some argue that only smaller countries are phasing out due to their limited budget and their need to focus on the most vulnerable. This, however, is not always the case, as the closing of the British aid agency in Vietnam in 2016 shows (Government of the United Kingdom, n.d.).

Overall, interviews with European delegates in Vietnam showed that EU-ASEAN relations are not prominent in bilateral EU positions. EU-ASEAN development cooperation is not pertinent to EU-Vietnam relations and, therefore, neither favorable nor detrimental to normative policy coherence for development in EU-Vietnam relations. Conversely, NPCD could be enhanced through a spill-over from EU-Vietnam bilateral relations to the regional level because of Vietnam's membership is ASEAN. EU-Vietnam relations are based on a free trade agreement as well as a partnership and cooperation agreement, which is strongly infused by norms, as was shown in chapter four. Norm implementation lacks behind the political commitment. Nevertheless, EU-Vietnam relations are more normative than EU-ASEAN relations because of the PCA, which does not exist between the EU and ASEAN. With this prominent position in the region, the EU-Vietnam relations could have the potential to set an example for other bilateral agreements with other Asian countries in transition from a donor-recipient relationship to a mutual relationship. In terms of Normative Power Europe and normative policy coherence for development, the importance to implement norms in EU policies towards Vietnam gains a higher momentum with this special status of Vietnam. If Vietnam is considered a gateway to ASEAN, the relations between the EU and Vietnam mark the EU's approach to other ASEAN members, and can set a benchmark for other relations. Therefore, not implementing norms coherently in this relationship might not only affect the EU's normative position vis-à-vis Vietnam but ASEAN as a whole.

**Trade Pillar**

Vietnam and the EU have concluded a new generation free trade agreement, which includes a chapter on sustainability and a clause to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which

allows for trade suspension in case of significant human rights violations. Thus, the EU-Vietnam relations are to some extent infused with norms. It is unlikely, though, that these norms would spill over to ASEAN, because ASEAN has its own regional strategies based on sovereignty and non-interference, and in addition, the EU-ASEAN FTA negotiations failed. Thus, normative differences between the regions prevail and given the non-normativity of trade per se, EU-Vietnam trade relations do not provide suitable conditions for norm spill-over from a bilateral to an inter-regional level. Moreover, the negative reinforcement of norms through trade sanctions when norms, such as human rights are not implemented, could counter World Trade Organization rules on free trade, thus undermining inter-regional NPCD.

## 6.5 INTER-REGIONAL NORMATIVE POLICY COHERENCE?

Normative policy coherence for development is viewed in this dissertation as "what the EU is" (its institutional character) and "what the EU does" (its policy implementation). This chapter analyzes the inter-regional relationship between the EU and ASEAN to examine its influence on NPCD in EU-Vietnam bilateral relations. While the preceding sections showed the economic character of EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism, this section adds to the analysis by examining the normative coherence between the regions. Three regional characteristics will be taken into account: regional integration processes, institutional arrangements, and global aspirations/inter-regional negotiations. The regional integration processes and institutional set-up both show the region's institutional character, i.e. "what the regions is", whereas global aspirations and inter-regional negotiations form part of the policy implementation, i.e. "what the region does". This section examines not only the normative character of the two regions, but also their susceptibility to inter-regional norm diffusion.

### 6.5.1 Historical Comparison of the Integration Processes
The historical comparison of both regional integration processes shows whether both regions have evolved around shared norms and how prominent those norms currently are. The relevance of norms in a region does not only define the normative character of a region, but also its susceptibility to new norms. Norm diffusion requires adaptation by the "receiving" actor. The more similar the actors, the easier it is to promote norms (see Elgström, 2000). A historical comparison will demonstrate how strongly norms are rooted within the regional actors.

The EU's integration process started in the 1950s as an economic community between six European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands).

During this time, moral aspirations to ensure peace after the two preceding World Wars were heightened, and in order to maintain peace economic cooperation was seen as an appropriate tool. Ever since, the EU has expanded (widened and deepened) integration, now comprising 28 members and competences ranging from economic affairs to political affairs.

ASEAN started its official integration process in 1967 after some failed attempts since the beginning of the 1960s, which was only shortly after the European Economic Community was created. As the former Foreign Ministry of Thailand Thanat Khoman (1992) describes: "The fact that the Western powers, France and Britain, reneged on their pacts with Poland and Czechoslovakia promising protection against external aggression, was instrumental in drawing the attention of many countries to the credibility of assurances advanced by larger powers to smaller partners. The lesson drawn from such events encouraged weak nations to rely more on neighborly mutual support than on stronger states that serve their own national interests rather than those of smaller partners". Poland and Czechoslovakia were not members of the EEC at this point, but the creation of a regional grouping and the favorable conditions for weaker states seemed to have supported the creation of ASEAN. Given this timeline, the EU could have served as an example for cooperation in a region that experienced violent conflicts and political struggles. However, since then, ASEAN has made comparatively few efforts to shift competences to the supra-national ASEAN level. Nevertheless, also ASEAN has expanded its membership since its creation. Thus, both the EU and ASEAN aimed for widening processes in terms of regional integration.

The objectives for both regional organizations are laid down in their respective charters or treaties. Having a closer look at the ASEAN Charter and the Lisbon Treaty, which are the most recent documents on the founding elements and objectives for both regions, shows that the EU and ASEAN approaches to integration vary quite significantly. Table 15 indicates that national sovereignty, non-interference and diversity are among the key elements of regional cooperation in ASEAN. "Unity in diversity" (ASEAN Charter, Art. 2) is used as the slogan for ASEAN bringing together the wish to create a peaceful region while at the same time maintain authority over national affairs. Diversity, sovereignty, and independence are among the primary principles for ASEAN, while on the contrary, the EU highlights further integration. This is a fundamental normative cleavage between the two regions as the EU is committed to the emergence of "regional norms" whereas ASEAN does not necessarily do so.

Despite the fact that the EU member states have decided to keep some policy matters in their

jurisdiction, i.e. maintaining sovereignty over certain policy areas, many competences no longer require member state approval, having been passed to the EU level. In article 1 of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU emphasizes becoming an "ever closer union" with an internal market, open borders for EU citizens, and a shared currency. While far from an internal market, ASEAN is currently striving towards less restrictive trade in goods by eliminating tariffs among the member states (ASEAN Secretariat, 2015). Notwithstanding these apparent divergent positions towards integration with ASEAN focused on sovereignty and the EU on closer integration, ASEAN has adopted some steps towards further integration as well, notably the creation of the three communities mentioned previously in this section. In 2015, ASEAN created a political-security community, an economic community and a socio-cultural community.

Even though ASEAN members seem to be reluctant towards further integration, rhetoric seems to suggest that their aim is nevertheless to strengthen the region and in doing so increasing cooperation between the states. The first EU-ASEAN agreement in 1980 was actually made "between the European Economic Community and Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand – member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations", rather than between the EEC and ASEAN as representative institutions. This shows that ASEAN integration had not reached the same level of integration as the EU (then EEC). Currently, however, widening integration is pursued. Partnerships are envisioned with third countries in the region are being continued, such as, for example, Timor-Leste's participation in several ASEAN activities (ASEAN Secretariat, 2015). This vision reflects that ASEAN indeed has a regional vision and it recognizes its regional potential. As with the EU as well, regional integration does take time and needs to happen at a pace that is acceptable to all members. Streamlining and coordination are key to ASEAN's integration measures under its current vision.

**Table 15: Integration in the ASEAN Charter and EU Treaty**

| ASEAN Charter | EU Treaty |
|---|---|
| Art. 2<br>ASEAN and its Member States shall act in accordance with the following Principles:<br>a) **respect for the independence, sovereignty**, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all ASEAN Member States;<br><br>b) shared commitment and collective responsibility in enhancing regional peace, security and prosperity; […]<br><br>e) **non-interference in the internal affairs** of ASEAN Member States<br><br>f) respect for the right of every Member State to lead its **national existence free from external interference**, subversion and coercion;<br><br>g) enhanced **consultations** on matters seriously affecting the common interests of ASEAN; […]<br><br>l) **respect for the different cultures, languages and religions** of the peoples of ASEAN, while emphasizing their common values in the spirit of **unity in diversity**; […] | Art. 1<br>By this Treaty, the high contracting parties establish among themselves a European Union, hereinafter called "the Union", on which the Member States **confer competences to attain objectives they have in common**.<br><br>This Treaty marks a new stage in the process of creating an **ever closer union** among the peoples of Europe, in which decisions are taken as openly as possible and as closely as possible to the citizen. […]<br><br>Art. 3 […]<br>2. The Union shall offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice **without internal frontiers**, […]<br><br>3. The Union shall establish an **internal market**. […] It shall respect its rich **cultural and linguistic diversity**, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced.<br><br>4. The Union shall establish an **economic and monetary** union whose currency is the euro. […] |

Note: emphasis added by author

Economically speaking, ASEAN has already undertaken some initiatives to create an economic community, for example, some trade tariffs have been cut and labor mobility between the member states has been encouraged. However, not all member states have implemented the measures under the 2015 vision to create the three communities. In the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), several countries are directly addressed in terms of implementing the ASEAN Community: "The immediate priority is to complete the implementation of measures unfinished under the AEC Blueprint 2015 by end-2016. The continuing

commitments of Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV) under the AEC Blueprint 2015 up to 2018 are also incorporated under the AEC Blueprint 2025" (ASEAN Secretariat, 2015, p.59).

The 2025 vision is on the one hand a strategy for further integration and greater visibility of ASEAN, but simultaneously there is no mechanism to hold member states accountable and, therefore, implementation can lag behind. Whether this lag is a political matter, or an issue of capacity is unclear. Non-implementation is also an issue in the EU, but the Commission has the capacity for follow up on implementation and propose sanctions, and in case of non-compliance the European Court of Justice can intervene.

In both regions, integration is on the political agenda, but the terms of integration vary. ASEAN focuses on deepening and strengthening while maintaining partnership with third countries, whereas the EU continues to negotiate neighboring countries' accession to the EU. At the same time, deeper integration has been hampered by the United Kingdom, which is negotiating its exit from the EU and as a result has put the EU integration project into question. Despite apparent differences in the integration processes, the EU emphasized EU-ASEAN compatibility: "Both are committed to addressing issues through a multilateral approach, and both see regional integration as the most effective way to foster stability, build prosperity and address global challenges. The EU and ASEAN are, therefore, natural partners, which share the same goals for their citizens" (EU Mission to ASEAN, 2017).

This mixture of similarity and difference between the two regions reflects the relationship between the EU and ASEAN in terms of integration rather accurately. "The EU also effectively has a form of hierarchy of regional integration, where it has privileged its own experience of integration above other regions. Although this view has become more nuanced over time, the legacy of that view had meant that ASEAN interlocutors are reluctant to accord recognition to many of the EU's achievements" (Murray, 2015, p.244). The two regions have rather different perceptions of regional integration, which creates barriers to norm diffusion. While the integration process determines the normativity of a region and its openness to new norms, the institutional and legislative arrangements are also relevant factors. This is discussed below.

### 6.5.2 Diverging Legislative Frameworks

A region's institutional set-up and legislation determines its decision-making procedure and commitment to norms. Norms can be found in the Lisbon Treaty as well as the ASEAN Charter

showing a region's formal commitment to them, but the institutional arrangements determine to what extent regional institutions have the capacity to implement those norms.

ASEAN is a group of ten highly diverse countries, which came to agree on regional cooperation based on terms of sovereignty and non-interference. Cooperation rather than integration seems to guide intra-regional relations. In its founding declaration, no institutional structure was foreseen. Instead, annual meetings of foreign ministers were to guide cooperation aided by the Standing Committee operating under the hosting chairmanship and leaving implementation to the national governments (ASEAN, 1967).

Since the signing of the ASEAN Charter in 2007, ASEAN is based on three pillars, as the EU was before the Lisbon Treaty, which are economic, social and political affairs. The highest representative organs are the ASEAN chair and the EU presidency. ASEAN has one chair that rotates every year, and which is responsible for the organization of the ASEAN summits (ASEAN Charter, Art.31 & 32). The ASEAN Summit is the highest organ in ASEAN bringing together the Heads of State, which corresponds to the European Council in the EU, which is comprised of the Heads of State and the President of the European Commission. The president of the European Council is elected for a term of 2.5 years and "the President of the European Council shall not hold a national office" (Art. 15 TEU), whereas in ASEAN the Prime Minister of the country holding the chair is the ASEAN chair (e.g. Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung in 2010 and Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in 2018).

The ASEAN Coordinating Council brings together the foreign ministers of the ASEAN member states at least on a bi-annual basis to prepare for the ASEAN summits (Art.8 ASEAN Charter). The Foreign Affairs Council in the EU, which brings foreign ministers together, is chaired by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who is also the Vice-President of the European Commission (Art.18 TEU). On behalf on the EU, the High Representative can engage in political dialogue with third parties. The competences transferred to the ASEAN bodies and the EU bodies are very distinctive as already presented earlier, because the ASEAN member states highly value sovereignty. Nonetheless, the institutional arrangements per se are comparable.

There are three ASEAN Community Councils corresponding to the three aforementioned communities that were created in 2015 (ASEAN Secretariat, 2015): the political-security community, the economic community and the socio-cultural community. The communities aim

to strengthen cooperation within ASEAN and between ASEAN and third countries, but institutionally the inter-governmental set-up remains. In fact, the inter-governmental character is enshrined in the ASEAN Charter (Art. 3). Nevertheless, ASEAN has shown interest in strengthening the ASEAN secretariat (ASEAN Secretariat, 2015). The EU component resembling the Community Councils the most would be the different Councils of Ministers, which bring together the ministers in charge for a given topic.

From an institutional point of view, the EU and ASEAN are similar to each other to a certain extent (ASEAN Summit/EU Council or the Coordinating Council/Foreign Affairs Council), but also very different in other respects. For example, in contrast to the EU, ASEAN does not have a judicial body that ensures policy implementation. The European Court of Justice (ECJ) is the highest instance in the European Union to decide on legal matters. ASEAN has not set up any institution comparable to the ECJ, but has shown steps towards creating a joint supervisory body in the form of an Inter-governmental Commission on Human Rights, which, however, is merely a consultative body (ASEAN, 2009). Annual assessments regarding the implementation of the Community Blueprints are presented to the ASEAN summit following a monitoring mechanism. A statement in the Blueprint for the Economic Community highlights the lack of policy enforcement mechanisms: "The immediate priority is to complete the implementation of measures unfinished under the AEC Blueprint 2015 by end-2016. The continuing commitments of Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV) under the AEC Blueprint 2015 up to 2018 are also incorporated under the AEC Blueprint 2025" (ASEAN Secretariat, 2015). With this statement, the lack of implementation is acknowledged and reintegrated into the new ASEAN strategy, i.e. no enforcement mechanism is in place to ensure implementation and, therefore, the goal is simply postponed. These two examples show that ASEAN's means to enforce implementation are far from the role of an independent court such as the ECJ. Similarly, there is no ASEAN parliament. The European Parliament is elected by European citizens and forms an integral part of EU policy-making. Such institutions are not part of ASEAN's current agenda and are not planned for the future. During Singapore's chairmanship of ASEAN, Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong made clear that ASEAN does not follow the EU's model and does not aspire to create supra-national institutions such as the EU's:

"*However, ASEAN will not become an ASEAN Union, on the model of the EU. It is less ambitious than the EU in terms of scope, membership, and integration. ASEAN does not aim*

*to have an ASEAN Parliament, an ASEAN Court of Justice, an ASEAN currency, or an ASEAN Central Bank, not even in the very long term. ASEAN is too diverse to aim for a European-style union. Our countries have different histories and cultures, diverse political and economic systems, contrasting views of the world. Where our interests align, we work together. Where we are not ready to cooperate, we put matters aside for the time being, to take up perhaps later when conditions are riper*" (Lee Hsien Loong, 2018).

To summarize the integration approach and the institutional arrangements, both similarities and differences can be found. The integration process in ASEAN is comparatively slower than in the EU, the institutions do not have a supra-national character and further institutional integration is not aimed at. Normative coherence builds on norm transmission, which is done through interaction and enhanced through persuasion/communicative action (Manea, 2008; Rüland, 2014). In the case of EU-ASEAN relations, persuasion remains a challenge as both regions share little commonalities and, therefore, norm transmission is challenged. New norms need to be translated into the existing institutional arrangements (Elgström, 2000), which implies that institutional differences complicate the process of "translation" due to the inherent tendency to resist changing the status quo. The institutional architecture emphasizes the structural differences between the regions, which impede norm transmission and consequently normative policy coherence.

### 6.5.3 Regional Norms in Global Strategies

Normative policy coherence for development is the sum of what an actor is and does. The previous two sub-sections have shown what the EU and ASEAN are in terms of the integration and levels of institutionalization. This sub-section focuses on what both regions do. Actorness, i.e. the capacity to set and achieve goals, is a crucial aspect because it represents what a region does (which in turn is influenced by what it is, as shown above). Assessing the EU's and ASEAN's global strategies with regard to norms will show whether both regions have the capacity (and willingness) to set a normative agenda for themselves as actors in the global arena.

Corresponding to the rather loose level of integration, ASEAN is currently still at a stage at which it strives for more recognition as a regional actor (ASEAN Secretariat, 2015). ASEAN's strategy is to follow the idea of "one vision, one identity, one community" according to its ambitions set until 2025 (ASEAN Secretariat, 2015). It aims to increase its presence in international fora and strengthen the ASEAN communities to create a more resilient region

internally and against external threats, in particular from an economic perspective. ASEAN's ambitions abound with normative aspirations. ASEAN has voiced the goal to "consolidate our Community, building upon and deepening the integration process to realize a rules-based, people-oriented, people-centered ASEAN Community, where our peoples enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms, higher quality of life and the benefits of community building, reinforcing our sense of togetherness and common identity, guided by the purposes and principles of the ASEAN Charter" (ASEAN Secretariat, 2015). Furthermore, under the political-security community one of the goals is to "strengthen democracy, good governance, the rule of law, promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as combat corruption" (ASEAN Secretariat, 2015).

From a normative point of view, this declaration is auspicious, because it addresses human rights, fundamental freedoms, rule of law and a people-centered approach to governance and development. Given that at least three ASEAN members (Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam) are not established democracies in which the fundamental freedoms are constantly undermined, these aspirations have a rather hollow connotation. In other words, it is questionable how ASEAN can and will make sure that these goals are implemented despite the lack of binding implementing mechanisms, as was presented in the previous sub-sections.

While ASEAN is still emerging in its quest to become a recognized regional actor, the EU has become an established regional actor in the global arena, and consequently can pursue other – more politically inspired – goals such as those related to security issues (European Union, 2016b). The EU's global strategy, one of the EU's policy papers to place itself in the global arena, reflects its own perception and aspirations regarding its role abroad (European Union, 2016b). According to the global strategy, security of the Union, state and societal resilience, exercising an integrated approach to conflicts and crises, global governance, and cooperative regional orders are the priorities. Inter-regionalism is part of a broader agenda, albeit an all-encompassing strategy with internal and external arenas and not a sole external policy approach. As part of the global strategy, the EU considers regions as a form of governance that can support nations to achieve security, economic growth and higher leverage in the global arena. Because of this understanding, the EU commits to supporting regional initiatives when they meet the EU's interests (European Union, 2016b).

In addition to creating a resilient and security-driven organization, one of the EU's major objectives is to become the most competitive market in the world and a widely recognized

trade partner. These aspirations were presented in the Commission Communication "Global Europe competing in the World" (European Commission, 2006). Under the premises of this competitiveness agenda, the EU has tried to approach ASEAN and negotiate a region-to-region free trade agreement but turned to bilateral agreements after the inter-regional negotiations were stopped. Economic competitiveness and a strong trade profile seem to be the key aspirations of the EU in the future. Particularly interesting in terms of balancing political interests is the interconnectivity between economic goals and the EU's creational values: "Our interests and values go hand in hand. We have an interest in promoting our values in the world. At the same time, our fundamental values are embedded in our interests" (European Union, 2016b, p.13). While the EU claims that at a global level, it aims to promote its values while simultaneously following its other interests, critics have argued that normative considerations are undermined by economic interests (Siles-Brügge, 2014). "Principled pragmatism" is called for in the EU Global Strategy, a term that accurately captures the EU's flexibility in promoting norms. Global aspirations are predominantly similar between the two regions. Both emphasize creating a more resilient region and more competitive economies based on regional cooperation.

## 6.6   INTER-REGIONAL RELATIONS AFFECT NPCD

This concluding section responds to this chapter's research question "*Do EU-ASEAN inter-regional relations affect normative policy coherence between development and trade in bilateral relations with Vietnam and if so, how?*" to highlight how the EU-ASEAN relationship affects NPCD in EU-Vietnam relations. As presented throughout this chapter, EU-ASEAN relations are not driven by norms, such as democracy, and consequently they lack normative coherence. Instead, economic interests shape the inter-regional relationship. The EU's normativity is undermined by its economic interests in ASEAN, i.e. "what the EU does" is not norm driven. Normative policy coherence, defined as the sum of what the EU is and what the EU does, is hardly identifiable at the inter-regional level due to the lack of norm implementation.

As presented in figure 15, EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism, EU-Vietnam bilateralism and Vietnam-ASEAN membership mutually affect each other. Consequently, norms (or the lack thereof) in one relationship can strengthen (or restrict) norms in another. Even though EU-ASEAN relations are strongly driven by economic interests, norms are present at several policy stages in EU-Vietnam relations (see chapter four). However, chapter four and five have also

shown that norms lack at the implementation level. Consequently, at the guideline and formulation stage in EU-Vietnam relations, norms do not seem to be affected by the lack of norms in inter-regionalism. Conversely, the lack of norm implementation is and indicator for the EU's non-normative priorities. Particularly the EU-Vietnam Business Network shows that access to the ASEAN market is the underlying goal at an implementation stage.

The preceding analysis has also shown that ASEAN membership does not affect NPCD in EU-Vietnam relations. Due to the inter-governmental nature of ASEAN, norm spill-over between ASEAN members and ASEAN institutions is hampered. ASEAN reinforces its own distinctive regional norms in response to EU norm promotion emphasizing national sovereignty and inter-governmentalism, which in turn restricts norm spill-over. Moreover, ASEAN integration is also driven by economic interests. Thus, ASEAN membership cannot be considered as a norm-interlocutor between EU-ASEAN inter-regionalism and EU-Vietnam bilateralism. Consequently, the EU would potentially be the main diver for norms in this triangular relationship. However, this potential is weakened by the EU's economic interests. This approach suggests that the EU follows realist goals, which are infused with norms – albeit at a rhetorical level – but which ultimately set the tone for EU external relations.

In terms of inter-regionalism theory and norm transmission, the different levels of regional development mentioned above affect regional behavior. As an emerging region, ASEAN is in the process of regional consolidation and identity-formation, i.e. norm reinforcement. The EU is an established regional actor in the global arena, and consequently, its global ambitions reflect cooperative hegemony utilizing norms as strategic tools in inter-regional relationships (Farrell, 2004; Pedersen, 2002).

Three causes of normative incoherence can be identified based on this chapter's analysis. First, the EU and ASEAN are two distinct regional actors with their own regional norms. In reference to the concept of "actorness" introduced above, the EU is characterized by regional agency as it promotes norms, which are defined at the regional level. Conversely, ASEAN does not display significant levels of normative actorness because of the commitment to the non-infringement of the sovereignty of member states. It remains a regional entity that reflects the aggregated interests of member states. Consequently, ASEAN has its own pursuit of a distinctive form of regionalism, which has not and will not follow the EU's footsteps (Lee Hsien Loong, 2018). ASEAN regional integration has historically not called for more supra-nationalism, especially in normative terms. Instead, the inter-governmental character of

ASEAN paired with significant diversity among member states, makes ASEAN as a regional actor less susceptive to norms. The above analysis supports the observation of ASEAN's resistance against EU norms (Garcia & Masselot, 2015a; Poole, 2015). ASEAN's identity is not shaped around norms comparable to the EU's norms and several ASEAN member states are still actively compromising norms, most visibly democracy, freedom, human rights, peace, or the rule of law. As a result, a normative dialogue between the regions does exist, but is a rare exercise and lacks implementation, as has been shown above.

Another cause of incoherence is the EU's principled pragmatism, i.e. the option to prioritize EU economic interests over norms. The EU's formal regional strategy prioritizes economic growth and inter-regional trade relations. Not only does the EU consider ASEAN as one of the fastest growing regions, but it also highlights the importance of the ASEAN market in its national projects in Vietnam. This further undermines inter-regional norm transmission. The EU's strong economic interests have been present since the first EEC-ASEAN agreement and, therefore, it cannot be argued that they exist only because of ASEAN's resistance to norms. Since the beginning of inter-regional relations in the 1970s, the EU has had economic interests in ASEAN, which have subsequently shaped inter-regionalism.

Indeed, scholars have argued that the EU's economic interests in combination with ASEAN's resistance to include norms in Free Trade Agreements has created "a double barrier" for EU norm transmission (Garcia & Masselot, 2015a, 2015b). EU-ASEAN relations are asymmetric in terms of the economic weight that each organization has, but regardless of this asymmetry, ASEAN follows its own path according to the ASEAN way (Katsumata, 2003). In free trade agreements, the inclusion of norms promoted by the EU is often seen as a form of market protectionism from the Asian states' perspective (Elgström, 2007; Garcia & Masselot, 2015a). Furthermore, Asian governments are reluctant to discuss non-trade matters under the scope of trade negotiations (Garcia & Masselot, 2015a). As a result, this type of norm transmission strengthens ASEAN's distinctiveness (also termed ASEANness or "the ASEAN way") (Garcia & Masselot, 2015a, 2015b; Manea, 2008) and as such is another cause of normative incoherence, albeit unintended incoherence. Based on these three causes of incoherence, I would argue that a triple barrier, rather than a double barrier, exists between the regions: difference in nature (levels of integration, institutional set-up), ASEANness/ASEAN norm resistance, and EU economic interests. This triple barrier to norm transmission is also a barrier to EU-ASEAN inter-regional normative coherence.

Both relationships, EU-ASEAN and EU-Vietnam, are guided by economic interests, but EU-Vietnam relations have moved past the economic dimension and incorporate other areas of cooperation included in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. EU-Vietnam bilateral relations are, therefore, "stronger" than inter-regional relations with ASEAN. One of the reasons for stronger relations with Vietnam might be the French ties to Vietnam, which support the EU-Vietnam relationship, as mentioned above. This kind of support cannot be found at the ASEAN level. Based on the observation that EU-Vietnam relations are more integrated than EU-ASEAN relations and the primacy of trade-related matters, it is unlikely that the EU's interests in ASEAN have a positive effect on normative policy coherence in the EU's Vietnam policies. Vietnam might be reluctant to make agreements that conflict ASEAN regulations, but due to the inter-governmental nature of ASEAN, weak enforcement mechanisms and the low institutionalization of ASEAN, ASEAN strategies are very vague and do not undermine Vietnam's policy-making powers. Therefore, it can be argued that challenging EU-ASEAN relations do not have a negative impact on normative policy coherence for development either. EU-ASEAN and EU-Vietnam relations are quite independent from each other and ASEAN does not constitute a governance layer between the EU and Vietnam. As such, it does not have major impacts on EU policies in Vietnam and consequently neither on the EU's (lack of) norm implementation.

Neither ASEAN nor Vietnam are normative actors in terms of the norms identified for this dissertation (democracy, freedom, gender equality, good governance, human rights, justice, liberty, non-discrimination, peace, rule of law, solidarity, sustainability). Thus, the EU is the primary normative actor in the relationship between inter-regionalism, bilateralism and ASEAN membership. In this position, the EU could create the normative link between inter-regionalism and bilateralism, but instead its relationships overshadowed by its focus on economic growth.

# Conclusions

The era of transformative development requires global development actors to include a normative dimension into their policies. As a normative actor (Manners, 2002) and an important global development actor, the EU should take seriously its responsibility to promote norms such as human rights, gender equality or the rule of law abroad. Even more so, because the promotion of EU norms abroad is mandated by the Lisbon Treaty. Simultaneously, the Lisbon Treaty calls for policy coherence for development (PCD): to support development strategies, non-development (e.g. trade) policies should not undermine development policies. Based on the two notions norms and PCD, the concept of normative policy coherence for development (NPCD) was utilized throughout this dissertation to assess whether development actors, such as the EU, implement norms in their development and non-development policies. For this purpose, twelve norms were identified based on the Lisbon Treaty (2009), the Agenda for Change (2011) and the European Consensus on Development (2006): democracy, freedom, gender equality, good governance, human rights, justice, liberty, non-discrimination, peace, rule of law, solidarity, and sustainability. Two main research questions guided the analysis:

*Are the EU's development and trade policies coherent in implementing norms;*
*And if not, why are they incoherent?*

A conceptual chapter introduced the concept normative policy coherence for development (NPCD) defined as the coherent implementation of norms in development and trade policies (see chapter three). NPCD is based on the Normative Power Europe concept, which argues that the EU's normative power arises out if what it is. In this dissertation, I have argued though that NPCD requires both what the EU is and what the EU does, which integrates norm content and norm implementation. Using the conceptual and methodological considerations presented in chapters two and three, norm representation, policy networks and inter-regional relations were analyzed as proxy factors for normative policy coherence in the empirical chapters (chapters four, five and six). Several sub-questions helped structuring the examination of this complex topic and simultaneously guided the analytical layers.

The analysis comprised three layers. The first layer was the legislative framework of the EU, which shows the EU's commitment to norms across four stages of policy implementation. The mention of norms in several policy documents was examined to determine whether those policy documents show commitment to norms (see chapter two for methodological details and

appendix 1 for a complete list of policy documents). Results show that the EU's commitment to norms is rather strong at the rhetorical stages "policy guidelines" and "policy formulation", whereas norms lack at the two policy implementation stages. Chapter four dealt with the questions "Does the EU present itself as a normative power in development?" and "Does the EU present itself as a normative power in trade?" by assessing the EU's institutional set-up and EU-Vietnam specific documents as to their norm representation in relation to policy definition and policy implementation levels. Both aspects are part of the Normative Power Europe definition: "what it is" is represented by the EU's institutional arrangement, and "what it does" by its policy statements. Normative power is regarded as one element to foster normative policy coherence for development and, therefore, is regarded as an important feature when studying NPCD. Concerning the institutional structure, the results show that the creation of the European External Action Service and the post of the High Representative has not brought the desired coherence but instead more competition between EU actors. Institutionally, more efforts towards policy coherence would be possible and particularly towards normative coherence. PCD, for the moment, is a goal to be achieved by the European Commission, which has its own sub-unit on "policy and coherence" (DG DEVCO Unit A1) to work on awareness raising of PCD, but the wider implications PCD could have for sustainable development are disregarded.

For the assessment of policy documents, four implementation levels were defined: policy guidelines, policy formulation, policy implementation I and policy implementation II. The results show that the most normative stage is the policy guideline stage, whereas the other three levels show mixed results. Previous studies have shown that norms have entered the development agenda within the EU (Elgström, 2000). For this reason, it was expected that EU norms are more visible in development than in trade policy documents. Furthermore, it was expected that the Lisbon Treaty has strengthened the EU's commitment to norms and the EU's commitment to policy coherence for development. Political commitment to norms is necessary condition but not sufficient for their implementation. As chapter four shows, the EU's commitment to norms in development is more prominent than its commitment to norms in trade; however, no change towards more normative commitment could be identified since the entry into force of Lisbon Treaty in 2009. Political commitment is a requirement for normative policy coherence as it is the first stage of the implementing process, but political commitment alone is not enough for NPCD. The document analysis has shown that norm implementation lacks at the lower implementation levels (program and project formulation), i.e. at the levels of

actual implementation. This result feeds into the discussions about PCD as a technical approach, but also into the development as freedom debate. Actual political commitment to policy coherence as a technical tool is a starting point to address incoherence and raise awareness about this issue, but the mere statement of being committed to PCD does not lead to any results unless measures are implemented. While there are PCD awareness campaigns within the European Commission, the exact goal of PCD remains unclear. Some researchers contend that PCD is actually utilized to further the EU's own foreign policy objectives (Thede, 2013). Following this suggestion, PCD could be understood as a tool to meet the EU's economic interests by providing largely technical support to developing countries to achieve economic growth and become new trading partners for the EU.

Policy networks form the second layer of analysis in this dissertation. To go beyond the EU's institutional and legal arrangements affecting norm implementation, chapter five addressed European policy networks in Vietnam. This chapter dealt with the question "Why might existing policy networks limit normative coherence between development and trade policies?" showing that sector networks create boundaries between actors in development and actors in trade. Interview data conducted at the European delegations in Vietnam was primarily used for this part of the NPCD analysis. The interview analysis has shown that the structure within the European delegations as well as the monthly meetings of delegation staff leads to a separation along professional lines, i.e. development staff meets as a group and trade staff meets as a separate group. Interaction between the two groups is inanimate, with the exception of small embassies in which individuals can occupy several roles. Coherence between development and trade might improve because commercial/economic counsellors take over the responsibilities of the development resort during the phase-out of development cooperation and consequently improve communication between the two fields. In PCD, "for development" is the crucial aspect, which gets lost because of the development phase-out. Based on better communication in the transition phase, coherence might improve; however, due to the "missing D" coherence does not improve "for development".

In addition to sector networks, issue networks have been created around shared interests. The EU-Vietnam Business Network is an issue network, which connects European companies that plan to establish themselves in Vietnam. A more normative example is the informal gender-working group, which was set up because of budget cuts to gender-focused development projects. As a result, interested individuals meet on an informal basis to discuss gender-related

themes outside the scope of development. Issue networks reinforce the thematic divides between development and trade actors. However, norm-inspired networks such as the gender-working group could potentially make a more normative impact because all actors in this network are particularly norm-interested and willing to promote those norms despite budgetary complications. Thus, norm-driven issue networks could enhance NPCD even though they do not form part of the EU's official policy implementation.

Chapter six addressed the question "Do EU-ASEAN inter-regional relations affect normative policy coherence between development and trade in bilateral relations with Vietnam and if so, how?" referring to the EU's wider regional interests that influence its bilateral relations. The analysis suggests that EU-ASEAN relations do not directly undermine EU-Vietnam NPCD, but the EU's economic aspirations in ASEAN indirectly affect the bilateral relationship. This conclusion is based on the loose relationship between ASEAN and Vietnam, which does not create an additional governance layer between the EU and Vietnam, and on Vietnam's advanced relations with the EU compared to the EU-ASEAN relations. EU-Vietnam relations are governed by a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement as well as a Free Trade Agreement, which cover a wide range of cooperation such as trade, poverty eradication, sustainable development, security and justice, communication, and human rights. Conversely, EU-ASEAN relations are still governed by the 1980 Cooperation Agreement, which only covers economic and development cooperation. Furthermore, interview partners in Vietnam suggested that ASEAN and EU-ASEAN relations do not play an important role in their work in Vietnam. Consequently, it can be concluded that the EU interests in ASEAN do not greatly shape its norm implementation in Vietnam.

This dissertation has shown that EU normativity lacks implementation. "Principled pragmatism" (European Union, 2016b) accurately reflects the EU's external policy strategies. Despite its normative rhetoric, EU policy practices are interest-driven, and hence, the EU undermines normative policy coherence for development.

This concluding chapter offers some final remarks to this dissertation. It is structured as follows. The next section recalls the causes if incoherence identified in this dissertation, which resulted from the empirical chapters four, five and six. The following section places this dissertation in a wider academic context by highlighting the contributions to literature on policy coherence for development, policy networks and inter-regionalism. The final two sub-sections provide suggestions for further research on normative policy coherence for development and

call for normative reconsiderations throughout the policy cycle.

## i.      Intended Causes of Incoherence

**Causes of Normative Incoherence**

*Norms are a political matter.* The goal of this research was to assess the EU's norm implementation in its development and trade policies. In the global political arenas, the EU has adopted the "development as freedom" perspective that is linked to the UN human and sustainable development agendas. However, EU development and trade strategies include growth-based objectives as discussed in throughout this dissertation. The EU as a normative actor should be expected to implement norms in development and in trade policies. Contrary to those expectations, neither development nor trade clearly reflect the normative dimension that is enshrined in the EU Treaties or the EU's global political commitments. Norms are considered a political matter and as such are included in political rhetoric, broad programs and vague statements, but are not actively addressed in concrete projects. The EU-Vietnam free trade agreement does make an explicit reference to the EU-Vietnam partnership and cooperation agreement, which includes references to the EU Treaties and the UN Charter of Human Rights, but as a trade agreement, it is not meant to incorporate any other matters. Nonetheless, sustainability is covered in one chapter, which reflects a new aspect that has been included during the negotiations of new generation trade agreements. The normative divide between development and trade is not as explicit as expected, because a certain commitment to norms can be traced in both arenas, but at simultaneously the actual commitment to norms remains at the political level. Both, the document analysis and the policy network analysis indicate that norms are a political matter. Consequently, norms are less relevant in development and trade affairs. This result also holds for the EU-ASEAN relationship. Scholars have argued that the main priority in EU-ASEAN relations lies on economic affairs (Camroux, 2010). This dissertation supports this claim as shown in the analysis of chapter six. Political affairs are kept strictly separate from economic affairs and the economic affairs often outweigh political tensions between the regions.

In accordance with the rhetoric-practice argument separating rhetorical claims from action (Picciotto, 2005), the first main finding can be summarized as norms being a political concern at the multi-lateral level. These normative concerns are not translated into bilateral development or trade practices, which consequently leads to normative incoherence.

*PCD is a technical tool.* The second finding relates to the EU's internal struggles over competences, which highlight that PCD remains a technical issue in the European Union. PCD is integrated in various policy documents and awareness measures are undertaken to limit incoherence, but this technical approach to PCD is subject to political and administrative competition between the EU institutions and within the institutions. Despite some efforts to reduce policy incoherence, such as the Commission's impact assessments or the creation of the position of the High Representative for External Relations, intended and unintended incoherence at the institutional level remain. Causes of incoherence can be attributed to competing interests between development and trade (most prominently DG DEVCO and DG TRADE), institutional structures dividing responsibility between the Commission and the Council, and rivalry between DEVCO and EEAS regarding certain budgets. At the national level, a variety of mechanisms to increase PCD have already been identified, among which there are the annual reporting to the EU institutions, a consultation mechanism between European and ACP church ministers, or the establishment of complaint procedures (for a more extensive list see: Hoebink, 1999). These suggestions might also be valuable for normative policy coherence for development at the EU level. Annual reports and consultations between non-political actors could increase general awareness of normative PCD within the EU institutions and the member states. The introduction of complaint mechanisms has the potential to support norm enforcement across policy arenas. As long as PCD remains merely a technical tool instead of a means to an end, i.e. a means to achieve sustainable development, it does not create greater coherence, and consequently undermines normative coherence.

*Networks do not foster NPCD.* The third main finding highlights the EU's necessity to improve relations between the EU as an institution and its member states to create better normative policy coherence. As presented elsewhere (Carbone & Keijzer, 2016; Hoebink, 1999b), diverging interests between the EU and EU member states is not a new phenomenon. This dissertation confirms those previous findings based on the results of the policy network analysis. Existing policy networks reinforce technical divides between the EU and the member states in terms of distributing areas of competence in development, and even more so reinforce the structural separation between the development and trade sector reducing communication. Reduced communication between development and trade actors restricts norm spill-over and consequently NPCD.

One of the causes of incoherence is the multi-level governance structure that the EU has

created by adding a regional level of policy-making. At the EU level, horizontal coherence between EU policies is not sufficient to achieve normative development. As mentioned in the previous section, various types of PCD are necessary as tools towards this overarching goal. Normative coherence could be considered a utopia (Carbone, 2008; Scheipers & Sicurelli, 2007), because it addresses horizontal, vertical, internal, multilateral, and donor-recipient coherence, which form an integral part in achieving normative policy coherence, particularly in EU policies due to its multi-level governance set-up. However, institutionalized norms are transversal in nature. Reinforcing them aims to establish internal coherence, above all within the development sector, and this can be considered the foundation for spill-over to the other coherence frameworks.

With regard to horizontal coherence, the EU emphasized already it its Blue Book 2007 "to increase coherence between different policy areas, and in particular between development cooperation, trade policy and political dialogue with the Government of Vietnam" (EU Delegation to Vietnam, 2007, p.38), referring to horizontal and donor-recipient coherence. In this case, the EU is an actor with its own policies and strategies, but on the other hand, the EU member states follow their own policies and strategies. As a result, incoherence arises due to competing interests between the EU and the member states and due to the lack of information, which can be intended or unintended. Despite monthly meetings of the sectorial counsellors from all European delegations in Vietnam, i.e. development counselors, political counselors or trade counselors, not all information is shared with the other delegations. Even though, according to the interviews, the countries' diplomatic goals largely overlap, disagreements naturally occur in some cases, which leads to the formulation of different national strategies. In those cases, an intended withholding of information can cause incoherence within a policy arena. Obviously, not all member states have the same attitude towards the EU delegation or towards each other, but generally, the delegations are supportive of the EU. Subliminal competition, national strategies and diverging interests between the EU and its member states can lead to withholding of information and insufficient exchange. Sector networks, therefore, create a double-barrier to normative policy coherence. First, they reinforce the structural separation of sectors and, second, actors within the networks are not always open to sharing information. Therefore, it can be concluded that existing policy networks do not support NPCD.

*Structural causes reinforce the normative-technical divide*. Based on the previous three findings, one observation can be made with regard to the structural basis for incoherence. Given that norms are considered by the EU to be a political matter, they do not translate into the technical approach for PCD promoted in the EU. They also do not spill over from one sector network into another, because the political counselors are in charge of political (and normative) affairs, and not the development and trade counselors. Thus, having norms as a political matter and PCD as a technical matter does create a divide, which does not support normative coherence. Consequently, norms are not transversal in nature as they are supposed to be, and the normative basis of policy-making in general is undermined, because the EU's normative power is not implemented in the development or economic spheres due to its restriction to political affairs. There is a mismatch between global commitments and the structural arrangements to enforce those commitments. The SDGs call for human rights and equality, but in terms of implementation, these norms are a political matter and not a development matter. Similarly, they are not a trade matter. Structural divisions between the sectors reinforce the divide between politics and technicalities, which are not only visible in the institutional struggles within the EU institutions, but also in the separation of policy networks and the divergence between globalized policy guidelines and bilateral agreements and strategies.

The results of this dissertation show that normative incoherence not only occurs between development and trade policies, but also across the governance levels ranging from the global level to the policy network level. Because of this inherent complexity, achieving NPCD remains a challenge. Perfect coherence can never be achieved (Carbone, 2008), it should nevertheless be aspired. Normative coherence should be aspired, because norms in external policies are a crucial factor in transformative development. In this dissertation, normative policy coherence included horizontal coherence, vertical coherence, multi-lateral coherence and internal coherence, not addressing donor-recipient coherence. Thus, while the causes of incoherence are already manifold, as shown above, adding another type of coherence would only make it more difficult to achieve normative coherence. Having said this, the results also show that efforts towards greater policy coherence exist as. For example, the Commission's report of policy coherence for development (European Commission, 2015b), the policy and coherence unit in DG DEVCO, and the counselors' meetings in Vietnam are initiatives to implement policy coherence for development in practice. While these efforts are positive contributions to reaching PCD, their disconnectedness from EU norms remains a challenge. As mentioned above, this is due to the EU's structural arrangements in which norms are considered

political and consequently are not incorporated in technical interventions, such as development and trade projects.

**Intended Incoherence to Support Trade?**

The causes of normative incoherence in EU-Vietnam relations are intended and system-driven. What is the function of presenting the EU as a normative actor if its structure does not support the implementation of its norms? Could the EU be reduced to a mere trade organization? It is necessary to reflect critically on those questions in this conclusion given that the results of the preceding analyses strongly imply exactly that.

Indeed, the internal structure of the European Union does not support the implementation of EU norms, as the analysis of policy networks in chapter five has shown. In addition to the structural separation between policy sectors and their corresponding sectoral policy networks in third countries, policy-making structures in Brussels (and Strasbourg) do not support norm implementation either. The European Commission has the power to negotiate and conclude trade negotiations and sign the final trade agreements after authorization by the Council. The European Parliament can only either approve or reject the final agreement but cannot propose amendments. It can negotiate trade agreements on behalf of the European Union and the implementation of these trade agreements do not require implementation at the MS level due to the EU competences. Thus, the organizational structures in Brussels underline the EU's competences in trade, whereas the EU member states implement their national strategies in other areas such as development. As one of the consequences of the internal structures that transfer economic powers to the EU institutions, the EU prioritizes economic interests in its bilateral and inter-regional relations.

The EU is a successful economic region and it could even be claimed that economic integration is one of its major successes. In order to maintain this success, it is important for the EU to remain an active global player in the globalizing world. Thus, the primacy of economic interests can be justified in terms of remaining competitive, expanding the market and increasing trade volumes. However, since the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, policy coherence for development is one of the EU's objective. Given that PCD is not clearly defined by the European Union, measures to implement it are at the mercy of EU-internal actors, including non-development actors. Adopting a "low-expectations approach", policy coherence implies that economic interests do not undermine development interests. As the EU supports economic development, the introduction of PCD does not create any major challenges.

Adopting a "high-expectations approach", the introduction of PCD could have resulted in a prioritization of development objectives over economic objectives. Obviously, the NPCD approach promoted in this dissertation is based on "high expectations", because it analyzes EU policies and strategies based on normative development goals and the EU's commitment to norms. Economic objectives are part of the EU's development agenda, but under the umbrella of transformative development, non-economic normative goals should be at least as important as economic goals since they are mentioned in EU treaties and the EU has made global commitments to them.

One of the major normative actors within the EU is the European Parliament (EP). The European Parliament has gained more decision-making power throughout the EU integration process – most recently with the Lisbon Treaty – and has used this strengthened role to push for the inclusion of norms. However, members of the European Parliament (MEPs) primarily resort to non-legislative resolutions, a mechanism to establish dialogues with other institutions, but also to create joint committees with third countries in the area of foreign affairs (Costa & Dri, 2014). As a result of this, the EP is recognized as an actor, which promotes European norms under the umbrella of addressing bigger crises such as poverty eradication, ending armed conflicts and addressing gender issues, even though other EU institutions have often opposed the EP's involvement (Costa & Dri, 2014). "Over the years, MEPs have developed an ambitious discourse on the role the EP as the 'largest democratic assembly of the world', ought to play, particularly in promoting human rights, democracy, development and peace in former colonies and globally" (Costa & Dri, 2014, p.133). Thus, the EP has found its way into policy-making even though its formal powers are still comparatively low compared to the Commission and the Council.

Due to all the above-mentioned factors, the inclusion of norms might be an EU-internal solution to give voice to the European Parliament more than a sign of normative actorness. Normative Power Europe (NPE) is defined as "what the EU is" (Manners, 2002), i.e. a peaceful region with stable institutions. What this approach fails to include are internal struggles that lead to the image of a normative power, which in turn fails to be implemented due to the internal struggles. The value attached to norms in external relations shows parallels to the MEP's resources in foreign policy making; they are legal, functional, and rhetorical (Costa & Dri, 2014). Norms are in the agreements, because the Lisbon Treaty mandates norm promotion abroad. As such, they have a legal value in terms of respecting the Lisbon Treaty. Norms are

also in the agreements because the EP uses various strategies to promote norms in foreign affairs and in doing so manages to push norms where the Commission and the Council would not have done so. As such, they have a functional role as a sign of democratic decision-making and hence as an effort to overcome the democratic deficit. Last, norms have a rhetorical value in the agreements to the extent to which they can be referred and can be used as verbal pressure against third countries. The trade-suspension clause in case of human rights breaches is one example. Even though this clause suggests trade suspension, it has not yet been invoked, thus it acts as a rhetorical tool at present.

The complexity of the policy-making processes in foreign policies shows that the EU is not merely a trade organization. Particularly the European Parliament contributes a normative voice. Nevertheless, economic interests and trade relations tend to overshadow non-trade goals, and as a result, it remains questionable how normative "Normative Power Europe" actually is.

## ii.    Relations to Wider Literature

This dissertation aimed to contribute to the public policy literature, literature on policy coherence for development and normative power Europe, and literature on regionalism.

It adds to the existing literature on PCD and public policy literature by taking the traditional policy cycle (agenda setting, adoption, implementation, evaluation) (Jann & Wegrich, 2007) and specifically examining the implementation in terms of normative policy coherence. The goal of this research was to identify gaps the policy definition and implementation that lead to normative incoherence. Previous research suggests that PCD could be improved by creating an international development regime, increased donor coordination in international fora, introducing guiding policy strategies and budget plans for national governments by national governments, or facilitating inter-ministerial and intra-ministerial coordination (Forster & Stokke, 1999). These suggestions are strongly related to the agenda setting and policy adoption stage, but less so on the policy implementation stage.

This dissertation adds to the study of gaps in PCD and feeds into the literature addressing the sources of incoherence. Informed by the autonomy-intention model (Hydén, 1999), the structural arrangements, different interests, budgetary concerns and lack of information were addressed in the form of normativity in the political commitment, in policy networks and in regional relations, giving more insight into the EU's normative policy coherence. Normative coherence studies (Koff, 2017b, 2017a; Koff & Maganda, 2016) have not addressed norm

implementation to this extent and, thus, this dissertation addressed a gap hitherto underexplored in the literature. It also reinforces the argument about the EU-MS divide regarding further development of PCD (King et al., 2012), by examining policy networks on the ground.

With the analysis of normative policy coherence for development, this dissertation also contributes to the study of normative power Europe (Manners, 2002). NPCD is the result of "what the EU is", its creation and institutional set-up, and "what the EU does", i.e. its policy practices. By having examined the EU's policy implementation, this research project adds to the understanding of what the EU does and how this corresponds to what the EU is.

Last, this dissertation builds on inter-regionalism literature by introducing normative coherence to inter-regional relations. As chapter six has shown, EU norm transmission to ASEAN is characterized by the divergence between the two regions, which restricts norms transmission and even enhances ASEANness. From a normative perspective, both regions have their own normative basis that shape their actorness. ASEAN is built on national sovereignty and limited regional integration. As a result, ASEAN is still in a phase of identity-formation. Conversely, the EU tries to export its normative identity to other regions, which is met by reluctance though. With this dissertation, I aimed to draw from this field of research and complement it with a normative angle on policy implementation that goes beyond institution-building. The analysis has shown that the EU meets major challenges to promoting its norms in EU-ASEAN inter-regional relations based on the diverging levels of integration, institutional structures and economic priorities.

## iii.    Propositions for Follow-Up Studies

The preceding sections have highlighted this dissertation's ambitious goals and aspired contributions to various fields of academic literature. Based on this, future research could build on this dissertation by enhancing some of the methodological limitations of this study or by applying different theoretical frameworks. Both possibilities are in turn explored in the following.

**Methodological Improvements**

Purposive sampling was chosen as the sampling strategy for this study to target relevant actors explicitly in the development and trade arenas. While this strategy supports the scope of the study and allows for effective information gathering, simultaneously it limits openness to information, which was not anticipated in the study. The viewpoint provided by non-

governmental organizations or information regarding the relationship between development, trade and agricultural policies are just two examples, which were excluded from this study. The choice of purposive sampling was undertaken carefully but resulted as the most suitable method aiming for information that was deemed relevant to the study. As a result, the number of respondents remained quite small and the distribution of respondents across sectors was uneven. The fact that the time permitted to conclude the Ph.D. was limited to four years did not permit more extensive interviewing.

Increasing the number of respondents could have been done in two ways: either by recruiting more people that directly fall within the scope of the study or by expanding the purposive sampling strategy to include respondents that are not directly addressed by the study. Regarding the former, it would have been useful to include one development and one trade counselor per embassy, but this was not always possible because of respondents' non-availability and the researcher's limited time of four months in Vietnam. Regarding the latter, respondents from the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) and Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV) in the European Commission could have been included. One of the respondents from the EEAS (personal interview not identified numerically in order to ensure anonymity) suggested that exchange with DG ENV is oftentimes more intense than with DG TRADE, because of the new sustainability emphasis. This implies that DG DEVCO and DG ENV might be closer connected than DG DEVCO and DG TRADE. Neither environmental nor agricultural policies are not part of this study, which is why no interviews were conducted with either of these two DGs. Nevertheless, interviewing DG ENV and/or DG AGRI could have brought more contextual information about the relationship between the different directorates-general and their relevance in a given policy proposal. Future research could, therefore, include a broader number of respondents to expand on the development-trade discussions to include environmental and agricultural aspects as well.

Another methodological advancement that could potentially arise out if this dissertation is the examination of a causal relation between policy-making and policy implementation, for example, by undertaking in-depth process tracing. As mentioned in the methodology chapter (chapter two), this study is not a study of causality, particularly not of causal mechanisms. Causal mechanisms show the path between the cause and the outcome, which has not been done here. Causal effects, however, can be inferred from the correlation between norms in political commitment, norms in policy networks and norms in regional interests as the

independent variables and normative policy coherence as the dependent variable. As the previous chapters show, norms in the EU's legislative framework have not changed across the temporal dimension, i.e. before and after the Lisbon Treaty.

A third inspiration for further research arises from the focus on the EU's normative policy coherence with Vietnam as the partner country for the EU's development and trade policies. This distinction between the EU as a prominent actor and Vietnam as a "silent" addressee of these policies was made because the aim was to discover the coherence between the EU policies and not, for example, coherence between the EU policies and Vietnamese policies. However, the Vietnamese context was relevant to the extent that it is a socialist one-party state where talks about norms might be more difficult to pursue than in a pluralist and open society. Having said that, the lack of the Vietnamese perspective on EU policies remains a weakness of this research. Even when excluding the Vietnamese perspective on purpose, the EU's policies are a result of negotiations with the Vietnamese counterpart. The EU does not operate in isolation and has no legitimacy to undermine the Vietnamese agenda. Leaving out the Vietnamese interests and strategies results in a relatively one-sided analysis and understanding of policy implementation. Nevertheless, the EU focus provides one part of the picture to which the study of the Vietnamese side would contribute. In terms of including the Vietnamese side, some efforts have been undertaken to include Vietnamese considerations, but only one respondent agreed to be interviewed. Even though Vietnam is not the main case of this study, the initial goal was to use interviews with Vietnamese government officials to place the EU's actions into a local context provided by locals. As a result of this low response rate, this study does not accurately capture the Vietnamese perspective. Further research could thus include the Vietnamese perspective more strongly to address donor-recipient coherence and norm diffusion more explicitly.

**Alternative Theoretical Framework**

This dissertation used the EU foreign policy literature to assess the overall EU policies. Foreign policy theory suggests that policies are not only interest driven but are also a result of the EU's wider political implications. Emphasizing rational choice models, other theories, such as those suggested by the political economy literature or international relations literature, could provide different angles towards explaining the EU's behavior.

Political economy theory would also have been a suitable theory for this study but was not

chosen as the primary theory because it prioritizes economic reasoning of decision-making, which does not fit the dissertation's focus on norms. Scholars of political economy argue that political choices are driven by economic interests, thus subordinating, for example, development policies to economic benefits (Siles-Brügge, 2014). In a study that is strongly driven by normative aspirations and focuses on the implementation of norms, political economy did not strike at the suitable theory. However, this theory may account for some of the results of this study, particularly those related to regional interests as shown in chapter six. Data suggests that economic interests drive the EU's regional strategy to some extent. Especially the move from a regional EU-ASEAN free trade agreement to bilateral free trade agreements emphasizes the economic rationale the EU pursues in the area. Therefore, a political economy perspective could add another explanatory layer to the EU's rationale on norm implementation. In the study of policy networks, political economy theory could highlight the divergence between economic and other interests. The focus here was on communication between the different actors and their involvement in norm promotion. The difference to the efforts towards economic promotion, however, is not highlighted in this dissertation. Therefore, the political economy approach could be a valuable contribution to further examine the role of norms in policy implementation. Thus, while this dissertation generally argues that structural arrangements and the norm-technical divide are drivers for normative incoherence, prioritizing economic interests could be explored as the underlying rationale for normative incoherence as well.

Alternatively, international relations (IR) theory could be applied to emphasize the EU's negotiation strategies more strongly to EU relations with ASEAN in particular but also to the EU's ambitions at the global level. IR theory highlights the competitive nature of self-interested nation states and different bargaining techniques in international relations such as coercion or persuasion (Johnston, 2005). One example shows how the EU-ASEAN relations are merely the fourth level of policy-making, behind the national level, the EU level and the global level (Camroux, 2010). In this regard, the EU's behavior is examined as bargaining at different policy levels. While international negotiations are definitely part of the policy-making process, they are not under the scope of this research. Extending the scope to include the negotiation process would not have been feasible for this project due to time constraints but could have brought some insights on the power dynamics between the EU, ASEAN, China, Japan and the United States. Comparing the negotiation processes of the (failed) EU-ASEAN free trade agreement and the (concluded) Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement would feed into

the discussion about regional hegemony.

This analysis only represents a small part of a bigger policy implementing system. That is to say that international organizations and treaties have an impact on actor behavior, which can influence the implementation of NPCD as both a process and an outcome. The United Nations, the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD), and the World Trade Organization (WTO) are global fora that shape the international political landscape to which individual actors such as the EU are bound despite the fact that they are creators of this landscape at the same time. Within different systems, the actors play different roles, and thus, adding the global policy level as a level of analysis to the existing EU-focused analysis would add to the understanding of how normative policy coherence for development is, and can or cannot, be implemented. Within this global setting of development actors, how much leverage does the EU have to strengthen its (still controversial) normative power (Birchfield, 2013; Diez, 2005; Manners, 2002)? Applying game theory, for example, would highlight the EU's choice between cooperation and blockage in multilateral settings (Caporaso, 1992). In relation to this, it could be examined to what extent the EU has gained (or lost) normative power as a result of successful or failed cooperation. The EU-ASEAN free trade negotiations could serve as a relevant case study of failed cooperation.

An entirely different analysis could be undertaken based on the literature on alternatives to development, which criticize the dominance of Western approaches over any alternative forms of society and living (Escobar, 1995; Gudynas, 2011; Rahnema & Bawtree, 1998; Ranta, 2018; Rist, 2008; Salleh, 2017). This dissertation does not question the EU's approach to development per se, but rather examines its normativity and assesses normative coherence within the system of "transformative development", which has been declared the normative guide for development cooperation since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. Thus, given the new normative/transformative approach to development, EU policies have been examined as to their norm implementation. Taking a step away from the within-system analysis, a different study could be undertaken on how PCD contributes to reinforcing the development structures and, consequently, the power relations between "the West and the rest" (see for example Amsden, 2001). Particularly by linking up development with other policies, the strategic character of development cannot be ignored. Therefore, the argument could be made that more coherence plays into the hands of the developed states, as they will use this tool to force their approach in all policy fields. While this kind of criticism was already

voiced (Thede, 2013), it still accepts the development discourse. Thus, a development-critical approach could add an entirely new perspective on the concepts of PCD and NPCD. Of course, this approach challenges the very fundamentals of the PCD, which are embedded in the international system criticized by alternative movements. While the value of an alternative perspective is beyond doubt, it is a highly ambitious objective and certainly out of the scope of the current study, which focuses on normative coherence within the predominant global order.

This dissertation offers ample ground for further studies. It contributes to the existing fields of PCD, public policy and regionalism, but further research could be undertaken as suggested in this sub-section. Moving from academic advancement towards a more personal statement, the next sub-section, the final part of this dissertation, lays out again the general necessity of norms in the current global system, or in other terms, the need for normative policy coherence.

## iv.    Critical Reflections on Norms and Development

The EU's actions do not correspond with the normative development paradigm at the global level in that the EU and a number of its member states separate norms as a political undertaking from development as a technical undertaking. Traditionally, development cooperation was meant to be non-political as it was not to interfere with internal politics of a sovereign state. As a result, it is not surprising that current development programs and projects do not include a normative dimension, which is designated to be a political task. However, since the initiation of the Millennium Development Goals, all UN members have agreed on a certain set of norms in development and, consequently, opened the development sector to a more political dimension. Now, 18 years after the first call for a universal effort to fight for the empowerment of women, for example, the fact that development is still considered a technicality is rather questionable. If the MDGs and SDGs call for human rights, why do development policies not reflect this call for change? Even though development is supposed to be non-political, it is nevertheless a strong tool to exercise power over the partner countries based on financial investments, and as such can function as a political instrument. Similarly, trade policies can be utilized as a political tool to put pressure on a partner country. Thus, while development and trade policies might not officially be qualified as political fields, they actually are – or at least have the potential to be used as – political tools. Even more so under the assumption that economic development will lead to democratization through urbanization, higher education levels or higher life expectancy, which in turn are expected to change public behavior towards a more politically active society (see for example Inglehart & Welzel, 2009).

Thus, the line between the political and non-political remains blurry, and it is the development actor's responsibility to determine the political functions of its development and trade policies. In authoritarian contexts, the non-political strategy is often a more successful route to trigger economic reforms, which are expected to lead to political reforms in the long term.

Based on the normative development paradigm applied in this dissertation, the underlying assumption for development was very optimistic expecting development to have a normative dimension, whereas the underlying assumption for trade did not show expectations for a normative dimension. "Development is optimistic and utopian. Development means changing the world for the better" (Peet & Hartwick, 2009, p.2). The analysis showed that in practice, development is not as utopian as assumed, but influenced by interests and technical processes. The optimistic potential to make the world a better place is lost by leaving normative discussion to the political arena. To make a more critical comment, making the world better under the development umbrella is limited to financial contributions and economic predictions from which both the donor and the recipient can benefit. The utopian vision is clear at the global level, where the sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda aspire for inclusive and universal development and emphasize all 193 UN member states' commitment to improve lives worldwide.

As shown in this dissertation, based on the analysis of EU-Vietnam development and trade policies, norm implementation lacks behind the rhetorical commitment. The next sub-section places this outcome in a wider context of current affairs.

**Realist Limitations to Idealism**

In a globalized world, several states compete for influence across different countries and regions. The EU not only competes with like-minded countries such as Australia and Canada in terms of providing development cooperation to Vietnam, but also with less normative countries such as the United States and China, which only attach few normative conditions to providing development aid or negotiating trade agreements. Given that other international actors have the capacity to provide sustainable amounts of development aid as well as offering access to a large economic market, such as the Chinese market, it is questionable whether the EU can remain an attractive partner or whether its expectations from a recipient country are too high and consequently make it an unfavorable partner. The role of the United States in international relations has been unpredictable since the election of President Trump in 2016. Since then, President Trump withdrew the US from the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement,

the Paris climate accord and the nuclear arrangement with Iran, and started a "trade war" with China. Thus, on several occasions did the US retract from hitherto negotiated international agreements. For this reason, the United States is likely to be considered an unreliable partner given its President's ad-hoc decisions and might currently not be a major competitor to EU in terms of development cooperation or trade. These actions might even have opposite effects, namely highlighting the reliability of other international actors such as the EU, as well as China. China has evolved into one of the most influential actors, if not the most influential actor, in the Southeast Asia region based on its economic strength and military capacities. Some would even argue that China has become a normative power in the region, albeit with a different set of norms (Kavalski, 2013). It has grown into a donor country providing financial incentives without attaching normative conditionality clauses as the EU tends to do. Simultaneously, economic ties between China and Vietnam have grown with many Chinese firms relocating to Vietnam due to lower labor costs (Renwick, 2016). By relocating companies, China support economic growth twofold, first by the relocation itself and second by growing consumption in China. In addition, contrary to the EU, China has managed to set up a China-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement first signed in 2002 and ever since expanded with the most recent amendment signed in 2015 (ASEAN, 2012). However, relations between Vietnam and China remain tense over claims of territory regarding the Spratly islands in the South China Sea. Indeed, Vietnam has signed an agreement with the Philippines and China to jointly exploit gas an oil resources around the Spratly islands, but only after the Philippines and China had already agreed on doing so bilaterally (Dosch & Vuving, 2008). China has indeed succeeded in building its hegemonic power in the region and is regarded as such by many ASEAN states (Dosch & Vuving, 2008), but despite this evolution, China-Vietnam relations remain complex:

"*Derived from China's grand strategy, its Vietnam policy has two major goals. The first is to keep Hanoi close to the Chinese orbit. The second is to cement China's control of the South China Sea. Given the dispute between the two countries over territories in the South China Sea, China's policy toward Vietnam cannot be a straightforward course of action. The seemingly contradictory objectives of this policy thus demand a delicate balance in the conduct of China's relations with Vietnam. This in turn requires a fine combination of reward and punishment in the implementation of that policy*" (Dosch & Vuving, 2008, p.17).

Thus, despite China's growing prominence in the global as well as regional arena, it is currently still a challenging actor for Vietnam. As a result, the EU seems to remain an attractive partner

for Vietnam both in terms of development cooperation as well as trade arrangements, and could use this position to promote its norms abroad.

However, two questions need to be asked here. First, how realistic are the EU's goals in terms of norm promotion? While the EU's official commitment to norms is strong, its actual potential to implement those norms is limited given the partner country's readiness to adopt these norms. As stated above, Vietnam tends to be more reluctant towards political norms, whereas it is more open to economic and social norms. In this context, the EU might use a bargaining strategy setting high expectations assuming that norm implementation will be challenging, but minor results can be spurred by setting high standards. This strategy is certainly possible but was not explored in this dissertation. Nevertheless, based on the interviews I have conducted, I would argue that the EU's hands are tied to a certain extent. It might adopt a bargaining position in more general negotiations on a governmental level, i.e. regarding the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, the Free Trade Agreement and even the Multi-Annual Programs, but the individual projects and the day-to-day work is based on very realistic views of what can be expected and the awareness that asking for too much might hamper the relationship. The interviewees in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City seemed very knowledgeable about the limits of their work and the opportunities in which to push the usual normative boundaries.

The second question relates to the first by addressing the EU's normative credibility in times of internal political uncertainty. Can the EU still be a normative actor in a time of the so-called migrant crisis, negotiations between the United Kingdom and the EU regarding the UK's exit from the union, and a growing number of right-wing parties entering national governments in several EU member states? These three recent examples of internal conflicts highlight that the EU faces severe difficulties in applying its own norms when put under pressure by internal and external development. The influx of large groups of immigrants from war-torn countries challenged the solidarity between the member states as well as the EU's commitment to human rights, which are nevertheless promoted abroad. Similarly, the EU promotes regional integration, while negotiating exit strategies with the United Kingdom, which has decided to leave the EU after a public referendum. Both examples are probably related to the rise of right-wing parties leading populist campaigns in favor of nationalism and xenophobia across member states such as France, Germany, Netherlands, Hungary, Poland, the UK, Austria and Finland. Despite these disruptions, most political parties across the member states as well as the majority of people do not stand in favor of these developments. There have been several

disruptions to the usual EU business-as-usual but compared to the success it has achieved since its creation in the 1950s in terms of economic, political and social integration, maintaining peace, opening borders between the nation states, it is unlikely that a few years of political difficulties will change the EU's international reputation. Undoubtably, this might change in the future if the member states will not be able to find a consensus on how to deal will common challenges. However, for the moment, it is a difficult phase, which might be overcome if the EU stuck to its own norms.

These evolutions, i.e. the rise of non-normative development actors and internally contested norms in the EU, might have different effects on the EU's norms in development. As this dissertation has shown, development is already considered a technical sector rather than a political/normative sector. Based on this, from an internal perspective, three scenarios are possible. First, if the EU is going through a difficult phase shaped by political conflicts undermining its own norm, but finally overcoming this phase, it is unlikely that this phase will significantly change the norms in development. As a result, development would continue being a rather technical field instead of a strongly normatively infused policy arena. A second scenario arising from the assumption that the EU is going through a phase might be the strengthening of EU norms. While this scenario currently seems unlikely, it might be possible that citizens and politicians urge for more togetherness, openness. Some grassroot movements and individual politicians have already called for a more inclusive society, but populist movements are nevertheless increasing. As a result of a more normative society internally, external policies might adopt this approach and be used more effectively to promote EU norms. Third, if the EU faces a more long-term development towards disintegration and nationalism, its norms might fade over time and it would not be a credible normative actor in the international arena any longer.

From an external perspective, the emergence of non-normative development actors, such as China, could pose a threat to the EU's position as a normative actor, which might force the EU to lower its normative expectations from the partner countries in a long-term perspective. However, as already mentioned above, the EU is currently still a valuable partner for Vietnam, and Vietnam-China relations in particular remain challenging. This, combined with the global efforts to achieve transformative development, enhances the EU's potential as a normative actor.

**Making Globalization more Normative**

The EU's commitment to policy coherence for development, on the one hand, and its commitment to its founding values on the other hand, led to the idealist view of normative policy coherence for development and the normative dimension as a reference point for policy assessment. Norms did not guide this research solely for idealistic purposes, or to hold the EU accountable for its actions, but also to highlight the importance of norms in current international politics, particularly in the seemingly inevitable process of continuous globalization. With this dissertation I do not aim to suggest that developing countries need to follow the European model, or adopt a European system of policy making, even though this approach is often implied in development practices. Rather, I would like to raise awareness for the necessity of norms to divert current development practices from the goal of economic growth towards a holistic human-centered approach that leaves space for various local practices.

The UN Charter of Human Rights is only one example of so-called universal norms. As such, these norms should be integrated in international politics while letting developing countries determine their own paths. In the transition from a globally isolated state towards a globally integrated state, each country needs to take decisions as to which path it aims to follow.

The following two scenarios help demonstrate the importance of norms, despite the rather simplistic illustration. Obviously, reality is more heterogeneous. Nevertheless, economic growth remains one of main goals for most states and is thus used as the basis for the two scenarios (visualized in figure 17). In the first scenario, the country has become a wealthy state in terms of average growth numbers, however, wealth is accumulated among the few oligarchs that govern the country and the majority of its citizens live in disadvantaged conditions. In the second scenario, wealth is distributed more equally among the citizens of this country, the majority of people receives quality education and decisions can be taken collectively by the citizens of this state rather than the ruling business owners. The difference between those two scenarios is the human approach to development, which places individual needs and wishes rather than national economic growth at the center. Without norms that allow individuals to pursue their own paths, such as human rights or pluralism, the first scenario is very likely to take place in a globalizing world. In both scenarios, the point of departure is a situation of internal conflict, which does not always mean violent conflict, but can be a struggle for recognition both at the global level as well as the individual level, economic stagnation and isolation from the global system. Taking this as a point of departure, one possible route leads

to an outcome which combines globalization and conflicts, i.e. in terms of conflict no major changes have occurred, but economic growth can be witnessed by the upper class (this is represented by the first quadrant in the top left corner). The other possible route leads to globalization combined with peace in the top right corner of figure 17. Norms can function as a tool to divert the route from the within-conflict globalization track to the from-conflict-to-peace globalization track. Again, this is just a simplified illustration of reality, and does not aim to imply that developing countries do not have or apply norms as long as the are not part of the globalized system. On the contrary, each society is built around a set of norms, but those norms obviously differ between societies. Nevertheless, the underlying rationale remains that implementation of those norms is a prerequisite to guide globalization processes towards a peaceful and inclusive outcome.

**Figure 17: Two-dimensional Grid of Isolation-Globalization and Conflict-Peace**
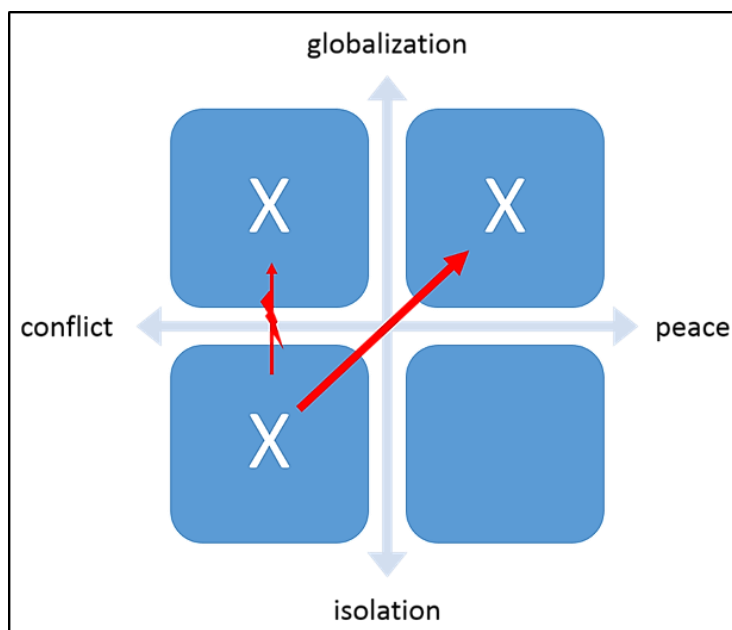


Source: author's own creation

Th guiding norms for human/transformative/normative development do not necessarily have to be a copy of the EU norms as examined in this dissertation. Each country operates in its own specific context with its own set of norms and, consequently, globally agreed norms, such as human rights, should be adapted to the local context. At the same time, certain norms are indeed global norms and as such should be implemented. Thus, I do not aim to prescribe the EU model as a model for development, but nevertheless I would like to highlight the importance of EU norms in development. Personally, I consider issues such as genital mutilation, imprisoning journalists when they report about an internationally unacceptable situation, or religious

persecution unacceptable. Contributing to warfare, as some of the EU member states do, is just as unacceptable and as already mentioned earlier, the EU currently faces a lot of challenges to its normative framework, which certainly does not make it a perfect example for normative actorness. This is why it is all the more important to call for political actions that correspond to the – to date mostly rhetorical – normative commitments by regional actors and nation states.

I would like to conclude this dissertation by highlighting – once more – the importance of development as freedom (Sen, 1999), the need for norms, for human rights and democratic values, for equity and equality, for freedom and solidarity in international relations, and their active implementation in policies to ensure a better life for individuals in this globalization-driven world. In the context of norms as a necessity in the globalization process, the question arises as to the moral rationale underlying norms. To phrase it in realist terms: Do norms function as a tool to exert more power over the partner countries and if so, does this undermine the morality of norms? In an idealist world, I would argue in favor of the morality of norms in general, not necessarily the primacy of all EU norms over other norms, because the EU system certainly does not suit each context. If norms are used solely as a strategic tool in external relations, they are not primarily meant to improve people's lives but to serve underlying rational purposes. As such, they should not be called norms, because they lack a normative character. However, regardless of the underlying rationale, those norms would still improve individual lives even though they might function overall as a tool for one actor to exercise more control over the other. This is not to justify EU norms as a means of exercising power. Rather, taking a realist approach, power balances between self-interested actors shape the global arena regardless of the (non-)inclusion of norms. As globalization is primarily an economic process, power does not have to take the form of armed conflict (military power) but manifests itself in economic superiority. Thus, on the path to peaceful globalization as presented in figure 17, economic power relationships determine the outcome. Within this economy-driven process, norms can take the role of stabilizing regions. In a peaceful and free society, production is not restricted by violence and, consequently, a normative vision enhances economic production. The economy of warfare obviously shows an entirely different picture. Having said this, does the underlying rationale of norm promotion play a role? It would be too idealistic to expect moral behavior from global actors in the competition over economic strength. Therefore, I would conclude that – in realist terms – the underlying rationale for norm promotion is not the decisive factor, but rather the fact that norms are actually being promoted – albeit to a limited extent as this dissertation has shown – and as a result, living conditions can be improved.

Taking this thought of improving living conditions a step further, pondering upon idealist notions and alternatives to development, I would like to conclude this dissertation with some reflections on norms and development. In this dissertation, I have argued that norms are relevant for development in order to improve lives. As mentioned earlier, this argument is embedded in the Western approach to development, which is in turn embedded in global capitalism, which, however, does not mean that the Western system is the appropriate system of each country. Nevertheless, considering the current state of global affairs, the EU plays a crucial role in implementing norms as a measure to introduce the centrality of people into development practices, albeit at a political/rhetorical level.

Integrated approaches to development see people as part of their surroundings in which each part has its role. Critical movements against traditional growth-centered development have existed since the 1960s (see Fanon, 1963; Frank, 1967) and particularly since the 1990s, alternative voices have gained momentum in academic debates (Escobar, 1995; Esteva & Prakash, 1998; Rahnema & Bawtree; 1998). Most recently, the notion of the pluriverse has been utilized to call for "a world where many worlds fit" (Demaria & Kothari, 2017). The "pluriversal perspective" (Escobar, 2015) offers a new viewpoint arguing for the acceptance of various epistemologies and ontologies. As Escobar (2015) accurately states in this context, "globalization can be described as a mono-ontological occupation of the planet". With this in mind, it would be worth considering whether and how the Western frame of development and global governance could be overcome allowing for a multitude of life designs. Under the current global system, however, integrating norms into realist politics in the form of normative policy coherence for development is a step towards a more humane version of international relations.

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# Appendix 1: List of Policy Documents

| Level | Primary Documents for Analysis | |
|---|---|---|
| Policy Guideline | Maastricht Treaty<br>Lisbon Treaty<br>European Consensus for Development<br>New European Consensus for Development<br>Agenda for Change<br>EU Global Strategy<br>Trade for All | |
| | **Vietnam Specific** | **ASEAN Specific** |
| Policy Guideline | | ASEAN Charter |
| Policy Formulation | Framework and Cooperation Agreement<br>Partnership and Cooperation Agreement<br>Free Trade Agreement | ASEAN Blueprint 2025 |
| Policy Implementation - programs | Country Strategy Paper 2002-2006<br>Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013<br>Multiannual Indicative Program 2007-2010<br>Multiannual Indicative Program 2011-2013<br>Multiannual Indicative Program 2014-2020 | Asia Regional Multi-Annual<br><br>Indicative Program 2014-2020 |
| Policy Implementation - projects | EU-ASEAN Blue Book 2016<br>EU-ASEAN Blue Book 2017 | |
| | EU Blue Book 2007<br>EU Blue Book 2008<br>EU Blue Book 2009<br>EU Blue Book 2010<br>EU Blue Book 2011<br>EU Blue Book 2012<br>EU Blue Book 2013<br>EU Blue Book 2014<br>EU Blue Book 2015<br>EVBN Project Description<br>MUTRAP Project Description | |

# Appendix 2: Interview Questions

**Appendix 2A: Interview Questions for DG DEVCO**

**Institutional Background**
1. What is your position and what are your responsibilities?
2. How long have you been in this position?
3. What is your budget?

**EU-ASEAN Relations**
1. In your opinion, what are the defining characteristics of EU-ASEAN relations?
2. What are the priorities on both sides?
3. What role does Vietnam play in EU-ASEAN relations?
4. In your opinion, how coherent are the EU's policies towards Vietnam?

**DG DEVCO**
1. How often do you meet with colleagues from other units of DG DEVCO?
2. Which unit do you work most with?
3. Is your relationship formal/informal/financial?
4. What are the sectors that you collaborate on?
5. Do you discuss norms?

**EEAS**
1. How often do you meet with your EEAS colleagues in Brussels?
2. Is your relationship formal, informal and/or financial?
3. Can you describe how a meeting is structured?
4. Who defines the agenda?
5. What topics are usually covered during the meetings?
6. Do you discuss norms?

**DG TRADE**
1. How do you communicate with your colleagues in DG TRADE?
2. How often do you meet?
3. Are your communications formal or informal?
4. What topics are usually covered during a meeting?
5. Do you discuss norms?

**EU Representatives in Vietnam**
1. Do you communicate with EU representatives in Vietnam?
2. Are your communications formal or informal?
3. Can you describe how a meeting is structured?
4. What topics are usually covered during a meeting?
5. Do you discuss norms?

**Appendix 2B: Interview Questions for EEAS**

**Institutional Background**
1. What is your position and what are your responsibilities?
2. How long have you been in this position?
3. What is your budget?

**EU-ASEAN Relations**
1. In your opinion, what are the defining characteristics of EU-ASEAN relations?
2. What are the priorities on both sides?
3. What role does Vietnam play in EU-ASEAN relations?
4. In your opinion, how coherent are the EU's policies towards Vietnam?

**EEAS Vietnam Desk**
1. How often do you meet with your colleagues from the EEAS GLOABL?
2. Which department do you work most with?
3. How would you describe your relationship?
4. Can you describe how a meeting is structured?
5. How do you agree on the agenda?
6. Can you tell me about the topics that you usually cover during the meetings?
7. Do you get the opportunity to discuss norms?

**DG DEVCO**
1. How often do you meet with colleagues from of DG DEVCO?
2. Which unit do you work most with?
3. How would you describe your relationship?
4. What sectors do you collaborate on?
5. Do you get the opportunity to discuss norms?

**DG TRADE**
1. How do you communicate with your colleagues in DG TRADE?
2. What kind of communication channels do you use?
3. How often do you meet?
4. How do you agree on the agenda?
5. What topics do you usually cover during a meeting?
6. Do you get the opportunity to discuss norms?

**EU Representatives in Vietnam**
1. Do you communicate with EU representatives in Vietnam?
2. What kind of communication channels do you use?
3. Can you describe how a meeting is structured?
4. What topics do you usually discuss during a meeting?
5. Do you get the opportunity to discuss norms?

**Appendix 2C: Questions for EU Delegation**

**Institutional Background**
1. What is your position and what are your responsibilities?
2. How long have you been in this position? How long have you been working in Vietnam?
3. How long has your agency/office existed in Vietnam?
4. What is your budget?

**EU-ASEAN Relations**
1. In your opinion, what are the defining characteristics of EU-ASEAN relations?
2. What are the priorities on both sides?
3. What role does Vietnam play in EU-ASEAN relations?

**Vietnamese Government**
1. With whom do you meet from the Vietnamese government (people or offices)?
2. How often do you meet representatives from the Vietnamese government?
3. Is your relationship formal, informal and/or financial?
4. Can you describe how a meeting is structured?
5. Who defines the agenda?
6. What topics are usually covered during the meetings?
7. Do you discuss norms? If so, how and how often? (regularly, irregular, never)

**Vietnamese Civil Society**
1. How often do you meet with the Vietnamese civil society?
2. Is your relationship formal, informal and/or financial?
3. Can you describe how a meeting is structured?
4. Who defines the agenda?
5. What topics are usually covered during the meetings?
6. Do you discuss norms? If so, how and how often? (regularly, irregularly, never)

**Other EU representatives**
1. How do you communicate with EU representatives in Brussels and/or Vietnam?
2. Are your communications formal or informal?
3. Can you describe how a meeting is structured?
4. What topics are usually covered during a meeting?
5. Do you discuss norms? If so, what norms?
6. What kind of instructions do you get? How much is left to your discretion?

**Trade**
1. Do you communicate with your colleagues in Trade?
2. How often do you meet?
3. Are your communications formal or informal or solely financial?
4. Do you discuss norms? If so, what norms?

**Additional Questions**
1. Why is Vietnam the first country (after Singapore) to conclude an FTA with the EU?
2. Who participated in the negotiation rounds?
3. Did you consult NGO in Vietnam on their position towards an FTA?
4. If yes, what kind of NGOs?
5. How do you assess the impact of trade agreements on human rights?
6. How are human rights taken into account if not through an HRIA?
7. What can be done to improve the commitment to norms?

**Appendix 2D: Interview Questions for Member State Officials**

**Institutional Background**
1. What is your position and what are your responsibilities?
2. How long have you been in this position? How long have you been working in Vietnam?
3. How long has your agency/office existed in Vietnam?
4. What is your budget?

**EU-ASEAN Relations**
1. In your opinion, what are the defining characteristics of EU-ASEAN relations?
2. What are the priorities on both sides?
3. What role does Viet Nam play in EU-ASEAN relations?
4. 2015 marks the 25th anniversary of EU-VN diplomatic relations. Can you summarize the main success stories and challenges?

**Vietnamese Government**
1. With whom do you meet from the Vietnamese government?
2. How often do you meet representatives from the Vietnamese government?
3. Is your relationship formal, informal and/or financial?
4. Can you describe how a meeting is structured?
5. Who defines the agenda?
6. What topics are usually covered during the meetings?
7. Do you discuss norms? If so, how and how often? (regularly, irregular, never)

**Vietnamese Civil Society**
1. How often do you meet with the Vietnamese civil society?
2. Is your relationship formal, informal and/or financial?
3. Can you describe how a meeting is structured?
4. Who defines the agenda?
5. What topics are usually covered during the meetings?
6. Do you discuss norms? If so, how and how often?

**EU Representatives**
1. How do you communicate with EU representatives in Brussels and/or Vietnam?
2. Are your communications formal or informal?
3. Can you describe how a meeting is structured?
4. What topics are usually covered during a meeting?
5. Do you discuss norms? If so, what norms?
6. What kind of instructions do you get? How much is left to your discretion?

**Local Colleagues**
1. Do you communicate with your colleagues in Trade/Development?
2. How often do you meet?
3. Are your communications formal or informal or solely financial?
4. Do you discuss norms? If so, what norms?

# Appendix 3: List of 32 Respondents

| Area of Responsibility | Location of Interview | Affiliation |
|---|---|---|
| High Level Development Cooperation Staff | Vietnam | EU |
| Director | Vietnam | EU |
| Team Leader | Vietnam | EU |
| Project Director | Vietnam | EU |
| Team Leader & Policy Officer (2 interviewees) | Belgium | EU |
| Development Cooperation Staff | Belgium | EU |
| Management Staff | Belgium | EU |
| Management Staff | Belgium | EU |
| Support Staff | Vietnam | EU |
| High Level Management Staff | Vietnam | International |
| Researcher | Vietnam | Asia |
| Senior Aid Coordination Advisor | Vietnam | Asia |
| High Level Political Staff | Vietnam | National |
| High Level Development Cooperation Staff | Vietnam | National |
| Head of Political and Economic Cooperation | Vietnam | National |
| High Level Political Staff | Vietnam | National |
| Country Director | Vietnam | National |
| Head of Trade Center | Vietnam | National |
| High Level Political Staff | Vietnam | National |
| Project Coordinator | Vietnam | National |
| Director | Vietnam | National |
| Trade Staff | Vietnam | National |
| High Level Trade Staff | Vietnam | National |
| Trade Staff | Vietnam | National |
| High Level Development Cooperation Staff | Vietnam | National |
| High Level Political Staff | Vietnam | National |
| Country Director | Vietnam | National |
| Trade Staff | Vietnam | National |
| High Level Development Cooperation Staff | Vietnam | National |
| High Level Political Staff | Vietnam | National |
| High Level Development Cooperation Staff | Vietnam | National |
| Policy Coordinator | Vietnam | Vietnam |

# Appendix 4: EVBN Leaflet

## EU-VIETNAM BUSINESS NETWORK

The EU-Vietnam Business Network (EVBN) is a project co-funded by the European Union and established 2013. EVBN's core objective is to help European companies, in particular small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), to access the Vietnamese market and do business in Vietnam, as well as to improve the trade and investment environment and to foster exports, market entries and investment from Europe to Vietnam and ASEAN.

### EVBN business support services, activities & events

- "Ask the expert" hotline
- Business incubator: low cost office facilities
- Database of existing EU business service providers in Vietnam
- SME Starter Kit, market studies, case studies, Vietnam overview, etc

- Organisation of flagship trade delegations and trade fairs (Europe / Vietnam)
- Sectorial events, conferences, seminars, business luncheons, etc
- Pre-market consultation including legal and customized market studies
- Tailored business partner search and legal advices
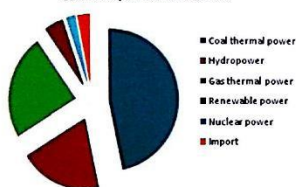
EVBN
www.evbn.org

## VIETNAM

Since 1986, Vietnam has gradually shifted from "Doi Moi" centralized planned economy into a socialist-oriented market economy in implementation of industrialization and modernization of the country. With an open door and world integration policy, Vietnam has achieved a significant progress in developing the economy. "Vietnam has already achieved five of its ten original Millennium Development Goal targets and it is on the way to attain two more by 2015" (Source: Vietrade).

## SECTOR INFORMATION

**14 – 16%** the electricity demand of the country is constantly growing by 14-16% per year in the period 2011-2015.



Structure of power sources by 2020

- Coal thermal power
- Hydropower
- Gas thermal power
- Renewable power
- Nuclear power
- Import

Source: Overview of energy in Vietnam, 2011, http://evn.com.vn

The below table illustrates that Vietnam's capacity to produce electricity ranked third after Indonesia and Malaysia in South-East Asia

| Country | Electricity consumption /person (kWh/person) | Capacity (MW) |
|---|---|---|
| Cambodia | 104 | 635 |
| Indonesia | 507 | 43,528 |
| Laos | 339 | 2,556 |
| Malaysia | 3,221 | 24,500 |
| Philippines | 524 | 16,223 |
| Singapore | 7,696 | 10,477 |
| Thailand | 1,962 | 31,451 |
| Vietnam | 1,104 | 26,475 |

## VIETNAM – GATEWAY TO ASEAN

- The 3rd populous country in ASEAN with a population of over 90 million people
- Ongoing "golden age" with approximately 70% of the population between 15 and 64 years
- Competitive labor cost starting between 100-150 USD minimum per month
- An emerging middle-income country with GDP per capita 1,900 USD in 2013

- Population: 93.5 million
- Major cities:
  - Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) aka Saigon
  - Hanoi (capital)
  - Hai Phong
  - Da Nang
- GDP of Vietnam (2014): 5.93%
  - GDP of Hanoi (2014): 8.8%
  - GDP of HCMC (2014): 9.6%
- Objectives for 2015
  - GDP: 6.2%
  - GDP of HCMC: 9.5 – 10%
  - EU – Vietnam Free Trade Agreement : "Agree on principle" signed on August 2015
  - Vietnam – Korea FTA
  - TPP – Trans Pacific Partnership
  - AEC – ASEAN Economic Community

4

5