

T.C.
TURKISH- GERMAN UNIVERSTY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

**THE IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL GATEWAY ON THIRD
COUNTRIES' ALIGNMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN
GREEN DEAL**

MASTER'S THESIS

Simge Yaren ŞENKULA

ADVISOR

Doc. Dr. Ebru TURHAN

ISTANBUL, January 2024

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is an original work. I also declare that I have acted in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct at all stages of the work including preparation, data collection and analysis. I have cited and referenced all the information that is not original to this work.

Simge Yaren ŞENKULA

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ÖZET

THE IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL GATEWAY ON THIRD COUNTRIES' ALIGNMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

Uluslararası ilişkilerde sert güç nüanslarının yeniden trend olmasına rağmen, yeni jeopolitik gelişmeler yumuşak gücün de toplam gücün önemli bir parçası olduğunu gösteriyor. Yumuşak güç sadece yeni problemlere karşı sorun çözme kapasitesini geliştirmekle kalmaz, ayrıca aktörlerin problemleri fırsata çevirebilmesini sağlar. Ancak Avrupa Birliği (AB) yumuşak gücü son yıllarda ciddi bir azalış göstermiştir. Avrupa Yeşil Mutabakatı (AYM), AB'nin 2050'ye kadar net-sıfır emisyonuna ulaşmasını sağlayacak bütüncül bir politikadır. Bununla birlikte, Birlik'in krizleri fırsata dönüştürme, küresel iklim liderliğini üstlenme ve yumuşak gücünü artırma planıdır. AB İklim Diplomasisi kapsamında yapılmış önceki eylemler AB'yi iklim krizi rejiminde çok enstrümanlı, deneyimli bir aktör haline getirmiştir. Ancak, iç politikadaki çığır açan başarılarına rağmen, AYM dış politika alanında zayıf kalmıştır. Bunun sebeplerinden biri, daha önce iklim diplomasi için etkili araçlar geliştirmiş olmasına rağmen AB'nin AYM kapsamında yalnızca 'örnekle yol gösterme' modeline dayanmasıdır. Küresel Geçit, AB'nin küresel pozisyonunun güçlendirme amacıyla oluşturduğu bir bağlantısallık projesidir. Bu tez, Küresel Geçit'in AYM'yi üçüncü ülkelere genişletme potansiyelini araştırmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, Küresel Geçit'in en önemli partneri olan Afrika ele alınmıştır. Fas ve Rwanda, üçüncü ülkelerin AYM ile uyumlanmasında Küresel Geçit'in etkisini test etmek amacıyla vakalar olarak incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Avrupa Yeşil Mutabakatı, İklim Diplomasisi, Yumuşak Güç, Küresel Geçit, Bağlantısallık*

ABSTRACT

THE IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL GATEWAY ON THIRD COUNTRIES' ALIGNMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

Although hard power nuances are re-trending in International Relations, recent geopolitical developments demonstrate that soft power is also a significant part of overall power. Soft power not only extends capability to respond to new challenges, but also enables actors to turn problems to opportunities. However, European Union (EU) soft power has been in decline for a couple years. The European Green Deal (EGD) is a comprehensive policy for the EU to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. It is also the Union's moment to turn crisis into opportunities, claim global climate leadership and boost its soft power. Previous external actions within the EU Climate Diplomacy make the EU an experienced actor in climate change regime with various policy tools. However, despite groundbreaking achievements in the domestic sphere, external dimension of EGD remains weak. One of the reasons is that the EU is relying solely on 'leading by example' in EGD, although it previously developed effective instruments enhancing its diplomatic skills in climate. Global Gateway is a connectivity project to strengthen the EU global position. This thesis investigates the potential of Global Gateway in externalizing EGD to third countries. In this context, Africa is focused on as the key partner of Global Gateway. Morocco and Rwanda are examined as case studies in testing impact of Global Gateway projects to the country's alignment with the EGD.

Keywords: *European Green Deal, Climate Diplomacy, Soft Power, Global Gateway, Connectivity*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACP: African, Caribbean and Pacific (Group of States)

AfDB: African Development Bank

AOSIS: The Alliance of Small Island States

ASEAN: Association of Southeast Asian Nations

ASEM: Asia Europe Meeting

AU: African Union

BASIC: (Acronym) Brazil, South Africa, India, and China

BRI: Belt and Road

CBAM: Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism

CCRDSAP: Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan

DCFTA: Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements

DG: Directorate General (of European Commission)

EBRD: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

EC: European Community

EEAS: European External Action Service

EGD: European Green Deal

EIB: European Investment Bank

EU: European Union

FAC: Foreign Affairs Council

FDI: Foreign Direct Investment

FTA: Free Trade Area

GHG: Greenhouse Gas

IMF: International Monetary Fund

IRA: Inflation Reduction Act

IPCC: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

IRA: Inflation Reduction Act

IR: International Relations

SDG(s): Sustainable Development Goal(s)

NDC: Nationally Determined Contribution

US: United States

UN: United Nations

UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

WTO: World Trade Organization

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1. INTRODUCTION

“History is on the move. The events we have lived through, in these four years, will shape the world for decades to come: from a global pandemic to the return of war on our continents, from the risk of extreme weather events to that of artificial intelligence.”

(von der Leyen, 2023)

The international arena is characterized by a good deal of challenges, uncertainty and conflict in recent years, an outlook that Von der Leyen chose to commence her letter of intent. The European Union (EU) inevitably had to face with many challenges that it needs to respond to, by occupying a position in the middle of conflicts; both geographically and politically. As it was trying to overcome negative impacts of Covid-19 together with the distrust rose by internal and external due to vaccine distribution crisis, what started as Russian aggression to Ukraine turned into a full-scale war. This has led to energy crisis, food security crisis and a more weakened EU solidarity on the brink of a new enlargement (Sarrats, 2023). Israeli offensive to Gaza as a response to Hamas activities seems to be one of the determinant incidents for foreign policy of the EU in 2024. These recent challenges were just supplements to ongoing crises, such as management hardships in refugee flow, economic recession, and domestic challenges regarding rule of law.

Climate change is a long-term challenge that has begun to exert its influence. The Earth's surface temperature has increased 1.1°C in 2011-2020 since 1850-1900 because of greenhouse gas emissions stemming from human activities (IPCC, 2023, p. 4). The warming pace of Europe was even more increased than rest of the world in last decade, with 2.04°C - 2.10°C surface temperatures comparing to pre-industrial era (EEA, 2023a). This change has already triggered some severe consequences. The past 40 years, extreme weather conditions have caused 85,000-145,000 deaths as 85% of the human cost resulted from heatwaves (EEA, 2023b). Economic damage is approximately €560 billion in 1980-2021, and the cost for the

year 2021 alone is €56.6 billion (EEA, 2023a). Therefore, formulating policies to tackle climate change and environmental problems is vital for the future of the EU, whilst initiating global awareness is equally important as climate change is a cross-border issue.

In 2019, the EU has unveiled European Green Deal (EGD) to respond climate related challenges. Defining climate change and environmental problems as '*existential threat*' to humanity, the Commission targets to be '*the first climate-neutral continent*' by reaching zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050, with a fair and inclusive economic growth via this ambitious framework (European Commission, 2023a). The Commission indicated that the European Green Deal would consist of a comprehensive set of policies which would be evolving accordingly to the changing necessities, and all other EU policies would be in compliance with the Green Deal, due to interconnected nature of the climate change problem (European Commission, 2019c, pp. 1-2). It is also specified that the EU will align EGD policies to the United Nations (UN) '2030 Agenda' and the 'Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs) to center sustainable development at the center of EU economy (European Commission, 2019c, p. 3), and to the 'Paris Agreement' to secure reduction in other regions' emissions (European Commission, 2019c, p. 20). Therefore, European Green Deal aims reductions in GHG emissions in both internal and external sphere, with the highest possible benefit to the EU economy.

Nonetheless, the Green Deal is not only a policy to tackle and mitigate climate change, but it is also a '*turning an urgent challenge into a unique opportunity*' moment for the EU (European Commission, 2019c, p. 2). The European Green Deal is regarded as an opportunity for the Union to bear global leadership in climate issues. Pioneering the international efforts in climate change with a new, green model, the EU strives to take the first mover's advantage, and be a standard/norm setter in this emerging field. To this end, the European Green Deal is aiming a 'Green Deal Diplomacy' by being a role model and supporting this position with external dimension, i.e. diplomatic dialogue, trade relations, development aid for global leadership (European Commission, 2019, p. 20). For this, efforts at bilateral and multilateral spheres are chosen as medium (European Commission, 2019, p. 20), with an inclination towards more emphasize on the latter.

Moreover, global climate leadership could be a significant chance for the EU to boost its soft power. Soft power is capability to control others by attraction and persuasion instead of coercion (Nye, 2017, p. 2). It was coined to International Relations (IR) literature during the 90s, to explain the other aspect of the United States (US) power. The concept was built around that notion of power has been altered by globalization and information revolution, so that the US was able to maintain its impactful role at the international arena, however, by not by pin faith only on coercive methods (Tulmets, 2007, p. 198). Instead, the US power was complemented with attractiveness, which comes from a country's culture, ideals, and legitimacy of its policies (Nye, 2004, 256; as cited in Tulmets, 2007, 199).

Nonetheless, soft power was adopted by EU leaders more enthusiastically than the US and narratives on soft power occupied a good number of narratives especially between 2005-2008. The EU was well aware of the attractiveness of the Union coming from its economic prosperity, solidarity, and its commitment to universal norms& multilateralism. Thus, the attractiveness of the EU model was used as an essential part of many successful policies and agenda setting activities. The most important instance would be the Enlargement Policy, which is regarded as the strongest policy of the Union.

However, the EU soft power is declining, and despite the fact that has been for a long time due to various factors, it became clearer in the past couple of years. Leonard (2022) gives an outlook from recent developments, from European identity crisis due to fight between left and populist right leaders to double standards implementing to Syrian and Ukrainian refugees. But a deeper analysis on the matter is, the EU misconception of equalizing soft power as '*universalizing*' its own values, and although it worked for a while, now the others realized that they would not have to opt for European values all together, as a package (Leonard, 2022). Covid-19 was also a good test for EU soft power in which the Union has failed in various aspects, particularly in its solidarity and capability to provide solution, as it failed to assist its member Italy (The Politico, 2020). In addition to that, African Union (AU) uttered their disappointment over patented vaccines at the EU-AU Summit in 2022 (Lowings & Aguiar , 2023).

However, soft power has a great capacity to deal with modern day challenges. The European Green Deal has a great potential in restoring the EU soft power. The Commission has indicated that its Green Deal Diplomacy for global leadership is based on '*convincing and supporting*' third countries for sustainable development (European Commission, 2019c, p. 20), which requires developing and utilizing soft power instruments. As green transition needs structural changes in various policy areas, the EU can enhance its bilateral relations and can offer a positive agenda to damaged relations by creating new, technical cooperation areas. This could also spill over to other policy realms. Moreover, generating a solution to a global problem would be a positive contribution to the EU image as a full-fledge actor. Furthermore, as a pioneering entity, the EU can enjoy the opportunity to be a norm setter in climate change regime which increases its influence. Besides, external engagement can lead to fruitful outcomes in the internal sphere in aspects of coherence and unity, which are among essential resources of the EU soft power.

Nevertheless, the past five years show that the European Green Deal is bounded by some internal and external factors that pose significant obstacles for the policy to reach its potential and pave the way for the global climate leadership. Despite remarkable achievements of the EGD at the domestic sphere, which falls under exemplary leadership and is regarded as vital by the EU (Council of the European Union, 2020, p. 1), domestic successes fell short of fulfilling leadership aspirations of the EU. On the other hand, external dimensions of the policy have been neglected by the EU. Although the EU recognizes support for third parties to lower their emissions, this support is poorly defined in scope of the European Green Deal policies. Moreover, implementations such as CBAM (Carbon Border Adjustment) to prevent carbon leakage creates misalignments with other countries which can result with further decline in soft power.

Global Gateway Initiative is a connectivity project which was introduced by the European Commission in late 2021. The initiative falls under another Commission priority 'a stronger EU in the world' which pursues EU global leadership (European Commission, 2023e). Ursula von der Leyen has explained that the EU goal is to establish value-driven and more resilient links with the world by investing in infrastructure projects that comply with

social and environmental standards (European Commission, 2023b). To this end, Team Europe will pledge €300 billion to sustainable initiatives in partner countries prioritizing their needs and advantages (European Commission, 2023b). With this, The EU objective is to support infrastructure to promote sustainable development, deal with climate change at global scope, and increase connectivity as Covid-19 highlighted fragmented links through the world which resulted with exclusion of some regions and a clumsy supply chain (European Commission, 2021b).

Engström (2022, 2) points out to limited number on peer-reviewed articles on the European Green Deal and external relations, except from some significant studies of think tanks and institutes. However, the European Green Deal is indicated as a leading priority by the Commission, and will have effects beyond the EU, thus climate and environment will be more significant for the EU position at international arena (Engström, 2022). Moreover, the EU reactions centering EGD in Covid-19 recovery and accelerating renewable energy policies after the Russian-Ukrainian War have demonstrated that it will not abandon the European Green Deal, and the policy will be impactful even in hard politics and security issues. Likewise, analyses Global Gateway role in externalizing European Green Deal are fewer. However, connectivity, partnership, influence and attraction are consolidating their importance in power politics and delivering outcomes as Chinese Belt and Road project has been proving since 2013.

Objective of this thesis to investigate whether the Global Gateway Initiative has capacity to address limitations of the European Green Deal and can be used as a means and institution for third countries' alignment with the European Green Deal standards which is key in global climate leadership and increased EU soft power. To this end, this study will examine (1) What is the potential of European Green Deal in restoring EU Soft Power? (2) What are the limitations and obstacles for externalization of the European Green Deal? (3) What is the potential of Global Gateway in externalizing European Green Deal? To provide solid background for the first and second questions, a conceptual framework for soft power will be developed. This will be followed by resources of EU soft power and debates on its decline. Furthermore, the EU Actorness Theory will be adopted to support the conceptual

framework. The theory will be utilized to analyze EU Climate Diplomacy before the European Green Deal. The objective for that is to better understand advantages and disadvantages for the EU goal of global climate leadership through European Green Deal. Then the European Green Deal will be explored with its strengths and limitations in external sphere. For the third question, this thesis will focus on Africa. First, African perspectives on the EU and green transition will be explored. This will be followed by two case studies with process tracing method to test Global Gateway's impact on African countries' European Green Deal compliance.

This study adopts primarily qualitative research methods, and particularly textual analysis is utilized. Communication papers, action plans, speeches, official websites, journal articles and policy briefings are among the main primary and secondary sources that are used. Case studies will be used to enhance empirical aspects and a deeper understanding of policy implementation process and its outcomes. Reliance on financial data in this section allows to benefit some quantitative research method aspects.

This study consists of six chapters. On the third chapter, conceptual framework of the study is introduced. The pillar concept of the thesis is soft power is examined first. Nielsen (2013, 727) points out that the term is challenging for IR students by causing '*no end conceptual confusion*' on how to classify power as 'soft'. Literature on soft power has many misconceptions, especially in terms of its means and resources. For that reason, a short definition and evolution of the concept is provided.

In the second section of the conceptual framework, Bretherton and Vogler's EU Actorness concept is embraced to develop a systemic view for EU external action. Their conceptualization consists of three interconnected dimensions, opportunity, presence, and capability. This approach will allow evaluating features and efficiency of the EU actorness by taking into account various interlinked internal and external factors.

The fourth chapter will assess the EU position in the international arena in terms of climate change through the lenses of EU Actorness Theory. Although the European Green Deal is a brand-new policy, Climate Diplomacy is not new for the Union. In fact, the EU has

a longstanding history of an environmental stance in its external policies (Engström , 2022, p. 2). Therefore, conceptualizing previous initiatives taken by the EU while pursuing global leadership in climate issues will provide a better understanding of strengths and weaknesses of the EU in climate politics. The European Green Deal will be explained with its possible contribution to EU soft power. Policy tools that are used in its external aspect will be discussed and insufficiencies of the policy will be addressed.

The fifth chapter is where the Global Gateway Initiative and connectivity are introduced, and case studies are conducted. This chapter focuses on Africa, as the continent is the key partner in the scope of the Initiative. This chapter will provide an overlook to Africa continent focusing on impacts of climate change and understanding of African perspective on green transition vis-à-vis the EU perspective. Then possible areas that Global Gateway can enhance cooperative relations will be analyzed. The chapter and thesis will be finalized with two case studies, Morocco, and Rwanda, as both were recognized as climate leaders by the EU. Through process tracing method, their compliance to the European Green Deal and impact of Global Gateway will be explored.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study investigates the potential impact of Global Gateway on third countries' alignment with the European Green Deal which is a necessary condition for the EU to reach global climate leadership and boost its soft power. This chapter aims to explain how research questions are addressed in the study, and how questions, conceptual framework and accumulated data for the study are linked to each other. Sprinz and Wolinsky (2002, p. 10) explain the link between methodology and theory as methodology provides roadmaps and approaches to “*test theories*” and, their company is essential in generating scientific knowledge. To this end, research design, indicators, and data collection methods of the thesis will be outlined in this section.

The main concept guiding to this thesis is Nye's Soft Power, which may be defined as an indirect method of practicing power (Nye, 1990a, p. 181). As it is also explained next chapter, power in general, and soft power in particular is hard to measure. This stems from complex nature of soft power which depends on both identity, capability, and ideals of the agent, and their interpretation by a third party which is bounded by various elements such as perspective, experience, power relations at the global politics, or internal dynamics within the third party. In this regard, empirical data that is used in Soft Power framework is mainly qualitative. Accordingly, a combination of ‘structured, focused comparison case study’ and process tracing methods is chosen for in-depth analysis of data as the research design with cases Morocco, and Rwanda.

“*Cases are the units of investigation*” (Henn et al., 2006, p. 58) and a case study is an “*aspect of an historical happening*” which a researcher chooses to evaluate (Sprinz & Wolinsky, 2002, p. 28). On contrary to other methods dealing with greater numbers of instances and cases to generalize, case study requires lesser numbers of cases, or even a single case as representation of the question for intense examination (Neuman, 2007, p. 20).

Comparative case method positions in between single case study and larger sets of data (Odell, 2002, p. 73). Accordingly with the purpose of the study, two countries are chosen for a comparative method which allows a more detailed investigation of impact of Global Gateway on third countries' alignment with the Green Deal by considering numerous factors, while enabling comparison for not to engage in hasty generalization. Structured, focused comparison falls under the comparative case methods adopted in this thesis. The word 'structured' stands for questions that are applied to all cases selected to "*standardize data collection*" while 'focused' indicates lesser dimensions to be examined (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 67).

Morocco and Rwanda are chosen as case countries since Africa is the primary focus area of Global Gateway, and two countries have significant similarities and differences. Despite differences, Morocco and Rwanda are only countries in the continent that are defined as climate leaders by the EU; Morocco in 2022 (European Commission, 2022b) and Rwanda in 2023 (European Commission, 2023m). The approval of both countries' efforts in climate neutrality by the EU is taken as a positive step in their Green Deal compliance and is an important factor in case selection to test to what extent launch of Global Gateway Initiative in 2021 impacted on their climate policies. Besides that, two countries are African which increases possibility of similar perspectives, and both import their energy, likewise the EU, and are interested in renewables to cut their dependency. On the other hand, their levels of connectivity with the EU and economic development diverges. Therefore, Morocco and Rwanda share some common features and similar perspectives& purposes, whereas with distinctive conditions that will be compared.

In this regard, multiple indicators are for evaluating concept and drawing conclusions (Henn, Weinstein, & Foard, 2006, p. 56). Morocco and Rwanda's connectivity with the EU, their trade volume with the EU, Foreign Direct Investments of countries, and the EU pledges under Global Gateway will be examined as indicators. With that, case studies will investigate (1) What is the connectivity level of the case with the EU and how global Gateway contributed to connectivity? (2) What is the trade volume of the case with the EU and has trade volume increased since the launch of Global Gateway? (3) Is FDI (Foreign Direct

Investment) rate of the case increased? (4) What are the EU pledges under Global Gateway that can increase their further cooperation in climate?

To strengthen analyses within case studies, process tracing method is employed. Process tracing is utilized in nearly all case studies as progresses, decisions, crisis, or changes are monitored by the researcher (Sprinz & Wolinsky, 2002, pp. 72-73). The aim is to find if there is a contiguous causal relation as conceptual framework and hypothesis foreseen (Sprinz & Wolinsky, 2002, p. 30). In this regard, climate policies of case countries at the internal sphere and their engagement as the international stage are examined between 2021 and 2023 to test impact of Global Gateway.

To support empirical aspect of the European Green Deal, establishment of the EU Climate Diplomacy and role of the EU in global climate leadership is examined to form a solid basis to understand advantages and challenges that the European Green Deal faces. To conceptualize the EU's prior endeavors, Bretherton and Vogler's EU Actorness Theory is utilized. It allows a more systemic analysis of the EU previous actions during establishment of EU Climate Diplomacy with an agency-structure method.

Data collection methods are divergent for each chapter. To set the conceptual framework, literature review is based on primary sources to extract Nye's understanding of Soft Power. As the concept focuses more on abstract matters which are more difficult to measure and more subjective, misconception is not uncommon. For that reason, a chronological review on Soft Power is adopted to comprehend evolution of the concept in time. Secondary sources are used to provide the EU perspective to the concept. To strengthen the EU perspective and 'real world practice' of the concept, the EU officials' quotations are also benefited.

For conceptualization of the EU Actorness, only Bretherton and Vogler's definition is utilized to not to stray away from the topic, as well as their articles with others, such as Niemann for updated knowledge.

For case study, data relevant with indicators are collected from official websites such as project details or financial data while data for process tracing gathered from countries'

national plans, climate tracking websites, following up their engagement in international climate politics.

Overall, this thesis has a qualitative design which is based mainly on textual analysis for both setting conceptual framework and methodology. A wide range of sources are used including official statements, communication papers, strategic action plans, official websites, reports, newspapers, policy briefings, book chapters, journal articles are used. Particularly quotations from Ursula Von der Leyen are analyzed as architect of both European Green Deal and Global Gateway. Although qualitative design of the study, reliance of financial data, particularly in case studies required use of quantitative method a certain extent.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. SOFT POWER

Since it was coined to literature in 90s, Joseph Nye's concept 'Soft Power' has found itself a prominent place in IR discipline. The concept was originally built as an examination of the US power and a response to claims that it was in decline. Through the lenses of traditional, by calculating military force or economic power of the state, it would be a correct statement (Nye, 2017, p. 2). However, he had a different vision, a new perspective to the issue which proved concerns about the US power would be 'less alarming'.

The 90s are marked as a significant decade for the IR literature Especially early 90s witnessed major changes occurred in world politics. Technology, communication, and transportation became more advanced and accessible, thus academic interest for globalization and global governance gained more significance since the 70s. Small states gained more power while some new actors such as NGOs, transnational companies and terrorist groups entered in international arena. Relatively new problems such as ethnic conflicts, environmental problems, and health epidemics (i.e. AIDS) that are extraterritorial have become more significant. The end of the Cold War led to questions regarding future world order and contrasting answers to them, from Fukuyama's 'End of the History' to Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations'. This was only an addition to the ongoing theoretical debate of the decade, between realists' institutionalists, and constructivists who were newcomers to the discipline (Drezner, 2016).

Therefore, might not be surprising that Soft Power was created and evolved during this decade in which global problems rose and therefore seeking global collaboration was in trend. Despite the term being created to understand changing US role in power politics, soon it gained popularity both in academia and political arena and was expanded to utilize for

other actors too. In this regard, the US disinterest and European Union's enthusiasm for the term caused its association with the Union's external relations. Although there are other similar concepts to define the Union's *non-coercive power* (i.e. Normative Power, Civilian Power, Transformative Power...) soft power is the best concept for the objective of the study. This section aims to explain the definition of soft power, and why soft power aligns with the content better. Then, it will be followed with an EU Soft Power section to better understand resources of EU Soft Power and impact of it. The section will be finalized with discussions and concerns that the soft power of EU is in decline.

3.1.1. Definition and Evolution of the Soft Power

Early works of Nye such as 'Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power' or 'Soft Power' start with a glance at concept of power. He benefited dictionary meaning for a basic understanding, "*it is the ability to do things and to control others*" (Nye, Soft Power, 1990b, p. 154). He also used Robert Dahl's definition in several articles; "*ability to get others to do what they otherwise would not do*" (Dahl, 1961; as cited in Nye, 1990a, 177). It is almost the same as our experience in daily life. With that being said, power is hard to quantify as we all experience. Sometimes unexpected outcomes may occur as power at hand is underestimated or overestimated.

According to Nye (1990a, 178) this is because distinguishing resources of power is generally difficult. Through the traditional lenses, the measure of power is perceived as having tangible assets such as population, territorial advantage, economic and military strength and political stability (Nye, 1990a, p. 178). He argued that advantage of this perspective makes power more solid and foreseeable (Nye, 1990a, p. 178). Indeed, in the past, when war victories and a strong treasury were the main benchmarks to secure a hegemony position, this definition provided a successful approach to measure power. However, there are other factors that can impact delivering outcomes which are more determinant in our day. The role of technology, education, economic development has increased in global politics of modern times, while significance of use of force and solid assets such as population or territory decreased (Nye, 1990b, p. 154).

Nye (2009, 162) claimed that IR theories were limited by relying only on material resources of power and neglecting other factors contributing to controlling other's behavior, such as attraction. To him, the delusion of decrease in US power due to imperial overexpansion stemmed from this miscalculation (Nye, 2009, p. 162). Therefore, the concept was built around that notion of power has been altered by recent developments that were ignored by IR theories at that time, so that the United States was able to maintain its role in international arena, however, by not by just relying on coercive methods (Tulmets, 2007, p. 198).

Exploring the impact of factors other than coercive methods in controlling other states, Nye contributed to the gap in literature by conceptualizing Soft Power, or, with its other name, Co-optive Power. To Nye (1990a, 181), power that is associated with coercive methods, such as use of force, threat, or inducement, is direct implementation of power. On the other side, a country may use power indirectly and get what it wants by influencing others to adopt its aims by attraction or persuasion (Nye, 1990a, 181). In this case, agenda-setting activities gain significance as preferences of a country may be seen as 'legitimate', and therefore, carrots and sticks would be used less (Nye, 2017, 2). Soft power is not about bringing the other to their knees; instead, it is a 'perceived attraction' and feel of partnership by the other that makes it want to participate and cooperate in the norms, values, and goals of one another (Nye, 2004, 5; as cited in Nielsen, 2013, 727). Although the term has some alterations by time, the basic definition did not change; soft power is "*the ability to affect others and obtain preferred outcomes by attraction and persuasion rather than just coercion and payments*" (Nye, 2017, 2).

Having conceptualized indirect use of power, Nye does not define hard power as obsolete. In contrast, he claims that soft power is complementary and usually falls short on its own (Nye, 2007, 2). It can, however, bridge the gap when legitimacy is needed, or traditional exercises of power are not responsive. Tackling climate change and environmental problems is one of the issues that does not align with coercive methods. In the 90s, Nye (1990b, 158) stated that mutual benefit and cooperation is required to cope with economic and ecological problems. New resources of power like communication skills and establishing

multilateral institutions are more useful in dealing with new transboundary problems from terrorism to climate change (Nye, 1990b, 164).

3.1.2. Resources of Soft Power

Nielsen (2013, 727) points out that the term is challenging for IR students by causing '*no end conceptual confusion*'; in what conditions is power considered to be hard or soft? In early times of conceptualizing soft power, Nye (1990a, 181) linked hard power with tangible assets like military and economic superiority whereas related soft power with intangible power resources like '*culture*', '*ideology*', or '*institutions*'. He also claimed that power was shifted from being capital-rich to information rich and therefore, the significance of raw materials was replaced by organizational skills (Nye, 1990b, 164). How about rare earth elements required for green technology, and thus, generate soft power?

The reason for confusion is that resources of hard and soft power are sometimes blurred. In fact, the distinction is even more blurred as Nye (2009, 160) expressed; economic and even military resources can sometimes be used to attract in his response to criticisms. As U.S. navy humanitarian relief effort following 2004 tsunami demonstrates, diverse resources can produce soft power, '*not that the term "soft power" can mean any type of behavior*' (Nye, 2009, 160). In other words, practice of power is not about resources, instead it is about the outcome, controlling the other (Nye, 1990b, 155). However, it would be beneficial to think on resources of soft power too, since sometimes soft power can be conceptualized mistakenly as it given, and therefore, a type of power that can be practiced effortlessly. However, transforming attraction to power is generally a skill that needs to be worked on. It needs strategic thinking and a 'game plan' reflecting aim, instruments, and method to be impactful (van Rompuy, 2011 as cited in Nielsen, 2013, 724). Appealing culture and openness of the Americans would be considered as effortless, likewise, ancient history and philosophy of China is an important component of their soft power. The US endeavor of creating international institutions coherently with their liberal values (such as IMF) required concrete and intangible resources. The Belt and Road project is China's major attempt to increase its sphere of influence and soft power - is a combination of historical asset (Silk Road) and open-door strategy in trade that emphasizes mutual gain and learning (Xinhua, 2015, 3-4; as cited

in Duarte & Ferreira-Pereira, 2022, p. 596). European values and economic prosperity of the EU were attractive features which were successfully used in Enlargement Policy. Therefore, it could be efficient to be aware of potential soft power resources and use their options interchangeably, where the most convenient.

3.1.3. The European Union Soft Power

Despite his focus on the US, Nye also considered the EU as a major rival in the realm of soft power; as European countries had various soft power resources and the EU as a peace project had successfully shaped a big part of the continent (Smith, 2014, p. 104). Almost a decade after the situation has changed, Nye was warning the United States that not only its soft power capacity was in decline, but also anti-Americanism was a rising trend (Nye, 2004, p. 255). It was the European Union that adopted the term, narrative on soft power emerged in speeches of then European diplomats (Nye, 2017, 2), such as Catherine Ashton, Olli Rehn, Eneko Landaburu... This enthusiasm of the EU embodied presence also in academia. Robert Kagan claimed that the EU was ‘coming from Venus’ by relying on norms and values, whereas the US power was obviously martial with military force, and it was ‘coming from Mars’ (Kagan, 2002; as cited in Tulmets, 2007, 201)

EU soft power is different than the US soft power, this difference lies in resources of soft power. Moreover, the sui generis feature of the Union is reflected in literature on the EU’s indirect power. While many scholars draw attention that attraction and non-coercive methods became a component of EU foreign policy, this common ground is accompanied with discussions on diverse disposition of the EU soft power and its practice (Duchêne 1972; Manners 2002; Ferreira-Pereira 2012; Kavalski 2013 as cited in Duarte & Ferreira-Pereira, 2022, 594). This enriches literature on European indirect use of power but not particularly focusing on soft power.

Even before Nye coined his concept, Duchêne claimed in 70s that the Europe was representing a civilian power in IR (Duchêne, 1972, 1973; as cited in Manners, 2002, 236) by being ‘economic giant yet military worm’ which is a common definition for EU power. Duchêne claimed that promoting multilateralism and trade based on economic power would

be a better choice for the EC to maintain its influence, in other words, lacking military means, the EU could be a stabilizing power in international stage (Özer, 2012, p. 66). Based on Duchene's idea, Manners (2022, 253) argued that the EU was a Normative Power as it was able to sculpt or alter what is 'normal' in world politics. Transformative Power approach claimed the EU was not only establishing international norms but also supporting and pushing candidate countries for various reforms in line with its values (Grabbe, 2004; as cited in Dimitrova, Boroda, Chulitskaya, Berbeca, & Parvan, 2016, p. 6). Unlike soft power, all these concepts are 'tailor-made' for the EU (Portela, 2007, 9; as cited in Nielsen, 2013, 728). All three concepts share some common features with soft power; ideals, norms and values are essential elements for the EU to get the outcomes it wants (Dimitrova, 2016, 10).

Then why soft power is chosen within the scope of this study? To begin with Manner's point of view, he not only emphasizes power of ideas, but puts it into the center with a misjudgment that EU norms are perceived positive and prevails no matter what; to him, the EU *has not* normative power, but rather, it *is* a normative power Nielsen (2013, 728). Nielsen (2013, 728) finds this claim notably ambitious, compared with soft power perspective of Nye, which is '*descriptive*' rather than '*ideational*'. Thus, it does not align with the climate change context, since every nation's perspective green transition is different. Also, it should not be forgotten that global climate politics were always debated on historical burden and inequalities for developing countries. Therefore, climate change is particularly wrong policy area for EU to try to impose their 'normal' to others. Moreover, Normative Power is based on 'norm diffusion' which lacks extensive toolbox that soft power approach provides.

Transformative Power may provide wider tools (both tangible and intangible) and allows a more realistic power assessment. It well explains reforms took place during the enlargement process of candidate countries. However, the concept is spatially and temporally limited as it is for the countries with membership prospect.

Civilian power depends on both ideational and economic capabilities as power resources. However, the notion of Civilian Power strictly opposes military power, and the EU eagerly wants to develop in this aspect. Moreover, civilian power is overly focused on

means of power, rather than outcomes of it; which results with neglecting blurred areas of civilian and military, or more importantly lack of discussions on whether it is sufficient to be 'civilian' while utilizing civilian means to protect of EU benefit only (Smith, 2005, pp. 72-75). Her point of view clearly highlights contradictions within the term.

For the reasons above, soft power is considered to be a better approach for EU aspirations in global climate leadership and conceptualizing this study. Although the notion is open to misconceptions, it lacks essential conflicts between the ideal and behavior, as soft power does not construct a normative or civilian identity that prevails. Soft power, or Co-optive power, is an approach based on cooperation with partners which depends on perceptions of others regarding the EU, instead of a passive recognition of the EU identity as the best. Therefore, it provides an equal point of view. Moreover, soft power concept provides a broader practice area and a broader use of policy instrument, including tangible sources of power. Catherine Ashton, the first High Representative/ Vice President perspective is a well conceptualization of the EU power. *"The EU has soft power with a hard edge – more than the power to set a good example and promote our values. But less than the power to impose its will"* (Ashton, 2011).

This study conceptualizes EU soft power as it can derive both from the other's perceptions on attractive features of the EU, and persuasion, the EU efforts to convince others. The former one is more associated with EU identity and how it is perceived, therefore the EU has little control, and contributes to exemplary model EU image. The latter one is associated with soft power instruments that the EU has capacity to utilize to generate soft power, therefore it has more control over. The first aspect is examined as 'resources of EU Soft Power' whereas the second aspect is explored in 'Instruments of the EU Soft Power'.

3.1.4. Resource of the European Union Soft Power

a. European Integration

It can be claimed that European Integration is the most obvious and important attractive aspect of the EU. As the driving force of the EU, the integration process reflects dynamic characteristics of the Union that learns from its mistakes and rebuilds itself.

Having some hard power resources, any actor in the international arena can exercise power to change the behavior of others. However, it is always much more difficult having power to change ‘ourselves’ which requires a greater will. The European Union is not just a political and economic union, but it is also the name of an identity-making process which manifests that putting old disagreements aside is possible. The historical aspect of the European continent shows how valuable ‘peace project’ the EU is. The achievement was also recognized by the Nobel committee and brought the EU the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012, for the improvement of ‘*peace*’, ‘*democracy*’, and ‘*human rights*’ in the continent (Council of the European Union, 2022) Whereas the Nobel Prize is can be a concrete proof, the European Integration achievement can be best seen in its success being an inspiration and even ‘exemplary model’ for other regional integration attempts, i.e. Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) or African Union (AU) (Cameron, 2010). Moreover, scope of the integration is also influential, what started as an economic integration has transcended to a political one, with 27 member states that endavaour for further unity and solidarity (BUJANCĂ, 2013, 292).

b. Economic Prosperity

Economic prosperity is one of the significant and concrete successes of European Integration and probably the most attractive feature of the Union. As (Pollock, 2009, 133) points out, the EU is the biggest market across the globe, more than the US and Japan together, and rightfully labeled as economic giant with its market power and currency.

The monetary benefits of the European Single Market that are reflected in their GDP figures and increased trade capabilities with the outside world are strong motives behind membership or partnership perspective of third states. The largest trade block in the world attracts third countries to make Free Trade Agreements (FTA), or more up-to-date Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTA). The EU added trade and sustainable development articles to the FTA with South Korea, Canada and Japan manifests that EU aim to relate sustainability with cooperation (Pilati & Zuleeg, 2020). However, the European Single Market operates more than just an attraction source, it also enables EU to regulate and

establish norms for various spheres of worker and consumer protection via binding chapters in (FTAs) (PILATI & ZULEEG, 2020).

Goldthau and Sitter (2015, 944) explore the regulatory nature of the Union as they assert that it is '*a rule based economic integration*' which is governed not by direct intervention but regulation, under enforcement of the European Commission . According to them this expands beyond the EU borders as; non-EU companies appealed by enjoying benefits of the Single Market if they accept EU rules and regulations (Goldthau and Sitter, 2015, 942).

c. Commitment to Universal Norms& Multilateralism

The EU commitment in multilateralism and universal norms can be claimed as the basis for the EU soft power; the EU adopted soft power as approach following the US invasion of Iraq, in the '2003 European Security Strategy', which is a common agreement for the EU to set against itself unilateral acts of the US (Sirello, 2016, pp. 8-9). The EU, therefore, constructed an identity for itself as an actor committed to multilateralism and universal values, such as human rights, democracy, and rule of law, that it decided to use as a guiding approach while conducting external relations.

The EU influence can be seen as formulated in various policies of the EU. Some examples are Enlargement Policy, Neighborhood Policy, Development Policy, as well as Asia-Europe Meeting of 1996 or the EU-Asia Connectivity Strategy adopted in 2015 (Duarte & Ferreira-Pereira, 2022, p. 601). According to Nielsen (2013, 729), the Enlargement Policy is where the EU puts a greater emphasis on norms and exerts greater soft power with fruitful outcomes, because membership perspective is a strong attraction for the candidates. The EU's commitment to norms is manifested in the *acquis* and in the Copenhagen Criteria. (Nielsen 2013, 730). Each candidate has their own progress reports that position of candidates in their compliance with the EU *acquis* is evaluated throughout the year, prepared by the Commission annually since 1998.

The role that the EU bears in the international arena also promotes its soft power. EU stances in global affairs ranging from '*stabilizer*', '*mediator*', '*humanitarian*', '*intermediary*

voice between South and North' (Sirello, 2017, 9) can positively contribute to the EU soft power, but only if these are accepted and perceived legitimate by international community.

Moreover, the fact that the EU commitment to multilateralism and universal norms and external roles accordingly led to perceptions for the EU as 'normative' or 'civilian' power as discussed above. Although these labels are open to debate, being perceived as normative/civilian is a further demonstration of the appeal of the EU example in terms of 'social', 'ethical' or 'economic' (Duarte & Ferreira-Pereira, 2021, 604).

d. Culture

Nye claims that culture is an important source of power when examining the US soft power (Nye, 1990a, 1990b). On the European side, it is more debatable. Some argue that EU soft power is largely stemming from its '*European Culture*' and '*cultural exchanges*' (Manners 2002; Moravcsik 2017 as cited in Duarte & Ferreira-Pereira, 2021, 598). According to Nielsen (2013, 729), on the other hand, the EU's attraction does not stem prominently from its culture, since '*the EU has little cultural identity of its own*', and '*there is no European equivalent of Hollywood*'. (Nielsen, 2013, p.729). It might be true, despite the Union's efforts, there is a lot to do to form a common European culture and European citizenship, however this might not necessarily mean that EU cannot exert soft power via culture. EU member states have their own cultural identities, many of them are in the high places in Soft Power 30 ranking (Soft Power 30, 2019), that the EU successfully uses to promote its influence.

3.1.5. Instruments of the European Union Soft Power

Nye asserted that (1990b, 166) agenda-setting and structuring the situations to influence others are as important as having soft power resources. This means crafting power resources consciously for soft power aims, which may be in the form of '*diplomacy*', '*exchange programs*', or '*assistance programs*' (Bujanca, 2013, 184).

The EU has enjoyed many fruitful results of employing soft power instruments. For instance, development aid shows that the EU is eager to spread prosperity, as it is the largest

donor of development aid across the globe. The Cotonou Agreements resulted in enhancing cooperative relations with ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) countries, which allowed the EU to diffuse its norms (Cameron 207, 164 as cited in Nielsen, 2013, 734), and set new agendas. However, these implications are not only affecting governments, but also the local stakeholder's perceptions, public opinion by providing people-to-people contact, or Union-to-people contact. A better example would be Erasmus+ program as it increases chances for cultural exchanges, gives students from abroad what it is like to study/live in the Union and thus, is regarded a symbol for the EU Integration (Duarte & Ferreira-Pereira, 2022, p. 598). Bujanca (2013, 294) also adds new social media instruments; Europe by Satellite, Europe Direct as Q&A service, and the EU Tube that is broadcasted in YouTube. These efforts can be evaluated under public diplomacy.

Nye (2008), argues that public diplomacy has been an important means to produce soft power for a long time, and it was a vital factor during Cold War. He further claims that new challenges such as transnational terrorism is not only a hard power subject, but also '*a struggle to win hearts and minds*', and while public diplomacy is a strong instrument for that, it is not only about winning hearts, but grasping importance of trust and understanding civic society (Nye, 2008). Song and Fanoulis (2022, p. 2) points out the public diplomacy endeavours of the Union as through the EEAS and European Commission, such as; web-sites tailored for each countries, special organisations such as Europe Day, engaging with local media, engagements with all level of societies from civil society to elites via cultural and sport events, and engagement with children via school activities..

Whilst these approaches came out beneficial, Armitage and Nye (2008b) also argued importance of a further engagement with public; contribution to global development by strengthening other governments and local people according to their needs, increasing people to people connections, promoting open trade, tackling with climate change and energy safety. Although, it was for a statement for the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Armitage and Nye's recommendations were put into practice not by the US or the EU, but by Chinese Government with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). With massive global infrastructure investments that support others via strategic corridors and specified projects, China has

delivered smooth outcomes in terms of influence and soft power since 2013. Moreover, although the project started with low-income countries, the past eleven years has expanded Chinese portfolio, as BRI has 151 beneficiary countries that signed Memorandum of Understanding as of December 2023, including high and middle-income countries (Green Finance& Development Center, 2023). China's achievement has brought a new mean to soft power, connectivity, which is strategic use of infrastructure. In a world that is being more geopolitical and more polarized, this approach gains more significance in generating soft power, undermining other means and resources based on identity.

Nielsen (2013, 727) classifies the instruments of practicing soft power into three; 'public diplomacy', 'agenda-setting' and 'framing international issues' (Nielsen, 2013, 5). Climate change needs an interconnected approach; while framing a global problem and setting a positive agenda are still significant in creating influence, practicing public diplomacy worldwide needs developing and understanding on people and thus, more connections in their benefit.

3.1.6. Decline in the European Union Soft Power

On the other hand, to what extent did the EU kept up with changes in nature of soft power? While China and other actors developed some new instruments and dimensions to generate soft power, the EU suffered from severe damages in its soft power.

As soft power derives from both external and internal factors, both should be assessed. Rise of the EU soft power mostly pushed by absence of the US. According to Smith (2014, 106), EU soft power increased significantly between 2000-2005, because of hostile stance of the US towards multilateralism and even towards UN treaties. Pollock (2009, 137) also refers to the EU advantage in soft power due to the distrust that the US created. Therefore, it can be said that rejection of the US methods was a significant element of European Union soft power.

In fact, many activities of the US made the EU the only utilizer of soft power in international arena; the list of examples are vast; US withdrawal from Kyoto Protocol to Iran

Nuclear Deal (Pollock, 2009, 135), or Paris Agreement. Could the European Union use its soft power successfully without a real competitor?

The answer comes from China, by generating a soft power by using Western institutions such as trade and liberalism, but without Western norms and values. When Nye was developing soft power, his articles hardly mentioned about China. His remarks on China consisted of criticisms to strict party rule to oppress its civil society, where most of the soft power potential lies in (Nye, 2017, 3). However, despite Nye's analyses, China established its soft power via external sphere, mostly on diplomatic skills and development aid. As Yağcı (2018, p. 76) puts, China appears to be a strong advocate for 'inclusive globalization' and emphasizing openness and liberal order rather than trying to bring up their socialist values. That showed third countries assisting without imposing is possible and there is other 'exemplary models'. Although Chinese model has its own severe problems, for instance by giving loans with less conditions and thus, creating a debt trap diplomacy in which there is no actual benefit and no winner (Nishizawa, 2023), it still undermines the EU approach and poses a serious rival to the EU soft power.

Internal factors also play a determinant role. EU credibility as an actor has started to decline after mid-2000s. Smith (2014, 106) asserted that 2008 crisis was the biggest hit to the EU soft power; the EU not only showed a serious incapacity to provide solution to crisis, but also led other economies to suffer. Following incidents of Arab Spring, Libya intervention as well as halts in accession process of candidates due to Enlargement fatigue from 2004 became a continuum of decreasing European influence. In her article Smith (2014, 108) continued as '*its decline should not be exaggerated...(yet) has a member state walked away*', which actualized only a couple years later with Brexit and raised questions about the unity and future of the Union.

If the 2008-2015 period signaled a light decline in soft power, developments after 2015 showed that that the decline should be taken seriously. The Migration Crisis of 2015 was particularly challenging as the EU's commitment to its founding norms& values started to be questioned deeply, moreover, it migration, what has started as a cooperation field became a political sensitive issue. Furthermore, Trump's election posed a bitter reminder for

the EU that European security heavily depended on the transatlantic alliance, despite efforts of the EU under Lisbon Treaty to renew EU institutions and strengthen the Union. Leonard (2022) gives an outlook from EU identity crisis from fight between left and populist right leaders to double standards implementing to Syrian and Ukrainian refugees. But a deeper analysis on the matter is, the EU misconception of equalizing soft power as ‘universalizing’ its own values, and although it worked for a while, now the others realized that they would not have to opt for European values all together, as a package (Leonard, 2022). Covid-19 was also a good test for EU soft power in which the Union has failed in various aspects, particularly in its solidarity and capability to provide solution, as it failed to assist its member Italy (The Politico, 2020). In addition to that, African Union (AU) uttered their disappointment over patented vaccines at the EU-AU Summit in 2022 (Lowings & Aguiar, 2023).

To sum up, there are four essential reasons that undermines the EU soft power.

- (1) EU inability to develop new tools to overcome challenges and obstacles, whereas providing solution, and assisting to the others became more effective ways to generate soft power. While the EU was proactive to bear various responsibilities and act upon global problems, now either it tries to isolate itself, as migration crisis and early phases of Covid-19 showed, or demonstrating incapability to help even its neighbor, Ukraine.
- (2) As Leonard (2022) pointed out, the EU leaders have misunderstood their soft power as given, perceived their values as universal and prevailing, which was working out before. However, as new examples such as China rose, the EU over-reliance on its exemplary model based on Western values became obsolete.
- (3) Bilateral relations of the EU have been damaged, particularly by halts in enlargement policy and in migration field; by either by EU mismanagement of migration flux or use of migration as a leverage by third countries.
- (4) Brexit and weak compliance of some members states
- (5) Increased competition in realm of soft power, particularly with China

3.2. GLOBAL ACTORNESS

Climate change became a topic in the international arena, and a subject of international politics particularly in the 90s. The EU and its member states have aimed to be an international leader as early as the first attempts, from 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. (e.g., Bäckstrand & Elgström, 2013; Groen & Niemann, 2013; Oberthür & Groen, 2018; Oberthür & Roche Kelly, 2008; Parker & Karlsson, 2010 as cited in Oberthür & Dupont, 2021, p. 195) Since then, the EU raised standards for science based, aspiring climate policy goals, with highs (1997 Kyoto Protocol), lows (2009 Copenhagen Conference (Bäckstrand & Elgström, 2013; Oberthür & Groen, 2018 as cited in Mureşan, 2021, p.9), and recoveries (2015 Paris Agreement) (PAPANIKOLAOU, 2021, p. 8).

Nonetheless, climate is not an easy field for EU to pursue leadership, because of the Union's *sui generis* feature. As Vogler (1999, p. 24) sums, the EU case is '*puzzling*' as it has various forms; sometimes a single entity under the European Commission, and sometimes a community of sovereign states; and in realm of environmental policies, it can employ both of these forms within short notices, even '*by the hour*'. It is because climate policies are under shared competences within the EU. Some significant steps were made by the Union to harmonize climate policies of member states since then, the most recent one is Climate Law under the European Green Deal. However, accepting that pace of green transition may vary for each member, the EU as a single voice in climate and environmental issues is not much different than Vogler has written in 1999.

On the other hand, challenges through unity never hinder the EU to formulate global climate policies based on scientific evidence and push the others to do more. Although the European Green Deal prioritized EU aspirations in global leadership for the first time, it is not the first leadership claim of the Union in global climate/environment policy realm. In fact, the EU is a prominent actor in the global climate regime. However, *sui generis* feature of the Union requires a careful examination of the EU actorness, particularly in policy realms that the EU has not yet formed a strict coherence, like climate issues. For that reason, Bretherton and Vogler developed the EU Actorness Theory.

This study will benefit this approach (1) to better analyze the EU previous external actions in climate (2) to support conceptual framework by complementing EU soft power analysis. The overall objective is to set a theoretical framework for historical aspect of the EU Climate Diplomacy at the second chapter and thus, to better assess the advantages and the disadvantages of the EU in its path towards global climate leadership through the European Green Deal.

EU Actorness Theory is an attempt to provide a constructivist view (Niemann and Bretherton, 2013, 7) to either conventional IR perspectives that were state-centric or sui generis approach which overfocuses on domestic processes when identifying external roles (Niemann and Bretherton, 2013, 1). To conceptualize the EU external action, Bretherton and Vogler examined it in three interconnected realms: ‘opportunity’, ‘presence’ and ‘capability’, that constantly affects each other in an interactive context (Niemann and Bretherton, 2013, 7) to prove EU Actorness. This thesis, however, will not utilize EU Actorness Theory to contest EU actorness in climate politics, as it is proven with significant achievements. However, examining EU Climate Diplomacy in these three dimensions is beneficial to assess efficiency of EU Actorness in a systemic framework, and can demonstrate opportunities and obstacles for future engagements of the EU.

Moreover, Soft Power and the EU Actorness Theory are compatible with each other in climate politics, as both depend on non-coercive approaches. EU Actorness Theory’s ‘presence’ deals with attraction and influence with a similar method of Nye’s conceptualization of attraction, while capability and opportunity are internal and external elements that can impact on attraction. With this, the EU Actorness Theory can complement Nye’s Soft Power, since the concept focuses more on outcomes. Nye accepts that EU attraction mostly depends on external, and particularly the *others’* perceptions, the concept does not interest this part, and lacks means to assess these factors. This makes a comprehensive analysis of EU soft power difficult. For instance, it is hard to detect reasons why soft power tools used in EU Climate Diplomacy results differently in each partner country, or why EU influence differs by in each negotiation for an international accord even though resources of power are same or similar policy instruments are used. In this context

the EU Actorness Theory gives a more holistic analysis of influence with contribution of many internal and external factors, which this gives a clear view to EU leaders to navigate the EU soft power.

“Opportunity refers to the external context of ideas and events that enable or constrain action” (Bretherton & Vogler, 2013, p. 378). This indicates all kinds of opportunities and challenges coming from the outside world that EU can form a response and demonstrate its presence. These would include everything from norms to power distribution at the international stage, to elite and public opinion and dynamics within third countries (Niemann and Bretherton, 2013, 7). Therefore, opportunity is the necessary and main context that provides necessary conditions for EU actorness. And on the condition the actorness is proved, it is also a medium for EU to shape, influence, and exert soft power. Therefore, in this study, opportunity refers to anything that belongs to external that the EU is impacted and makes an impact.

Opportunity may not necessarily be positive or negative by itself but becomes meaningful with action which is demonstration of EU’s presence and influence. For instance, Mureşan (2021, p. 11) interprets Trump’s pulling the US out of the Paris Agreement as favorable conditions for EU to show its presence. By claiming this, he refers to the power vacuum that the EU can fill in as it was the case in Kyoto Protocol. On the other hand, (ZHANG, DAI, Hua-Xia, & WANG, 2017, p. 222) claimed that decision of Trump has damaged commonality and unity in Paris Agreement which was regarded as the milestone in reaching global consensus, and thus, endangered global collaboration in climate change. Zhang et al (2017, p.222) also claimed that the withdrawal increased other’s responsibilities by causing emission costs for other parties to be higher.

Biden’s return to the accord also meant both an opportunity and challenge for the EU. The US could be an ally in the Union endeavors for promoting cooperation at international stage, and a rival by claiming its own global leadership. As the time showed, both predictions came true. Increased visits between officials pursuing a stronger cooperation between the US and the EU is an example for the former prediction (European Commission, 2022d). Nonetheless, the US plan to reduce its emissions, the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) was

protested by many countries because of its protectionist provisions and caused concerns within the EU (Worland, 2023). As Vagueur-Jones, a senior analyst at BloombergNEF pointed out, IRA was a policy stressing that the EU act was not sufficient, and the US was taking initiative to accelerate the green transition (Jack , D1 Sario, Mackenzie, & Coi, 2023).

The second concept of the Actorness Theory is presence. Bretherton and Vogler has indicated that presence is ability of the Union to impact external sphere and shape outside world, not by conscious effort, only by *existing* (Bretherton & Vogler, 2013, pp. 377-378). In their article, Niemann and Bretherton (2013, 7) stressed that it is a '*passive concept*' that may be formed by incidental results of domestic policies and/or '*perceptions of the EU's reputation*' by third countries.

Schunz and Damro (2020, pp. 129-130) formulates presence more simply; presence refers to '*what the EU is and stands for*' in a particular policy field at the international level. According to them the first part is related to '*material being*' of the EU, while the second part is associated with developments in domestic sphere such as level of European Integration, or EU *acquis* in that specific policy area (Schunz & Damro , 2020, pp. 129-130) . For instance, in this context, the EU is a supranational entity that pursues to be climate neutral, and what it stands for, in terms of level of integration, is Climate Law. Therefore, presence can be considered as what the EU represents, emanating from its own actions but bounded by perception of others. Thus, it also can be said that it is the intersect between external and internal dimensions of the EU Actorness.

Conceptualization of presence closely aligns with the attractiveness of the EU. Both depend on EU identity formed by both material assets (including tangible and intangible) and third parties' perspective. Both the concepts, as explained above, are passive and mostly haphazard that the EU has little control over. However, on the condition that the EU actorness is proven in a particular policy domain, attractiveness exceeds recognition of the EU presence by third parties and generates more influence by appealing others to cooperate with it (Jakob & Teebken, 2020, p. 9). Thus, it can be claimed that presence establishes necessary conditions for EU recognition as an actor and then, attractiveness makes EU presence

stronger. This link is also established by Bretherton and Vogler (2013, 377) “*perceptions of shared purpose, unity and effectiveness also enhance presence*”.

Capability is the last indigent of EU actorness and the internal dimension of it. It is determination, common priorities, and policy tools for EU to “*capitalize on the presence or respond to the opportunity*” (Bretherton & Vogler, 2013, p. 381). In other words, it is the EU interest to act in a specific policy area, ability to form a consensus, and to use policy instruments. Nevertheless, it is not a precondition for the EU actorness, it can be formed following the external action. (Schunz & Damro , 2020, p. 126).

Capability was originally examined in three categories: ‘consistency’, ‘coherence’ and ‘availability of policy instruments’, nonetheless, Bretherton and Niemann (2013, 7) indicates that the focus shifted more on coherence recently. According to them, a minimum amount of coherence is required for EU Actorness, and as much as coherence between EU members increases, effectiveness of the actorness also increases (Niemann & Bretherton, 2013, s. 7-8-9). This is the answer, at least in climate and environmental policy sphere, that the EU could perform as an actor in international arena, despite having shared competencies at the Union level unlike trade policy or similar policies that are under strict control of the EU.

If attractiveness is parallel to presence, in this context capability is related to transition of attractiveness to soft power. Once the EU realizes opportunity and forms some kind of presence following with attraction, policy instruments like agenda-setting or demonstration of positive example could be used to this end. This makes the EU actorness and EU role in global politics more impactful. Capability is important both for actorness and soft power since Hill’s famous Expectations- Capability Gap (Hill, 1993) is even more relevant today, in a world where influence has started to associate more with material assets than values, ideas and rules. For instance, even though climate issues are highly normative, soft power of developed countries are constantly contested in the negotiations by the never-fulfilled promises of funds, therefore their influence is impacted by ‘less rhetoric- more action’ narrative.

4. EUROPEAN CLIMATE DIPLOMACY AND EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

The EU Climate Diplomacy has been established by the EU as international community efforts to form a global governance to tackle climate change have started. The EU has always been the most ambitious actor in terms of climate change policy and pushed others, therefore global climate affairs of the Union had lots of challenges. Today, also there are a good deal of obstacles in front of the EU objectives on climate change crisis and sustainable development, from China and Russia's impact on hard politics to increased appearance of middle powers in global stage, and economic crises, Brexit, rising populist leaders, however, these can be regarded as 'window of opportunity' to the European Green Deal (Silander, 2022, pp. 1-2). The EU response to pandemic by making Green Deal in Covid-19 recover plan (European Commission, 2023a) is a good example in this context.

This section consists of two sections, an historical aspect to the EU Climate Diplomacy will be provided, then this will be followed by an assessment of the European Green Deal external dimension.

4.1. EUROPEAN CLIMATE DIPLOMACY

Current Global Climate Regime owes a lot to the EU Climate Diplomacy. The EU proactive stance in climate issue and its consistent instance on solid action based on scientific facts has carried the process forward. The process was very gradual until the early 2000s, stagnant and even backlashed around 2010, and peaked during the revival of the diplomacy in 2015-16. This section will examine how the EU responded to 'opportunity' by demonstrating its 'presence' that is enhanced by 'capability', via summarizing main shifts

and agreements in global climate diplomacy. To this end, the section focused primarily on Kyoto Protocol, Copenhagen Summit and Paris Agreement as these three represent different stages of climate-regime making and different eras in EU climate diplomacy.

4.1.1. EU Leadership in the Making (1990-2010)

The relationship between greenhouse gas emissions and climate has been started to be discussed since 19th century (Kreienkamp, 2019, s. 1). Nevertheless, it took until the end of the 20th century that the issue has gained public and political attention rather being a mere scientific concern (Kreienkamp, 2019, s. 2) with discovery of ozone hole in 1988 (United Nations, 2007).

The issue entered agenda of the European Council with the first report of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and during the pre-negotiations of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1990 (Prah & Hofmann, 2014). As early as this, the EU has been involved in shaping an international regime for climate change. It can be claimed that UNFCCC was a starting point for both international political consensus on climate change issue and global climate leadership aspirations of the EU. This new regime in the making was in line with the EU aim to establish itself as a global actor and that it can bear bigger roles, and accordingly, its push for a multilateral world (Oberthür, 2011, p. 675). Thus, the EU involvement in climate change negotiations was always ambitious and based strictly on scientific data since the beginning. According to (Oberthür & Kelly, 2008, p. 36) the EU has usually performed “leadership by example” during the early phases of the climate change regime that mainly employs soft power resources. Forming itself as a positive example, the EU has pursued to encourage others for more assertive goals. To this end, despite the US disagreement the EU insisted on binding targets and timetables for parties of UNFCCC and pledged to stable the EU members’ emissions by the year 2000 (Schuntz, 2012, 194; as cited in Bäckstrand & Elgström, 2013, 1375). Despite the fact that the UNFCCC came out non-binding, the EU has pushed for binding targets during negotiations of Kyoto Protocol, which was achieved. Nonetheless, other than binding targets, the US weighted heavily on the structure of the protocol (Oberthür & Kelly, 2008, p. 36). Similar to its stance during UNFCCC negotiations, the EU promised

to decrease its GHG 8% during the first commitment period (2008-2012) while other developed countries agreed to 5% decrease (European Commission, 2004).

Thus, it can be said that the EU was pursuing leadership with being pioneer and setting assertive goals, however, with restricted influence due to the opposition coming from the US and developed countries. However, context of *opportunity* has changed in favor of the Union during adoption phase of the Kyoto Protocol, the EU had a chance to demonstrate its ability to lead two times (Oberthür, 2011, p. 669). The first one was the US withdrawal from Kyoto and not accepting to be a party in 2001. This was an advantage for the EU as the US resistance was posing as a strong challenge for international cooperation by encouraging other developed countries to resist. However, more importantly, the EU succeeded and led to agreement to be concluded at Marrakesh in 2001 (Oberthür, 2011, p. 669). During the negotiation period, it has agreed to compromise and forged comprehensive, one-track approach to secure developing countries' ratification with 1995 Berlin mandate (Chazournes, 2023). The second triumph was persuading Russia to ratify the Protocol in return for Russian participation to World Trade Organization (WTO) (Oberthür, 2011, p. 669).

The EU secured Kyoto Protocol by dialogue and '*bridge-building*' (Bäckstrand & Elgström, 2013, p. 1377), and, despite challenges, it successfully deployed other soft power elements such as negotiation, persuasion and active promotion of multilateralism; formed a toolbox for its climate diplomacy. Developments at the international stage have led EU to enhance in internal climate policy together with external climate policy, which also improved its '*international credibility*' (Adelle et al., 2018; as cited in Sanzay, 2020, s. 9). Moreover, EU coherence and unity in international climate change policy get strengthened and as the negotiations for Kyoto Protocol neared, the EU unified more through the Council Presidency that held external representation of the Union (Oberthür, 2011, p. 671). It can be claimed that during the 1990s opportunity and proactive presence of the EU in international climate change have contributed to EU capability which was highly compatible with leadership by example technique of the EU. As the EU managed to reduce emissions, this perspective gained significance. Therefore, especially in the second half of the 1990s and 2000s the EU

took the lead in negotiations, took initiatives for further elimination of its emissions and therefore, set standards for the others unilaterally.

4.1.2. Failure in EU Leadership (2010-2015)

The EU enjoyed its leadership during the 2000s, until Conference of the Parties (CoP) 15, namely Copenhagen Summit of 2009. The EU expectations for the Copenhagen Summit were high as it pursued a universal, ambitious agreement to be concluded. In the light of the 4th IPCC assessment report, the EU urged 25%-40% decrease in GHG emissions from developed countries and 15%-30% from developing countries compared to 1990 level (van Schaik & Schunz, 2012, p. 175; as cited in Oberthür & Dupont, 2021, p. 1101). This proposal was elimination of the distinction between developed and developing countries by bringing binding obligations for them. This was a serious shift from ‘common but differentiated responsibility’ principle of the regime that was constructed through UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol and supported with Berlin Mandate. CoP 15 has become a *‘political earthquake for global climate diplomacy’* that resulted with backlash in EU leadership and emergence of a new geopolitical order (Bäckstrand & Elgström, 2013, pp. 1377-1378).

As per usual, EU self-commitment was also assertive for Copenhagen Summit, it planned to decrease its emission 20%, and if other parties would agree on a more assertive accord, it would rise to 30%. However, this was an unsuccessful attempt for leadership by example and the EU left isolated since “*others did not perceive the need to move towards the EU position to make a deal*” (Oberthür, 2011, p. 670). What the EU miscalculated was changing power dynamics at the international stage and change in emission distributions in climate change regime. Emerging powers, particularly China was rising and contesting existing power dynamics in many aspects and trying to impact on global politics. BASIC was one of these attempts of Brazil, South Africa, India and China to raise their voice by forming a bloc in climate change regime. Climate change regime was not a coincidence for newly industrialized countries chose to impact on. Oberthür (2011, 677) pointed out the changed distributions of emissions by comparing emission levels of countries in 1990 and 2005; developed countries (except for the US) have significant reductions while developing countries have increased their share. The EU points in Copenhagen Summit were interpreted

as a threat for their growing economies. The US return to the regime in 2009 has also marked a significant development. The EU response to these developments was establishing its own bloc with African states and AOSIS (Alliance of Small Island States), however, the last-minute deal could not work out (Parker et al. 2012, 280; cited in Bäckstrand & Elgström, 2013, p. 1379).

Although the EU was scientifically right in pushing binding targets for all parties, it did not consider *opportunity*, recent geopolitical realities in the regime. In addition to this, the EU strategy in climate change was focused and evolved towards developed countries rather than emerging economies with less historical responsibility but also with a growing burden for greenhouse warming. That difference, together with the fact that decreasing EU share in emissions also lessened its relevance to GHG reduce made 'leadership by example' obsolete, or at least inadequate on its own. The EU diplomatic toolbox was incapable of securing attraction and/or persuading others through negotiation. This contributed to weakening the EU presence and soft power which has already taken a big hit with 2008 financial crisis. Coherence was another challenge that worked against the Union and hinted backlash in its capabilities. The second half of the 2000s was the years that the EU has just completed the biggest enlargement in its history and needed deepen its integration through unity and coherence. The credibility of the Union had further decreased as some EU members openly discussed their skepticism for assertive goals of the Commission (Bäckstrand & Elgström, 2013, p. 1378). In the end, the Copenhagen Summit is marked as serious backlash for both EU leadership and the overall regime, as it was concluded with volunteer track review.

4.1.3. Recovery Era (2015-2019)

The EU failure in Copenhagen Summit was the end of an era in climate regime with EU leadership, However, the lessons learned from this failure paved the way for one of the first major successes of the regime, namely the Paris Agreement. In order to achieve this, diplomatic efforts of the EU were crucial. Through the path to Paris Agreement, the EU first consolidated its actorness and increased its soft power by employing various instruments of

soft power, shaping a coherent EU Climate Diplomacy and enhancing its capabilities at domestic sphere.

The first clue for the EU effort for restoring its leadership was as early as 2011, at Durban for CoP 17. At Durban, parties have embraced the decision to launch new negotiations for a comprehensive GHG decrease protocol, by the deadline in 2015 (United Nations, 2011). This was a significant achievement and demonstration of a strong EU presence, particularly after dichotomy led by Copenhagen Summit. (Bäckstrand & Elgström, 2013, pp. 1380-1381) claim that by forming coalitions (i.e. with AOSIS), utilizing reconciliation and bridge-building, the EU developed and performed ‘structural leadership’ rather than exemplary leadership. According to them, its position was being ‘mediator’, leader-cum-mediator, which “*worked with rather than against*” current geopolitical realities (Bäckstrand & Elgström, 2013, pp. 1380-1381).

Although it was a positive development in terms of restoring EU soft power and leadership, Durban achievement could be classified as moderate for tackling climate change. That meant a moderate level of EU ability to get the outcome it wanted. The Union had limited time to reconsider its climate diplomacy preparing for the Paris Agreement, nearly four years. At that time, the international outlook slightly changed once more, this time in support of the EU; major emitters the US and China has changed their stance, as both actors did not want to be reason for ‘a new Copenhagen’ (Oberthür & Groen, 2018, p. 716).

In addition to developments at the opportunity aspect, the EU attached more importance on grasping the outside world; primarily on geopolitical developments and other parties’ perspectives instead of focusing only on strict scientific facts and self-centered definition of climate regime structure (Schunz, 2021, p. 24). This has opened doors for enhanced multilateralism and opportunities for cooperation. The EU climate diplomacy, in the light of dynamics of external sphere, was reshaped with flexibility and multiple bilateral relations, as Schunz’s definition ‘multiple bilateralism’ (Schunz, 2021, p. 4).

Having kept the term ‘mediator’ of Backstrand and Elgström, Oberthür and Dupont (2021, pp. 110-1101) contributed to discussions on EU leadership type in post-Copenhagen

era by categorizing the EU climate leadership into two categories: exemplary leadership and diplomatic leadership. Exemplary leadership referred to internal capabilities of the Union like ambitious target goals or domestic policies whereas diplomatic leadership is associated with external sphere, and depended on different capabilities such as diplomatic contacts, or finance (Oberthür & Dupont, 2021, pp. 1100-1101).. According to them, after Copenhagen failure, the EU added diplomatic leadership as a component of overall leadership in climate to promote its influence (Oberthür & Dupont, 2021, pp. 1100-1101).

The EU shift to focusing on diplomacy aligns with the EU effort to re-design its institutional structure with 2009 Lisbon Treaty to improve coordination and coherency in foreign policy. (Biedenkopf & Petri, 2021, p. 79). This has contributed enormously to EU capability by enabling EU to better formulate and act upon policies with enhanced institutional capacity. For instance, the EU actorness in climate has strengthened in third countries through diplomatic diplomacy by linking it to newly established EEAS (European External Action Service) in 2011. The third article of the Council Conclusions on EU Climate Diplomacy clearly demonstrates that aim; the EEAS was expected to “*address climate change at all political levels*” with a strong unity, and to promote EU climate related activities in line of UNFCCC, including Durban Summits, raising awareness with partners that have particularly key in climate change, as well as contributing to developing countries’ institutional and capacity building (Council of the European Union, 2011)

In addition to that, a new DG (Directorate General) was formed in 2010 to support the European Commission in his efforts to deal with climate change on international and domestic levels. This was followed by structural changes in the Commission, ‘engine of European integration’, made by President Juncker who aimed to enhance functionality of it (Dinan, 2016; as cited in Silander, 2022). In addition to that, Juncker declared his goal that structuring a ‘political commission’ by supporting European integration in areas and protecting normative features in policy areas like economic, social and environment (Silander, 2022, p. 4)

2015 climate diplomacy action plan has designated several tasks for diplomats in EU Delegations to promote public diplomatic engagement, that were fruitful as confirmed by the

FAC Conclusions of next year (Biedenkopf & Petri, 2021, p. 79). The engagement activities in third countries had varied such as *‘outreach to host-country stakeholders, public diplomacy, reporting and information gathering, as well as mainstreaming climate concerns’* (Biedenkopf & Petri, 2021, 80), by utilizing *‘traditional and social media as well as public events’* (Biedenkopf & Petri, 2021., 80) and *‘other projects and initiatives, such as development aid, association dialogues and technical assistance programmes.’* (Biedenkopf & Petri, 2021, 81). In their survey with EU diplomats, the most significant public diplomacy event was ‘Climate Day’ (Biedenkopf & Petri, 2021, 81). EEAS and EU Delegations have enabled EU impact on all levels, provided variety of policy tools and more importantly allowed EU to engage with tailor-made approaches. New climate diplomacy not only consolidated EU Actorness it also contributed to its effectiveness. According to Oberthür and Groen (2018, 715), this was reflected in spirit of the 2015 Paris Agreement which was heavily affected by EU aims and wide recognition of deal-breakers for the Union. A universal, binding agreement was finally concluded. Moreover, developed countries have repeated their commitment to mobilize USD 100 billion each year until 2020 to support developing countries which was decided in Copenhagen and formalized in 2010 Cancun-Cop 16 and extended it by 2025 with Paris Agreement (OECD, 2023). Also, parties reached consensus on deciding further goals no later than 2025. Therefore, the EU goal achievement in Paris Agreement can be considered as strong (Oberthür & Groen, 2018, p. 716).

Enjoying its triumph, the EU focus moved from international negotiations and regime-constructing to implementation of what was decided, by trying to influence climate policies in third countries (Biedenkopf & Petri, 2021, pp. 72-73). On the other hand, post-2016 has witnessed major developments both had decisive effects internally and externally, from Brexit to migration crisis and the EU could not contributed to climate change concretely. This could impact on EU global climate policies on both Union level and member state level. Biedenkopf and Petri (2021, 76, 79) also draw attention to reduced EU diplomatic action in third countries during the period 2017-2020, which was also reflected in FAC conclusions. In 2018-2019 conclusions, EU delegations were not referred while in 2020 conclusions they were mentioned shortly and vaguely.

Overall, the EU established itself as an actor in global climate politics and then gradually weighed its significance based on its strict commitment to scientific data and proactive stance. Although this commitment sometimes resulted in failures, the EU quickly recovered and did not let backlashes damage its consistency. It can be claimed that 2015-2016 were the years the EU Climate Diplomacy peaked as a consequence of the Union's fruitful efforts to re-establish its leadership by learning, experimenting, structuring and utilizing various strategies and instruments since 2011. The EU actions in climate were in parallel to its aim to increase its power in global politics; particularly its soft power as it positioned itself against the US by demonstrating that there were alternatives to coercive methods to stay relevant at global politics. External actions have contributed to the EU image as an actor that can provide solutions to world problems and contributed to its soft power at almost every stage on its path to climate leadership.

Firstly, the EU identification itself as an actor committed to dealing with climate change has resulted with strong EU involvement and presence in climate politics from the very beginning. Climate became a perfect policy area that the EU could enjoy pioneering and setting itself as an example; establish itself as an actor that wants to and able to solve a global problem. This has altered other's perceptions as the fact that climate/environment covers a big place at the broad literature discussing EU soft, normative, civilian, etc. power. The EU self-perception was followed by external action, engagement with other actors. Then, the EU has strengthened its unity and coherence despite having shared competences in climate change, invested in its capabilities and European integration in this area to enhance actorness. This was further supported by modifications in the structure of the Union by the Lisbon Treaty. With its growing ability to shape the outside world, the EU had chance to become a prominent founder of an emerging international regime and impacted on it with its own preferences and standards. Last but not the least, multiple bilateralisms have enabled the EU to construct a wide network that increased its chance to get the outcome it wanted by persuasion both at bilateral level and afterwards, within a multilateral framework.

Nonetheless, following the period 2015 Paris Agreement and its ratification in 2016, EU climate diplomacy has lost its significance and strategies that carried the EU to climate

leadership were started to be less referred. Other developments that the EU had to face externally; challenges in management of migration flow, Brexit that resulted questioning of EU unity, or internally: rise of right-populism were other factors that damaging EU soft power. As the EU focus shifted to these issues, the EU neglected climate, a significant policy area that contributed to its soft power. That was before the von der Leyen Commission stepped up and declared the European Green Deal as a priority which will be discussed in the following section.

4.2. EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

In 2019, Ursula Von der Leyen inherited a ‘political commission’ from its predecessor Jean Claude Juncker. Even before her taking over the commission, she declared her aim to form a ‘geopolitical commission’ which has a more extensive scope (European Commission, 2019a) What that means is that a commission that whose focus is increased on external engagement as her first speech demonstrated. She indicated her vision of EU role as ‘*shaper of a better global order*’ through leadership as ‘*a responsible power*’ and ‘*force for peace and positive change*’ (European Commission, 2019b).

Haroche (2022, p. 971) explains external reasons for geopolitical shift in the commission with growing international competition for power and strategic use of economic instruments in global politics. In his study, interviews with the Commissioners revealed their observation was increasing share of ‘*geopolitical conflicts*’ in international politics, and therefore the Commission had to ‘*redefine its role*’ (Haroche, 2022, p. 974).

In Von der Leyen’s first speech as president of the Commission, her reclaimed desire for geopolitical commission is followed by climate issue. She defined climate change as an existential threat for both European Union and rest of the world, and European leadership was needed to deal with it (European Commission, 2019b). A climate neutral, green Europe was set as a priority for both the European Council and European Commission for 2019-2024.

In December 2019, the European Commission declared its policy framework for EU green transition, the European Green Deal as dealing with the climate change and making the EU net-zero and resource-efficient, safeguarding nature, while ensuring competitiveness of the economy by 2050 (European Union, 2023). In 2020 Council Conclusions the EU pointed out the widening gap between Paris Agreement targets and current progress and indicated significance of EU leadership through example (Council of the European Union, 2020, p. 1). To this end, the EU also pledged to reduce its GHG emissions 30% by 1990 (Council of the European Union, 2021).

As explained in the previous section, the EU international action in global climate policy is far from new. The EU has proven itself as a responsible, experienced power in this regard, also played pioneering, leadership roles more by taking much more initiatives than any other actor both domestic and external sphere. However, the European Green Deal is the first climate policy in the world that covers many issues in a comprehensive way from biodiversity to energy, from agriculture to industry. More significantly, the EU aim of net-zero is combined with social and economic dimensions, therefore many paradigms shifts in mode of production and consumption will be needed to address all the issues in three dimensions. In fact, the EU is planning to change its approach to the way they live, their politics and economy. This requires lots of work for the Union, both internal and external, as it will challenge EU relations with partners. To this end, the EU sets all other policies compatible with European Green Deal objectives (European Commission, 2019c) , of course also its foreign policy.

However, international context brought up new challenges for the EU starting from 2019. First, Covid-19 pandemic caused difficult times for all economies in the world and stalled production& supply chain all around the globe. Pandemic is greatly parallel to climate change, both threats are transboundary for all humanity and there is no national territory that enjoys full sovereignty in these matters. However, particularly early phases of pandemic witnessed failure in multilateralism as strict control of borders or internal purchase of sanitary products (Cole & Dodds, 2021, p. 149). EU late action to help ailing Italy (The Politico, 2020) led to criticism and questions regarding EU unity and solidarity. On the other hand,

Chinese mask diplomacy demonstrated that even basic products like mask could be easily used to pursue ‘geopolitical influence’ and altering global governance (Li and Musiitwa, 2020; Mulakala and Ji, 2020; Myers, 2020; Verma, 2020; Wong, 2020 as cited in Sun & Yu, 2023, p. 382). Also, late phases of pandemic raised questions on multilateralism as poor distribution of vaccines to vulnerable regions created distrust (Lowings & Aguiar , 2023). Second major incident was Russian attack on Ukraine which immediately showed its impact on global food crisis and energy supply. First reaction to energy crisis, the EU increased coal demand from abroad led to confusion (Falkner, 2023, p. 2), however, moderate level of temperatures with efficient demand control resulted with decrease in emission sum of the EU (Falkner, 2023, 5). Moreover, beyond Chinese use of mask diplomacy to generate influence, global food security threatened by multifaceted nature of Russian-Ukraine war further demonstrated that any type of power can be used as a leverage, or even, can be weaponized and thus, it can be asserted that climate issues can be used as a bargaining tool in international arena (Dennison & Engström, 2023, p. 3).

These incidents further stresses importance of EU aim of leadership in climate politics. Constructing and navigating the global green transition is crucial for EU prosperity and security in the long run. (Velasco, Jackson, & Pilsner, 2023, p. 1). The EU successfully adapted the European Green Deal to Covid-19 Recovery Plan (European Commission, 2023a), and accelerated renewables as response to Russia, which protected EGD’s relevance within the internal sphere. However, the EU could not fulfill its potential in the external sphere which will be discussed at below sections.

4.2.1. European Green Deal and its Potential Contribution to Soft Power

As much as Von der Leyen emphasized climate change as an existential threat to earth, she also referred to it as a ‘*window of opportunity*’, as throughout the history of the EU crises has deepened European Integration (Silander, 2022, pp. 8-9). It is very clear that the EGD has increased coherence through many initiatives in domestic sphere, for instance the EU Climate Law which is legal aspect of European Green Deal was entered into force in July 2021.

In addition to that, in an increasingly geopoliticized world, addressing global problems is not sufficient, it is more important to act upon and finding solutions to generate influence. And silence, as proved in EU late action in Italy, shows its adverse impact on influence immediately. Therefore, if the European Green Deal achieves its objectives and accelerates global green transition in a fair& inclusive way, would be an important achievement for the EU that contributes to its soft power.

Moreover, as Nye (2017, 3) claimed, soft power derives from citizens to a large extent, rather than governments. In this regard, EGD is a perfect tool for the EU to invest in its soft power. As ‘extreme weather conditions’ became more relevant in daily life of Europeans, together with rise of adverse impacts has been felt, support for green implications increased by EU citizens. 2019 could be a milestone in this context. 2019 European Parliamentary Elections resulted with 72 green seats of the total 705 seats. Soon after, this support aligned with a new policy introduced by the Commission, the European Green Deal. As Mélanie Vogel, French senator and co-chair of the European Green Party indicated, *“There would not have been a Green Deal if there had not been a green wave in 2019”* (The Economist, 2023).

Furthermore, if comes out successful, EGD increases EU chance to set the international rules and norms, which was nearly achieved through Paris Agreement previously and marked a triumph in EU Climate Leadership which would alter third parties’ perceptions positively. Climate Club that is launched in late 2022 with Germany’s efforts can be a good instance in this regard. It is a forum for G7¹ countries and the EU to coordinate their efforts to comply with the Paris Agreement and overcome difficulties of methods tackling with climate change, such as CBAM (European Parliament, 2023). It can be said that this initiative is a demonstration that the EU activity is enhanced as multilateral for a and it is a concrete step to shape global climate politics.

Moreover, the European Green Deal can enhance bilateral relations as it requires enhancing cooperation. Green Deal can create new technical cooperation fields, which can

¹ : Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the US

spill over to other fields as well. Focusing on technical and expertise cooperation may provide continuation of dialogue, even with the countries where tensions are the most strained. Increasing numbers of Green Alliances which started with 2021 EU-Japan Green Alliance and extended with 2023 EU-Norway and 2023 EU-Canada Green Alliances aims to establish collaborative relations by aligning their climate policies (European Commission, 2023n)

Last but not least, particularly in climate issues, the EGD can contribute to EU soft power by assisting other countries with its financial instruments for their green transition. The EU Soft Power derives from EU enthusiasm of spreading welfare to other countries as it the grandest donor of development aid. The EU Council conclusions on Climate and Energy Diplomacy of 2023 consists of articles considering financial assistance for least developing and Small Island Developing States, however ambiguously, and their enthusiasm to accelerating unlocking global financial funding, including gathering 100 USD until 2025 (Council of the European Union, 2023c)

4.2.2. EU Limitations at the External Dimension of European Green Deal

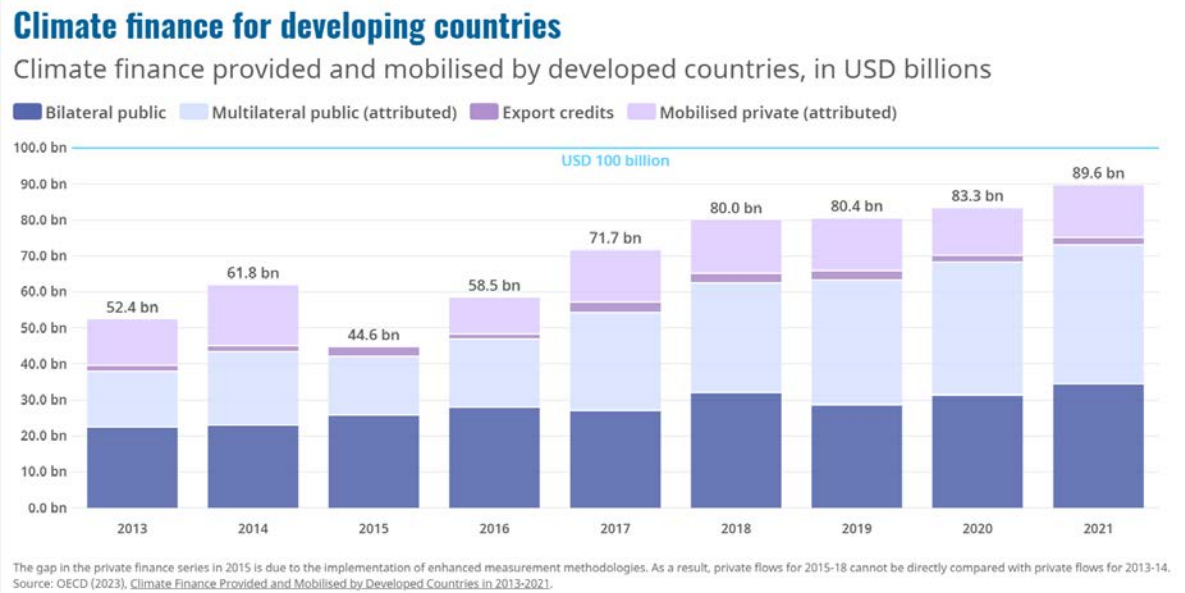
It has been almost 5 years since the unveiling of the European Green Deal. The EU achieved domestic promotion of the EGD and placing it as a solid step on EU path to economic growth and general welfare of the Union to a large extent. Nevertheless, its external aspect did not fulfill its potential (Pilsner, Scott, Jackson, & Palmer, 2022). Relying on leadership by example (which was underly stressed in policy papers) only, will not be efficient neither in reducing global emissions nor attracting third countries, considering that the EU share in emissions under 8% currently and so is EU relevance in emission reduction.

Global concerns for environment and climate change are not merely topic for scientific observation as it was before 1980s, instead, currently it impacts from economy to political interests. Moreover, climate geopolitics is increasingly trending in IR (Papanikolaou, 2021, p. 6). On the one hand, developed countries including major emitters have declared their own net-zero agendas, for instance China is planning to be net-zero by 2060, while the US and South Korea's goal is 2050. Therefore, the EU has competition on its way to make Europe the first net-zero continent. Moreover, China has already attached

green aspects to its Belt and Road Projects (Rana, 2023), which hints an upcoming alternative to EU climate leadership. On the other hand, climate negotiations at conferences of parties (CoPs) are highly politicized by developing countries with historical responsibility and poor climate funding. Yet another challenge for the EU is that changing mode of production, consumption patterns and demand-supply particularly in energy demand will inevitably have consequences on external sphere as the EU neighbors and partners will be affected by changes in the world's largest trade bloc (Leonard, Pisani-Ferry, Shapiro, Tagliapietra, & Wolff, 2021). Therefore, the EU has to find a cooperative, multilateral solution for green transition, not only to be global climate leader, but also to prevent conflicts.

By looking at international context, industrializing countries together with less developed-vulnerable countries are key. Their claim is that they are responsible for a small proportion of global warming on contrary to early industrialized OECD parties. Therefore, although dealing with climate change is a common objective, they claim that climate change regime should not set a barrier to their economic development. Here, enhancing cooperation and trust is key to success. Pledge of developed countries to mobilize USD 100 billion became a measure of commitment and trust of developing countries to climate change regime is highly criticized with insufficient amount allocated each year, poor and vague reporting with inadequate transparency and the fact that loans are considered as funds (Clean Energy Wire, 2023). OECD claims that mobilization of USD 100 was achieved and below table shows goal achievement of developed countries between 2013-2021.

Table 1 : Climate Finance for Developing Countries (OECD, 2023)



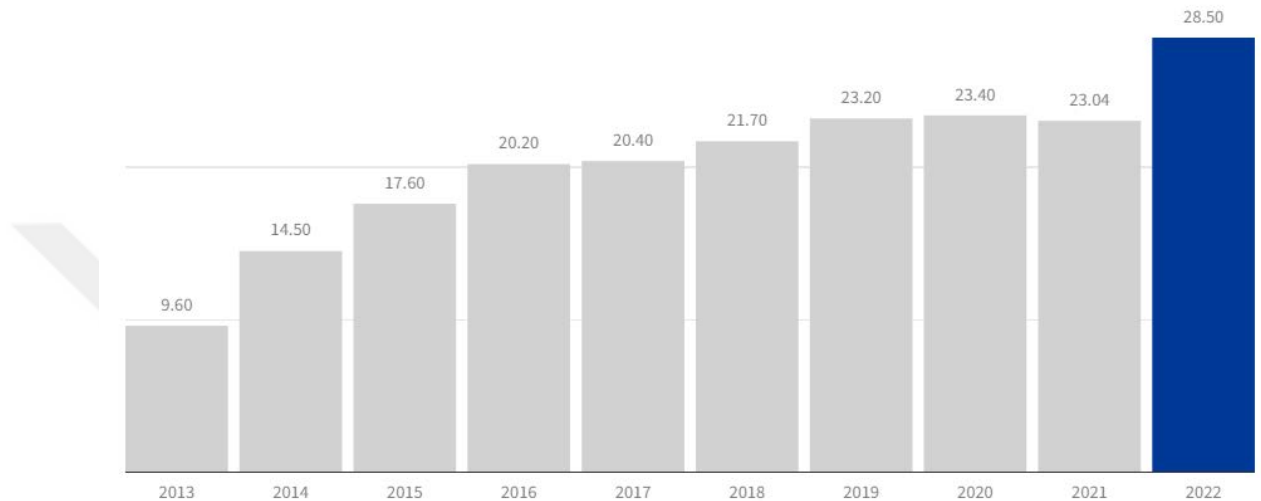
Currently OECD has 38 members, and 22 OECD states consists of EU member with European Commission is a special party. EU share of allocated USD 100 billion in 2022 was EUR 28.5 billion (Council of the European Union, 2023a), which counts approximately 30% of sum.

The portion of EU with its 22 OECD member states can be considered low for an actor that aspires to be climate leader. Below, EU's share in funds between 2013-2021 can be seen.

Table 2: Europe's Contribution to Climate Finance (Council of the European Union, 2023b)

Europe's contribution to climate finance (in €bn)

Since 2013, Europe has more than doubled the funds raised to help developing countries mitigate and adapt to the impact of climate change



The sources for the figures include the EU budget, the European Development Fund and the European Investment Bank.

* The overall public figure is calculated by using a new methodology, based on commitments for bilateral and disbursements of multilateral finance made in 2022. If the previous year's methodology were used, the overall public finance contribution for 2022 would have been €30.5 billion.

Source: Council of the European Union • [Get the data](#)

Moreover, imposing set of rules/targets by neglecting there are other perspectives to green transition will not work, as it did not previously. The EU for instance, has disproportionate GHG emissions with emerging power India that makes common understanding and cooperation harder. Africa countries on the other hand, were and are less responsible for GHG emissions, however similar levels of GHG do not sufficient to form a common understanding and cooperation field. A paper that is prepared jointly by European and African Think Tanks in 2021 stresses the importance of EGD for overall AU (African Union) and EU relations, however on the condition that EU understanding of African strategic perspective, EU learning from previous engagements to gain trust and form common cooperation areas. The study specifically emphasizes significance of 'eye-level

partnership’ approach (Hackenesch, Högl, Knaepen, Iacobuta, & Asafu-Adjaye, 2021, p. 2). Therefore, cooperation in green transition and EGD pushing enhanced relations lean on EU communication skills and how EU approaches to African partners (Hackenesch, Högl, Knaepen, Iacobuta, & Asafu-Adjaye, 2021, p. 20). The hardship is that in early phases of EGD, EU was struggling to form a ‘*positive and clear offer*’ within framework of EGD that can encourage African partners through their objectives in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and instead, external perceptions of EGS are constructed by ‘green protectionism’ as introduction of CBAM (Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism) demonstrates (IDDRI, 2022)

One another point that halts European Green Deal that it Green Deal Diplomacy has not giving the same results as it was achieved through public diplomacy implications by 2015-2016 EU Delegations. As spreading EU objectives are important, consolidation and implementation of them also should be encouraged, however there were no solid project-implementation system in EGD.

Overall, leadership by example approach, coming from EU internal dimension of European Green Deal reflects an enhanced coherence and contributes to EU credibility. On the other hand, diplomatic/external dimensions in European Green Deal can be considered as weak; stress to cooperation fields, partnership and mutual learning are referred less, climate funding is poorly defined. Instead of positive agenda setting efforts, EU priority to protect European companies by internal pressures, measures like CBAM, are perceived as protectionist by third countries. In the next chapter, whether 2021 Global Gateway Initiative can address these problems will be investigated.

5. GLOBAL GATEWAY INITIATIVE

Global Gateway Initiative is an instrument for ‘*a Stronger Europe in the World*’ which is among six priorities listed by the European Commission for the term 2019-2024. The key goal of this priority is to consolidate the EU role in global politics as ‘a responsible leader’. The Commission asserts that to achieve this role, the EU will combine the attraction of a powerful and fair open-trade Union and an uncompromising commitment to its climate, environmental and labor standards. A stronger EU priority also stresses importance of ‘*coordinated approach to external action*’ for a more impactful and unified EU in the world. (European Commission, 2023e). Suitably this approach, Global Gateway was adopted in December 2021 to reinforce the EU as a powerful leader, is also supporting external dimensions of other Commission priorities, and particularly of European Green Deal.

Global Gateway is an initiative to invest in infrastructure improvement worldwide to deal with global problems from climate change to health security. The EU points out to issues highlighted by Covid-19 crisis such as partial, inadequate and fragmented global infrastructure and increasing global investment gap and offers its assistance on physical infrastructure, i.e. fibre optic cables, clean transport corridors, clean power transmission lines... (European Commission, 2021b, p. 1). It is indicated that Global Gateway’s goal is to establish ‘*smart, clean and secure links*’ that are compatible with UN’s Agenda 2030 SDGs and Paris Agreement throughout the world (European Commission, 2023b) and to this end, ‘Team Europe’ will allocate 300 billion EUR for sustainable projects.

There are many articles trying to unravel the potential role of Global Gateway as the external dimension of Green Deal since the initiative has been declared. There are two strong and solid bases for this inclination. First, green transition is prioritized in Global Gateway Initiative. Second, sustainable infrastructure is a vital component in developing economies’

green transition and their capacity to keep up with EU regulatory standards through European Green Deal. In this section, it will be investigated whether Global Gateway has capacity to be used as a means and institution in third countries' alignment with the European Green Deal. In this context, will be studied whether 'connectivity' factor can address limitations of the European Green Deal external dimension.

Nevertheless, the initiative is rather new. Currently there are ninety Global Gateway projects that were launched as recently as 2023. As it will require more time to fully assess whether Global Gateway has a remarkable impact on its extensive implementation area, this section will be focused on Africa since the continent is priority within the Initiative. The fact that half of the amount that will be mobilized (150 billion Euro) will be Africa's share proves this prioritizing.

This section will explore the term 'connectivity' and its use in Global Gateway, then will provide background information on Africa's perspective embracing its vulnerabilities, opportunities and perceptions on EU in climate change policy area. Then the potential contribution of Global Gateway to the EU for strengthening external aspect of European Green Deal will be investigated. This will be followed by two case studies to provide empirical evidence. Case studies are chosen as Morocco and Rwanda since the EU defined both countries as climate leaders; Morocco in October 2022 (European Commission, 2022b) and Rwanda in December 2023 (European Commission, 2023m). In this study, recognition of both countries as climate leaders by the EU, is interpreted as EU approval of both countries' green policy compliances with the European Green Deal. Morocco is a North African country with long history with the EU with more connectivity, including a physical connection with Spanish borders and shares similar concerns with the EU on its energy sector. Rwanda is a Sub-Saharan African country which is landlocked, therefore had less chances for connectivity and thus, connection related infrastructure. The EU-Rwanda relations are relatively new with potential cooperation areas. The fact that two countries differ in

geographical region, economic development (North-South axis), opportunities for connectivity and relations with the EU will make the section a comparative analysis for evaluating to what extent the EU investments in connectivity will affect countries' Green Deal compliance.

5.1. GLOBAL GATEWAY AS A CONNECTIVITY INITIATIVE

Global Gateway, at its simplest, is a connectivity project. The concept has been associated with China, as its major connectivity project Belt and Road (BRI) that has been implementing since 2013 has a vast literature on its contributions to Chinese soft power. It has been discussing that 2021 Global Gateway is 'a geopolitical countermeasure' to BRI as being an instrument to fulfill the Commission aim to be geopolitical Commission and restoring EU influence in global (Dejonghe, 2023, p. 1) Although there is a big literature focusing on Chinese BRI, connectivity efforts in IR are relatively new in the literature and there are few conceptualizations. The most relevant and used definition is what ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) indicated to define Asia-European connectivity in 2017 (Gaens, Sinkkonen, & Ruokamo, 2023, s. 195-196):

“Connectivity is about bringing countries, people and societies closer together. It facilitates access and is a means to foster deeper economic and people-to-people ties. It encompasses the hard and soft aspects, including the physical and institutional social-cultural linkages that are the fundamental supportive means to enhance the economic, political-security, and socio-cultural ties between Asia and Europe which also contribute to the narrowing of the varying levels of development and capacities.” (ASEM, 2017)

Looking at this definition, popularization of connectivity may be regarded as odd. Connectivity practices traces back to the ancient times, what makes it new is use of connectivity with strategic geopolitical aims instead of random or opportunistic connections (Godehardt & Postel-Vinay, 2020). Today we see an increased tendency of forming, shaping and utilizing connections for geostrategic aims and ensuring an actors' role in global politics. This is also notable for practicing soft power as enhanced connections increase attraction and

unlocks a more extensive foreign policy toolbox. As Chinese BRI model demonstrates, investing in physical connections and building partnerships became stronger determinants in generating power through influence.

Connectivity is also seen as a strong component of gaining power from the EU point of view. According to Kacperek (2020), a policy officer at EEAS, political power of a country is less associated with military capacity in our day, rather, economic capabilities gained more significance in foreign policy toolkit, thus geopolitics is sliding to geoeconomics. He continues that with globalization, power more depends on connections with the others; more specifically on number of connections, variety of these connections and agency as “*defining one’s own rules or being subjected to someone else’s conditions for connecting*” (Kacperek , 2020). Therefore, connectivity is not new, but diverges in its aim and use by different actors (Godehardt & Postel-Vinay, 2020) from generating power through influence to persuasion or setting rules of the connection.

The EU had been working on forming connections in compliance with EU identity, aim and values, for instance 2018 EU-Asia Connectivity, or Partnerships between Japan and India. (European Commission, 2021a), however, Global Gateway is the first comprehensive and large-scale attempt of the EU to establish connectivity by investing in value-driven and physical infrastructure in Africa, Latin America, and Caribbean (European Commission, 2023b). The EU objective in Global Gateway is to contribute to global structure and shape it for its strategic aims. Von der Leyen indicated that clearly, “*As part of our global recovery, we want to redesign how we connect the world to build forward better... The Global Gateway Strategy is a template for how Europe can build more resilient connections with the world.*” (European Commission, 2021a). Post-Covid19 era is meaningful timing in this context, as it already highlighted long existing fractures in nation-wide and global infrastructure, in other words, the cracks in globalization. Use of Internet at pandemic is a well illustration, as it meant connection and continuity for some people, and deprivation and isolation for other people due to inadequate infrastructure (ITU, 2022, p. xv). The World Economic Forum defines connectivity key for a ‘*purpose-led globalization*’ which reinforces sustainability, common purpose, and dealing with climate change to have a climate-resilient global

economy (Aguzin, 2023). Effective and resilient connections across the globe is crucial for countries to achieve UN Agenda 2030 and SDGs in tandem, therefore, all connections that are established has to be compatible with sustainability standards (Gaens, Sinkkonen, & Ruokamo, 2023, s. 198).

Building partnerships through physical, sustainable connections therefore, is the most effective way for EU to form alliances through its strategic aims as it enhances bilateral relations to strengthen EU actorness and soft power and empowers its partners to join EU agenda. Although the European Green Deal contributes to EU soft power with its pioneering achievements at the internal sphere by principle of ‘leading by example’, this contribution is shrinking as discussed in the previous chapter. The EU has to contribute to partner countries’ green transition to provide solid steps in tackling climate change, and thus, claim its climate leadership and enhance its soft power through European Green Deal standards. However, the external dimension of Green Deal has poorly defined assistance, connectivity and partnership opportunities to third countries, and instead, implementation will have severe negative impacts to developing countries.

The next section will be focused on Africa and Global Gateway’s impact on empowering and therefore encouraging African countries vis-à-vis the European Green Deal.

5.2. OUTLOOK OF AFRICA

Africa is one of the most vulnerable regions in the world. This is also relevant for the effects of climate change and these effects are increasing exponentially. In 2023, extreme weather conditions caused death of at least 15,700 people, the death toll was 4,000 in 2022 (Dunne, 2023). Besides Africa’s geographical proximity to equator is the reason for excessive impacts of climate change compared to other regions, Africa’s economic capability for climate resilience is insufficient which further contributes to adverse effects (Knaepen & Dekeyser, 2023, p. i). The 2019 UN State of the Climate in Africa Report forecasts impacts of climate change will cost 40 billion USD each year until 2030, while The African Development Bank (AfDB) assesses to fulfill mitigation and adaptation goals in NDCs

(Nationally Determined Contributions), Africa will need 3 trillion USD investment in infrastructure (Ishmael, 2023, s. 15-16).

As economic situation of the African states makes it difficult for governments to establish working infrastructure, private sector investments and bank loans are also critically limited because of the risks ranging from political instability to high debt ratio. The second one particularly affects the Sub-Saharan region. Chinzara et al (2023) indicates that as World Bank 2019 report demonstrates, Sub-Saharan countries have to invest 7.1% of their GDPs, which is twice as much of the current investment (3.5%) in infrastructure to realize SDGs. Less involvement of private sector in infrastructure investment resulted with governments combine use their own resources with external debt in between 2015-2018, which resulted with even more severe debt crisis and decreased attractiveness in the eyes of investors/creditors (Chinzara, Dessus, & Dreyhaupt, 2023). Besides, there is a vicious cycle, inadequate infrastructure leads to less attraction for investments in infrastructure improvements. Whereas, despite physical infrastructure vulnerability of North Africa is relatively lower than the Sub-Saharan region, the high risk of climate change still endangers economic growth of the region which may further increase current unemployment rates (Chinzara, Dessus, & Dreyhaupt, 2023).

It was already challenging for the continent to fulfill SDGs and the Paris Agreements before Covid-19, the most catastrophic crisis since The Great Depression, and '*hard-won development gains are being lost*' due to continuing impacts of the pandemic (African Union, 2021, p. 5). 600 million Africans lack electricity access, and extreme poverty will not be eliminated by 2030 as it was targeted in Agenda 2030 (ibid., 5). Covid-19 crisis is an important illustration for not only the potential impacts of climate change but also for further increased global inequalities in case of a global catastrophe. In February 2022, WHO (World Health Organization) Director General has indicated that 83% of African people did not get their first dose (WHO, 2022).

Overall, climate change brings high risks for Africa in many aspects ranging from socio-economic vulnerabilities to contribution to existing global inequality. Although Africa

is responsible for only 4% of global GHG emissions, there is a high possibility that it will be hit hardest by impacts of climate change (AlJazeera, 2023) with little support given. On the other hand, Africa has significant opportunities in climate change crisis too. For instance, it has a big share in solar resources across the globe with a big potential in green hydrogen (Ishmael, 2023, s. iii). Moreover, with effect of daily experienced adverse effects, African Union (AU), with its 55 members are dedicated to deal with climate change collectively.

African countries are well aware of their vulnerabilities and opportunities in climate change crisis. African Union Green Recovery Action Plan indicates that only a recovery that is '*clean and resilient*' will pave the way for job creation in Africa and dealing with problems in health security, economy and climate change (African Union, 2021, p. 7). In fact, AU has established link between sustainability and economic development as early as 2007, with the Great Green Wall. It is a 8.000 km landscape restoration initiative, a green belt that has been forming to address climate change and related problems i.e. droughts, food crisis and mass migration.. (The Great Green Wall, 2023). It is even more remarkable for this context that The Great Green Wall is rooted in Sahel region which is among the world's most deprived and underprivileged places. In addition to the positive effects to the land and to the people, this massive initiative has increased cooperation in the region, politicians from

Senegal to Djibouti, two ends of the Great Green Wall are working together to prevent desertification (van Dok & Berlinger , 2022).

While the Wall is still constructed, the AU has published 'Green Recovery Action Plan 2021-2027' in which Covid-19 recovery was combined with dealing with climate change. This was followed by a more comprehensive 'African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (CCRDSAP) 2022-2032'. This action plan is harmonized with regional frameworks such as 'Agenda 2063', 'African Agricultural Development Programme', 'Programme for Infrastructure Development' or the 'Continental Free Trade Area'; and also with international frameworks such as 'UN Agenda 2030' or 'UN Convention for Biological Diversity' (Ishmael, 2023, s. 16). Africa, therefore, has a clear and long-standing inclination for linking climate and sustainable development with its continental integration and within international frameworks.

This comprehensive vision of the AU, in many aspects, is compatible with European Green Deal. Particularly African Union's CCRDSAP principles 'people centered approach', 'leave no one behind/a just transition' and 'whole economy' (African Union, 2022) are parallel to European Green Deal's 'economic growth decoupled from resource use' and 'no person and no place left behind' guides (European Commission, 2023a). Both AU and EU indicated their plans would be compatible with UN SDGs and Paris Agreement. Moreover, both Unions adhered their Covid-19 recovery and future ability to respond global challenges to their climate goals. For the AU a climate compatible economy represents an opportunity for long-standing desire of African people, development without overdependence to external sphere (Ishmael, 2023, s. 15). Whereas for the EU it is associated with global leadership and also Strategic Autonomy to prove itself as a strong, independent global actor.

Therefore, for Africa case, cooperative relation is highly possible in climate change considering their shared common goal, enthusiasm and similar principles towards low emission levels. Similarities could be positive incentive for African states' alignment with European Green Deal standards, however this should not be taken as granted. There are also significant differences in perspectives, methods and economic/political contexts of EU and African states that are determinant elements in Green Deal compliance.

African and European perspectives on dealing with climate change differs accordingly their economic and geographic realities. This can be seen in adaptation/resilience-mitigation nexus. AU gives more stress to climate resilience and adaptation which focuses on adverse affects of climate change while the EU policies are more inclined with mitigation that concentrates on elimination of climate change and lowering emissions. It can be seen in the both Green Recover Action Plan and CCRDSAP, the word 'mitigation' is referred remarkably less. Less emphasis of adaptation in the EU agenda is criticised by the Africans (Knaepen & Dekeyser, 2023, p. 1). In addition to that, AU centralization of development in their climate actions is also an important difference that emphasizes different positions of EU countries and Africa in North-South axis.

It is equally important to consider perceptions of Africans towards the European Union and European Green Deal. According to (Knaepen & Dekeyser, 2023, p. i) long history full of crisis, from colonial heritage to recent ones like mismanagement of migration flow and vaccine distribution distrust have caused negative image on Africans, and spilled over Africa-EU climate cooperation. Moreover, Green Deal policies have severe negative externalities on Africa.

For instance, the Farm to Fork policy created tensions (Knaepen & Dekeyser, 2023, p. i) particularly in Africa. (Dekeyser & Woolfrey, 2021, s. 2) has pointed out in 2021, Farm to Fork will increase European imports and decrease exports in agriculture sector, which will lead to rise in food prices, and threaten global food security in Africa. As Russian-Ukrainian war has demonstrated, global food security is one of the most vulnerable fields. Africa is even more vulnerable and was one of the regions that was impacted the most, as food spending consists of 40%-60% of a African household budget whereas the percentages are 13% for France and 6% for the US (Yohannes-Kassahun, 2023).

Likewise Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism was not only perceived as protectionist by Africa, but also by economically developed countries from Australia to Russia and Qatar (WTO, 2022). WTO Director-General Okonjo-Iweala also warned countries in general regarding potential protectionism in CBAMs and stressed the importance of subsidies and utilizing trade as a positive incentive to reach zero emission goals, which are overlooked (Harvey, 2023).

A comprehensive look demonstrates even more severe cost for Africa. According to Maimele (2023), in case the EU applies EGD in all planned sectors fully, the African cost will be USD 135 billion of exports, which is 5% of the continent's GDP.

These perceptions lead to rather opposite of the EU aims; achieving global leadership, setting international standards and contributing to its actorness and soft power in climate change regime via European Green Deal. Global Gateway can be used as a means and institutions on alignment with the Green Deal by partners, via enhancing external

dimension of EGD, addressing its limitations and mitigating adverse effects on developing economies.

5.3. GLOBAL GATEWAY CONTRIBUTION TO AFRICA'S ALIGNMENT WITH THE GREEN DEAL STANDARDS

The fact that only a developed Africa can be a partner for the EU to realize its Green Deal objectives, the EU has launched EU-Africa Global Gateway Investment Package in 2022 with its 150 billion EUR budget (Shirley, 2023). While the Initiative prioritises green transition, it also embraces enhancing physical transportation, digital transformation, and improvements in health, education and finance, making a 'package' to support a fair and just transition. Moreover, infrastructure projects with EU contribution increases compliance of the African economy to Green Deal norms.

Global Gateway not only aims to empower Africa in their green transition but also contributes to credibility of the EU as a partner in climate change regime by providing EU to use a more extended soft power toolkit for external dimension of European Green Deal from more emphasis on equal relationships to more extensive and structured financial assistance. Some aspects that the Global Gateway can enhance EGD in Africa below listed.

a. More Connectivity for Africa

Most of Africa's suffering stems from bad quality infrastructure. Quality infrastructure is component for sustainable development and provides economic growth by increasing people to people interactions and trade relations within and across countries. Therefore, investing in infrastructure and connectivity should be the first step of empowering Africa.

Rizzi and Varvelli (2023, 8) point out African countries' performance on in the Logistics Performance Index. Although the region has high rates of oil and gas trade connections across the globe, interconnectivity in the continent is considerably less developed; trade, logistics and interpersonal links are weak due to insufficient infrastructure (Rizzi & Varvelli, 2023).

To address this challenge, the Global Gateway has launched ‘Strategic Corridors’ under the Global Gateway Investment Package to invest in sustainable transportation within Africa and support trade relations in African Continental Free Trade Area (European Commission, 2023c). European Investment Bank are working collaboratively with the African Development Bank (European Commission, 2023g) to finalize the project by 2030, which can enhance cooperative relations between institutions. Moreover, the USA also expressed its eagerness to participate to strategic corridor infrastructure efforts (European Commission, 2023g) which demonstrates the project achieved beyond increasing continental connectivity and connectivity between the EU and Africa.

Moreover, in 2023, the EU launched Medusa Cable project to provide high speed internet connectivity for education, research and digital economy (European Commission, 2023i). Medusa Submarine Cable project is the European Commission first digital Global Gateway project (SubMarine Cable Networks, 2023), a fibre optic cable will link North African countries with their EU neighbors; Cyprus, Italy, France, Italy, Portugal and Spain and will boost North African university internet 200 times faster (European Commission, 2023d). One of the objectives of the EU is to establish terrestrial links to universities and research centers which will be a valuable contribution for innovation and job generation, and the other aim is to enhance digital integration in the Mediterranean region (European Commission, 2023f). This can shift Northern Africa-EU relations on oil and gas trade to scientific knowledge exchange and cooperation in sustainable technology advancements. Multiplying connection types and offering other alternatives would mitigate adverse effects of the EU decision to replace its energy supply from oil and gas to renewables to North African economies. Moreover, although the project’s priority is connecting the EU with Northern Africa, the increased internet quality also speeds digital connectivity and integration in between Northern African Countries.

b. Emphasis on Development

The European Green Deal is a plan created to achieve economic growth with net-zero emissions for developed countries. On the other hand, many African countries are still on the early phases of their development, and the path has many challenges from worldwide

economic shocks to global pandemics. Many people in Africa do not have access to basic needs like clean water, electricity or education, in the meanwhile, Africa population is increasing sharply (Stanley, 2023). On the other hand, EGD external dimension is more of a regulatory policy concentrated on carbon emissions. The ambitious goals of EGD causes stress on Africa and other regions, and historical responsibility is more likely to be discussed when the EU does not compromise on their high expectations as the Copenhagen negotiations showed.

Global Gateway's development focus matches with AU Agenda 2063 and can support EGD in terms of economic development. This can also be seen in flagship Eu-Africa projects emphasis on climate adaptation and resilience. Sustainable urban development (Morocco), Rural Development Program PADAER II (Senegal), Pump and Storage Facility (Cape Verde), Solar Park for Rural Electrification (Angola) and Rehabilitation & Expansion of Drinking Water of Mbuji Mayi (Democratic Republic of the Congo) are some of the Global Gateway Projects under the 'climate and energy' together with many solar and hydropower projects across the continent (European Commission, 2023i). These projects have mitigation aspects with strong adaptation & resilience implementations, therefore is a balance in development-climate nexus.

c. Equal Partnership

Africa wants an eye-level relationship (Hackenesch, Högl, Knaepen, Iacobuta, & Asafu-Adjaye, 2021). The continent has a long-standing history of slavery, colonialism and external interventions that exploited human labour and natural resources which set Africa's development back and created a massive income gap between Africa and industrialised countries.² Therefore, a great sensitivity for African self-determination is prevailing in the continent regardless of the country. 'Africa-owned' and 'Africa-led' are principles stems from this sensitivity and guides Africa in their development process. It is also one of the core principles of Agenda 2063 and AU CCRDSAP. Accordingly, the continent has to produce its own capacity to find scientific, technological, financial and entrepreneurial solutions to

² The Historical Origins of Africa's Underdevelopment <https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/historical-origins-africas-underdevelopment>

tackle climate change by considering African norms and values (African Union, 2022). EU participation to African-owned projects or joint projects can pave the way on new channels in which Europeans and Africans work together, learn from each others knowledge, expertise and experience. This would lead to a mutual norm diffusion which makes reaching common standards easier and cooperation easier. In this regard, EU support to the African-led the Great Green Wall under Global Gateway is a significant step and reflects that it is a partnership and not a unilateral funding project. The EU investment is supporting 18 African countries in their efforts in the Great Green Wall; the most significant ones are Regreening Africa, a multi-country land restoration project, Riposte, reforestation and resilience project in Senegal and support to Niger in their sustainable value-chain for ‘non-timber forest products’ and ‘plant-proteins’ (European Commission, 2022a).

d. A Step to Narrow Investment/Fund Gap

Fiscal problems are the most challenging issue for each African state in their fight with climate change. Climate funding pledge is been poorly fulfilling by developed countries, while cost of climate change is increasing disproportionately for Africa. Investment and bank loans are also bounded by political and infrastructural risks. Whereas Western institutions hesitate to invest, Chinese loans are being called as ‘debt trap’.

Team Europe approach approach will enable to EU to provide investments, grants and loans EU institutions like the European Investment Bank (EIB) and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) together with EU member states (European Commission, 2021a) in a more coherent way. This approach is a combination of EU new and old financial instruments such as EFSD+ (European Fund for Sustainable Development+) which was financial tool of NDICI-Global Europe³, InvestEU and Horizon Europe (European Commission, 2021a). The objective of the EU is to manage financial flow to projects in a more structured way, under Global Gateway.

³ The Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)-Global Europe

Moreover, EU investments can decrease the risk of investment for others at both internal and external sphere. One of the major objectives of the Global Gateway Initiative's financial part is to encourage private sector (European Commission, 2021a) which Africa lacks but, besides with that EU led infrastructure would create favorable conditions for investors, Global Gateway principles of increase good governance and transparency also aim to increase and catalyze further stakes.

Steps towards good governance and transparency is remarkably fruitful and provides fast results, as two examples from Sub-Saharan region shows. First example is Senegal's securing a solar energy FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) worth 52 million USD in 2018, which corresponded to 0.2% of GDP as the government implemented regulatory reform to increase transparency and competition for tendering in power industry (CHINZARA, DESSUS, & DREYHAUPT, 2023). In the following year, Ethiopia was invested by private sector in telecommunication domain that worth of 850 Million USD which is 0.9% of the country's GDP, only one year after it enacted competition and licensing directives, despite high vulnerability of the country to conflict and violence (CHINZARA, DESSUS, & DREYHAUPT, 2023).

e. Expertise/Technology Transfer

Unintended results of European Green Deal such as From Farm to Fork or measures to protect European companies such as CBAM causes political tensions between EU and African countries due to possible adverse effects on their economy. Whereas, with Global Gateway projects, the European Union can offer technical expertise and technology transfer to lower the emissions in a tailor-made approach. For instance, carbon neutral methods and technology can be introduced in Africa to lower their emissions. Besides this would be the best method to eliminate carbon leakage as it prevents emissions from the first place, it would also open a new channel for EU to diffuse its standards in production. The EU has already indicated its goal to offer technical support to empower its partners to plan and attract investors for infrastructure projects (European Commission, 2021a).

5.4. CASE STUDY: MOROCCO

The EU and Morocco has a long history and deep rooted relations starting with Morocco's application for membership in 1987. Although this application was rejected, Morocco and EU has intense relations based on exclusive partnerships.

Legal aspect of their partnership and Free Trade Area has been established with the 1996 Association Agreement which was put into effect in 2000 (European Commission, 2023j). From then on the EU and Morocco had numerous partnerships and regional integration systems i.e. from Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to the Neighborhood Policy, from pan-Euro-Mediterranean cumulation to the PEM Convention (European Commission, 2023j). In 2019, the Association Council has declared the EU-Morocco 'shared prosperity partnership' that emphasised common goals and values, in 2021 'New Agenda for the Mediterranean' was adopted which prioritised cooperation areas; green partnership, human development, good governance, resilience, digital transition (EEAS, 2021).

Given their partnership history, and the fact that there is regular meetings of the Association committees, it can be claimed that the EU-Morocco has structured relations (EEAS, 2021), and strong compliance through its connectivity. Moreover, Morocco is the only Maghreb country that has physical borders with the EU, by Spanish cities Ceuta and Melilla, which inevitably enables to cooperation in migration and EU support in Morocco's border control and relative infrastructure (Ouhemmou, 2023). Considering that Morocco was out of the African Union for 33 years over the dispute in Western Sahara, it can be claimed that Morocco's relations and cooperation with the EU is even deeper.

Although, cooperation and partnership do not hinder rising tensions, mostly on Western Sahara and human rights, the EU has considerable influence in Morocco, not only in government level but also at people level as 71% of Moroccan people think that the EU should have a bigger role in their country, which is the highest percentage in Maghreb (Abouzzohour, 2019). This demonstrates a strong soft power stems from historical ties and image of the EU associated with good governance in civil perspective. Besides, technical nature of their relation ensures enduring dialogue even during crisis times and prevents spill

over of disagreements on other cooperation areas. Therefore, the EU and Morocco do not suffer lack of agenda-setting and other instruments of soft power to improve their relations.

Therefore, it can be asserted that the EU and Morocco had already strong connections before Global Gateway. Morocco indicates that it recognizes and shares EU geostrategic aims related to climate change, peace, security and rule of law, and that their actions are compatible with the EU in these areas while stressing importance of cooperation to establish ‘an exemplary partnership’ and a ‘development model’ (Embassy of Morocco in South Africa, 2020). It can be claimed that, with the effect of strong links to the EU, Morocco-EU relations have capacity to detect possible cooperation fields areas and make progress in them.

Cooperation in climate change, is no exception, if not a catalyzer for enhanced relations as climate change is currently serving as a cooperative area for EU and Morocco to perform ‘an exemplary partnership’. In October 2022, Morocco and the EU signed the first Green Partnership to enhance external dimension of the European Green Deal (European Commission, 2022c) following by launch of Economic and Investment Plan under Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood (February, 2021), Global Gateway (December, 2021) and Africa Investment Package under Global Gateway (February 2022). All these policies had a deeper partnership perspective with more extensive financial tools that supports Morocco’s development and enhances their connectivity.

Morocco is the biggest trade partner of the EU in Southern Neighbourhood whereas the EU is the largest trade partner of Morocco (EEAS, 2021) with 49% of its goods trade (2022) (European Commission, 2023j).

Table 3 : EU-Morocco Trade in Goods (European Commission, 2023j)

Trade in goods, € billions

Years	EU imports	EU exports	Balance
2020	15.1	20	4.9
2021	18	25.1	7.1
2022	21.7	31.6	9.9

According to the EU trade database, trade volume in goods has increased significantly between 2020 and 2022. Although the trade balance is in favour of the EU, it can be seen that Moroccan exports to the EU has also accelerated between 2021 and 2022.

In addition to that, Morocco is one of the biggest beneficiary of EU financial support within the European Neighbourhood Policy and the EU is the biggest contributor to Morocco's Foreign Direct Investment (European Commission, 2023j). According to World Bank data, net inflow of FDI (% of GDP-USD) of Morocco has reached to %1.7 in 2022 which is a significant rise after reaching lowest points %1.3 in 2019 and %1.2 in 2020 since 2008 financial crisis (World Bank, 2024)

Validity of EU pledges under Global Gateway is also significant determinant. What makes the EU-Morocco green partnership and Moroccan intention to cooperate with the EU in this regard is they can mutually benefit from renewable energy. Like the EU, energy sector in Morocco is highly external depended and wants to overcome its dependency with renewable energy. EY report Renewable Energy Country Attractiveness Index (RECAI) demonstrates that 90% of energy mix of Morocco is imported, in which coal prevails and Russia-Ukraine War catalyzed Moroccan efforts on renewable sector (EY, 2022, s. 11). Geographical advantages gives an enormous renewable power potential in solar and wind energy. The Noor Ouarzazate complex is the biggest concentrated solar farm across the globe while the Tarfaya wind farm is the biggest wind farm in Africa which aligns with the Moroccan King's desire to transform Morocco to a '*green energy hub*' (Christofaro, 2022). EY report also points out Morocco's existing and planned interconnections with Spanish (3) and Portugal (1) power systems as significant the country's geographical advantages in its green transition (EY, 2022, s. 21). RECAI 2022 rates Morocco's renewable energy rank as 19, however with flattening GDP of countries, the real rate of Morocco rises to the first rank (EY, 2022). Climate Action Tracker indicates Moroccan rating as 'almost sufficient', despite enthusiasm of the country, it needs international endeavours to overcome challenges in energy sector and decarbonisation (Climate Action Tracker, 2023).

Global Gateway pledges, in compliance with Morocco's seek to alternate its energy source options, is mobilised 1.6 billion EUR for financing Morocco's transition to renewable

energy (Africa Energy Portal, 2022) and assisting Morocco to open a competitive bidding process for P2X hydrogen power plant (European Commission, 2023i). The fact that EU also needs to vary its energy supply, Morocco's renewable energy would be a good option, therefore the link creates benefit mutually. As it is indicated by Morocco, the country will work for further decarbonisation in other sectors as well (EY, 2022), which the EU can support through new investments and projects.

In this regard, the EU pledges in accordance with needs of Morocco contributes positively to their climate ambitions. While Morocco's engagements at the international stage has also increased via its active participations to CoP conferences or its contributions to projects such as 'Sahel Climate Investment Program' (Moroccan Ministry of Youth, Culture and Communication, 2020), Morocco has also indicated that Morocco could help the EU in implementing Global Gateway Plan (Moroccan Ministry of Youth Culture and Communication, 2022).

The EU recognition of Morocco as a climate leader is a positive sign in Morocco's alignment with the European Green Deal, from the EU point of view (European Commission, 2022b). Although it is early for assessing the impact of Global Gateway on its own, as the EU and Morocco has numerous complex partnerships, it can be claimed that the Global Gateway projects positively contribute to Morocco's Green Deal compliance. First, of all it is proven in Morocco case that partnership and connectivity based relationships enhance cooperation and compliance by providing a more structured dialogue. In addition to that, the EU engagements in this regard attracted and influenced not only the government, but also the local Moroccan people. Third, Global Gateway projects are compatible with Morocco's ambitions in renewable energy, therefore it contributes to common goals and values. Lastly, the EU was able to facilitate a development model which was turned to an exemplary leadership which can attract others.

5.5. CASE STUDY: RWANDA

The EU-Rwanda relations has formed officially in 1991, with 'accord de siege' (EEAS, 2023a). Rwanda is a land locked Sub-Saharan country which creates challenges in

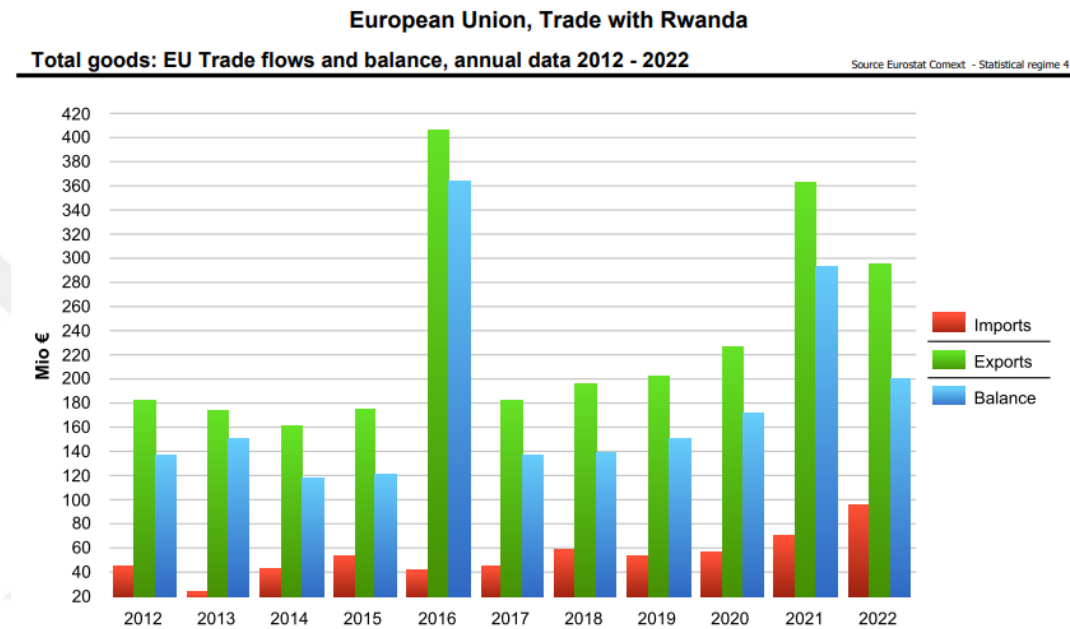
Rwanda's accession to connections with the EU and other countries. The fact that region's infrastructure is highly fragmented is a contribution to this. Rwanda lacks oil and gas resources, unlike its sub-Saharan neighbor Nigeria which is reflected in its GDP and connectivity. For these reasons, the EU-Africa relations are not as enhanced as other African countries that has more connections through oil& gas export or migration management. In their trade relations, the EU is Rwanda's second biggest partner with 11% (EEAS, 2023a).

EU connectivity with Rwanda can be considered weaker, considering geographic distance and inadequate infrastructure of the region. EU-Rwanda relations can be assessed through broader partnership frameworks than bilateral ones, for instance Joint Africa-EU Strategy and ACP-Cotonou Agreement or with its renewed name EU-OACPS Partnership Agreement, and Global Gateway Project (EEAS, 2023a). However, this is about to change, starting from 2021, bilateral cooperation with the new 2021 - 2027 Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) for Rwanda, and cooperation in regarding refugees in Libya camp are signals for more enhanced EU-Rwanda relations. This is also valid for climate change. Likewise Morocco and the EU, Rwanda is also relies upon climate neutrality and net-zero for its future growth and development.

However, the EU efforts to form connectivity has fast and fruitful outcomes, particularly in areas that has potential in mutual benefit. In 2023, EU-Rwanda Business Forum hosted 100 European Businesspersons in Kigali to meet Rwandan private sector (RDP, 2023). This was followed by, Von der Leyen emphasized quality partnership between Rwanda and the EU, and defined Rwanda as a climate leader, and added 40 billion EUR investment to already existing 900 billion EUR to deepen the partnership on agriculture and critical raw material (European Commission, 2023m). The fact that Rwanda is one of the richest countries in terms of critical materials such as tin, tantalum, and tungsten (International Trade Administration, 2022), give hints that cooperative relations in this field can be formed in framework of Global Gateway. A significant step in this regards is 'Momerandum of Understanding on Sustainable Raw Materials Value Chains' signed by the EU and Rwanda in February 2024 following the Global Gateway Forum which was held in

October 2023 aims to establish a framework in innovation& extraction of raw materials and cooperation in their sustainability (European Commission, 2024).

Table 4: EU- Rwanda Trade in Goods (European Commission, 2023o)



Rwanda's significantly increased trade volume with the EU in 2021 and 2022, compared to other years can be attributed to intensified connectivity and announce of Global Gateway. This perspective strengthens as another boost in volume coincides with Rwanda's signature of the EU- EAC (East Africa Community) Economic Partnership Agreement in 2016 (EEAS, 2023a). By looking at trade balance, although it is in favour of the EU, there is a remarkable shift in benefit of Rwanda in 2022.

The EU is also the biggest investor in terms of FDI in Rwanda with USD 210 million in 2022 (EEAS, 2023b). But more importantly, Rwanda was able to attract foreign investors 3% of its GDP in 2022 which is a significant rise after %1.9 in 2021 and 1.5% in 2019 (World Bank, 2022).

Other than critical raw materials, Rwanda's exports are based mostly on agricultural goods and Global Gateway targets this sector to enhance Rwanda's hand in decarbonised agriculture exchanges. Significance of agriculture is even more drastic as Rwanda's key

exports such as coffee and tea are highly vulnerable to impacts of climate change (Kumwenda, 2023). In this regard Kigali Wholesale Market under Global Gateway will be established for Rwanda to be ‘*a distribution hub for fresh produces in the region*’ which is a pioneering project in the Eastern Africa (European Commission, 2023k). Perspective of the project consists beyond of establishing Rwanda’s agricultural infrastructure, but also enhancing it by increasing connectivity of Rwanda to other markets, establishing an efficient value-chain in which gender-equality is promoted (European Commission, 2023b). Kigali Market practices will also be compatible with NDC adaptation goals (EEAS, 2023a). The EU is implementing other projects to empower Rwanda in digital and health sectors which can be assessed as further pledges to reinforce more connectivity and engagement which increases compliance.

Yet domestic conditions set both opportunities and challenges in Rwanda. Similar to Moroccan King’s interest in green policies and renewables, current president of Rwanda demonstrates unwavering efforts in climate neutrality. In 2022, Climate Tracker Action has evaluated Rwanda’s climate governance as committed together with good base of knowledge and it pursues to have zero emissions by 2050, however it lacks a roadmap that aligns with Paris Agreement as there is also no advisory institutions in government related to a comprehensive climate change policy which requires ministries to work together (Climate Action Tracker, 2022). On the other hand, low levels of corruption and declarations of opposition parties provide a steady view (Climate Action Tracker, 2022). This makes Rwanda an inexperienced but enthusiastic country.

Although these developments are recent, the first impression on Rwanda at CoP28 is that Rwanda is committed to comply with the Paris Agreement, in line with the EU partnership. CoP 28 was fruitful for Rwandan green policies as it demonstrated strong agency by seeking climate partners, joining to Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency Pledge, displayed Green Taxonomy Working Paper and more remarkably commenced on its National Carbon Market Framework (Ministry of Environment, 2023). It can be claimed that Global Gateway can further encourage Rwanda to take solid steps through financial and technical assistance.

6. CONCLUSION

International relations have never settled down. Constant paradigm shifts and fluctuations in distribution of power have always required actors to develop some capacity to position themselves in global politics. The late 90s were also the years marked by massive paradigm shifts happened. Besides disequilibrium in power dynamics, new challenges entered into world politics, such as intrastate wars with ethnic conflict, terrorism, health issues like AIDS. One of the common features that all are transboundary issues. With the effect of increasing interconnectedness, the impacts of these problems are even more severe and unpredictable. This resulted in actors seeking more cooperation and strengthening multilateralism by enhancing international institutions.

Today, while a variety of transboundary problems have increased, such as migration flows, cyber risks, and climate change, they also became more impactful and difficult to confront due to their hybrid-nature. While even more enhanced multilateralism is needed, hardships in multilateral cooperation and cracks in globalization increased instead, with changes rise of small states and blocs, as well as rising populist leaders in the West. Hard power nuances in global politics escalated while ‘real politik’ is trending. Nonetheless, China’s establishment of health diplomacy during Covid-19 pandemic shows that soft power can be more effective overcoming these new challenges and turning them into opportunities.

Normally challenges are considered as a motor for further EU integration and power which is traditionally inclined more with soft power. Considering geographical proximity of the EU to most of above challenges, soft power should be continuing to be a credible part of the EU power. However, recent years witnessed severe declines in EU soft power. This has several explanations. First, as the nature of world politics is changing once more, power is becoming more inclined with geopolitical challenges. In this context, soft power became more associated with capacity to address problems. Covid-19, again, is a well illustration, as

the EU had problems providing solutions even for itself. Besides, cooperative relations of the EU are damaged, particularly in migration field, if not caused political tensions to strain. Moreover, internal problems that the EU had, from Brexit to Visegrad's loose compliance to the EU values caused questions to rise for EU unity and its commitment to universal values. Lastly, whereas the EU relied on its 'lead by example' principle and 'attraction', both started to lose their advantage as 'new examples' arise such as China or BRICS. Now there are alternative models on the global stage.

In 2019 Ursula Von der Leyen Commission has unveiled the European Green Deal to tackle the climate change crisis, which was addressed as a common problem for humankind. To this end, the EU pledged that it would decrease its carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 while maintaining an 'economic growth' with 'fair and just transition'. Besides, this is also an instrument to restore the EU soft power as it is stated clearly stated in 2019 Communication paper; this is a comprehensive policy to 'turning challenges to opportunities' and a plan for EU global climate leadership. Accordingly, the EU pursues to be a climate leader through ambitious goals and first movers' advantage.

Global climate leadership can positively contribute to the EU soft power by a good established external aspect of the European Green Deal. Climate change is a geopolitical risk that the EU can demonstrate its capability as a full-fledged actor which can respond to challenges and provide solutions to global problems. Moreover, climate change can offer new cooperation areas, and an opportunity for a positive agenda to repair strained relations of the Union with partners. Besides, the EU history shows that its increased external actions can boost internal action and fuel further integration, which can strengthen coherency, unity, and commitment to the EU. Furthermore, climate change regime is relatively new at the global governance which means the EU can shape it more easily with its norms and standards. In this manner the EU is well equipped as it has experience from its previous engagements within the short history of climate change regime.

The EU experience in climate change can be considered as stronger than others, due to its pioneering actions with highs and lows. Climate change regime is recent in global politics which traces back to scientific research on impact of human activities in global

warming. It became a subject of international politics in the 70s, with the discovery of a hole in the ozone layer. Weighting of the issue has increased since then, which resulted with structuring a regime with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992. This equals 30 years climate change negotiations and 30 years of EU Climate Diplomacy.

In this study, the EU Climate Diplomacy is examined in three phases, that are marked with milestones in the EU global climate action. To assess EU action with external and internal factors, EU Actorness Theory was used. Accordingly, opportunity (external sphere), presence (perceptions of third parties) and capability (internal sphere) are examined if the EU was able to shape the outside world and influence others. The EU actorness is based non-coercive methods in climate sphere and employs the same instruments with soft power. Therefore, when efficiency of EU actorness enhanced and the EU claimed responsibility for leadership, EU soft power also increased.

The EU performed a proactive role starting from negotiations for the UNFCCC. Although this convention united almost all countries on the same ground with the objective of framing climate change, negotiations were mostly taken away by historical responsibility and development discussions by developing countries or strong rejections by the US. With that, the EU was the only actor insisting on setting higher goals to reduce carbon emissions with timelines and a binding accord. Despite its limited skills and instruments then, the Union played important roles at the multilateral fora. In other words, although its impact was bound by the US, the EU still had a role punching above its weight during negotiations.

Moreover, as the EU engagement increased, it also increased its coherence and unity, as it appeared in negotiations as a single voice. This resulted in increasing capability of policy formulating and implementing in climate issues which was well reflected in the EU carbon emission reduction goals. The EU set its standards higher to push others. These targets are achieved, sometimes with surpass.

Two major incidents had led to rise of the EU as a climate leader. The first one was the US withdrawal from 1997 Kyoto Protocol which was going to be first binding agreement in climate change. Until then, the EU was a negotiator for higher targets, suddenly, it had to

fill the gap created by absence of a great power to save Kyoto Protocol. Achieving this with multilateral and bilateral efforts was the first step of EU climate leadership. The second step which consolidated EU role as leader was persuasion of Russia to adopt Kyoto Protocol in return for its membership to WTO.

Therefore, although early times in this phase the EU was a negotiator and mostly affected by external sphere, after 1997 Kyoto Protocol its position rose to leadership. The Union was given this opportunity by the absence of the US; however, the EU proved its leading skills by filling this void successfully. Characteristics of EU leadership were established with its commitment to multilateralism, and the principle of 'leading by example', as it accomplished assertive targets and encouraged others.

This landscape, however, has changed through 2009. The EU aim to set a comprehensive and binding agreement in Copenhagen CoP 15 crashed and marked a second phase of the EU external action starting with a failure. During the negotiations the EU was isolated and marginalized. The best explanation for this comes from the external sphere, as massive changes both in power distribution and GHG emission shares occurred. The late 2000s witnessed a rise of smaller actors in climate politics, with economic growth and GHG emissions in tandem. This resulted in a new formation, such as BASIC which blocked EU assertive goals. With other factors, such as the EU decreasing share in global emissions, and return of the US, 2010s marks geopolitical change in climate change negotiations. The EU, far from realizing the changes, persisted in raising targets while performing a clumsy attempt to form coalition. This resulted in decreasing EU attraction and influence with failure in leadership simultaneously and became a milestone in EU Climate Diplomacy.

Nonetheless, the EU isolation did not last long. The first recovery was the 2011 Durban Conference. Although the EU influence achievements were moderate, Durban hinted a new role for the EU as a 'mediator', a leader that negotiates and mediates with other actors. From 2011 to 2015 Paris Agreement the EU endeavored to form new diplomatic means and instruments for a comprehensive binding agreement. Newly established institutions with Lisbon Treaty such as EEAS and redesigned EU Delegations extended and deepened the EU unity and instruments, which increased its capability. Fruitful campaigns qualified its

bilateral relations and gained more influence at all levels, and thus, strengthened EU negotiation skills at multilateral fora. 2015 Paris Agreement became the first comprehensive binding agreement including major emitters (the US and China), and the EU global climate leadership was consolidated at its peak, with strong EU soft power.

It can be said that the Post-Paris Agreement era was stagnant with no significant event. Climate change was placed in Council Conclusions briefly, with decreased diplomatic dialogue and less instruments used compared to 2011-2015. This was until Von der Leyen Commission's flash declaration in 2019, topping a European Green Deal as the priority for her 2019-2024 presidential term. Almost five years have passed since then, the EU achieved ground-breaking achievements, yet the externalization of European Green Deal which is necessary for the EU leadership was infertile to a large extent. Moreover, some policies and measures such as From Farm to Fork, or CBAM created some reverse effects. The former example caused fears about disturbing the global food market whereas CBAM caused EU to be labelled as protectionist. This signals a strong decrease in EU soft power which attracted other actors via the size of its market, but as much as open and fair trade. Moreover, targets of the European Green Deal will influence partners of the EU in the most comprehensive way, including the energy sector.

This study assessed reasons for failure in externalization of European Green Deal. First, the EU maintains an overreliance on leading by example. Although it positively impacts European climate leadership, Copenhagen proved that setting a good example on its own is not sufficient for leadership. Moreover, although the EU showed a great capability of negotiating and persuading others for more structured and binding targets, it is equally important to ensure its implementation which requires more extensive instruments, such as financing and expertise/technology transfers. With that, lessened diplomatic dialogue in the post-Paris Agreement era weakened the EU hand in branding Green Deal. Moreover, policies of Green Deal centers and prioritizes the EU companies and EU interests at the expense of others, although, the fact that dealing with climate change needs cooperation and a common ground to deliver solid results. Moreover, the geopolitical context has changed once more,

the EU faced with major emitters, China, and the US as potential rivals with their net-zero agendas. Thus, the EU's first mover's advantage is at stake.

This study aimed to investigate whether Global Gateway can address these problems and be a means and institution for third countries' alignment with the European Green Deal. Global Gateway was also declared in 2021 by Von der Leyen under the umbrella of another Commission priority 'stronger EU in the world' which aims for a more structured EU action with EU leadership in many policy areas. It is a demonstration that the EU has understood importance of connectivity and building partnerships to stay relevant at the global stage and increase its soft power as Chinese Belt and Road Initiative proved. Although building connections are old as human history, geopolitical employment of connections to create influence is newly introduced to IR. In this context, connectivity is mostly provided with hard infrastructure, such as highways, ports, forming hubs or cable systems, which connects people and enhances trade relations in digital and real world. As building connections is a long-lasting endeavor, it gives opportunity to influence, or define the rules of the connection and norm diffusion.

Thus, Global Gateway aims to build value-driven, physical links with partners from Africa, Latin America, and Caribbean by large scale investments in infrastructure. Infrastructure is not only an important component of connectivity, but it is also essential for green transition. Moreover, good quality infrastructure triggers sustainable economic development which makes green transition just, fair, and inclusive. Therefore, if the EU aims to externalize European Green Deal standards, it has to ensure that it offers cooperative partnership and empowers third countries to keep up with the EU. In this context, developing countries are the key; because they are more vulnerable to impacts of climate change and their total sum of emissions are increasing as they rely on traditional methods to grow.

Although connectivity is a strong element in others' compliance with the European Green Deal, Global Gateway is a recent project as it was introduced at the end of 2021. There are newly started 90 projects under the scope of the Initiative, therefore, to fully analyze the impact of Global Gateway requires more time to pass. However, this study aimed to seek potential of Global Gateway in this context. To this end, Africa is chosen as a focus point, as

it is chosen as a key partner with half of the total allocation dedicated. Comparing Global Gateway statements and AU strategic plans to make their continent greener, it is seen that the EU touches important points from AU point of view. For instance, Global Gateway objectives are compatible with AU climate agenda's emphasis on development and adaptation to climate change, rather than focusing only on decreasing carbon emissions. With that, equal partnership is also stressed, Africa is not seen as a passive entity that foreigners determine what to do with. EU support for Africa-les 'the Great Green Wall' respects that Africans know their continent best and can provide solutions. Partnership is cooperation and working together which makes expertise and technology transfers easier. Last but not least, high investments with Team Europe approach combined with private sector investments, and Global Gateway projects on enhancing rule of law and open trade policies can de-risk other investments and loans, and release capital flow.

Two case studies are positive evidence for the study. First case is Morocco, a North African country with high degree of connectivity with the EU, the second case is Sub-Saharan Rwanda with less connections and developing relations with the EU. Both countries have enthusiasm and valid reasons for a green transition, as both are externally dependent on the energy sector. EU narrative verifying Morocco and Rwanda as climate leaders, and their stepping into further partnerships with the EU in green arena, and increased alignment with the Paris Agreement which is one of the bases of European Green Deal are also among facts that was determinant in case selection. To test the impact of Global Gateway on their compliance, four indicators are used: connectivity, trade volume, FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) and EU pledges. It is observed that Global Gateway was successful strengthening existing connections in Morocco and establishing new connections in Rwanda by contributing both physical infrastructure and increasing people-to-people interactions& new cooperation fields that has green aspect. Both countries' trade volumes increased which also leads to interpersonal interactions and norm diffusion. Both countries attracted more investors during the period between 2020-22, while the main FDI belongs to the EU, overall increase can be explained by investments under Global Gateway contributes to political and economic steadiness. Both increasing trade volume and FDI contributes to development of

Morocco and Rwanda which is necessary condition for a sustainable and green path. Lastly, the EU pledges accordingly with the countries' needs are in parallel with more active participation to CoPs, and more assertive goals in their national strategies.

Therefore, this thesis finds Global Gateway potential to impact on countries compliance with Green Deal and boosting its soft power highly positive, as long as connections are established compatible with third countries' perspective, and in benefit of them.



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