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Out of Sight, Out of Mind? UK–EU Member States Bilateralism as an Enabler of Europeanisation

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Abstract

Whilst an extensive scholarship has questioned the role of the United Kingdom in multilateral and mini-lateral venues, less attention has been devoted to the signature of 24 bilateral declarations between the United Kingdom and EU member states from 2021 to 2023. Bilateralism has indeed been one of the preferred UK strategies to achieve foreign policy co-ordination with EU member states post-Brexit. Questioning the intentionality of the United Kingdom in initiating and investing these arrangements, we find that despite the clear attempts to deEUise its foreign policy, we are also not witnessing purposes of de-Europeanisation that would imply a repudiation of European shared values, a divergence from common priorities and an end to social encounters between UK and EU member states' officials. Instead, through a frame analysis of these declarations and interviews, we highlight that bilateralism has enabled continued Europeanisation, even though to a lesser extent in comparison with the pre-Brexit situation. Closer relations with European capitals are thus enabling Europeanisation of UK foreign policy to persist. In other words, we conclude that whilst there has been, on the side of the United Kingdom, a repudiation of the EU as a political entity, there has been no rejection of common European values and priorities, which remain shared with EU member states.

Keywords: bilateralism; Brexit; de-EUisation; Europeanisation; foreign policy

Introduction

Since the announcement of the 2016 Brexit referendum, scholarship has analysed the role of domestic politics on British foreign policy post-Brexit (Martill, 2023) and the United Kingdom's search for new foreign policy narratives, as it has gradually become more isolated and de-socialised from EU structures (Oppermann et al., 2020). Alternative venues used by the United Kingdom and EU member states to co-ordinate their foreign policy, now that the United Kingdom has left EU formal structures, have been further studied, including the role of the United Kingdom in multilateral organisations (e.g., United Nations and World Trade Organisation) and its active participation in minilateralism (e.g., E3 with France and Germany on Iran; G7 and G20 on economic issues) (Brattberg, 2020), as well as in informal contact groups (e.g., the Western Balkan format) and new geopolitical forums such as the European Political Community (Leruth, 2023).

Comparatively less attention has been given to the use by the United Kingdom of bilateral declarations to co-ordinate with its European partners (for notable exceptions, please see Davies and Kassim, 2023; Mintel and von Ondarza, 2022). Indeed, since the 2016 referendum, British diplomatic efforts have led to the signing of 24 joint declarations with EU member states (see Appendix A). Although not legally binding, such

statements of intent traditionally guide the strategic relationship between two countries.[1] This renewed bilateralism is quite intriguing given the difficulties in finalising the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) and the lack of interest of both the United Kingdom and the EU in integrating foreign policy co-operation into it (Mintel and von Ondarza, 2022). Overall, there has been more limited academic research on what this development reveals about the intentionality of the United Kingdom's foreign policy regarding the EU, and whether bilateralism is a channel to further engage or to distance itself from the EU (Urbanovská et al., 2022).

Historically, bilateralism and multilateralism have been complementary to the United Kingdom's EU membership, including bilateral ties with EU member states (Martill, 2023). For instance, with Tony Blair's 'Step Change initiative', bilateralism was conceptualised as a way to put the United Kingdom at the centre of the EU (Bulmer and Burch, 2002). In that sense, bilateral connections 'add political depth to intra-European relationships' (Mattelaer, 2019). Yet, this 'promiscuous bilateralism' (Smith, 2005, p. 709) from the United Kingdom also led it to forge different ad hoc, issue-focused alliances to maximise its influence, rather than build more stable ones. Later on, the 2010 coalition-led government took a more detached approach to the EU as bilateralism was used partly to bypass the EU (Whitman, 2018). Then, during the initial Brexit negotiations led by Theresa May, these ties were seen, not only as an opportunity to mitigate the impacts of the United Kingdom's withdrawal but also as a possibility to influence the ongoing negotiations with the EU, leading to some concerns from EU institutions (e.g., European Parliament, 2017).

With this context in mind, we question the intentions of the United Kingdom regarding (de-)EUisation and (de-)Europeanisation when engaging in renewed bilateralism post-Brexit. In other words, we ask: to what extent does the post-Brexit intensification of bilateral foreign policy agreements by the United Kingdom with EU member states reveal intentionality regarding (de-)EUisation and (de-)Europeanisation? Whilst the processes of Europeanisation and EUisation are strongly connected (Flockhart, 2010), they relate to different dynamics, with EUisation focusing on the 'transfer of institutional and organisational practices and policies' (Flockhart, 2010, p. 791) happening between the EU and the member states. In comparison, Europeanisation offers a broader understanding of the diffusion of ideas, and values through multiple interactions, including horizontal ones. This differentiation enables us to provide a more fine-grained analysis of the post-Brexit political dynamics by capturing the potential continuity amidst the institutional and organisational changes brought about by the withdrawal process.

Based on a frame analysis of the 24 bilateral declarations between the United Kingdom and individual EU member states in the field of foreign policy (Appendix A), complemented with 7 interviews with UK and EU foreign policy officials, we argue that despite de-EUisation dynamics, the United Kingdom's bilateral engagement with EU member states enables Europeanisation in the area of foreign policy. Yet, this Europeanisation appears, at best, to be limited, characterised by the continued espousing of European values and priorities, which remain shared with EU member states.

[1]Other formal bilateral agreements are available at the FCDO and in the treaties database, which lists the international obligations of the United Kingdom (https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/command-papers-by-country-2013#2022, https://treaties.fcdo.gov.uk/responsive/app/consolidatedSearch/#home).

This article proceeds as follows: first, we introduce how the notions of de-EUisation and de-Europeanisation offer relevant elements to investigate renewed UK bilateralism with EU member states and their operationalisation. Second, relying on the framing analysis and the interviews, we test to what extent it is possible to identify attempts of de-EUisation and de-Europeanisation in the United Kingdom's engagement with the member states.

I. De-EUisation and De-Europeanisation in Foreign Policy: Conceptual and Methodological Reflections

To analyse the UK government's intentionality when engaging in bilateralism with EU member states, we distinguish between attempts to (de-)EUise and to (de-)Europeanise its foreign policy. The concept of 'EUisation' was coined by Helen Wallace (2000) to address criticism regarding the blurred and multifaceted notion of Europeanisation. Indeed, in the 2000s, an extensive literature looked at Europeanisation with a 'narrow focus' on processes 'which relate almost exclusively to change brought about by the EU, thereby *de facto* excluding other processes which may also logically be regarded as Europeanisation' (Flockhart, 2010, p. 789).

Not only does EUisation accept 'a Eurocentric interpretation of history' (Flockhart, 2010, p. 790), but it also mostly focuses on 'explaining domestic adaptation to European integration through the EU' (Flockhart, 2010). EUisation has therefore been seen as a more relevant notion for the analyses that are 'predominantly concerned with "political encounters," where specific political entities, such as the EU and member state representatives, engage in the transfer of institutional and organisational practices and policies' (Flockhart, 2010). It is, hence, a helpful notion to essentially capture the more top-down domestic changes in response to demands of EU membership (Wong and Hill, 2011).

In contrast, Europeanisation is understood as a wider social learning process, predominantly about cultural encounters. Ideational transfer in this context includes not only institutional and organisational practices and specific policies but also 'all norms and behavioural practices that make up the identity of the community in question' (Flockhart, 2010, p. 791). In this sense, Europeanisation is not just a vertical process but encompasses a diversity of interactions between member states, including through the EU, leading to the internalisation of shared norms. Distinguishing between the two, however, is not always an easy task as EUisation and Europeanisation are strongly connected. Europeanisation is, in some cases, a necessary and a priori process to EUisation (Wallace, 2000) whereas EUisation is a small part of Europeanisation. Also the former usually reinforces the latter (Flockhart, 2010).

In the field of foreign policy, Europeanisation is understood as a 'transformation in the way in which national foreign policies are constructed, in the way professional roles are defined and pursued and in the consequent internalisation of norms and expectations arising from a complex system of collective European policy' (Tonra, 2000, p. 229). This is usually perceived as the result of the 'Brusselisation' of foreign policy, as 'policy formulation, decision and implementation are increasingly conducted by nationals based in Brussels' (Bicchi and Schade, 2022, p. 7).

More recent accounts have highlighted how de-Europeanisation processes are now occurring following a series of internal and external challenges to the Europeanisation of foreign policy. Defined as the 'reverse gear' of Europeanisation (Gravey, 2016), de-Europeanisation in foreign policy would be characterised by three elements (Müller et al., 2021): the de-construction of professional roles resulting from a substantive, institutional and procedural re-nationalisation; the repudiation of the dominant procedural and fundamental norms of EU policy-making in foreign policy; and the structural disintegration of collective EU policy-making institutions through rhetoric or substantive disbandment, disengagement or circumvention of EU structures.

Like Müller et al. (2021), we consider de-Europeanisation to be a process and not an outcome, with variations of its scope and scale along a spectrum. Nonetheless, by paying attention to what is being transferred and how, we explore de-Europeanisation of foreign policy as a distinct dynamic from de-EUisation and insist on the differentiation to be made between the two processes. Furthermore, given the importance of the context when scholars reflect upon de-Europeanisation (Gravey and Jordan, 2023), some adaptation is required for de-Europeanisation to be applied to our case study as Müller et al. (2021) have an exclusive focus on EU member states. One of these amendments relates to the notion of 'norms' that will be referred to as 'values' in our analytical framework. This change reflects the end of United Kingdom's membership to the EU and its obligation to respect the norms established in EU law as values are 'cultural representations and points of reference of what is good or bad' (Foret and Vargovčíková, 2021, p. 2).

Consequently, we argue here that de-EUisation of foreign policy (see Table 1) is characterised by three dynamics that reflect the institutional, political and organisational aspects of policy change: (i) the disengagement from EU structures, ranging from a reduced rhetoric or substantive support and commitment to a complete withdrawal; (ii) the rescaling of foreign policy discourse, namely, 'a political process in which the spatial scale of governance practices changes' (Wilson, 2018), where non-EU geographical spaces are given preference; and (iii) the reorganisation of foreign policy bureaucracy through a reinforced control over the national officials seconded to Brussels, including a redeployment of staff away from EU institutions.

De-Europeanisation, on the other hand, is made of three cognitive and social processes: (i) the rejection of shared European values; (ii) the divergence from 'previously established common European [...] priorities that have emerged through Europeanisation' (Müller et al., 2021, p. 524), resulting from ideational transfers and discussions; and (iii) the end of social encounters with European national officials, including outside formal EU venues.

Table 1: Dynamics of De-EUisation and De-Europeanisation of Foreign Policy (Adapted From Müller et al., 2021).

Dynamics of de-EUisation	• Disengagement from EU structures • Rescaling of foreign policy discourse • Counter-Brusselisation through bureaucratic reorganisation
Dynamics of de-Europeanisation	• Repudiation of shared values • Divergence from past common priorities • Termination of the social encounters with European national officials

Whilst foreign policy was not included in the TCA that structures the formal EU–UK post-Brexit co-operation, the renewed bilateralism, propelled by the United Kingdom through the 24 joint statements it agreed on with EU member states, is intriguing in respect to the UK government's intentionality regarding EUisation and Europeanisation of its foreign policy. The recent reinforcement of these bilateral ties, in times of a troubled relationship with the EU, could be indicative of the United Kingdom's intentions to pursue ideational transfers, but the nature of these transfers in terms of EUisation and Europeanisation has yet to be determined. To test it, this article uses a framing analysis of the 24 bilateral arrangements adopted after Brexit.[2] Frame analysis allows us to understand how actors mobilise specific frames to structure the social world and what meanings are mobilised and competing. In frame analysis, the 'definitions of a situation are built up in accordance with principles of organisation which govern events … and our subjective involvement in them' (Goffman, 1974 [1986], pp. 11–12). Although the bilateral statements result from co-authorship of the United Kingdom and EU member states, our interviewees have clarified that the United Kingdom has been the one mostly initiating and modelling these texts, enabling us thereby to learn about the 'construction of meanings' given by the United Kingdom to its bilateral relations with European capitals. This fits the assertion according to which 'frames are grounded in the institutions and discourses that sponsor them' (Björnehead and Erikson, 2018, p. 112). Table 2 refers to how the authors operationalised the dynamics of de-EUisation and de-Europeanisation in our frame analysis.

Several methodological reflections need to be made in terms of adaptations and limitations of our analysis of the potential de-EUisation and de-Europeanisation of United Kingdom's foreign policy. First, for de-Euisation, as the issues of disengagement from EU structures and of bureaucratic reorganisation are broader than any bilateral arrangement between the United Kingdom and EU member states, our analysis of these institutional and organisational dimensions relies on additional material than the bilateral statements, including grey literature and seven interviews with EU and UK officials.[3] These interviews have also offered us a more dynamic understanding of the rest of the frames and how they have evolved. For the other indicators, we follow a methodology that involves comparing our interview transcripts to 'mixed deductive and inductive structuring of perceived frames, and identified keywords, metaphors and examples' (Mäkinen et al., 2023, p. 13). That has involved a deductive phase of identifying the frames from prior research and combining it with the keywords identified in the 24 statements.

Second, regarding de-Europeanisation, given that some of the texts were adopted shortly before the writing of this article, our study is limited to the repudiation of substantive values and excludes procedural ones. Yet, these shared European values still need to be defined. In Appendix B, we identify seven frames that express them.

In this article, although we agree that these values are 'neither given once and for all by history, philosophy, religion or even culture, nor taken for granted by Europeans' (Foret

[2]These texts were collected from the UK government (FCDO, Defence Ministry) and from the EU–UK in a Changing Europe Tracker for the post-referendum period to June 2023. Our sample does not include an extra 13 bilateral statements in the field of defence and security, nor additional sectoral agreements on migration, which we have excluded from the analysis as not part of foreign policy.

[3]This distinct methodological approach, adopted to capture these two indicators in comparison with the others, explains why they are in italic in the table.

Table 2: Dynamics and Indicators of De-EUisation and of De-Europeanisation.

	Dynamics	*Indicators*
De-EUisation	• Disengagement from EU structures	• *Reduced institutional investment in EU structures*
	• Rescaling of foreign policy discourse	• No references to the EU in foreign policy discourse
	• Counter-Brusselisation through bureaucratic reorganisation	• *Organisational transformations of national administration away from Brussels*
De-Europeanisation	• Repudiation of shared values	• No references to shared values in foreign policy documents
	• Divergence from past common priorities	• No references to past common priorities in foreign policy documents
	• Termination of the social encounters with European national officials	• No opportunities for social encounters

and Vargovčíková, 2021, p. 2) and that they are subject to value conflicts in society and in the public sphere, in the field of European foreign policy, we limit ourselves to the foreign policy values elaborated in article 3 of the Treaty on European Union.[4] Far from being exclusive to and only owned by the EU, these values have been shared by other regional organisations (e.g., the Council of Europe), the Euro-Atlantic security community or the the community of liberal states. This is because before becoming EU values, they were first agreed by EU member states, including the United Kingdom, when they decided to include them in EU Treaties that were ratified and became part of the EU acquis in 1992. These values enacted upon by EU institutions originate from the liberal democracy identity of EU member states in the aftermath of the Second World War as much as they are enacted upon by EU institutions. Thus, considering that Europeanisation is not only about the EU, we refer to these values not as EU ones per se but as benchmarks as the EU Treaties codify these shared European values in the clearest and most consistent way. Furthermore, whilst the values might be generic for liberal democracies, they reach higher levels of coherence and density within the EU. The EU has been elaborating its foreign policy discourse around these values, and its member states have been socialised around them through consultation and communication, for instance, across COREU (Smith, 2000). Such intensity brings an EU specificity regarding the mechanisms employed in having these values respected and enforced. In this paper, we address a common methodological challenge that involves proving whether Europeanisation takes place and distinguishing its effects from other processes to capture 'whether and to what extent the EU makes a difference' (Haverlan, 2006, p.135). This enables us to pay attention to the cumulative effects and to stress that the EU is only one of the channels through which shared European values are internalised at the national level.

[4]'In its relations with the wider world, the Union shall uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens. It shall contribute to peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the child, as well as to the strict observance and the development of international law, including respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter'.

Facing a similar methodological challenge to identify common European priorities, we apply a similar method to test this specific indicator of (de-)Europeanisation for post-Brexit United Kingdom's foreign policy. To establish a clear set of shared priorities in the area of foreign policy, this article refers to the 2016 EU Global Strategy (European Union, 2016) and uses EU priorities as proxies for European ones. Wary of not restricting Europeanisation to EUisation, we consider this doctrine as the most consistent document in terms of shared European priorities and not just EU ones. Indeed, several fora and instruments have been set up to ensure that non-EU member states were also participating in selecting and addressing shared threats and foreign policy approaches. For instance, the European Free Trade Agreement partners are consulted by the Council Working Groups, and political discussions are held twice a year whilst the Council of Europe has contributed to the European Peace Facility when activated for the war in Ukraine.

Finally, this article focuses more on the intentions than on the concrete policy changes happening in the post-Brexit era. Consequently, although a total repudiation of these values is hardly conceivable, the degree of adherence and consistency of the United Kingdom's government to them is a useful indicator to test continuity or rupture after Brexit.

II. De-EUising but Still Europeanising: Away From Brussels but Closer to European Capitals

In the empirical sections of the article, we propose a framing analysis of the 24 bilateral statements. First, we analyse the political dynamics taking place within UK foreign policy and how these resulted in the de-EUisation of that policy field. In parallel with a clear disengagement from EU policy structures, we demonstrate that there has also been a re-scaling of foreign policy discourse to the global level, as well as a counter-Brusselisation through bureaucratic reorganisation (see The Development of the Global Britain Approach and De-EUisation section). Second, we find that, although to a lesser degree, Europeanisation still persists, being evident through (1) the numerous references to European shared values; (2) the remaining convergence towards common security priorities, including those of the EU Common Foreign Security Policy (CFSP) and Justice and Home Affairs (JHA); and (3) the establishment of venues and mechanisms to ensure social encounters between national officials in London and European capitals (see Uninterrupted Europeanisation? section).

The Development of the Global Britain Approach and De-EUisation

Domestic UK perceptions of the UK–EU relationship have been influential in shaping British foreign policy (Harrois, 2023), with the ideological stance underpinning these perceptions aligning with the same principles driving contemporary foreign policy development (Interview 4, 2023). Thatcher's foreign policy attempted to bring about 'the revival of [Britain's] influence' in the world (Thatcher, 1979) and was characterised by a vision of the United Kingdom as a champion of world trade and Liberalism (Kenny and Pearce, 2018) and by increasing opposition to EU supranationalisation. Thatcher's views would shape the United Kingdom's grand strategy deeply in terms of global leadership ambitions, perceived role and standing on the world stage and UK relations with the

EU (Daddow, 2019). As this relationship started to be increasingly questioned within the UK landscape over the 1990s and 2000s, the European dimension of the United Kingdom's foreign policy began to be eroded, and a greater emphasis was put on openness to the rest of the world. These ideas featured prominently in Cameron's foreign policy proposals from 2005 onwards, framed as responses to 9/11 and the 2005 London attacks, adopting an interventionist stance championing liberal ideals (Beech, 2011). This foreign policy vision sought to nurture a special relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States and to prioritise North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) as the main international security provider to the detriment of the EU.

With the coalition Government of 2010, these priorities were expanded by the Foreign Secretary and implemented through gradual foreign policy re-nationalisation that involved extending the United Kingdom's global reach and influence with emerging economies in Asia and South America, stepping up Britain's influence in international multilateral fora and pursuing joint interests with the United States (Hague, 2010). The EU remained relevant within that foreign policy vision, although the United Kingdom opted for developing bilateral relations with specific member states, such as Poland, and expanding its presence and influence within EU institutions. During this period, we can also identify specific instances of de-prioritisation of the UK–EU relationship, which led the Cameron Government to initiate reviews on the balance of competences, including in foreign policy (HM Government, 2013). Interestingly, most of the reviewed evidence strongly pointed towards the United Kingdom's interest in working through EU foreign policy, given the weight of the EU in the world. Nevertheless, the conclusion was that the EU should be considered just one of many alliances that the United Kingdom should be utilising.

Following the decision to hold a referendum on exiting the EU, the divergence of UK foreign policy away from the EU gradually accentuated. Prime Minister May declared that 'the referendum […] was a vote for Britain to stand tall, to believe in ourselves, to forge an ambitious and optimistic new role in the world' (May, 2016), creating 'a truly Global Britain – the best friend and neighbour to our European partners, but a country that reaches beyond the borders of Europe too' (May, 2017a). Whilst emphasising the global dimension of the United Kingdom's foreign policy, a clear intention to engage with EU foreign policy structures remained, repeatedly stated as 'we may be leaving the European Union, but we are not leaving Europe' (May, 2017b). This was echoed throughout the first phase of Brexit negotiations, resulting in the signing of the Withdrawal Agreement and the Political Declaration. The latter makes clear provision for the future relationship to include co-operation in foreign policy, security and defence (HM Government, 2019).

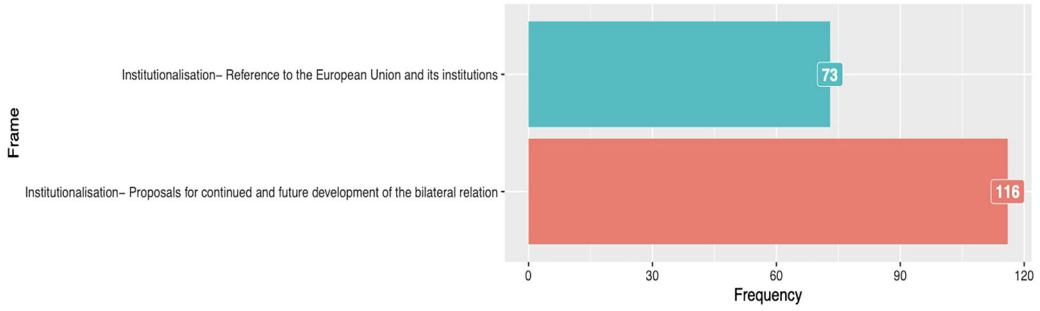
During the second phase of negotiations, however, Prime Minister Johnson adopted a more aggressive stance, the rescaling of the foreign policy discourse became accentuated and the references to the EU in UK position papers and speeches became scarcer (Mesarovich and Martill, 2023; Interview 7, 2023). Johnson's Greenwich speech, for example, clarifies that the United Kingdom's newly found sovereignty and autonomy have consequences for UK co-operation with EU foreign policy with the prioritisation of ad hoc co-operation when interests converge and a clear disengagement from EU foreign policy structures through the absence of an institutionalised agreement (Hadfield and Whitman, 2023; Johnson, 2020). The disappearance of UK–EU institutionalised foreign

policy co-ordination (HM Government, 2020) coincided with the culmination of the Global Britain strategy in the format of the 2021 Integrated Review (HM Government, 2021). The latter was particularly illustrative of the rescaling of the EU's place in the United Kingdom's foreign policy, a strategy considered important by the Johnson Government to operationalise Brexit (Interview 6, 2023). Although the Integrated Review mentioned the European Union 25 times across 114 pages, these references were mostly about the opportunities arising from Brexit. UK priorities were a deepened alliance with the United States, the expansion of its influence through multilateral fora and the exploration of relations with other parts of the world. The desire to deepen bilateral relations with specific EU countries is also highlighted, as a vital pathway to building a safe Euro-Atlantic area (HM Government, 2021). According to one interviewee, especially under Johnson and Truss premierships, there was a tendency to use G7 venues and similar fora to exclude the EU and to talk directly to EU member states (Interview 7, 2023).

This re-scaling was accompanied by counter-Brusselisation through bureaucratic reorganisation. The operationalisation of Brexit led to the creation of the Department for Exiting the European Union (DExEU), whose staff was re-allocated from the Europe Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Europe Unit of the Cabinet Office and the United Kingdom's Permanent Representation to the EU (May, 2016). With the signing of the TCA, DExEU and the governance of the TCA were then integrated into the wider FCO, indicating a desire to dilute the focus on EU affairs (Interview 1, 2022). Shortly after, the Integrated Review marked the transformation of the FCO into the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), bringing together the United Kingdom's overseas activities and rendering its global ambitions more explicit (HM Government, 2021). Simultaneously, when the UK Permanent Representation to the EU became the UK Mission to the EU, staff reductions brought the numbers down to those of the 2002–2008 period (UK Parliament European Scrutiny Committee, 2022) whilst part of the staff was redeployed to bilateral embassies in Europe (Interview 2, 2022; Interview 4, 2023). At the time of writing, 130 people are based in Brussels (instead of 180 prior to Brexit) and are working towards maintaining the United Kingdom's influence in Brussels. Since the Windsor Framework in particular, the United Kingdom is trying to position itself as an indispensable actor and strategic source of information for EU institutions, sometimes even before EU member states (Interview 7, 2023). Finally, counter-Brusselisation was also clear from the initial hesitation to grant the EU ambassador to the United Kingdom the full diplomatic status and privileges that are given to heads of missions of states (James, 2021).

It is in this context of de-EUisation that bilateral declarations on foreign affairs were signed between the United Kingdom and specific member states (see Appendix A). These bilateral declarations have been considered a natural continuation of regular UK diplomatic activities (Interview 5, 2023), as well an important way to operationalise the United Kingdom's foreign policy post-Brexit (Interview 6, 2023). Looking at these declarations in greater detail, it is possible to identify important markers of de-EUisation, namely, the limited connection to the EU and its institutions (see Figure 1). Amongst the 24 declarations that were analysed for this article, there are 73 references to the EU, including to the Union itself, the TCA, the Withdrawal Agreement, EU member states and EU agencies (see Table 3). Most references (38), however, are to the desire to use bilateral relations

Figure 1: References to Institutionalisation in the Bilateral Declarations. [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]



to go beyond the current UK–EU co-operation framework. Comparatively, there are 108 mentions to co-operation through NATO. There are no references to EU policies, such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy, nor to EU actors, apart from two references to EU agencies (Europol and Eurojust). Furthermore, only half of the declarations refer to the need for bilateral relations to be respectful of EU membership obligations and as an important framing element for the development of the bilateral relationship. Significantly, only two countries discuss the importance of ensuring transparency of bilateral relations towards EU institutions (Czech Republic and Germany). Finally, the multiple proposals for the institutionalisation of the bilateral relations (see Appendix B) include no suggestions for future co-operation with EU institutions/instruments. The following section now questions what this means for the Europeanisation of the United Kingdom, and whether this continued engagement with European capitals could still be understood as a form of narrow Europeanisation, and hence not a full de-Europeanisation.

Uninterrupted Europeanisation?

Assuming that post-Brexit bilateralism would not automatically end the pre-existing Europeanisation of United Kingdom's foreign policy, we tested the processes identified in Table 1 in the 24 joint statements: (1) the permanent strong adherence to EU substantive values in foreign policy; (2) the convergence towards EU priorities; and (3) the continuation of social encounters between national officials from the United Kingdom and EU member states.

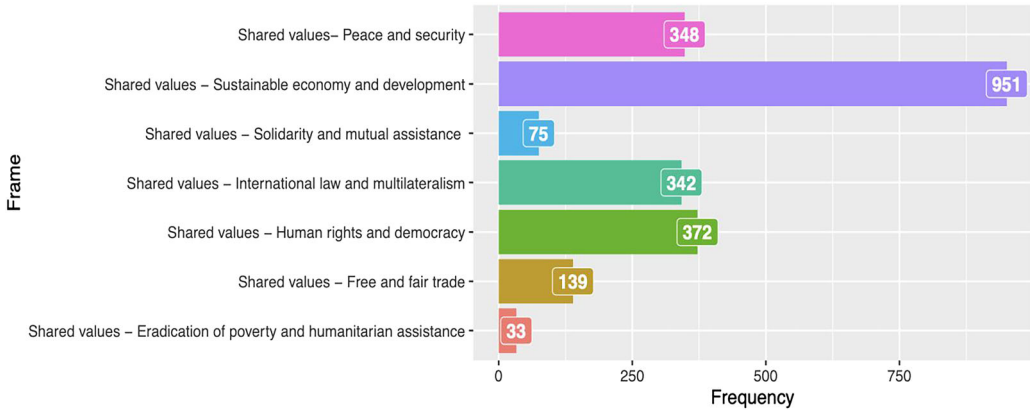
Persistent Shared Values

Leaving aside procedural norms, we first analyse to what extent the United Kingdom's government has remained consistent with EU substantive ones in its renewed bilateralism. Figure 2 shows a clear alignment to all EU foreign policy values and in order of frequency: sustainable economy and development (ranked 1st, appearing 951 times in the texts), human rights and democracy (372), peace and security (348) and international law and multilateralism (342), as well as free and fair trade (139), solidarity and mutual assistance (75) and eradication of poverty and humanitarian assistance (33).

Table 3: Dynamics and Indicators of De-EUisation and of De-Europeanisation in the Post-Brexit Bilateral Statements Between the United Kingdom and EU Member States.

	Dynamics	*Indicators*	*Results*
De-EUisation	Disengagement from EU foreign policy structures	Reduced institutional investment in EU CFSP structures	No institutional foreign policy relationship in the TCA
	Rescaling of foreign policy discourse	No references to the EU in foreign policy discourse	Rejection of what the EU can offer and very limited references to the EU
	Counter Brusselisation through bureaucratic reorganisation	Organisational transformations of national administration away from Brussels	Civil service re-organisation in line with new foreign policy discourse and reduced investment in administrative units dealing with the EU
De-Europeanisation	Repudiation of shared values	No references to shared values in foreign policy documents	Strong adherence to shared values
	Divergence from past common priorities	No references to past common priorities in foreign policy documents	Continued convergence in common security priorities
	Termination of the social encounters with European national officials	No opportunities for social encounters (meetings, dialogues, joint training etc.)	New mechanisms and venues created to pursue social encounters

Figure 2: Frequency of 'Shared Values' in the Bilateral Declarations. [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]



This strong adhesion to EU values within bilateral relations helps understand 'why some bilateral relationships have the ability to become strong, stable and amicable' (Ben-Josef Hirsch and Miller, 2021, p. 356) and others not. In our case study, the values underpinning the UK and EU member states bilateral relations are interestingly similar to

what they used to be whilst the United Kingdom was still a member of the EU and hence exhibit a high level of density and consistency. Reinforcing our argument about post-Brexit continued Europeanisation, many of our interviewees have agreed that 'our values are still very naturally close' (Interview 5, 2023).

This feeling of a specific European like-minded community is consolidated by the many references in the bilateral arrangements to the common heritage and to the notion of friendship that has existed between the United Kingdom and EU member states prior to the start of European integration (e.g., Portugal, Czech Republic), with repeated mentions to the long historical ties between European capitals. Recent events also contributed to the reactivation of a shared identity. In addition to the numerous calls for Europe's security and peace, with the war on Ukraine, a sense of shared identity about European security provision is highly visible in the joint statements between the United Kingdom and countries in Central/Eastern and Northern Europe that feel particularly threatened by Russia's invasion (i.e. Sweden, Czech Republic).

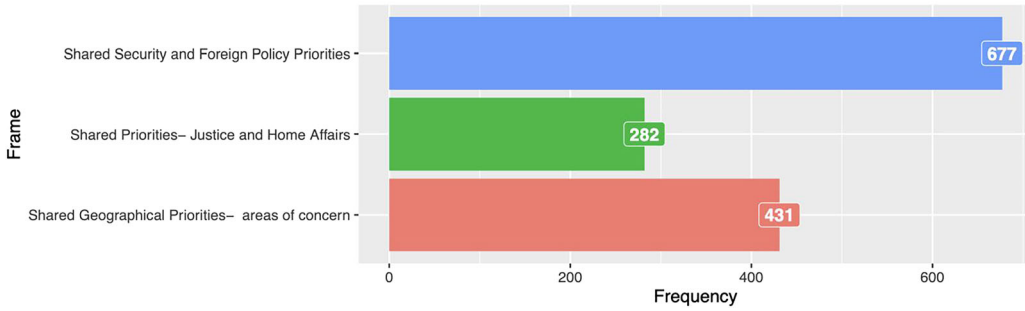
At the same time, as mentioned above, these seven values are not exclusive to the EU and are also present, with less intensity and coherence, in the post-Brexit arrangements between the United Kingdom and Canada, the United States, Malaysia or Australia. This was confirmed by our interviewees: 'The UK has not changed their approach to any of these things since they left the EU. We don't expect them, as a Western democracy, to change that much' (Interview 6, 2023). Whilst continued Europeanisation is also about common substantive values with other liberal democratic actors in line with the values of multilateralism and rule-based international order promoted by the EU, the United Kingdom is at the same time pursuing a strategy of rescaling, demonstrating that the EU is just one other actor with whom the United Kingdom shares values on a global level (Interview 7, 2023). That is particularly visible in the field of trade, central to bilateral statements, with London proving that it can avoid Brussels' red tape by trading with global nations, such as France (Interview 3, 2023). Furthermore, one also needs to acknowledge that the continuation of Europeanisation around shared values is nonetheless taking place in a more informal way since these declarations, contrary to EU treaties, are not legally binding.

Europeanised Shared Security Priorities: CFSP and JHA

The alignment of the UK government with the EU agenda, considered as a proxy for shared European priorities, constitutes an additional indicator of Europeanisation, with the United Kingdom still having the same key interests and the core issues and challenges not being impacted by Brexit (Interview 4, 2023). As security, external and internal, appears as the most prominent topic in the bilateral statements, we focus on this specific era. Figure 3 analyses the frames of shared security priorities and reveals that they relate to two different EU policy fields: security and foreign policy (677 references) and JHA (282 references).

In the field of foreign and security policy, a strong convergence towards the priorities identified in the 2016 EU Global Strategy (European Union, 2016) and with which non-EU member states have aligned shows some continued Europeanisation. Similar to this strategic document, the bilateral statements between the United Kingdom and EU member states reveal a common broad understanding of security, appearing as the top concern. In addition to the predominant mentions of defence (156 references), security

Figure 3: Frequency of 'Shared Priorities' in the Bilateral Declarations. [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]



also encompasses cybersecurity/cyberactivity/space (59), disinformation (27), hybrid threats (26), energy (20) and even climate and environmental degradation (109). Indeed, the latter is framed as a security issue, calling for instance for closer co-operation between the United Kingdom and France on food security, climate adaptation and development for the Sahel, Gulf of Guinea, Lake Chad Basin and Great Lakes and West Africa and the Horn of Africa.

That specific example also reveals the continuity in terms of priority areas of consideration, with many references in bilateral statements to both Africa (31) and Asia (54). Whilst Russia was already featuring prominently on the EU's Global Strategy, the war in Ukraine put it at the centre stage of the bilateral statements between the United Kingdom and EU member states (260 references to Russia and Ukraine). Hence, defence is particularly prominent with Nordic countries and with countries in the vicinity of Russia and Ukraine, namely, Lithuania (9 references), Poland (12), Denmark (9) and Romania (11). Moreover, sovereignty and territorial integrity (55 references) appear especially in relation to Ukraine, namely, the priority to maintain a rule-based order, to restore Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity (Poland) and to hold 'those to account who undermine the integrity of international commitments' (Estonia).

Finally, similarities between the EU's Global Strategy and bilateral statements also relate to two broad imperatives. On the one hand, the joint statements insist on the strong commitment to keep preserving and expanding international and regional orders, through multiple calls to multilateralism (97 references) and to specific international organisations (e.g., NATO, UN) (177) but also regional co-operation, including Euro-Atlantic security (41). On the other hand, there is a clear continuity regarding the general approach to conflicts, with a focus on resilience and deterrence (63 references), arms control and disarmament (25), prevention (6) and peacebuilding (5).

Regarding JHA, the bilateral statements focus essentially on two sub-policies. First, about half of the texts include provisions to combat crime and terrorism (133 references), with some references to specific forms of crime, especially cybercrime (28), illicit finance and corruption (13) and, to a lesser extent, drug (5) and weapons trafficking (3) (e.g., Italy and Portugal), modern slavery (2) (e.g., Latvia and Lithuania) and sexual violence, especially against children (12) (e.g., France and Romania). Co-operation is mainly envisioned through exchanges of information, practices and expertise and through some

more sophisticated provisions such as real-time reciprocal alert exchanges (e.g., Italy and Portugal) or joint training (e.g., France and Cyprus). Second, in the 12 bilateral statements where migration is present (60 references), the emphasis is on irregular border crossings (30), with limited references to other concerns (e.g., asylum processes). Addressing migration as a security issue, the sharing of data and expertise, the development of technologies, the strategic dialogues and operational plans to be set up are primarily targeted at securing borders (3) and fighting human trafficking and migrant smuggling (27). In comparison, fewer bilateral statements allude to judicial co-operation and when they do they cover three main aspects: operational co-operation (11 references), especially to facilitate transfer of prisoners (2) (e.g., Italy); sharing of best practices and joint training to support the modernisation and reform of national judicial systems (3) (e.g., Cyprus); and efforts to promote civil judicial co-operation (3) (e.g., Romania).

To some extent, the inclusion of these issues in the bilateral statements makes sense considering the past engagement of the United Kingdom in this policy area (Wolff et al., 2022) and reflects the characteristics of JHA: the historical prioritisation of security policies over the rest; the emphasis on horizontal and soft co-operation mechanisms; and externalisation with provisions on the co-operation with third countries (mostly Africa and Balkans) to tackle internal security. In addition, the strong convergence over JHA is better understood based on the negotiations of Brexit, with the bilateral statements being an opportunity for the United Kingdom to complement the TCA (as recalled by many texts) and to improve the co-operation with EU member states (Davies and Kassim, 2023).

Yet, despite that continuity, the new provisions will not replicate the past level of co-operation between the United Kingdom and EU member states, nor will palliate the limited access granted to the United Kingdom to some EU agencies and instruments. The 13 mentions in these bilateral agreements of data sharing through Interpol is a good illustration of the United Kingdom's intentions to use alternative channels to EU venues in order to mitigate post-Brexit arrangements, but with limited results so far (Mitsilegas and Guild, 2023).

Continuation of Social Encounters

The continuation of social encounters is the final dynamic of Europeanisation, as it ensures that the United Kingdom and EU member states will keep actively engaging in social learning and ideational transfers. Although we acknowledge that this can be brought about by the activity of a number of actors, such as the United Kingdom's Mission in Brussels and the EU External Action Service in London, we limit our analysis to the different arrangements envisioned in the bilateral statements. With a few exceptions, these texts provide for the holding of regular consultations and meetings between Foreign Affairs Ministers (38 references), mostly on an annual basis, to be complemented by discussions and exchanges between senior officials and experts to review progress, propose new initiatives and consider possibilities for further dialogue and co-operation. Some of these agreements envision more detailed governance mechanisms, such as the establishment of a strategic working group for Belgo-British relations, or the preparation of action plans to ensure the co-operation between the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

In addition, many of the bilateral arrangements mention the creation of bilateral working groups, dialogues, forums, committees, partnerships on some specific topics such as

cybersecurity, trade and investments, migration and energy security/transition. Other mechanisms are more operational, for instance, the development of joint training of diplomats (e.g., Netherlands) or of police officers (e.g., Cyprus). Defence appears as a highly institutionalised policy with provisions on joint capabilities (e.g., Latvia), on capacity-building efforts (e.g., Poland) and on new bilateral defence agreements (e.g., Portugal) and military dialogues (e.g., Romania, Malta) to be set up. This focus on defence makes sense considering the past role of the United Kingdom in this policy, the context of the war in Ukraine (Davies and Kassim, 2023) and its prioritisation detailed above. Bilateral statements appear therefore as a potential opportunity for the United Kingdom and EU member states to ensure some continued Europeanisation despite the limited achievements of the TCA on Defence.

However, the level of institutionalisation obtained through the bilateral agreements is unlikely to reach the potential intensity of the EU framework characterised by its density of venues and meetings enabling social encounters and exchanges of ideas and practices, the United Kingdom being outside the room now (Interview 2, 2022), with no discussion at the margins of the Council meetings (Interview 6, 2023). An additional argument to a limited Europeanisation lies in the blatant differences between the EU member states in terms of institutionalisation. Whilst many venues have to be created for future co-operation between the United Kingdom and France, Italy, Portugal and Poland, provisions are less ambitious with other EU member states (e.g., Greece and Luxembourg), including in comparison with the 2019 UK–Japan Joint Statement or the 2023 AUKMIN Joint Statement. That last remark reinforces the argument of the United Kingdom as proponent of promiscuous bilateralism (Interview 4, 2023), selecting its partners, and adds nuances to Europeanisation. Finally, as recalled by the interviewees, these texts use very vague notions (‘dialogue’, ‘partnership’, ‘discussions’ etc.) with limited details on the nature and the functioning of the different venues to be set up, leaving doubts on their degree of feasibility and on the move from a rhetorical institutionalisation to an effective one, especially as these are non-binding texts. Yet informality does not necessarily mean that the co-operation is weakened, as the personal relationship between Prime Minister Sunak and President von der Leyen, as well as the regular and frequent meetings between EEAS Secretary Sannino and FCDO permanent secretary Philip Barton testify that informal contacts take place on a frequent basis (Interview 7, 2023).

Conclusion

This article has questioned whether the intensification of bilateral statements at the initiative of the United Kingdom with EU member states could be seen as an instance of de-EUisation and/or de-Europeanisation of its foreign policy. Against the backdrop of the literature on the varieties of British policies’ trajectories (Wolff and Piquet, 2022), as well as on de-Europeanisation (Copeland, 2016), we contend that in spite of the United Kingdom exiting EU formal structures competent for foreign policy, re-scaling its foreign affairs ambitions to the global scale and reorganising its administration to shift away from a EU focus, which can be equated to a de-EUisation, some forms of Europeanisation are enabled through a wide and in-depth network of bilateral diplomatic links. The United Kingdom is still a strong promoter of values and priorities that are fundamental to European countries and of social encounters with European capitals. This alignment, as

we have seen before, is not necessarily only correlated to the fact that the United Kingdom was a member of the EU but also to broader processes of Europeanisation that have involved historical ties with European countries and shared values found in other organisations that go beyond the EU. In this sense, we contend that Europeanisation of UK foreign policy in its broader sense continues and needs to be understood as a wider, longer historical process, whereby EU member states recall their long-standing relationship with the United Kingdom in the bilateral declarations that have existed and will keep existing outside the EU. EUisation is therefore a clearer concept to gauge the impact of the EU on domestic settings.

Furthermore, our article provides some additional elements in understanding the evolution of bilateralism in times of crisis. Even though domestic politics negatively impact external differentiation, bilateralisation of foreign policy co-operation has been rather consensual and actively sought by both the United Kingdom and its partners when facing crises, including since the start of the war in Ukraine. Expanding from our case study, this article also calls for more research on the EU and bilateralism in times of turmoil. Starting from the observation of an intensification of the bilateral ties between EU member states and third countries (e.g., Norway, Switzerland and Iceland), as well as between EU member states, especially following the Eurozone debt crisis and the COVID-19 crisis (Mattelaer, 2019), this new research agenda could explore to what extent the 'polycrisis' faced by the EU has led to a renewal of bilateralism and affected the purpose of such format of international relations, questioning whether it reinforces or hinders European integration.

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Interviewees

Interview 1, UK Civil Servant, online, 6 June 2022
Interview 2, French diplomat, Paris, 12 July 2022
Interview 3, former civil servant at DTI, online 2 October 2023
Interview 4, Member of the House of Lords, online, 3 October 2023
Interview 5 UK Civil Servant, online, 11 October 2023
Interview 6, EEAS Official, online, 13 October 2023
Interview 7, EU Official, online, 8 November 2023

Appendix A: Bilateral Agreements Concluded Between the United Kingdom and EU Member States in Foreign Policy and Defence Since the Brexit Referendum

	EU member state	*Agreement*	*Date*	*Topics*
1.	Estonia	Statement of Intent on Enhanced Cooperation	11/03/2021	Foreign policy and defence and security
2.	Germany	Joint Declaration on Foreign and Security Policy	30/06/2021	Foreign policy
3.	Greece	Strategic Bilateral Framework	25/10/2021	Foreign policy and defence and security
4.	Belgium	Joint Declaration on Bilateral Cooperation	30/11/2021	Foreign policy and defence and security
5.	Latvia	Joint Declaration of Cooperation	06/12/2021	Foreign policy and defence and security
6.	Slovenia	Joint Statement of Intent on Enhancing Bilateral Relations	23/02/2022	Foreign policy and defence and security
7.	Poland	Joint Leaders Statement	07/04/2022	Foreign policy and defence and security
8.	Finland	Joint Statement	11/05/2022	Defence and security
9.	Czech Republic	Joint Statement on Intent	27/05/2022	Foreign policy and defence and security
10.	Lithuania	Joint Declaration on Bilateral Cooperation	30/05/2022	Foreign policy and defence and security
11.	Estonia	Joint Leaders Statement	06/06/2022	Foreign policy and defence and security
12.	Portugal	Joint Declaration on Bilateral Cooperation	13/06/2022	Foreign policy and defence and security
13.	Estonia	Joint Statement on Defence	08/11/2022	Defence and security
14.	Cyprus	Memorandum of Understanding on Establishing a Strategic Cooperation	15/11/2022	Foreign policy and defence and security
15.	Netherlands	Joint Statement on Foreign, Development and Security Bilateral Cooperation	16/11/2022	Foreign policy and defence and security
16.	Malta	Bilateral Cooperation Framework	10/02/2023	Foreign policy and defence and security
17.	Slovakia	Joint Declaration on Closer Cooperation	21/02/2023	Foreign policy and defence and security
18.	France	Joint Leaders' Declaration	10/03/2023	Foreign policy and defence and security
19.	Romania	Joint Statement on the Strategic Partnership	23/03/2023	Foreign policy and defence and security
20.	Italy	Memorandum of Understanding on Bilateral Cooperation	27/04/2023	Foreign policy and defence and security
21.	Croatia	Joint Declaration on Bilateral Cooperation	28/04/2023	Foreign policy and defence and security
22.	Luxembourg	Joint Statement on Bilateral Cooperation	12/05/2023	Foreign policy and defence and security
23.	Sweden	Joint Leaders Statement	19/06/2023	Foreign policy and defence and security
24.	Denmark	Joint Statement on Foreign, Security, Defence Development and Bilateral Cooperation	20/06/2023	Foreign policy and defence and security

Appendix B: Frequency of the Frames Present in the Bilateral Agreements Concluded Between the United Kingdom and EU Member States in Foreign Policy and Defence Since the Brexit Referendum

Shared Values

N	*Frame*	*Overall frequency*	*Text reference*	*Frequency*
1	Shared values – peace and security	348	Europe's peace and security	12
			Principles of European security order	3
			Protection of Ukraine/help/support	138
			European security	18
			Common understanding of threats	9
			Unprecedent challenges	2
			Sovereignty/territorial integrity	51
			Geopolitical competition	1
			Countering disinformation/interference/ misinformation	27
			Irregular/illegal migration	28
			Non-proliferation	10
			Resilience/deterrence	46
			Shared national security interests	3
2	Shared values – human rights and democracy	372	Diaspora/citizen's rights	12
			Climate action/climate change	71
			Biodiversity loss	17
			Shared democratic values	14
			European and universal values	7
			Like-minded democracies	4
			Freedom (media/religion/belief)	46
			Global network of liberty/freedom	8
			Opposition to authoritarianism	1
			Gender/women/girls	49
			LGBT+	6
			Sexual and reproductive health	1
			Global health	9
			Help vaccinate the world	3
			Protection of minorities/vulnerable groups	8
			Rule of law	30
			People – people contact	26
			UN Charter	13
			Civil society	15
			Culture	32
3	Shared values – international law and multilateralism	342	Shared democratic values	14
			European and universal values	7
			Deepening diplomatic ties	5
			Rule-based international order/system/ multilateralism	37

N	*Frame*	*Overall frequency*	*Text reference*	*Frequency*
			Membership of international organisations (UN, OECD, NATO, CoE, Joint Expeditionary Force, WTO, ICC, OPCW)	177
			Access to justice	1
			Criminal justice	11
			Rule of law	30
			Multilateral	57
			Rules-based multilateral trading system	3
4	Shared values – free and fair trade	139	Businesses	44
			Economic ties	10
			Private sector	7
			Export controls	2
			Resilience	20
			Supply chains	26
			Movement of goods	1
			Rules-based multilateral trading system	3
			Protectionism	7
			Digital trade	2
			Harmful industrial subsidies	2
			Taxation	3
			Free trade	12
5	Shared values – sustainable economy and development	951	Tourism	8
			Businesses	45
			Jobs/employment	6
			Income	1
			Circular economy	4
			Transport	7
			Energy	96
			Economic ties	10
			Private sector	7
			Public administration reform/digitisation/ digitalisation	15
			Resilience	22
			Economic security	11
			Education/science/research/development/ student exchange/higher education institution links	297
			Seasonal workers	1
			Supply chains	24
			Diaspora/citizen's rights	11
			Investment	59
			Technology (ies)	97
			Digital trade	2
			Mutual investment	2
			5G and 6G	5
			FinTech/GovTech	1
			Affordable energy	5
			Building back better after Covid	2
			Maritime affairs	15
			Net-zero	18

N	*Frame*	*Overall frequency*	*Text reference*	*Frequency*
			Clean energy transition/renewable energy sources/decarbonise/green hydrogen	47
			Climate action	34
			Climate change	45
			Green growth/clean growth/green shipping corridors	6
			Deforestation	5
			Phase out coal	2
			Biodiversity loss	12
			People-to-people contacts	26
			Inclusive growth	3
6	Shared values – solidarity and mutual assistance	75	Mutual investment	2
			Friendship	15
			Strong engagement	3
			Key strategic partnership	2
			Shared capacity	3
			Common European heritage	1
			Like-minded global partners	6
			Mutual vision/mutual interests	16
			Shared history	6
			UN Charter	12
			Common goals	3
			Oldest alliance	1
			Strategic unity of Europe	4
			Mutual assistance in case of disaster or attack	1
7	Shared values – eradication of poverty and humanitarian assistance	33	Humanitarian crisis	3
			Humanitarian assistance	10
			Development (aid)	0
			Fight against poverty	3
			Global health/help vaccinate the world	12
			Force for good	1
			Reduction of inequalities	4

Shared Priorities

N	*Frame*	*Overall frequency*	*Text reference*	*Frequency*
1	Shared priorities – justice and home affairs	282	Transnational/serious/organised crime	37
			Migrant/human smuggling/trafficking/ organised immigration crime	27
			Modern slavery	2
			Illegal/irregular migration	30
			Drug trafficking	5
			Weapons/ammunitions/explosives smuggling	3
			Sexual violence	12
			Illicit finance	6
			Cybersecurity/cybercrime	28
			Terrorism	28
			Border security	3
			Law enforcement co-operation/police co-operation	18
			Intelligence sharing	10
			Rule of law	30
			Artificial intelligence	5
			Corruption	7
			Criminal justice	11
			Interpol	13
			Exchange of criminal records	4
			Transfer of prisoners	2
			Access to justice	1
2	Shared security and foreign policy priorities	677	Strategic unity of Europe	4
			Sovereignty/territorial integrity	55
			Geopolitical competition	1
			Countering disinformation/interference/ misinformation	27
			Irregular/illegal migration	30
			Terrorism	28
			Cybersecurity/cyber activity/space	59
			Intelligence co-operation	6
			Situational awareness	2
			Interoperability	13
			Conflict prevention	6
			Defence	156
			Peace building	5
			Military mobility	6
			Hybrid threats	26
			Arms (control/export)/weapons/ disarmament	15
			Non-proliferation	10
			Resilience/deterrence	63
			Joint capabilities/joint expeditionary force	12

N	Frame	Overall frequency	Text reference	Frequency
			Shared national security interests	4
			Strategic communication	3
			Mutual assistance in case of disaster or attack	1
			Defence procurement	2
			Sanctions	10
			Malign use of technology	1
			Energy security	20
			Climate (change/migrants/security)/ environmental degradation	109
			Global poverty	2
			MH17	1
3	Shared geographical priorities – areas of concern	431	Euro-Atlantic	41
			Russia	119
			Ukraine	141
			China	33
			Belarus	10
			Indo-Pacific Region	17
			Africa	27
			Western Balkans	16
			Hong Kong	4
			Eastern Mediterranean	7
			Near East	10
			North Africa	6

Institutionalisation

N	Frame	Overall frequency	Text reference	Frequency
1	Institutionalisation – reference to the European Union and its institutions	73	Membership of the EU	9
			EU member state	15
			Europol	1
			Eurojust	1
			Transparency towards the institutions and members states of the European Union	2
			EU–UK trade and co-operation agreement	17
			TCA	1
			UK–EU framework/co-operation between the EU and the UK	17
			Withdrawal agreement	7
			Complementing ongoing work	3
2	Institutionalisation – proposals for continued and future development of the bilateral relation	116	Joint training	6
			Shared capacity	4
			Strategic dialogue	11
			Regular dialogue	7

N	*Frame*	*Overall frequency*	*Text reference*	*Frequency*
			Regular strategic dialogue	1
			Annual dialogue	10
			Bi-annual dialogue	0
			Regular consultations	5
			Regular bilateral consultations	5
			Periodic consultations	0
			Annual meetings	7
			Regular meetings	3
			High-level inter-governmental trade dialogue	0
			Strategic working group	2
			Joint diplomatic training	1
			Programme of defence industrial co-operation	1
			Joint commission	2
			Joint cyber hub	1
			Bilateral strategy	4
			Strategic partnership	6
			Business, trade and investment taskforce	1
			Conferences	23
			Outlook group	1
			New agreement	3
			War memorial	2
			Triennial delivery plans	1
			Bilateral defence agreement	1
			Co-operation and training protocol between police forces	1
			Joint action plan	5
			Business forum	2