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WHY DO THE NETHERLANDS AND GERMANY DIFFER ON FURTHER EUROPEAN INTEGRATION



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Executive Summary

The goal of this research is to examine the differences between the Netherlands and Germany, when it comes to European integration. The central question in this thesis is: “Why do the Netherlands and Germany differ on further European integration?”. Through desk research and field research, in the form of interviews with experts on the matter, the history of both the Netherlands and Germany with European integration has been examined. The research is structured in four sub questions, which deal with the European integration process from 1945 until now. Both the Dutch and German history with this subject is examined, as well as the relations between the two. The last sub question is a case study, which deals with a subject that is relevant to European integration, and topical: PeSCo, the new EU initiative on the field of security and defence.

The Dutch and German history with European integration has followed different routes, even though the outcome was the same for both. The newly formed West German state took part in European integration after World War Two, since it was an opportunity to become equal to the other Western countries. Germany also felt a responsibility for Europe, after it had been responsible for two World Wars. The Netherlands took part mostly, because they were dependent on the West German, regardless of the Dutch Atlantic aim. This economic incentive would become a constant in the Dutch history with European integration. When the economic integration was, to a certain extent, completed in 1992 with the Treaty of Maastricht, the situation for Germany had changed significantly. The West and East German states had reunified in 1990, making Germany a central European power. In this new role, it felt a responsibility for European integration, and it called for the ‘deepening and widening’ of European integration. The Netherlands grew increasingly Eurosceptic after 1992, since their economic aim had been fulfilled, and the project was now ‘done’. This continued in the 21st century. Germany developed itself in Europe’s economic powerhouse, and would therefore take the lead during the economic crisis of the 2010s, becoming Europe’s ‘de facto’ leader.

In PeSCo, the Dutch Euro pragmatic view, and the German more idealistic side, come together. The differences between the two countries are visible in this project. Germany does not want to work alone on a subject as sensitive as defence and military, and is looking for consensus across the board. And while Merkel is talking of a European army, the Netherlands only want concrete results and no ideological discussions.

There is not one, unequivocal answer that can be given to this question after the research. The answer is found throughout all these historical events and incentives, as explained above. Together, they are reason for the current differences between the Netherlands and Germany.

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Glossary

Abbreviation: Full name – English translation (if applicable)

AfD: Alternative für Deutschland – Alternative for Germany

CDA: Christen-Democratisch Appèl – Christian Democratic Appeal

CDU: Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands – Christian Democratic Union of Germany

CSU: Christlich-Soziale Union – Christian Social Union

D66: Democraten 66 – Democrats 66

EC: European Community

ECSC: European Coal and Steel Community

EEC: European Economic Community

EMU: European Monetary Union

EPU: European Political Union

EU: European Union

Euratom: European Atomic Energy Community

FRG: Federal Republic of Germany

GDR: German Democratic Republic

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

PeSCo: Permanent Structured Cooperation

PvdA: Partij van de Arbeid – Labour Party

PVV: Partij voor de Vrijheid – Party for Freedom

SGP: Stability and Growth Pact

SPD: Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands – Social Democratic Party of Germany

UK: United Kingdom

USA: United States of America

VVD: Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie – People's Party for Freedom and Democracy

1. Introduction

With the end of the Second World War in 1945, across the European continent the question arose as to what to do now. It was clear that changes in international relations and the world order had to be made. Where the new super powers Russia and the United States slowly descended into the Cold War, different developments took place in post-WWII Europe. The continent had suffered heavily during the war. Germany was occupied by the allied forces. Europe had to be rebuilt. Germany remained a key factor in this question, housing the Ruhr Area which could supply Europe with much needed coal and steel. But how could a sovereign German nation exist, without threatening the safety of Europe? It became clear that Germany had to be reintegrated into Europe, through cooperation and European integration. This became the new goal. This aim was realised firstly in 1951, when the Treaty of Paris, which formally established a European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), was signed by six European countries: France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy, the Netherlands and West Germany. This European Coal and Steel Community was the first step towards further European integration, which would develop from that moment on.

Both the Netherlands and West Germany took part in this new European cooperation from the very beginning. Economically, these two countries were, and still are, closely tied to one another. Politically, however, the Netherlands and West Germany (and later a unified Germany) have since the very beginning been looking in different directions. Despite its economic dependency on Germany, the Netherlands have an Anglo-Saxon focus, looking across the pond and the Atlantic Ocean for political partners and security (Korteweg, 2017). With the ECSC developing over time from a trade union into a political union, the Dutch and German views on European integration developed along with it, but not always for the same reasons, and not always into the same direction.

In the European Union in 2018, Germany is its de facto leader. The Netherlands is respected as one of the founders of the ECSC, but comes nowhere near its eastern neighbour in terms of influence and power. Since 1951, European integration has developed intensively, looking for example at the introduction and implementation of the Euro. Nowadays, developments regarding further European integration are taking place in many forms, and in many different fields. With the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, the Dutch lose an important political partner in the EU. The Dutch and Germans, however, still do not share the same ideas and views on European integration. How come, that two countries that are tied to each other economically, have such different views politically, and specifically on a topic such as European integration?

In this thesis, the following research question will be examined: Why do the Netherlands and Germany differ on further European integration?

In order to answer this question, four sub-questions have been formulated that structure the research. These sub-questions are the following:

1. The Dutch and German involvement with European integration from 1945 until 1992
2. What are the German developments regarding European integration since 1992?
3. What are the Dutch developments regarding European integration since 1992?
4. Case Study: What are the Dutch and German stances on PeSCo?

Sub-question 1 analyses the developments of both the Netherlands and Germany regarding European integration from after the Second World War, until the Treaty of Maastricht. This serves as a basis and framework on which the following sub-question can build.

Sub-question 2 and 3 continue from sub-question 1. Each sub-question focusses on one of the two countries central to this thesis, with sub-question 2 addressing the Dutch developments regarding European integration since 1992, and sub-question 3 concentrating on the German developments regarding European integration since 1992. These questions are relevant for the research, because it will become clear what developments both countries went through, and how each country came to its respective views on European integration. When these questions are answered, they help in identifying the differences between the Netherlands and Germany.

Sub-question 4 is a case study, in which the Dutch and German differences regarding European integration on the subject of European defence are researched. The focus lays on the Permanent Structured Cooperation of the European Union's security and defence policy, which is referred to further in this thesis as PeSCo. This case is especially interesting, since it is the first development on the field of military and defence in European integration in over 50 years. It is a sensitive political subject, and therefore it forms a perfect case study, to see in which ways the Dutch and Germans might differ in opinion and views on the matter. The 4th sub-question helps to further identify the stances of the Netherlands and Germany, and put them in a modern light, since more recent developments are taken into account. This, together with the previous sub-questions, will subsequently help answering the research question. The research question is answered in the conclusion.

The topic of migration is left out of account in this research. This choice has been made for several reasons. Firstly, other developments that took place are more essential to European integration, for example the Euro crisis. Migration, while an essential topic in the European contemporary debate, has not produced enough on the topic of European integration. Secondly, taking in account the word limit for this dissertation, choices with regards to what could be discussed had to be made. Because of these reasons, migration is left out of account in this dissertation.

2. Literature Review

This thesis discusses the Dutch and German history with European integration, starting from 1945. The Dutch and German approaches and developments are examined apart from each other. This is done based on already existing literature on these topics.

Extensive research on the Dutch history with European integration since 1945 has been done. Dutch historian Duco Hellema's book *Nederland in de Wereld: De buitenlandse politiek van Nederland* is regarded as a standard work on the Dutch foreign policy. In this book, Hellema deals with the Dutch foreign policy starting from the sixteenth century until 2010. From 1945, The Netherlands took an 'Atlantic route' on several important areas (Hellema, 2016, p. 174). The Dutch position towards the EEC was ambivalent. On the one hand, the Dutch did not want or need an EEC, on the other hand they were too small to not take part (Hellema, 2016, p. 258). In the 1970s, one of the Dutch goals was achieved with the accession of the United Kingdom, making the European Community more Atlantic and less continental. With this accession, however, the Dutch role in the European Community became smaller, because they lost their position the Atlantic spokesperson within the EC (Hellema, 2016, p. 344). From the 1990s, the Atlantic aim of the Netherlands became less prevalent. The European integration would have to focus on free trade. In the 21st century, the EU policy of the Netherlands would be to focus on the Dutch financial interests. Central to Hellema's book is the idea that the Netherlands have trouble with positioning themselves internationally, either as a country that holds its own, or as a small country that needs its neighbours.

Another book that details the relationship between the Netherlands and European integration, was written by Dutch historian Mathieu Segers: *Reis naar het continent: Nederland en de Europese integratie, 1950 tot heden*. In this book Segers also writes about the ambivalent position of the Netherlands. The Netherlands believed the future to be Atlantic. However, in reality it was European, and specifically German. Segers sees a difference between the Netherlands and the other five Founding Fathers of European cooperation. The Netherlands were never able to take European cooperation the way that they wanted. European integration was a process that simply happened to the Netherlands, and they were unable to do something about it (Segers, 2013).

In their book *Van Aanvallen! Naar verdedigen?: De opstelling van Nederland ten aanzien van Europese integratie, 1945-2015* Dutch academics Hans Vollaard, Jan van der Harst and Gerrit Voerman write about the apparent change in the way the Dutch view European integration. The Netherlands have always had a pragmatic approach towards European integration. However, the authors notice a change from a pro-European view to a negative view. They take the European constitution referendum from 2005 as the point where this change in view became visible. However,

they nuance this throughout the book. Again the difference between what the Netherlands wants and what it can actually achieve within Europe, is discussed (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015).

Complementary to the book by Vollaard, van der Harst, and Voerman is the book *Verloren Consensus: Europa in het Nederlandse parlementair-politieke debat, 1945-2013* by Dutch academics Anjo G. Harryvan and again Jan van der Harst. This book details the way Europe was viewed in the Dutch parliament and politics from 1945 until 2013. The book covers this in roughly two periods, from 1945 until 1990, and from 1990 until 2013. Adding upon what the other books have already provided, is the call for more democracy within the EU by Dutch members of parliament in the 1980s. Confirmed is once more the ambivalent position of the Netherlands, and the problems it has with positioning itself. Harryvan and Van der Harst place the changing view of Europe in the Netherlands around 1992. With the introduction of the common currency in the Euro, the Treaty of Maastricht (1992) marks the completion of the liberalisation of the internal market. With this, one of the most important Dutch goals is achieved, and the European integration process becomes less important to the Netherlands. From this moment on, the Netherlands become increasingly Eurosceptic (Harryvan & Harst, 2013).

German historian Gregor Schöllgen details the (West) German foreign policy from the founding of the FRG, until the mid-1990s, in *Die Außenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*. The German history with European integration is discussed extensively. He remarks that the Germans take their time when it comes drawing conclusions about their international position. According to Schöllgen, it took Germany 15 years after the Second World War, to adapt itself to the situation. It took them 25 years to confirm the new situation indefinitely. And ten years after the German reunification, before consequences were drawn from Germany's new political situation. Even though the Germans have experience with facing new political situations, they are not quick to adapt. In this, Germany differs from its neighbours. He expects, however, that German will be able to meet 21st century challenges with sovereignty (Schöllgen, 2001).

In *Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und die europäische Einigung 1949-2000*, German historians Marieke König and Matthias Schulz have selected several articles, which discuss the German role in the European integration process. Political actors, societal developments, and international experiences form the core. Germany has had trouble positioning itself in between several different forces and processes, such as the FRG's binding to the USA, and its own Europe policy. The influence of the Chancellors on the process are discussed, from Adenauer until Kohl (König & Schulz, 2004).

Harryvan and Vollaard, joined by German historian André Krause, wrote the book *Europa zwischen Hoffnung und Skepsis: Deutschland und die Niederlande über die europäische Integration seit 1990*. In

this book the writers look at the way European integration is viewed in both Germany and the Netherlands. The standpoints of governments, political parties, the media and the public opinion from 1990 and onwards are analysed. Differences and similarities between the two countries come to light with this approach. The Eurosceptic development in Dutch politics took off in the 1990s, whereas the German traditional parties remain positive towards the EU. Both the German and Dutch population changed its opinion after Maastricht. However, where the German population became slightly more Euro pragmatic, the Dutch view on European integration grew more negative and sceptical (Harryvan, Krause, & Vollaard, 2018).

The Dutch-German relations from 1945 until now have been extensively researched. Dutch historian Friso Wielenga closely details the Dutch-German relations from 1945 until 1995 in his book *Van vijand tot bondgenoot: Nederland en Duitsland na 1945*. This book is considered a standard work on the Dutch-German relations, and is often cited and used by other authors and academics who have written on this subject. Wielenga describes the path of normalisation between the two countries, from mutual incomprehension until normalisation. The Dutch-German relations from after 1945 are characterized by incomprehension of each other's position. The Dutch expected the Germans to redeem the debt it had towards the Netherlands (according to the Netherlands) for what happened during the war. The Germans, however, had problems with the position that the Dutch took and the high expectations they had regarding repaying this debt. Normalisation of the political-psychological relations, as Wielenga calls it, remained challenging for a long time. The economic relations, however, were normalized quite soon after the Second World War, because it served the interests of both the Dutch and the Germans. The Dutch were also among the first countries that wanted to allow West-Germany to rearm (Wielenga, 1999).

Dutch historian Jacco Pekelder wrote a book that he sees as a continuation of Wielenga's *Van vijand tot bondgenoot*. In *Nieuw nabuurschap: Nederland en Duitsland na de val van de muur* Pekelder focusses on the Dutch-German relations from after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Dutch perceptions of the Germans, after being predominantly negative after the Second World War, move in an upward motion from 1990 onwards. In the 1990s, Germany and Germans were still conceived negatively by the Dutch population. However, positive German reactions towards the Dutch political system, and the Dutch realisation of its own failure with Srebrenica, set in motion a changing, more positive Dutch perception of the Germans and Germany. This characterises the Dutch-German relations from this moment on, according to Pekelder. The economic dependency on each other, symbolised in the Rhine, is both a cause for connection between the two, but also a cause for tensions. This is the case when one of the two appears to become too dominant in the relations. However, the Netherlands and

Germany work towards a new sense of neighbourly relations, more intense and more involved with one another (Pekelder, 2014).

In *De vleugels van de adelaar: Duitse kwesties in Europees perspectief* a selection of historians and academics share articles, in which they shed their light on the current German political situation, in European perspective. Dutch historians Hanco Jürgens and Ton Nijhuis selected the articles, and wrote for the book themselves. Changes in Germany since its reunification are discussed. Germany's development from the 'sick man of Europe', into Europe's economic powerhouse is cause for its current dominant EU position. The French-German relations are discussed. In this relationship, so important for European integration, Germany has become dominant. This to the dismay of the French. According to the authors, Germany will have to take more consideration for the French position, if it does not want to damage the relations (Jürgens & Nijhuis, 2017).

The economic dependency as mentioned by Pekelder forms the core of *Tot elkaar veroordeeld: De Nederlands-Duitse economische betrekkingen tussen 1945-1957* by Dutch historian Martijn Lak. In this book Lak details the often mentioned, but rarely specified importance of the economic relations within the overall Dutch-German relations. In spite of the shared hatred of Germany within the Netherlands after the Second World War, the importance of Germany for the Dutch recovery was acknowledged. The ambivalent Dutch position, a recurring part of the relations in the books mentioned prior, of not knowing whether to focus on punishing Germany or restoring the economic relations, would not end until 1948. Despite of the restoring economic relations, however, the political relations between the Netherlands and Germany did not follow suit. The book is titled after the mutual dependency the two countries had economically. (West-)Germany could not miss the port of Rotterdam, whereas the Netherlands needed the (West-)German economy overall. This economic dependency would eventually influence the Dutch political position regarding Germany, shedding its atonement-policy in exchange for a more accepting position towards West Germany (Lak, 2015).

When deciding what the leading theory for this dissertation should be, two dominant approaches of international relations theory are all eligible: realism, liberalism, and. These dominant theories are identified by political scientist Stephen M. Walt (Walt, 1998).

Realism theory focusses on the state and its own interests. In this theory, international affairs and relations are defined by the states, who want more power for themselves and simply seek to protect their own interests (Walt, 1998). Power is a key factor within this theory. The states are the key actors in international relations, and military power and state diplomacy are their main instruments (Snyder, 2004, p. 59). Important within realism theory is the term anarchy. However, this does not

imply “chaos or absence of structure and rules, but rather the lack of a central government that can enforce rules” (Goldstein, 2001, p. 81). In international systems, according to realists, there is “no central authority to enforce rules and ensure compliance with norms of conduct” (Goldstein, 2001, p. 82). There are only states, who can counter each other.

Liberalism differs from this theory. In realism theory, states are “unitary actors”, with one set of coherent interests. However, according to liberalism, state behaviour is influenced by many more factors and actors. These include nonstate actors, such as individuals, NGOs and IGOs. In international relations not only states are at work, and these relations therefore cannot be reduced to only states interacting with one another (Goldstein, 2001, p. 110). Adding to that, liberals counter the anarchy point of view of realists. According to liberalists, international interactions are highly structured, through norms and institutions based on cooperation. It is not only the power of nation states that structures international relations (Goldstein, 2001, p. 110). Liberalism sees the states as the central players within international relations, which coincides with the realism theory. However, as political scientist Jack Snyder writes in his article which draws on the three theories as identified by Walt, “liberalism highlights the cooperative potential of mature democracies, especially when working together through effective institutions.” (Snyder, 2004, p. 55).

Cooperation between states, which leads to economic interdependence, also is a means to ensure peace between these states (Walt, 1998). Interdependence is a political phenomenon, as well as an economic phenomenon. When two nations states have economic relations with one another, they become dependent on each other’s “political cooperation in order to realise economic gains through trade” (Goldstein, 2001, p. 362). However, the more a nation state profits from economical cooperation, the more it becomes dependent on other nation states. Subsequently, these nation states will therefore gain power over the dependent nation state. In interdependence, the well-being of one state, depends on factors in other nation states, which are out of its control (Goldstein, 2001, p. 364).

Dutch historian Hein A.M. Klemann discusses the Dutch-German relations and economic interdependence. He states that European integration is based on liberal interdependence theories. Economic relations have political consequences. In liberal interdependence, economic relations lead to political security (Klemann, 2006, p. 10). Klemann starts in 1860, when the Dutch-German economic relations were closely linked. The most important industrial centre of Europe developed in the German Ruhr-area, close to the Dutch border. With the harbour in Rotterdam, the Netherlands possessed the outer harbour for this industrial area (Klemann, 2006, pp. 64-65). In 1914, the Netherlands were left out of the First World War, partly because of this economic importance to

Germany (Klemann, 2006, p. 66). With the Second World War, the Dutch economy had lost value to Germany, because of the inconvertibility of the German Reichsmark (Klemann, 2006, p. 67). In this case, the Germans did involve the Netherlands in war. This confirms the assumption, that in the case of the Dutch-German relations, economic interdependence increases political security.

The Dutch-German relations from after the Second World War include two important actors, namely the states themselves (Germany and the Netherlands), but also international institutions in the form of the European Union, in which these two states operate and cooperate. This fits the theory of liberalism, where it is not only the power of nation states that structures international relations. Other actors influence this as well, in this case the supranational institution of the EU.

The economic cooperation intensified after the Second World War, partly coming from a desire to make sure the European continent would be peaceful. This fits perfectly with the liberal interdependence theory as described above, where economic interdependence increases political security. Thus, when adding this information to the theories as described above, one can conclude that only liberal interdependence theory can be the leading theory for this dissertation.

3. Methodology

In order to answer the research question, it is needed to establish a method of research. The research for this dissertation exists mostly out of qualitative desk-research. The European integration process is a political process. This is hard to express in data, field research or empirical research. The observations of historians and politicians, which can be found mostly literature, form the basis in answering the sub-questions. Therefore, qualitative desk-research is the right choice for this thesis. The first three sub-questions are answered by means of the qualitative desk-research approach. The literature on these subjects, as discussed in the literature review, provides the basis for answering these questions. The research will use these works to gather data and information. For example, sub-question 3 can draw on the work of Segers' book *Reis naar het continent: Nederland en de Europese integratie, 1950 tot heden* to find out how the Dutch position towards European integration has developed from 1992 and on.

The qualitative data exists of a variety our sources. A wide range of works and literature on the Dutch-German relations exists. The works are useful for the research as a whole, and specifically for the first three sub-questions. Works on the both the Dutch and German role within Europe, the EU, and European integration are used.

Another research method that is used in this research is the use of interviews. Experts in the field of European integration, and the Dutch-German relations, provide a welcome source and view on the matter at hand. Dutch historian Mathieu Segers, whose book *Reis naar het continent* is discussed in the literature review, is interviewed. As an expert on European integration, and the Dutch role in this process, he is a perfect candidate. Dutch historian Friso Wielenga is interviewed as well. His book *Van vijand tot bondgenoot*, which is discussed in the literature review as well, gives a detailed account of the Dutch-German relations from 1945 until the German reunification. He is an expert on Dutch-German relations, and therefore a good candidate for an interview for this thesis.

For sub-question 4 a different approach is used. The question takes the form of a case-study, which takes on a specific subject. In this question, the role of Germany and the Netherlands is detailed. Where the first three sub-questions identify an overall image of the Dutch-German relations and involvement with European integration, this sub-question shows how the positions of the two countries are determined in a specific case. All together this will result in answering the research question.

Sub-question 4 focusses on the Permanent Structured Cooperation of the European Union's security and defence policy, or PeSCo. This case is interesting, since it is the first development on the field of military and defence in European integration in over 50 years. It is a sensitive political subject,

especially since German Chancellor Angela Merkel has commented on PeSCo, and called for a European Army. Therefore, it forms a perfect case study, to see in which ways the Dutch and Germans might differ in opinion and views on the matter. It also shows whether or not the reasons that shaped German and Dutch views on European integration since 1945, are also the reasons that decide the views in this specific case. Since PeSCo was launched in 2017, the modern approach towards European integration is shown, which is helpful in answering the research question.

In order to answer his question, qualitative sources are used. However, instead of on literature, the focus lies on quality newspapers, such as *Trouw*, *NRC Handelsblad*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine*. These newspapers are known for the quality level of their content, and therefore form suitable sources. Because this case is an ongoing, current event, newspapers provide a better source than literature, since there has not been written much yet on the subject of PeSCo. Experts who are interviewed also provide a welcome source.

The last question taking the form of case study is useful for several reasons. The first three sub-questions draw largely on qualitative sources, and deal, for the most part, with history. In these three questions, the development of European integration, and the development of the Dutch and German views on this matter, in the period from 1945 until now, become clear. In the last sub-question the respective views of the two are analysed in a specific case: PeSCo. It shows what makes the two countries form their opinion in this specific case. It is interesting to see, if these reasons are the same as the reasons that have characterised the history of the European integration process. The results of the first three sub-questions are put to practice, and show them in a 'modern' light. The case study illustrates what has been discussed in the first three sub-questions.

4. Results

4.1 The Dutch and German involvement with European integration from 1945 until 1992

In this chapter, the Dutch and German involvement with European integration is analysed, from 1945 until 1992. Six events that took place during this period, and that are essential to European integration, form the basis. For each event the Dutch and German views are analysed, as well as the Dutch-German relations and cooperation during each event.

The first event is the foundation of the West German state in 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). As Segers states, “more than anything else, the foundation of the FRG formed the basis of the European integration process” (Segers, 2013, p. 46). In the period after the Second World War, Germany did not exist as a sovereign, independent nation. It was governed and occupied by the allied forces, each having their own zone (Falter, 2017, p. 225).

The Netherlands was split on the issue of Germany. During the war, the Dutch government in exile in London was of the opinion that Germany should be able to take part in European rebuilding. However, due to the course the war in the Netherlands took in 1944, this opinion changed. In 1944, the situation in the Netherlands became increasingly worse, with floods and the so-called ‘hunger winter’, where many in the west of the Netherlands suffered starvation (Lak, 2010, p. 409). A need for revenge on Germany was shared among the Dutch. The Dutch policy towards Germany was unclear, and characterised by the discrepancy of its aims. On the one hand, it was clear that in order to rebuild the Netherlands, an economically strong Germany was essential. However, the wanted repercussion towards Germany (which included the annexation of German territory) would prevent Germany from becoming economically strong (Lak, 2010, p. 413).

In 1947, the Dutch formulated a new policy regarding Germany. In order to prevent new German aggression, Germany needed to be integrated peacefully within Europe. Next to that, the restoration of economic relations with Germany became of the utmost importance for the Netherlands, which was heavily dependent on the German economy (Hellema, 2016, p. 131). In 1948, the three allied powers the United States, Great Britain, and France, decided that a West German state needed to be formed and that its economy should recover (Hellema, 2016, p. 133). The Eastern Soviet zone would start building its own German state, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) (Falter, 2017, p. 229). This formation of a West German state was in the Dutch favour, since it could make a recovery of the economic relations between the Netherlands and the West German zones possible. Even though there were still claims of repercussions towards Germany, eventually the Netherlands favoured a multilateral solution to the German problem (Hellema, 2016, pp. 132-133).

The start of the Cold War and the growing division between East and West Europe made the place of Germany within Europe even more important. The United States decided that a West German state was needed within Europe to create a West European buffer zone (Falter, 2017, p. 230). This was made acceptable to the other western European countries with the addition of the Marshall Plan in 1947 (Klemann, 2006, p. 58). The Marshall Plan was an American initiative that would serve the European rebuilding through the use of financial aid. In exchange for this aid, the Americans wanted European integration (Segers, 2013, p. 43). European integration was the only way to include a West German state within Western Europe in such a way that it would not become a threat to safety, that Western Europe would become economically strong again and thus able to be a powerful ally to the USA within the Cold War (Segers, 2013, pp. 55-56). For the Dutch, a powerful Western Europe as ally to the USA was necessary, and the new West German state needed to be a powerful part of this Western Europe (Wielenga, 1999, p. 41). On August 15, 1949, the first federal elections in the FRG (23 May 1949) took place. The CDU/CSU emerged as the biggest party after these elections, and its leader Konrad Adenauer was chosen as the FRG's first Chancellor (Falter, 2017, pp. 226-227).

Adenauer saw foreign policy as one of the most important tools for the FRG. In 1949, the FRG did not possess full sovereignty, and for Adenauer foreign policy was the best opportunity to establish West Germany as an equal partner among the other Western states, which could return sovereignty to the FRG (Lappenküper, 2008, pp. 5-6). An opportunity to achieve this came along in May 1950 with the Schuman Plan, which is the second event essential to European integration.

On May 8 1950, Adenauer received a letter from the French minister of Foreign Affairs Robert Schuman. The letter contained the so-called Schuman Plan. Even though the Plan was named after Schuman, it was French official Jean Monnet who designed it. Monnet had the task of modernising the French economy. However, another goal of his was the changing of the existent order within Europe. Monnet wanted to do this through European economic cooperation, in a supranational way. After the war, Monnet was convinced that this was the only way Europe could break away from its past (Segers, 2013, p. 72). The Plan was to bring the West German and French coal- and steel production under the control of a single authority, a supranational European institution. Other West European countries could take part (Segers, 2013, p. 71). The letter was brought to Adenauer personally by a French magistrate who was friendly to Schuman. Adenauer read the letter in his presence, and immediately told the magistrate that he agreed with the plan (Falter, 2017, p. 262). Adenauer saw the plan as a way to bring the relationship with France to a new level. The French-German relationship was, according to Adenauer, crucial to the "europäischen Zusammenschluss", the closer European cooperation, merger or integration (Lappenküper, 2008, p. 7).

In Adenauer's cabinet, not everyone shared the Chancellor's enthusiasm. There were those who saw the plan as the French way to submit the German coal- and steel production to French rules. However, Adenauer was willing to take the risk, because the chance to get on an even level with other European states was one he assessed as much more important (König & Schulz, 2004, p. 44). For him, a regional group in continental Western Europe formed the best guarantee for a safe and stable Western Europe, and the 'biggest hope' for Germany. Adenauer was convinced that the West German public opinion would receive the plan positively, in which he would turn out to be correct (Segers, 2013, pp. 75-77).

Schuman would launch his plan on the 9th of May, 1950, in a press conference. The Dutch were taken by surprise, they had not been informed about the plan and had not taken part in any preparation (Segers, 2013, p. 71). The Foreign Ministry of the Netherlands initially reacted reluctant to the plan, because of the limited number of participating countries, and because Great Britain would not take part. The plan itself, however, would be accepted fairly soon by the Dutch (Hellema, 2016, p. 165). Because of the Dutch economic dependency on West Germany, they did not really have any other choice but to accept the plan. However, the plan did raise economic questions for the Netherlands, especially with regards to the way in which the proposed supranational integration would fit with the Dutch economic interests (Segers, 2013, p. 77). Eventually, the Netherlands would sign the ECSC Treaty on the 18th of April, 1951, but not before they had toned down the supranational elements of the plan slightly by demanding the addition of a Council of Ministers, which could counter the supranational High Authority within the ECSC (Segers, 2013, pp. 80-81). Even though not much notice was given to it at the time, the partaking of the Netherlands in the ECSC signified a change in direction for the Dutch foreign policy. The Netherlands still preferred the focus on the Atlantic, but they were taken on the Continental European route by the ECSC (Segers, 2013, p. 84)

The Dutch-German relations at this point were still characterised by Dutch ambivalence. There was a stark difference in the way the Dutch engaged with the Germans multilaterally and bilaterally. Multilaterally, the Dutch supported the equal integration of West Germany into the Western European cooperation. This integration also had to happen in a positive way, because only then would Germany and its population go along, instead of drift off to the East. This way the FRG could become a trustworthy partner within West Europe for the Dutch (Wielenga, 1989, p. 144). The Germans were aware of this position of the Netherlands in the multilateral sphere. However, in bilateral situations they faced a different partner. The war remained very present in bilateral meetings between the two, and the Dutch did not act accommodating (Lak, 2015, p. 245). The Germans, on their part, were not willing to act upon the wishes the Dutch had to 'make even' for the Second World War. For the Dutch, the War ended only ten years ago, while for the Germans, it was

already ten years since the War had finished. However, the two remained dependent on each other. The Dutch was dependent on the FRG economically, while the Germans needed political support from the Netherlands (Lak, 2015, p. 248)

Because of the open, export-oriented post-war Dutch economy, it was a goal of the Netherlands since 1945 to reduce trade barriers within Europe. The liberalisation of the European trade was of great importance to the Dutch (Hellema, 2016, p. 197). Important steps towards this liberalisation were made with the foundation of the European Economic Community (EEC), as established in the Treaty of Rome in 1957. The Treaty of Rome forms the third essential event to European integration.

The Treaty of Rome sprung from Dutch-Belgian initiative. Belgian minister of Foreign Affairs Paul Henri Spaak and his Dutch colleague Johan Willem Beyen started to work together. They believed that it was time for the Benelux to initiate the next step in the European integration process (Segers, 2013, p. 112). This next step for the Dutch entailed the foundation of a European internal market. It was essential to Beyen that this European internal market was part of a possible Benelux memorandum. Beyen, who shared the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with Joseph Luns, was responsible for matters related to European integration, while Luns' area contained the United Nations, and relations with non-European countries (Weenink, 2005, p. 297). The Atlantic focus that the Netherlands had displayed in the post-war years was ignored by Beyen in his aim for the European internal market. The Dutch fervently tried to get Great Britain to join in, demonstrated by several visits of Beyen to London (Falter, 2017, p. 485). However, Beyen could not persuade the British at the time. Ultimately, regardless of the Atlantic aim, it was far more important for the Dutch that Germany would be embedded in a European construction in which cooperation could arise (Falter, 2017, p. 458). The final Benelux memorandum, which included the Beyen-plan for a European internal market, was sent to all six members of the ECSC, and would be discussed at the Messina Conference in 1955 (Segers, 2013, p. 114). In the Resolution of Messina it was laid down that a common market as a goal should be pursued (Segers, 2013, pp. 116-117).

Even though Adenauer still favoured continued European integration, he had reservations as to the plans for a common European market. He was afraid that opposition to the plan in France would discredit a possible political union of Europe. However, regardless of the opposition of German Minister of Economic Affairs Ludwig Erhard, the FRG government would accept the general idea of an internal market in its answer to the Benelux-memorandum (König & Schulz, 2004, p. 48).

Surprising was that the most euro sceptical member of the Six, the Netherlands, pleaded for a supranational framework in which to operate the common market. The supranational European Commission should get as much authority as possible. This position can be explained, since the

Netherlands did not want to end up in a bloc dominated by the Germans and the French. After all, the Dutch foreign policy still had an Atlantic focus. In a supranational system, the smaller countries would have more influence and the rules would be laid down from above (Segers, 2013, pp. 125-126). Even though the Dutch tried to tone down all supranational elements in earlier situations, for example during the ECSC negotiations, the favourable influence of a supranational design for a common market made the Dutch change their tune (Hellema, 2016, pp. 200-201).

Adenauer had his own reasons to support the plans for a common European market. At the time, in 1956, the Suez-crisis was in full swing. After Egypt nationalised the Suez canal, France and Great Britain intervened. The United States did not offer political or military support (Segers, 2013, p. 129). Adding to that, the Americans had decided to reduce the number of American troops in Europe. Adenauer was shocked with the powerlessness of Europe (Lappenküper, 2008, pp. 13-14). This made Adenauer realise that Europe should be able to run its own affairs, and should not rely on others. With this realisation came the renewed urge for European integration, and thus the path was paved for the Treaty of Rome (König & Schulz, 2004, p. 50)

Another reason that accounts for the spur in European integration in the 1950s, is that at the time it was trendy to support European ambitions. Germany and France had politicians at the top of government level who were convinced out of political reasons that the deepening of integration was a necessity (König & Schulz, 2004, p. 50). The Dutch were aware of the popularity of pro-European positions, which influenced their turn with regard to European integration with the Beyen-plan (Segers, 2013, p. 126). On the 25th of March 1957 the Treaty of Rome was signed by the Six, and with it the foundation of a European Economic Community, and the foundation of Euratom (European Atomic Energy Community) were made official (Falter, 2017, pp. 538-539).

In 1963 Adenauer left as Chancellor of the FRG, and he was succeeded by former Minister of Economic Affairs Erhard (König & Schulz, 2004, p. 106). With this change of leadership in the FRG, the Dutch hoped it would also mean a change from the German-French politics that been dominant under Adenauer. Between 1963 and 1969, the Dutch-German relations were characterised by attempts of the Dutch to get the German to shift their focus from the Gaullist France to the Atlantic stream (Wielenga, 1999, p. 110). The Dutch, however, were not able to rightly assess the value that the German-French relations encompassed to the FRG. Regardless of the Dutch attempts to loosen the German-French bond, the relations with Paris would remain of more value to the FRG than the relations with The Hague (Wielenga, Van vijand tot bondgenoot: Nederland en Duitsland na 1945, 1999, p. 110).

The process of European integration also stalled in this period. The Netherlands had been pushing for Great Britain to enter the EEC, and to open negotiations for this. The French-German dominance within the EEC was not regarded positively by the Dutch. The possible addition of Great Britain would be in favour of the Netherlands, since the British could act as a counterbalance to the French-German axis (Hellema, 2016, p. 242). However, French president De Gaulle repeatedly blocked (Dutch) initiatives to involve the British. Even though the Germans were not necessarily against the addition of new members, including Great Britain, De Gaulle's opposition to the plan was enough reason for the Germans to not pursue this, since the French-German relations remained of the utmost importance (Wielenga, 1999, p. 110).

In 1969, at a Summit in The Hague, the Six decided on new initiatives that form the fourth event essential to European integration. The Summit, at the time, did not seem to become a success. The previous years were a period of stagnation for the European integration process. However, in 1969, several changes occurred that paved the way for a successful summit. First of all, the biggest opposer of the addition of new members to the EEC, De Gaulle, stepped down as French president. This paved the way for the British to join the EEC (Hellema, 2016, p. 241). Secondly, Willy Brandt became the new Chancellor of the FRG. His policy of 'Ostpolitik', the normalization of relations with Eastern Europe, required even more attachment of the FRG to Western Europe, thus more European integration. Because only if the FRG was unconditionally bound to the EEC and NATO, these institutions would not oppose Brandt's policies (Segers, 2013, pp. 179-180). As Brandt said himself: "Ostpolitik starts in the West" (König & Schulz, 2004, p. 180).

With De Gaulle gone, the Dutch hoped for a more liberal, open, and non-protectionist EEC. The addition of new members (especially Great Britain) would suit this goal (Hellema, 2016, p. 242). The Dutch therefore looked at Brandt to take the lead during the The Hague Summit. And this is what he did. It can be accounted to Brandt that the Summit turned out to be a success, in which new steps towards European integration were made (Wielenga, 1999, p. 115), such as the opening of negotiations with Great Britain and other candidates on the joining of the EC. The second step was the decision to form an economic and monetary union (EMU) (Hellema, 2016, p. 269). The EMU formed the conclusion of the European integration process that was started with the ECSC (Segers, 2013, p. 176).

Looking back, the 1980s can be seen as the period in which the European integration process showed new progress: the "relance européenne", European renewal (Segers, 2013, p. 225). The economy formed the basis for this renewal. The economic rise of Japan made Europe, and especially the Netherlands, nervous. Dutch prime minister Ruud Lubbers therefore was actively taking part in this

process of renewal, keeping in mind the Dutch economic- and business interests (Segers, 2013, p. 222). Jacques Delors, who in 1985 became President of the European Commission, had a French-German assignment: to spur European integration. He was of the opinion that this was solely possible if the goal would be the completing of the European internal market. Lubbers would take the lead in Europe, exemplified by his call for 1985 to be “the year of the internal market” at the European summit in Dublin in December 1984 (Segers, 2013, p. 223). Chancellor Helmut Kohl sent Lubbers a letter in which he told the Dutch prime minister that his efforts were supported by the government of the FRG (Segers, 2013, p. 224). Another partner was found in Great Britain, and the wishes of this northern European bloc for liberalisation of the capital market as a part of the completion of the internal market would be realised in the Single European Act of 1986 (Schöllgen, 2001, p. 175).

This Single European Act, however, was seen by Delors as the first step towards the EMU. The Dutch and the West Germans were not too fond of this at the time, because the monetary situation as it was at the time was seen as the most beneficial by both (Segers, 2013, p. 238) (Lappenküper, 2008, p. 111). During the European summit in Madrid in 1989, the European Council would agree with the Delors’ report, which forms the birth of the EMU (Schöllgen, 2001, p. 175). At the time, the Dutch and West Germans agreed, because they were of the opinion that this EMU was and would not be feasible for a long period of time (Segers, 2013, p. 239).

However, a wholly different process would encompass the European integration process in the coming years. This process forms the fifth event essential to European integration. On November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall fell, 28 years after its construction (Schöllgen, 2001, p. 187). Starting in the autumn of 1989, the foreign policy of the FRG became completely focussed on the “deutsche Frage”, the German question of unity between East and West Germany (Lappenküper, 2008, p. 112).

Only a few weeks after the fall of the Berlin Wall, at the end of November 1989, Kohl would present his Ten-Point Plan for German unity, to the surprise of many (Lappenküper, 2008, p. 113). In this plan, Kohl stated that the developments of the German-German relations would be embedded in the “gesamteuropäischen Prozeß”, the overall European process (Schöllgen, 2001, p. 192). For Kohl, German reunification and European integration were two sides of the same coin (Schöllgen, 2001, p. 192). The French President Francois Mitterand would pose as the main partner of Kohl during the reunification process (Lappenküper, 2008, p. 114). Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Margaret Thatcher, however, opposed the idea of European integration. This became clear during the European Summit in Strasbourg of December 1989. More unexpectedly for Kohl were the doubts that Lubbers voiced during this Summit. Kohl, who on the one hand understood the Dutch prime

minister's position based on the Second World War, was still very disappointed by this position, since he saw Lubbers as a partner on multiple fronts (Segers, 2013, p. 244). Kohl would not forgive Lubbers for this (König & Schulz, 2004, p. 232).

The Dutch government was concerned that a reunified Germany would become too strong, and would dominate the European community. At the same time, it was deemed unwise to resist something that was unavoidable (Hellema, 2016, p. 354). Eventually, the Dutch stated that they would support German reunification, under the conditions that a reunified Germany, just as the FRG, would be integrated in the European community, as well as in NATO. Integration of Germany in (Western) Europe was key, as it had been since 1945 (Wielenga, 1999, p. 177).

Aware of the opposition that some of the European leaders shared, Kohl agreed to an intergovernmental conference to be held in December 1990 on the topic of EMU, earlier than he had wanted originally (Schöllgen, 2001, p. 192). This "decision against the German interests", as Kohl called the decision for a EMU summit, was made because "Germany needed friends" (Segers, 2013, p. 244). With this, the Chancellor meant that it was important that Germany showed willingness to continue with the European integration process, to make the European partners feel that they could trust a reunited Germany. However, parallel to the EMU discussion, Kohl wanted a summit on a European Political Union (König & Schulz, 2004, p. 228). With this gesture, Kohl would not only speed up the process, but he would also show to the sceptic European partners that a reunited Germany would remain focussed on a responsible and communal foreign- and security policy (Schöllgen, 2001, p. 193).

On the 3rd of October 1990, the reunification of Germany was made official. And, as the Dutch had wished, this Germany was embedded in both the European community, as well as in NATO (Schöllgen, 2001, p. 201). For Germany, which suddenly became a central European power, it meant that the foreign policy had to change (Lappenküper, 2008, p. 115). Kohl assured that the FRG's policy of integration in Western Europe would not change after reunification (Segers, 2013, p. 254). For the Dutch, however, the reunification and the possible enlargement of the European community with new Eastern European members formed two new arguments for the Dutch Atlantic focus, and for institutional strengthening of the European community in supranational sense (Hellema, 2016, p. 356). The more members, the less influence the Netherlands would have. The Dutch (and other 'smaller' members) would have more influence in a supranational system than they would have in an intergovernmental system.

The Netherlands would host the Council Presidency in the second half of 1991. The first half was hosted by Luxembourg, which used the opportunity to present the creation of a new organisation

within the EEC, based on both supranational and intergovernmental ideas (Visser & Mei, 2013, p. 2). The Dutch, ever weary of intergovernmentalism in the European sphere, countered this by using their Council Presidency to launch their own plan. Dutch Minister of European Affairs Piet Dankert was spurred on by Delors to come with a more federal proposal (Visser & Mei, 2013, p. 3). The plan proposed to strengthen the position of the European Commission, to bring foreign policy, defence immigration and asylum policy under the roof of the already existing EC institutions, and to give the European Parliament more competences (Hellema, 2016, p. 358). However, once presented to the other Member States, none, with the exception of Belgium, saw something in the plan and it was rejected (Hellema, 2016, p. 357). This painful moment for the Dutch has since been dubbed 'Black Monday' (Visser & Mei, 2013, p. 3). After this, calls were made within the Dutch government for a reorientation of the Dutch Europe policy (Pekelder, 2014, p. 30).

The opportunity to enact this would arrive soon, with the Maastricht Summit of 1991, which would lead to the Treaty of Maastricht. The Treaty of Maastricht led to the realisation of an Economic and Monetary Union, and launched a new era of European integration (Ahrens & Ohr, 2003, p. 11). The Treaty of Maastricht therefore forms the sixth event essential to European integration.

The Maastricht Summit was an important opportunity for Lubbers and the Netherlands to take away the bitter aftertaste Black Monday had caused. Kohl also wanted to book results at the summit. In the weeks leading up to the summit Kohl and Lubbers had been in contact, agreeing that both would work their hardest to make sure the monetary union would happen. The relationship between the two had cooled down after Lubbers had opposed German reunification. However, according to Lubbers, this did not put a strain on their relationship during the summit (Cortenraedt & Laarhoven, 2017, pp. 13-14).

Kohl also needed Lubbers in order to achieve a monetary union. This due to the good relations Lubbers had with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, John Major (Cortenraedt & Laarhoven, 2017, p. 14). Major was opposed to any UK commitment to a monetary union and a single European currency, and he could voice a veto against the plans, in which case there would be no monetary union. This was resolved by making it possible for the UK to 'opt-out' of the EMU, while the other member states could continue (Visser & Mei, 2013, p. 4). This would be Lubbers' most important achievement with regards to the Maastricht Summit (Segers, 2013, p. 252). Looking back, this British 'opt-out' would cause the UK to take a different position within Europe and the integration process. This in turn would lead to a situation which more resembled the post-war period of European integration, where the Netherlands was dominated by the continental powers of France and Germany, and where the Dutch Atlantic focus was missing (Segers, 2013, p. 184).

Still, on December 11, 1991, Lubbers could proudly announce the political birth of the European Union (Visser & Mei, 2013, p. 4). Apart from the decision to start an EMU, the Treaty of Maastricht also intensified the cooperation between member states on juridical and foreign-policy areas (Hellema, 2016, p. 252). Kohl was able to show to the member states and the world that a reunited Germany would still support and initiate European integration (Visser & Mei, 2013, p. 4).

Conclusion

The European integration process has been defined since its start by the German-French relations. After the Second World War, this relationship formed the basis for a stable Europe. The Dutch did not always feel entirely at home so close to this French-German axis, since their focus was on the Atlantic. However, since the German economy was of vital importance to the Netherlands, they had no choice but take part in the European integration process which started with the ECSC. The newly established Federal Republic of Germany would under Chancellor Adenauer focus on the integration of Germany in Western Europe, in order to regain its authority and sovereignty. For the Dutch, this integration of Germany was also of the utmost importance. However, for safety and economic reasons. Over the course of the European integration process, the lead was taken at most times by either the French or the West Germans, and most times in close cooperation. The Dutch had no choice but to either limit the supranational, or later the intergovernmental elements of any initiative. Economically, the Netherlands was tied to the FRG. Politically, this was much less the case. The Dutch-German relations were characterised by Dutch ambivalence in the beginning. Later, the two would cooperate more, but for Germany the French would always be of more importance.

4.2 What are the Dutch developments regarding European integration since 1992?

With the Treaty of Maastricht, the Netherlands accepted a European Union that combined supranational and intergovernmental elements (Harryvan & Harst, 2013, p. 17). The Treaty also realised many of the goals the Netherlands had in the past for European integration since the 1950s. With the completion of the internal market, and the establishing of the EMU with the introduction of a common currency, the liberalisation of trade and payment became reality (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, p. 54).

The end of the Cold War also meant a change of direction for the Dutch foreign policy. NATO lost importance with the end of the Cold War. For the Netherlands this meant that a stronger EU would be in its interest, and that the Dutch Atlantic focus became less self-evident (Hellema, 2016, p. 362) (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, p. 44). The Dutch reticence with regards to French-German cooperation and domination within Europe would have to be put aside (Hellema, 2016, p. 362). With the appointment of Dutch politician Hans van Mierlo as the new Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1994, this change of direction became visible. Van Mierlo was pro-European, and he did not share his predecessors' Atlantic focus (Hellema, 2016, p. 361). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs introduced the policy of 'naberschap', neighbourship, where the Netherlands would focus on renewed Benelux cooperation, and improved relations with both Germany and France (Hellema, 2016, p. 363).

The end of the Cold War also changed the Dutch view on European integration. The Treaty of Maastricht marked the end of a period of European optimism among the Dutch (Harryvan & Harst, 2013, p. 175). A reunited Germany, and the addition of new member states meant that the Netherlands would have to rely more on itself. In a EU with more member states, the Netherlands became less influential. This was reason for a Dutch focus on results in the EU that were directly in the interest of the Netherlands, instead of in the interest of the European community as a whole (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, p. 53).

In 1997, the EU was enlarged to 15 members (Hellema, 2016, p. 363). The institutional structure of the EU dated back to the 1950s, and therefore needed thorough revisions (Harryvan & Harst, 2013, p. 176). The aim was to realise this with a conference. Since the Netherlands hosted the Council presidency in 1997, it would also host this conference, in Amsterdam. It would lead to the Treaty of Amsterdam. The Dutch entered the conference with a supranational aim, which had characterised years of Dutch European policy. The supranational aim, to the Dutch, meant more influence and security for the smaller member states (Hellema, 2016, p. 363). The Dutch government wanted the common foreign and security policy, as well as the judicial cooperation, to be realised in the EU's supranational "pillars". However, it soon became evident that this was not possible. With 1991's

'Black Monday' in memory, when almost all the member states had voted down a Dutch supranational proposal, the Dutch government was prepared to make concessions if it could result in a successful end to the Amsterdam conference (Hellema, 2016, p. 363). For the Dutch, the Treaty resulted in the continuing of the EMU and a common currency, which served the Dutch goals of market liberalisation (Hellema, 2016, p. 364). However, with regards to institutional revision, not much was achieved, except for difficult and complicated compromises. The Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) was decided on, which had the goal of guaranteeing that member states would meet certain financial-economic criteria in order to implement a stable single currency (Harryvan & Harst, 2013, p. 176). Among these criteria was the requirement that the budget deficit of member states could not exceed 3% (Segers, 2013, p. 276)

National payments made to the EU became a more important issue (Harryvan & Harst, 2013, p. 175). Per capita, the Netherlands was the biggest contributor to the EU-budget (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, p. 54). This was cause for the Dutch government to act reluctantly towards new European policy. The achievement of the Dutch EU wish of liberalisation of the European common market was another reason for reluctance with regards to new European policy; the Dutch already had what they wanted (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, p. 54).

Segers identifies two events that were cause for much of the Dutch dissatisfaction with European integration that became present at the end of the 1990s, and is still present to this day. The first event was the start of the EMU with a large group of member states, including Italy, which was against the Dutch expectations (Segers, 2013, p. 270). The Dutch had hoped for the EMU to start with a select number of member states. Certain 'convergence criteria' had to prevent the financially weaker member states from joining (Segers, 2013, p. 277). Italy had a significant national debt, and the Netherlands feared that if Italy joined straight away, it would undermine the strength of the single European currency. Minister of Financial Affairs Gerrit Zalm said he would resign if Italy was to join the first Euro-countries in 1998. However, after the government in Italy implemented new tax regulations, the Dutch were temporarily put at ease, and Zalm did not resign (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, p. 52). In 1999, the EMU started with Italy, which had been able to meet the convergence criteria, against the expectations of the Dutch (Segers, 2013, p. 278).

The second event that Segers identifies, took place in 2003. In this year, both Germany and France planned to exceed the budget deficit limit of 3%, which was laid down in the SGP (Segers, 2013, p. 270). The countries made use of a 'special-circumstances clause', which was accepted by the other member states, with then Commission President Romano Prodi even calling the SGP 'stupid' (Segers, 2013, p. 276). To the Dutch, this was unacceptable. The SGP was highly regarded in The Hague, and

seen as one of the Dutch accomplishments of the Treaty of Amsterdam (Segers, 2013, p. 277). Zalm went as far as calling the German position in this situation 'betrayal', and his tirades against the German government and his German colleague Hans Eichel during this period reached the German media (Pekelder, 2014, p. 101). Segers states that, after these two events, the Dutch Europe policy, and also Europe in general, lost its 'persuasiveness', and 'Europe' was regarded with suspicion in the Netherlands (Segers, 2013, p. 279).

The European leaders decided that in 2001 a 'European convention' would take place. The 'convention about the future of Europe' had as goal to unite proposals for more democracy, transparency and efficiency, in a 'constitution for European citizens', which would replace the Treaties of Rome, Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, p. 64). In 2002, a new Dutch government was installed, headed by Prime Minister Jan-Peter Balkenende. The government released a memorandum about the convention later that year, which focussed more on what it did not want to happen, instead of new ideas or proposals. This caused former Minister of Foreign Affairs van Mierlo, who had been appointed as the Dutch government representative for the European convention, to resign. The memorandum was reason for this, stating that 'the position of the Dutch government showed a reluctance that I [Van Mierlo, Jop van Ravenhorst] have not seen since the beginning of the European integration process' (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, p. 67).

In 2004, to the surprise of many, the Convention delivered the European Constitutional Treaty. The treaty would, among other things, give more rights and power to both the European and the national parliaments, the European Council would get a President, and the EU would get a Minister of Foreign Affairs, who would be responsible for common EU foreign, security, and defence policy (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, pp. 68-69). Eventually, 129 of 150 members of the Dutch parliament would vote in favour of the European constitution (Harryvan & Harst, 2013, p. 243).

Dutch parties Groenlinks, D66, and PvdA had initiated that a referendum had to be held to ask the Dutch people whether or not they supported the European constitution (Harryvan & Harst, 2013, p. 243). On July 1st, 2005, 61,5% of the voters voted against the European constitution, with a turnout of 63,3% (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, p. 76). A few days prior to the Dutch referendum, a referendum on the same issue was held in France, which also resulted in a voting down of the European constitution (Hellema, 2016, p. 404). The result seemed to stem from the reluctant and sceptic role that the Dutch government had displayed towards European integration in the years prior the referendum, and even though the Dutch government and a majority in parliament did support the constitution, the Dutch 'no' reflected this role (Hellema, 2016, p. 406). The Dutch and

French 'no' were cause for an impasse in European cooperation (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, p. 76).

According to Hellema, the Dutch 'no' in 2005, the stubborn positioning of the Dutch within the EU, the openly sceptic Dutch government when it came to the future of the EU and the rise of anti-European populist sentiments in the Netherlands harmed the Dutch reputation within Europe (Hellema, 2016, p. 447). The Dutch stubbornness regarding the possible addition of Serbia as EU member state is an example of this. After the Netherlands had become increasingly isolated in their stand against a trade agreement with Serbia, they finally agreed to it in 2009 (Hellema, 2016, p. 443).

After general elections in 2010, the VVD and CDA formed a new government, with the VVD's Mark Rutte as new Dutch Prime Minister. Since the two parties did not have a majority in the Dutch parliament, they were supported by the Dutch Eurosceptic party the PVV (Pekelder, 2014, p. 99). The financial crisis in the Eurozone was, and would remain, the most important issue on the European agenda. The crisis had started in the USA, when the housing market collapsed. Both American and European banks were hit severely, resulting in the nationalisation of banks on the verge of bankruptcy, which cost the Dutch state billions of euros (Harryvan & Harst, 2013, pp. 270-272). The world economy suffered as a result of this, and the subsequent financial crisis in Europe would test the level of trust and cooperation between countries in the Eurozone (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, p. 95). The Dutch government's priority in Europe was, as always, the Dutch economic interest, and focussed on the decreasing of national payments made by the Netherlands to the EU (Hellema, 2016, p. 448). Several southern member states were hit extremely hard by the crisis, most notably Greece. The Dutch Minister of Financial Affairs Jan Kees de Jager made name for himself by the hard and condescending way he spoke about Greece and other southern Eurozone countries (Hellema, 2016, p. 450).

According to Segers, "the Dutch lost control at times, for example under Rutte's first government, with the anti-Polish hotline" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019). The Dutch Eurosceptic party PVV, who supported the Dutch cabinet, had created a hotline where people could report it if they lost their job to a Central or Eastern European (Ebels, 2012). This led to strong condemnation among EU member states (NRC, 2012). According to Segers, however, the Dutch reputation in the EU was not negatively affected. "The Netherlands have always been a serious and constructive partner in the EU, and as one of the founders of the ECSC, the Netherlands are taken seriously. The Dutch remain a trustworthy, serious and constructive partner in European integration" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019).

Even though the Dutch government had stated that the EU's power would not be extended, eventually the supranational point of view that had characterised many years of Dutch European politics returned (Vollaard, Harst, & Voerman, 2015, p. 95). For the Netherlands it was again the best way to prevent the larger EU member states from pushing through their own agendas. On the Dutch initiative, it was decided that in 2011 the European Commission would get more power, so that it would be able to handle member states who did not respect or follow the financial rules. It turned out, however, that the intergovernmental trend that had been prevalent in the EU for years, could not be turned. During the Euro crisis, many decisions were taken in the European Council with the member state leaders, or in cases even by German chancellor Merkel and her Minister of Financial Affairs Wolfgang Schäuble, at times in bilateral discussions with France (Hellema, 2016, p. 451).

In 2012 a new Dutch government was installed, once again headed by Mark Rutte. Frans Timmermans was the new Minister of Foreign Affairs. However, even though he was seen as a convinced European, the Dutch stance within Europe would not change much. The Dutch' own interest remained the most important within Europe. After 2012, the crisis in the EU seemed to calm down (Hellema, 2016, pp. 451-452). The Dutch did learn another EU lesson in this period. During the election campaign, Rutte had stated that no more money would go to Greece. In 2015, however, Rutte agreed with the third support package for Greece, leading to the conclusion that "a tough autonomous Dutch position is untenable in the European arena" (Schout, 2018, p. 6).

On the 23rd of June, 2016, Britain voted to leave the European Union (MacShane, 2016). Prime Minister David Cameron had promised that, if he were to be re-elected as Prime Minister in the general elections of 2015, he would organise a referendum about Great Britain's EU membership. Earlier, in 2013, Cameron already called for 'less Europe' and 'less rules', which met the approval of both Rutte and Timmermans. The referendum, however, was not favoured by the Dutch government (Hellema, 2016, p. 452). With Brexit, the Netherlands return to the situation as it was before 1973, when the British joined. Great Britain as counterpart to the French-German axis, which was always supported by the Netherlands, is not the situation anymore. This caused Rutte to state that "it will never be as good as it was", when referencing the EU and Brexit (Schmidt, 2018). Segers states that "the Dutch cannot hide behind the back of the UK anymore, which at times was very useful when the Dutch wanted to slow down French-German initiatives and it could use the British to make this happen" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019). With the British role in the EU for grabs, several Nordic countries are looking at the Dutch, hoping that they will take over this British role (Schout, 2018, p. 1).

This possible renewed Dutch role within the EU was seen in 2018, when the Dutch Minister of Financial Affairs Wopke Hoekstra led an alliance of eight Nordic countries. The aim of this alliance was to make sure that a French-German axis would not 'derail', focussing on stable and secure monetary policy within the EU (Alonso, 2018). According to Segers, however, this alliance is of little importance, and does not represent the position that the Dutch will take after Brexit.

"The alliance does not have enough influence, because of the combined level of votes these countries have, but also because several countries are not even part of the Eurozone. France also did not take well to this alliance, which means that the momentum for the strategic movement is pretty much over" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019).

The Dutch will have to find a new position for themselves in the EU after Brexit. Segers is of the opinion that "the Netherlands will choose for a role close to the French-German motor in the Eurozone" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019). In February 2019, Prime Minister Rutte called for a stronger EU during a speech in Zürich. With this speech, Rutte seemed to align himself more with France and Germany, and their aims for the future of the EU. Rutte's third cabinet has been investing in the relations with France, and the Prime Minister himself holds close relations with both Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron (Moerland, 2019).

Germany's importance to the Netherlands increases because of Brexit. "Germany and the Netherlands need each other more now, when it comes to making sure the northern European voice is heard within the EU. Germany already was the most important country to the Dutch by far, both economically, as well as politically in European integration. This is even more the case now with Brexit" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019).

Therefore, the expectation is that the Dutch will continue to be pragmatically constructive, in a position close to the French-German axis.

Conclusion

When the Dutch reached their goal of liberalisation of the common market, the incentive to continue European integration disappeared. The end of the 1990s and the 2000s mark a period in which the Dutch acted increasingly sceptical and conservative when it comes to new EU policy. When the liberalisation of the internal market was 'completed', European integration became less important to the Dutch. The role of the Dutch as net contributor to the EU, the start of the EMU with Italy, and the disregard of the Stability and Growth pact by other member states (most notably Germany) led to this Eurosceptic position. The Dutch cabinets in the 21st century, led by Balkenende's centre-right CDA, and Rutte's liberal right VVD, took positions in the EU that showed reluctance when it came to new EU policy and further European integration. With Brexit, the situation in the EU changes. The

Dutch will have to reposition themselves, since their powerful Eurosceptic partner is gone. Germany becomes even more important to the Netherlands. In the period after Brexit, the Dutch have invested in their relations with both Germany and France, predicting a future Dutch position close to the French-German axis.

4.3 What are the German developments regarding European integration since 1992?

After the Cold War and the German reunification, the political situation in Europe and the EU changed. In this situation, Germany held a, literally, central position in Europe (Wielenga, 1997, p. 89). Germany's potential for power increased, and it became, once again, a 'European great power' (Schöllgen, 1993, p. 31). Germany's size, central geographical location, and 'prodigious' economy make it so that the country would play a decisive role in Europe (Hyde-Price, 2000, p. 109). The question of a German European identity stood high on the political agenda in the discussions over German reunification. Several European countries feared a reunited Germany, and subsequent potential German nationalism. Europe, and a German European identity, could serve as an 'antidote' against possible renewed German nationalism, and reassure the concerned countries (Fullbrook, 2015, p. 289). The Netherlands and the United Kingdom, for example, were among those who initially opposed a German reunification, because of fears of a Germany that would be too powerful, as explained in chapter 4.1.

Is important to note that, to Germany, European cooperation and integration were not simply dependent on whether or not it was beneficial for Germany, or if it served German interests. To Germany, the "EU is a 'Schicksalgemeinschaft', a 'community of common destiny', united by a common identity, in a community of values with roots reaching back to the Christian Medieval and to the archaic ages" (Hyde-Price, 2000, p. 174). With European integration as a project of peace, Germany felt a special responsibility, since it had started two World Wars in the 20th century (Harryvan, Krause, & Vollaard, 2018, p. 67). This ideal had shaped German 'Europapolitik' in the past decades, and this did not change with reunification, even though there were fears at the time that it would (Kundnani, 2014, p. 53).

To Kohl, the German unification could not happen without deeper EU integration (Hyde-Price, 2000, p. 130). Germany needed "to be anchored in a more integrated Europe", since it would reassure the other member states, as well as prevent "recidivist behaviour by future German governments" (Hyde-Price, 2000, p. 181). This is why he agreed to the EMU, as discussed in chapter 4.1. The German reunification, did not mean that the European focus, which had been pivotal in the FRG, would come to an end. In Kohl's Ten-Point Plan for German unity, the Chancellor already called for both deepening and widening European integration. The widening referred mostly to Central and Eastern European states. Kohl did not want the European Community to end at the banks of the river Elbe (Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet, 2002, p. 158). Enlargement of the EU towards Central and Eastern European states was in Germany's interest, because Germany's own security and prosperity "depended on the security and prosperity of their eastern neighbours" (Hyde-Price, 2000, p. 130). The balancing of 'Westpolitik', (West) Germany's continued integration into Western Europe, and

'Ostpolitik', now defined by possible EU enlargement to the East, posed a foreign policy difficulty to Germany (Hyde-Price, 2000, p. 132).

Germany also had to deal with new responsibilities that the reunification brought onto the unified state. Kohl addressed this in 1990, stating that "Germany's responsibility for the protection of world peace would continue, in the framework of the NATO, the EU, and also in bilateral relations" (Hacke, 1997, p. 382).

In the 1990s, Kohl continued with the EMU, as well as with the political union he had wanted as a condition for the EMU, this to enlarge the trade capacity of Europe (Wielenga, 1997, p. 89). While visiting the Netherlands in 1995, Kohl was asked why he continued pushing for a political union, when the EMU already was 'complicated enough'. Kohl gave two reasons, the first being that the Germans had sacrificed the D-Mark. To justify this sacrifice, on other issues and fields steps towards integration had to be taken. His second reason was that without a political union, there would be no harmonisation among the member states, which would decrease the chances of a successful EMU (Wielenga, 1997, p. 90).

In 1997, during the European Council of Amsterdam, Germany refused to extend qualified majority voting to several crucial areas. The European federalist convictions of Germany were doubted, most notably by the French. With this refusal, it seemed as if the Germans favoured intergovernmentalism over a federalist approach. This put a strain on the French-German relations, the force behind European integration for most of its history, which did not know its best times during the 1990s (Maull, 2006, p. 110). The French, who were suspicious of a reunified Germany, did not accept that Germany could take on the leadership role in the bilateral relations. They also opposed the "increasingly neoliberal monetary, economic and financial policies of the Kohl government" (Maull, 2006, p. 109). French President Francois Mitterand, a good partner of Kohl, stepped down in 1995, and he was succeeded by Jacques Chirac. The relations between Chirac and Kohl never developed in the way they had with Mitterand. Then there were also doubts among the French of Germany's focus on Central and Eastern Europe. All of this made that the French-German relations during the 1990s did not work as they had prior to the German reunification (Maull, 2006, pp. 109-110). The French noted, however, that in 1999, when the Euro was launched, Germany was more imbedded in European institutions than it had been before reunification (Kundnani, 2014, p. 54).

In 1998, after general elections, SPD leader Gerhard Schröder became the new Chancellor of Germany, succeeding Kohl who had held this position for 16 years (Maull, 2006, p. 111). Following the tradition of his predecessors, Schröder spoke of Germany's dedication to Europe, stating that "policy in Europe, from Europe, and of Europe" would form "the guiding principle of German foreign

policy" (Hyde-Price, 2000, p. 172). German Minister of Foreign Affairs Joschka Fischer added upon this in a speech he gave in 2000, calling for the "completing of integration" and for the EU to become a "federation of nation states" (Fischer, 2000).

In 2003, the German economy stagnated. The German reunification was costlier than expected, unemployment rose, and so did the budget deficit. When Germany exceeded the budget deficit limit of 3%, Schröder called for a more flexible SGP. He got support from France, Italy, Great Britain and Greece, but member states such as the Netherlands, Ireland and Austria fiercely opposed this flexible SGP. Schröder got what he wanted, and he could continue with an exceedance of the 3% without getting fined by the European Commission. France and Germany, who were the initiators of the EMU, were the first to 'break the rules'. Germany had lost its 'moral authority', its authority on financial areas in Europe was damaged (Jürgens & Nijhuis, 2017, pp. 201-202).

Angela Merkel, a physicist from the former GDR, became the new German Chancellor, when her CDU party became the biggest in the elections of 2005 (Bulmer, Jeffery, & Padgett, 2010, pp. 34-35). She wanted to continue the 'Europapolitik' in a fashion similar to Kohl, as well as restoring Germany's reputation in Europe (Jürgens & Nijhuis, 2017, p. 202). In her first four years, Merkel exercised a fairly 'normal' 'Europapolitik', continuing on the path of her predecessors without any significant changes. However, after her re-election in 2009, she would face a new situation in Europe (Jürgens & Nijhuis, 2017, p. 203). In the period of 2005-2009, the German economy recovered. Unemployment declined, the budget deficit turned in to a surplus, and Germany developed into Europe's economic powerhouse (Boterman, 2017, p. 20).

The Euro crisis of 2010 revealed an increasingly assertive Germany, a role that not everyone in Europe and Germany was comfortable with (Kundnani, 2014, p. 91). Germany, as the strongest economy within the EU and its biggest creditor, had little choice but to take the lead in the crisis. When the crisis hit southern member states, most notably Greece, Germany started pushing an agenda of strict economic rules. Budgetary discipline was needed in the suffering member states, according to the Germans (Boterman, 2017, p. 29). During this period, Merkel was portrayed as 'Madame No' in French, Italian and Greek newspapers, because of her refusal to support the weaker member states through Eurobonds, or other proposals that would make the weaker member states' debts common EU responsibility (Jürgens & Nijhuis, 2017, p. 203).

Merkel had three leading principles during this crisis. Firstly, the EU could not become 'subsidiarity-union', where the 'fiscally responsible' member states pay for the 'fiscally irresponsible' ones (Kundnani, 2014, p. 91). Secondly, under no circumstances could the Eurozone break-up, as this would damage the German economy. Next to that, Merkel was convinced that these problems had

to be solved on a European level. Thirdly she wanted to prevent inflation and keep the prices stable (Boterman, 2017, p. 32). Germany suffered from trauma when it comes to inflation. The hyperinflation of the Weimar Republic in the 1920s, when lifesavings evaporated in months, “scarred generations of Germans” (Polonyi, 2011). Because of these past experiences, Germany still feared inflation, which was the reason for this third leading principle (Boterman, 2017, p. 40). In the next years, however, she was forced to compromise on some of these issues, since some principles threatened others (Kundnani, 2014, p. 91). Because of this, in May 2010, Merkel agreed to a €80 billion emergency loan to Greece, of which 28 percent was Germany’s responsibility, thus €22,4 billion (Jürgens & Nijhuis, 2017, p. 203). Merkel stated that: “If the Euro fails, then Europe fails” (Boterman, 2017, p. 35). Merkel agreed to this break away from her first principle, because if she did not her second principle could be threatened: a break-up of the Eurozone (Kundnani, 2014, p. 91). Former German Chancellors Schmidt and Kohl criticized Merkel during this period, fearing that she was breaking with the ‘Westbindung’ politics of her predecessors, because of the fierce German attitude towards the weaker member states, including France (Kundnani, 2014, p. 92). The leading role of Germany during the Euro crisis also led to other painful issues, when in Greece and Italy the financial discipline that was forced upon them was perceived as German doing, instead of EU doing. Often times, parallels were drawn to the Second World War, with Germany portrayed as occupying force (Kundnani, 2014, p. 99).

The crisis, however, did spur European integration. German Minister of Financial Affairs Wolfgang Schäuble stated that “far from undoing the EU project, the crisis has been helping to advance it” (Kundnani, 2014, p. 97). The integration, however, differed from earlier periods of integration. English journalist Hans Kundnani calls it “integration at gunpoint”, since there was little choice for Eurozone countries but to transfer powers to EU level (Kundnani, 2014, p. 98). The Euro crisis also started certain developments within Germany. Because of the ‘survival-mode’ that the EU went in during the crisis, trying to make sure the Eurozone would survive, there was no room for discussion on the possible EU reforms. In this ‘vacuum’, German Eurosceptic and populist parties could rise (Harryvan, Krause, & Vollaard, 2018, p. 47).

Because of its actions during the Euro crisis, Germany became the ‘de facto leader’ of Europe. The consensus among non-EU countries was that “if you want something done in Brussels you go to Berlin” (Kundnani, 2014, p. 93). Germany gained influence, in Europe and in the world. However, it also met a lot of resistance, most notably in those member states that were forced to follow ‘German imposed’ financial rules (Jürgens & Nijhuis, 2017, p. 210).

Germany's power and influence destabilizes the French-German relations, since France became the 'weaker' party in this alliance. Germany's focus on strict financial rules also hit France, whose economy also took severe hits during the crisis. The power balance between the two countries has always been an important factor within the EU, and the French feared that Germany became too powerful. Because of this, the French-German axis was not as prevalent during the years of the crisis (Jürgens & Nijhuis, 2017, p. 155). In May 2017, Emmanuel Macron was elected as the new French President. He ran on a message that was very pro-EU, and he also wanted to intensify and revitalise relations with Germany (Ulrich, 2017). In January 2019, steps towards this last goal were taken. Merkel and Macron signed the Treaty of Aachen, a 'pact of friendship' between Germany and France. Macron and Merkel want to renew the fundament of French-German cooperation with the treaty (Mühlauer, Roßmann, & Wernicke, 2019). The aim is, to make it so that the French-German cooperation is not dependent on the personal relations between the leaders of both states, but instead is laid down in a treaty. Agreed is that before European summits, France and Germany will align their positions with each other. European defence, and the French-German cooperation on this field, is also included (Abels, 2019). This will be discussed in chapter 4.4.

The Treaty arrives at a time when the balance in the French-German relations has changed once again. After the German elections of 2017, Merkel's CDU once again won the most seats, but lost seats as well in comparison with the elections of 2013. After long coalition talks, Merkel started her fourth term as Chancellor in May 2018, leading a coalition between her party and the Social-Democrats (SPD), a so-called "great coalition" (Bundeskanzlerin Merkel legt Amtseid ab, 2018). Because of the long and difficult coalition talks, and the reluctant position of the SPD, Merkel is not as influential in the EU as she was during her last terms. She even stepped down as her party's chairwoman, stating that her current term as Chancellor will be her last (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 2018). With the rise of German populist and Eurosceptic party Alternative für Deutschland who won 13,7% of the votes in the election, the Chancellor is not backed anymore by a population that wholeheartedly agrees on the need for European integration (Peters, 2017). Macron enjoys a comfortable parliamentary majority in France, and has more room to take a lead when it comes to European integration issues. Lately, however, mass protests in France also threaten his position domestically (Willsher, 2018). Still, Merkel, who has set the pace in the EU for a long time, is now, in a sense, overshadowed by Macron (Brössler & Fried, 2017). Germany, however, remains the most powerful and influential of the two.

The future role of Germany within the EU, and in European integration, will be influenced by Brexit. With Brexit coming up, even more focus will be on Germany, and on the French-German axis. The EU's internal power balance was based on France, Germany and the UK. With the UK leaving, this

balance will shift to France and Germany, with an emphasis on Berlin. An EU dominated by Germany looms. This is not wanted by the Germans themselves, and it is the question if serves the EU in general (Jürgens & Nijhuis, 2017, p. 156). According to Segers, "Europe becomes even more German with Brexit. This can be a risk, since it is possible that a future Chancellor will be more assertive, and focus more on Germany's own interest. If this happens Germany can have an enormous influence" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019). The power of Germany in the EU is likely to become one of the bigger questions of the EU in the future.

Conclusion

With the German reunification, the German push for European integration did not end. Germany needed European integration, to reassure that a reunited Germany would not threaten the European balance. All Kohl's successors have promoted European integration. When Schröder ignored the SGP in 2003, however, trust in Germany was tainted. Merkel wanted to rebuilt Germany's reputation in Europe, especially when it came to financial matters. With the Euro crisis, she did just that. During the crisis, Germany took the lead. This was, and is, an uncomfortable position for the Germans. Germany's dominance in Europe led to friction, especially in those countries that were hit the hardest, and who now had to adhere to Germany's budget policy. The French-German relations were also affected by Germany's powerful position. With Macron as the pro-Euro French President, and the Treaty of Aachen, however, the relations seems to have a new impulse. The question for the future will be, however, what Germany's power means to Europe and the EU.

4.4 Case Study: What are the Dutch and German stances on PeSCo?

In a personal interview, Dutch historian Mathieu Segers stated that “because of the geopolitical situation around Europe, and the increasing threats coming from several different directions, the necessity for cooperation in the area of defence grows” (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019). The United Kingdom, a great military power, has decided to leave the EU. The President of the United States, Donald Trump, has repeatedly questioned the workings of NATO, the organisation which is responsible for much of the security on the European continent (Elshout, 2017). At the same time, the Russians are displaying activity on the east-EU border that troubles the eastern member states. With wars raging in the Middle East, and migration flows in Africa, Europe feels a need for stronger defence (Homan, 2018). These developments all led to the establishment of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PeSCo) in 2017, with 25 member states (excluding the United Kingdom, Denmark and Malta) signing on (Biscop, 2018, p. 162).

PeSCo is meant to “bring together all willing member states in the area of defence whose military capabilities fulfil higher criteria and which have made more binding commitments with a view to the most demanding missions” (Zandee, PESCO implementation: the next challenge, 2018, p. 1). It marks the first time since the start of the EU in 1993, that an initiative on the area of defence and military is developed, breaking a taboo on military cooperation within the EU (Elshout, 2017). The member states have signed up to 17 commitments, which range from the obligation to take part in ‘capability projects’ that are ‘strategically relevant’, to the ‘regular increasing of defence budgets’ (Biscop, 2018, p. 162).

The PeSCo process was led by France and Germany (Billon-Galland & Quencez, 2017, p. 1). For Germany, PeSCo was an opportunity “to put wind back into the sails of the European project” (The Economist, 2019). According to the Germans, however, PeSCo needed to be an inclusive project. Germany wanted to include the maximum number of EU member states (Zandee, PESCO implementation: the next challenge, 2018, p. 2). If PeSCo would turn out too ambitious, with standards that were too high, new divisions within the EU would be possible, with only a small group of member states joining PeSCo (Billon-Galland & Quencez, 2017, p. 2). Making sure that the EU is not divided in different zones and groups had been Merkel’s approach during the EU crisis, and this has not changed with PeSCo. The French, however, wanted precisely that what the Germans absolutely did not: a more ambitious and smaller core group. They were able to find a compromise, calling for an “inclusive and ambitious” PeSCo in July 2017 (Zandee, PESCO implementation: the next challenge, 2018, p. 2). The inclusiveness wish of the Germans came out, eventually, when in December of 2017 25 member states signed on. This German aim of inclusiveness is a continuation of another one of Merkel’s policies within the EU: “Merkel always makes sure others are on board, she

is always looking for support, and if she doesn't have it, rarely will she continue because she doesn't want Germany to take the lead on its own" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019). This is very much the case in the PeSCo scenario, where Germany refuses to take the lead on its own, especially since its concerning such a sensitive issue as the military, seeing Germany's history (Franke, 2018). The strong French-German leadership, however, was the motor behind the PeSCo proposal, which was adopted in record time: between the French-German summit, where France and Germany announced their European defence and security initiatives, and the Council decision only half a year had passed, showcasing the potential of a functioning French-German axis in European integration (Biscop, 2018, p. 164).

PeSCo is not the start of an European army. The member states will increase cooperation by supplying military capacities to military operations and organisations. With PeSCo, the member states committed themselves, and cooperation is no longer without obligations. The armies themselves, however, remain under the authority of the member states (Homan, 2018).

For the Germans, PeSCo is a way for the EU to take the issue of security in its own hands, however, there can be no competition between NATO and PeSCo. The two organisations have to cooperate closely. The FRG, and later the reunited Germany, has "continually based its security policy on the NATO Alliance, and the US military security guarantees that it embodies" (Hyde-Price, 2000, p. 136). This has been Merkel's position as well, however, in the past years, Merkel and Germany have shifted on this. The Germans are of the opinion that the EU should be in a position where it solves its own problems, as the Germans believe that the United States will no longer solve the problems for Europe (Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, 2018).

In November 2018, when speaking to the European Parliament, Merkel praised the PeSCo programme. She went further, however, stating that the EU "should strive to create a proper European army, which would show the world that there will never again be war between European countries" (Chazan & Brunsden, 2018). This fits the words of German Minister of Defence Ursula von der Leyen, who called PeSCo a "step on the way towards a European army" (EU-Staaten beschließen neue Projekte für Verteidigungsunion, 2018). Merkel added, however, that a European army would "not be aimed against NATO", but that it would form a "good complement" (Chazan & Brunsden, 2018). The balance between dependency on NATO, and a Europe that stands on its own is a difficult one for Germany (Gotkowska, 2017). Merkel already called for a EU that can take its destiny in own hands (Elshout, 2017). It remains important to Germany, that a European army could only occur within the framework of the EU, instead of outside of it. This was a reaction towards Macron, who

stated that the United Kingdom could join new defence and military initiatives eventually, even post-Brexit (Chazan & Brunsden, 2018).

Initiatives such as PeSCo, however, are on its own not nearly enough to replace the role that the NATO currently holds on the European continent (Gotkowska, 2017). Based on the number of military material (warplanes, armoured vehicles, and submarines) and troops in Europe, as well as the military budget, it can be concluded that Europe's military standard exceed those of Russia and China (Boon, 2018). The problem is, however, cooperation. In Europe, there are around thirty national armies. There are several different cooperation-projects on the field of military and defence, such as NATO, and now PeSCo. However, not all EU countries take part in the same cooperation projects. Sweden, for example, is not in NATO. Europe and the EU are missing one single defence strategy, since every single member state can make choices on its own. Therefore, NATO cannot be replaced yet, as PeSCo does not add enough on the field of European cooperative defence (Boon, 2018).

Germany's own national army, the Bundeswehr, faces problems. "There is neither enough personnel nor materiel, and often one confronts shortage upon shortage. The troops are far from being fully-equipped" (Karnitschnig, 2019). Criticism on Merkel and her dedication to the Bundeswehr is increasing. Even though Merkel speaks of a Europe that can protect itself, and is responsible for its own security, it is clear that Germany is still dependent on the United States when it comes to security, as it has been since the second half of the 20th century. As American journalist Karnitschnig writes, "plans for a "European Army" that includes Germany have about as much chance of getting off the ground as the German Air Force" (Karnitschnig, 2019).

When the Netherlands signed the PeSCo agreement, Dutch Minister of Defence Ank Bijleveld stated that "PeSCo marks the biggest cooperation on the field of defence that we have ever taken part in", referring to military cooperation within the EU (Homan, 2018). To the Dutch, PeSCo marks a change in attitude towards security policy. "The Dutch always leaned more on Atlantic cooperation, in NATO, with the British and the Americans" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019). NATO is the cornerstone of the Dutch security policy, and the Netherlands have always relied on Atlantic cooperation instead of Europe for security (Zandee, PeSCo: The Dutch Perspective, 2018, p. 2).

Already in the 1950s, the Dutch advocated a central position of NATO in Western defence matters (Krabbendam, Van Minnen, & Scott-Smith, 2009, p. 650). Even though the multilateral and bilateral relations with the United States loosened in the centuries after, NATO remained central to the Dutch (Krabbendam, Van Minnen, & Scott-Smith, 2009, p. 651). The Dutch also use NATO as a way to counter the ambitious French-German ideas on European defence. With current United States

President Donald Trump questioning the NATO, however, the Dutch will have to do more than simply rejecting the French-German plans (Zandee, Alleen het afwijzen van de Frans-Duitse oproep voor een Europees leger voldoet niet, 2018).

Thus, this Dutch change in attitude can be attributed to the geopolitical situation around Europe, for example the mentioned election of Trump as President of the United States, and his continued questioning of NATO, among other reasons that are mentioned in the introduction to this chapter (M. Segers, political communication, February 13, 2019). In the past, initiatives such as PeSCo would most likely have been disregarded by the Dutch, based on their commitment to NATO. However, instead of focussing purely on NATO, the Dutch are now of the opinion that strengthening European defence capabilities can add to NATO cooperation, and does not necessarily devalue NATO (Zandee, PeSCo: The Dutch Perspective, 2018, p. 2). The Netherlands have three principles that define the approach to PeSCo. Firstly, there can be no 'ideological debates' about the purpose of European defence cooperation. The Dutch fear that such debates will lead to questioning of NATO, and further talks on the topic of a European army. PeSCo needs to provide concrete output; no other way of measuring its success. This is the second Dutch principle. This adds to the first principle, since it prevents 'ideological' and symbolic results from being seen as a goal of PeSCo. Thirdly, the concrete output has to strengthen NATO. To the Dutch, NATO remains the standard for security (Zandee, PeSCo: The Dutch Perspective, 2018, p. 3). These principles reflect the pragmatic approach that characterises the Dutch position in European integration (Zandee, PeSCo: The Dutch Perspective, 2018, p. 7).

Responding to the remarks of Merkel and Macron, Rutte stated that the Netherlands opposes a European army. He is of the opinion that Europe still needs the United States. Europe remains dependent on NATO for security, according to the Dutch Prime Minister. In November 2018, Rutte called the proposal for a European army "inept" (NOS, 2018). Bijleveld reinforced Rutte's words later that month, also stating the Netherlands will oppose a European army (Vanheste, 2018).

The Dutch and the Germans already work together on the field of military (Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, 2018). Since 1995, the First Dutch-German Corps exists, operating from the German city Münster. In 2014, new developments on the field of Dutch-German cooperation took place. The Dutch Airmobile Brigade integrated with the German Rapid Forces Division. The German and Dutch soldiers will be trained together, and possibly deployed together as well, in case both countries agree to this (Feiten over nieuwe 'Nederduitse' legereenheid, 2014). This cooperation can be seen as a successful way to integrate (divisions of) armies of member states, while both countries retain authority over their own division (Wijk, 2018). However, in the discussion surrounding the European

army, both the Germans and the Dutch do not mention this example of military integration between member states.

The Dutch agree with the French, and oppose the German view, when it comes to allowing non-EU member states to partake in PeSCo initiatives and projects. Norway and a post-Brexit United Kingdom are two countries that The Hague would like involved in PeSCo projects (Zandee, PeSCo: The Dutch Perspective, 2018, p. 3). This directly opposes the German view, who want all development to occur within European frameworks (Chazan & Brunsden, 2018).

Conclusion

With PeSCo, the EU has made new progression on the politically sensitive area of defence and security. This French-German proposal once again showed that it is the motor behind European integration, leading the way to PeSCo. That does not mean that the two agree entirely. Compromise formed the basis of PeSCo: the “inclusive and ambitious” project serves the aims of both Germany (inclusiveness) and France (ambition). The Germans see PeSCo as a way to initiate new European integration, but also as a way for Europe to take matters in its own hands when it comes to security. Germany is of the opinion that the EU can no longer be dependent on the United States for matters of security. Important is that PeSCo was as inclusive as possible, within the European framework. A European Union of different zones is no option to the Chancellor. Next to that, Merkel will not push through German initiatives without as much consensus on the continent as possible, especially on a subject as sensitive as the military and defence. Germany refuses to take the lead on its own. To Germany, PeSCo does not mark the end of integration on the field of defence; German government officials, including Merkel herself, have already spoken of a European army.

The Dutch took part in PeSCo, because the geopolitical situation asked for it. With Trump questioning NATO, the Dutch cannot put all their cards on NATO anymore. This, and Brexit, make the EU less Atlantic, and more continental. The Dutch try to adjust to this, which is a reason for their participation in PeSCo. This confirms the pragmatic position of the Dutch. NATO, however, remains the cornerstone of the Dutch defence, and the same should go for the EU according to them. PeSCo needs to deliver concrete results, and debates about the ideology of European defence are no option. A European army is therefore out of the question for the Dutch. The Atlantic cooperation remains more important. The Dutch would also like it to be possible for non-EU member states to join PeSCo projects, thinking especially of the post-Brexit United Kingdom. On this they find partners in the French, but the Germans oppose this notion. To them, developments and initiatives have to happen within the European framework.

5. Analysis

The Netherlands and Germany have a shared history in the European integration process. However, this does not mean that they shared the same incentives to take part in, and continue with this process. While European integration is, by definition, a process and a history of cooperation between nations, the two countries have differed in view and aim from the beginning, and this continued throughout the process.

The Dutch involvement with European integration

In the six events that form the core of the European integration process until 1992, the differences between Germany and the Netherlands, with regards to European integration, become clear. Leading up to the first event, which was the foundation of the FRG in 1949, the Dutch had to choose between idealism (repercussions on Germany as revenge for the Second World War), and economy (letting the German economy recover). They, eventually, chose the latter, because an economically strong Germany was essential in order to rebuild the Netherlands. "The economy always was an important aim of the Dutch in European cooperation" (F. Wielenga, personal communication, February 25, 2019). This Dutch aim is clear throughout the whole integration process. In the Dutch choice to join the ECSC, again the choice is made for the economy. As explained in chapter 4.1 (p. 13), the Dutch ideal is Atlantic cooperation with the USA and UK, however, their economy is so dependent of West Germany that they do not really have an option. After the ECSC, the Dutch would initiate new integration themselves. The field in which they want this integration is, once again, the economy, aiming for an internal market. This initiative (the Beyen-plan) would lead to the Treaty of Rome (1957). This economic aim of the Netherlands is seen throughout the whole integration process.

"The Netherlands is susceptible to trends, the country moves along with the *Zeitgeist*" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019). As explained in chapter 4.1 (p.15), another explanation for the Dutch choice for European integration, was not only the economy. In the Netherlands, and generally in Europe at the time (the 1950s), pro-European positions were popular. This influenced the politicians in power, who decided on European integration issues.

Up until the Treaty of Maastricht, the Netherlands had supported European integration. With the Treaty of Maastricht, however, the Dutch goals of liberalisation of the internal market were, to a certain extent, accomplished. In the following years, a feeling of saturation came over the Dutch. "The Netherlands have, to a certain extent, achieved what they wanted with the EU and the internal market. They feel as if the integration project has been completed" (F. Wielenga, personal communication, February 25, 2019) This was cause for Dutch reluctance when it came to new EU policy. The reunification of Germany, and the addition of new member states in 1997, meant that the

Netherlands would have less influence in the EU. Because of this, the Dutch focussed more on EU policy that was directly in the interest of the Netherlands itself. From the late 1990s, the Dutch became increasingly Eurosceptical. Two reasons for this are given in chapter 4.2 (p. 22). Another reason for this increasing Euroscepticism, is the previously mentioned Dutch susceptibility to the Zeitgeist. “The Zeitgeist is more Eurosceptic the past 15-20 years, and the Netherlands move along” (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019). The governments in the 21st century, of course, influenced the Dutch Eurosceptic position too. These were led by the centre-right Christian Democrats, and later, since 2010, the liberal VVD. These parties advocated a more Euro pragmatic approach, and wanted to decrease the level of payments that the Netherlands made to the EU.

During the 21st century, the Netherlands would often take a strong stand against Europe publicly, however, internally, in cooperation with the other member states, the Netherlands were seen as a good, constructive partner. This discrepancy between public positioning, and actual internal cooperation is seen throughout the 21st century.

Since Brexit, a shift can be noticed with regards to the Dutch position towards European integration. With Brexit, the EU becomes less Atlantic. The Netherlands will have to make new choices, since it cannot count on its former partner in London anymore to stop any proposals that do not find support in the Netherlands. Two new positions have been displayed by the Netherlands recently. There was the northern alliance of eight Nordic EU countries, led by the Netherlands, which was meant to counter French-German proposals. More recently, however, Rutte has called for a stronger EU, and his cabinet has been investing in relations with Germany and France. This implies, that the Netherlands will position itself closer to the French-German axis in the future.

The German involvement with European integration

The German history with European integration differs from the Dutch. In the interviews, both Segers and Wielenga remark that Germany has an historic appreciation for the European cooperation, that because of its history, European cooperation is “almost a second nature to Germany” (F. Wielenga, personal communication, February 25, 2019). In the Netherlands, this historic appreciation, or feelings of responsibility towards European integration “are certainly not present in that way” (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019).

When the French presented the FRG’s Chancellor Adenauer with the ECSC plan in 1950, Adenauer immediately agreed. With the plan, the newly erected FRG could become ‘equal’ to the other Western European states. “The most important goal, was to regain a equal position within Western cooperation” (F. Wielenga, personal communication, February 25, 2019). While this seems opportunistic, there was an idealist side to it. The plan could bring the French-German relationship to

a new level. Adenauer thought that this relationship was crucial to the “europäischen Zusammenschluss”. As explained in chapter 4.1 (p. 13), Adenauer was convinced that cooperation in continental Western Europe formed the best guarantee for a safe and stable Western Europe.

Where the Dutch supported a common European market because of economic interests, Adenauer supported the plans because of the geopolitical situation at the time, As explained in chapter 4.1 (p. 15). The Chancellor was of the opinion that Europe should be able to run its own affairs, without being dependent on others. Germany’s deeply felt responsibility for Europe is an important incentive in its *Europapolitik*. in this situation. While the Dutch and German both supported the internal market, their reasoning for it was different. “The Dutch and German approach towards European integration differed, but the direction is similar” (F. Wielenga, personal communication, February 25, 2019).

Throughout the integration process, the French-German relations remained pivotal to Germany. Because of Germany’s past, and the renewed sense of responsibility, the Germans did not want to give the impression that they dominated Europe. “The Germans are aware that they should avoid an *Alleingang*” (F. Wielenga, personal communication, February 25, 2019). This constant cooperation and consultation with the French, historically their biggest enemy, was a way for Germany to avoid this *Alleingang*.

When the Berlin Wall fell in late 1989, it would form the basis for a new spur in European integration. FRG Chancellor Kohl saw his chance for the reunification of East and West Germany. However, he was aware that this could only be done if the reunification took part within the European process. As explained in chapter 4.1 (p. 17), German reunification and European integration were two sides of the same coin to Kohl. In order to make a reunified Germany acceptable to the other Western member states, Kohl would agree to a summit on the topic of EMU. In 1990, the FRG and the GDR reunited into one German state. Germany became, if that was not the case already, the most powerful country within Europe, a central European power. In this new role, Germany called for the ‘deepening and widening’ of European integration. The responsibility that the Germans have felt for European integration since the beginning, remained present, and formed a driving force behind Germany’s *Europapolitik*.

The reunification, however, was cause for a stagnating German economy, and Germany was referred to as ‘the sick man of Europe’. It got to a point where the new Chancellor Schröder set to exceed the 3% budget deficit limit, which negatively affected Germany’s authority on financial areas. In 2005 Merkel was elected as the new German chancellor, and in her first period, the German economy recovered. This economic recovery turned Germany into Europe’s powerhouse, since it became the

strongest economy within the EU. This would be an important factor in the leading role that Germany took on during the financial crisis that started in 2009. In this crisis, Germany and Merkel took the lead. The Germans themselves, as well as several member states in the EU, were not entirely comfortable. "Germany wants to prevent a situation in which other countries think of the EU as German" (F. Wielenga, personal communication, February 23, 2019). To prevent a previously mentioned *Alleingang*, the Germans sought close cooperation with other member states during the crisis. Germany did not want to act alone. Still, during the crisis, Germany became the EU's 'de facto' leader.

Germany's increasing power and influence disbalances the French-German axis. This was the case in the late 1990s, and this issue has continued since. Merkel and Macron, however, recently signed a Treaty in which the German-French relations for the future are renewed. Merkel herself has stepped down as chairman of her party, signalling that her current term will be her last. Both Segers and Wielenga, however, do not expect Germany will stop being the motor behind European integration. "It is in Germany's interest to keep the EU going. Without the EU, Germany is alone in the middle of Europe, and it will lose significant political power. The EU is in the German national interest." (F. Wielenga, personal communication, February 23, 2019). Segers states that "I expect that Germany will remain a stable factor, that is aimed on bringing parties together in European integration" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 15, 2019).

In PeSCo, the difference of the Dutch and German approaches towards European integration are, to a certain extent, visible. As so often in European integration, the French-German axis was the driving force behind PeSCo. Germany, who are always looking for consensus, wanted enough support among member states particularly in this case, given Germany's past and the sensitive matter of security and military. The Germans want to take steps on the field of European security and defence, because they want the EU to be able to defend itself, without being dependent on others (most notably the US). Because of the geopolitical situation, the Dutch felt that the EU should take more responsibility for its own security. Thus, they took part, but they only want concrete output coming out of PeSCo. The result-driven approach fits in the Dutch more Euro pragmatic line of the 21st century. The Dutch do not want PeSCo to be a platform for discussion about the ideology of European defence and military matters. Merkel, however, already started a discussion on a European army, showing Germany's more idealistic approach to the subject. Germany and the Netherlands do agree on the field of NATO, with both stating that PeSCo in no way replaces NATO.

The Dutch-German relations

In post-war years, the Dutch-German relations were defined by Dutch ambivalence. The Dutch supported the peaceful integration of the FRG into Europe (and subsequent restoration of the West German economy). In bilateral meetings with the Germans, however, the Dutch demanded that the Germans 'make even' for the Second World War, since it had ended only ten years ago. For the Germans, however, it was already ten years since the War had finished. Economically, the two were partners. Politically, the situation was different. In the 1960s, as explained in chapter 4.1 (p. 15), the Dutch tried to get Germany to move away from their French focus. To the Germans, however, the bond with France was deemed much more important. This was cause for the Dutch to continue leaning on the Atlantic cooperation, especially when the British joined the EEC in 1973. Throughout the years, the political Dutch-German relations remained stable, but neither party was the most important partner to one another. Politically, the Germans focussed on the French, the Dutch on the Atlantic. The cooperation is intense through regional initiatives, or for example on the field of the military with the Dutch-German corps. "It does not always reach the news, and the cooperation could get more attention politically, the relations are not too visible to the general public" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 13, 2019). During the financial crisis, cooperation between The Hague and Berlin intensified on the political, European stage. More recently, with Brexit, the Netherlands even seem to shift more towards Germany politically. "After Brexit, Germany and the Netherlands need each other more now, when it comes to making sure the northern European voice is heard within the EU" (M. Segers, personal communication, February 25, 2019). "A subtle shift can be observed in the Dutch position, one that moves more to the already existing German position. In that sense, one can speak of more rapprochement" (F. Wielenga, personal communication, February 25, 2019).

6. Conclusion

The central question in this thesis is: Why do the Netherlands and Germany differ on further European integration? Through desk research and field research, in the form of interviews with experts on the matter, the history of both the Netherlands and Germany with European integration has been examined. In a final case-study, on PeSCo, the positions of these two countries in a matter that is both topical, as well as relevant to European integration, were analysed. When looking at these results, the central question can be answered.

The reason for the current differences between the Netherlands and Germany, lies in the past. From the very start of the European integration process, the two countries have had different incentives to take part in this project. The West Germans took part, because this renewed European cooperation could make the new West German state equal to its Western European partners. Next to that, the Germans felt a responsibility for Europe, and intensive cooperation and integration was seen as a way to ensure peace. The Dutch, on the other hand, joined because they were not really left a choice. They were economically dependent on West Germany, and while their cooperation of preference was with the USA and the UK, they took part regardless. This economic choice would remain an important factor in the Dutch history with European integration.

The two countries went through different developments over the course of the European integration project. Germany grew into Europe's economic powerhouse, and was the motor behind European integration in close cooperation with France. The Netherlands fervently tried to get the British to join, in which they succeeded in 1973, and focussed mostly on economic cooperation. When the West- and East German states reunited in 1990, Germany became a central European power. The Netherlands, on the other hand, lost influence in the 1990s with the accession of a number of new member states.

With the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, European integration lost, to a certain extent, its appeal to the Netherlands. The market had been liberalised, and the Dutch wishes with regards to European integration were mostly realised. This was cause for an increasingly Eurosceptic positioning of the Dutch in the late 1990s, and throughout the 21st century. The Germans, on the other hand, found a new sense of responsibility for Europe with their reunification. And when their economy developed from 'the sick man of Europe' into Europe's absolute economic powerhouse, their responsibility grew. With the leading role that Germany took on during the Euro crisis in the early 2010s, it became the EU's 'de facto' leader.

These developments lead us to the point where the two countries are now. With Brexit, the Netherlands will lose a partner that was able to counter the French-German axis. This means that

they will have to find a new role and position within the EU. Germany becomes even more powerful within the EU, but it will have to prevent a situation in which the EU is dominated by the Germans themselves. And with Merkel planning to leave, the question is who the next German Chancellor will be, and what his or her plans with Europe are.

To conclude, the reasons for the different views of the Netherlands and Germany on European integration, are found in the histories of the two with this integration process, from the Second World War until now. Where this war still influences Germany's position in the EU to this day, the Dutch do not have this ideological support for European integration. For them, it is the economy that counts. There is not one, unequivocal answer that can be given to this question after the research. The answer is found throughout all these historical events and incentives, as explained above. Together, they are reason for the current differences between the Netherlands and Germany.

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Appendix I – Student Ethics Form

Student Ethics Form

European Studies Student Ethics Form

Your name: Jop van Ravenhorst

Supervisor: Martijn Lak

Instructions/checklist

Before completing this form you should read the APA Ethics Code (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>). If you are planning research with human subjects you should also look at the sample consent form available in the Final Project and Dissertation Guide.

- a. Read section 3 that your supervisor will have to sign. Make sure that you cover all these issues in section 1.
- b. Complete sections 1 and, if you are using human subjects, section 2, of this form, and sign it.
- c. Ask your project supervisor to read these sections (and the draft consent form if you have one) and sign the form.
- d. Append this signed form as an appendix to your dissertation.

Section 1. Project Outline (to be completed by student)

(i) Title of Project: Why do the Netherlands and Germany differ on further European integration?

(ii) Aims of project: To find out the reasons for the different positions that the Netherlands and Germany have when it comes to European integration.

(iii) Will you involve other people in your project – e.g. via formal or informal interviews, group discussions, questionnaires, internet surveys etc. (Note: if you are using data that has already been collected by another researcher – e.g. recordings or transcripts of conversations given to you by your supervisor, you should answer 'NO' to this question.)

YES

If no: you should now sign the statement below and return the form to your supervisor. You have completed this form.

This project is not designed to include research with human subjects . I understand that I do not have ethical clearance to interview people (formally or informally) about the topic of my research, to carry out internet research (e.g. on chat rooms or discussion boards) or in any other way to use people as subjects in my research.

Student's signature _____ - date _____

If yes: you should complete the rest of this form.

Section 2 Complete this section only if you answered YES to question (iii) above.

(i) What will the participants have to do? (v. brief outline of procedure):

The participants take part in an interview, in which they answer several questions about the subject.

(ii) What sort of people will the participants be and how will they be recruited?

The participants are academics, with knowledge on the field of Dutch-German relations and European integration. They have been contacted through email, and eventually the conversation took place over telephone.

(iii) What sort stimuli or materials will your participants be exposed to, tick the appropriate boxes and then state what they are in the space below?

Questionnaires[]; Pictures[]; Sounds [x]; Words[x]; Other[].

Sounds, since the conversations that were held are recorded with agreement of the interviewee.
Words, since the conversations are written out in a transcript, and excerpts are used throughout the dissertation, again with agreement of the interviewee.

(iv) Consent: Informed consent must be obtained for all participants before they take part in your project. Either verbally or by means of an informed consent form you should state what participants will be doing, drawing attention to anything they could conceivably object to subsequently. You should also state how they can withdraw from the study at any time and the measures you are taking to ensure the confidentiality of data. A standard informed consent form is available in the Dissertation Manual.

(vi) What procedures will you follow in order to guarantee the confidentiality of participants' data? Personal data (name, addresses etc.) should not be stored in such a way that they can be associated with the participant's data.
The conversations, in audio form and transcript, are stored in the dissertation. Contact information will not be shared in this dissertation, and remains private.

Student's signature:  date: 21/2/2019

Supervisor's signature (if satisfied with the proposed procedures): date: 21/2/2019

