

Brussels, 13 April 2018

COST 030/18

DECISION

Subject: **Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the COST Action “EU Foreign Policy Facing New Realities: Perceptions, Contestation, Communication and Relations” (ENTER) CA17119**

The COST Member Countries and/or the COST Cooperating State will find attached the Memorandum of Understanding for the COST Action EU Foreign Policy Facing New Realities: Perceptions, Contestation, Communication and Relations approved by the Committee of Senior Officials through written procedure on 13 April 2018.



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

For the implementation of a COST Action designated as

COST Action CA17119
EU FOREIGN POLICY FACING NEW REALITIES: PERCEPTIONS, CONTESTATION,
COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONS (ENTER)

The COST Member Countries and/or the COST Cooperating State, accepting the present Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) wish to undertake joint activities of mutual interest and declare their common intention to participate in the COST Action (the Action), referred to above and described in the Technical Annex of this MoU.

The Action will be carried out in accordance with the set of COST Implementation Rules approved by the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), or any new document amending or replacing them:

- a. "Rules for Participation in and Implementation of COST Activities" (COST 132/14 REV2);
- b. "COST Action Proposal Submission, Evaluation, Selection and Approval" (COST 133/14 REV);
- c. "COST Action Management, Monitoring and Final Assessment" (COST 134/14 REV2);
- d. "COST International Cooperation and Specific Organisations Participation" (COST 135/14 REV).

The main aim and objective of the Action is to improve our understanding of central properties of European Union foreign policy in times of major internal and external change and to develop strategies to help practitioners to make the EU more resilient.. This will be achieved through the specific objectives detailed in the Technical Annex.

The economic dimension of the activities carried out under the Action has been estimated, on the basis of information available during the planning of the Action, at EUR 64 million in 2017.

The MoU will enter into force once at least seven (7) COST Member Countries and/or COST Cooperating State have accepted it, and the corresponding Management Committee Members have been appointed, as described in the CSO Decision COST 134/14 REV2.

The COST Action will start from the date of the first Management Committee meeting and shall be implemented for a period of four (4) years, unless an extension is approved by the CSO following the procedure described in the CSO Decision COST 134/14 REV2.

OVERVIEW

Summary

EU foreign policy experiences unprecedented turbulences that put key achievements of the European integration project at risk. Externally, the EU's global environment is characterized by the reconfiguration of power, growing divisions, and the contestation of established liberal order. Simultaneously, the EU's neighbourhood is increasingly conflict prone and instable, triggering migration flows and the proliferation of illiberal values. 'Domestically', the EU faces severe internal conflicts, marked by austerity, Brexit, growing nationalism, populism and new protectionism.

The Action ENTER aims to improve our understanding of central properties of EU foreign policy in light of these new realities, focusing on perceptions, communication, contestation. In today's world, the success of EU foreign policy depends on the EU's ability to instantaneously respond to stimuli and pressures originating from both the international and the intra-EU levels. Linking internal and external policy dynamics, the Action has a strong potential for breakthrough scientific developments. A central objective of the action is to derive theoretically informed, policy relevant advice for the EU's strategic approach to its international relations, its communication, and for dealing with the interaction between internal and external challenges. It will generate a step change in how the new realities of EU foreign policy are theorized and addressed. This will be achieved by establishing multi-national, multidisciplinary collaborations at the nexus of policy fields and research communities that have not sufficiently communicated in the past. Substantive efforts to bridge between the "academic-practitioner divide" are made, to synthesize knowledge, facilitate shared understandings, and inform EU foreign policy.

<p>Areas of Expertise Relevant for the Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Political Science: European studies ● Political Science: International studies, strategic studies, human rights, global and transnational governance 	<p>Keywords</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● European Union ● Foreign Policy ● Perceptions ● International Relations ● International Order
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Specific Objectives

To achieve the main objective described in this MoU, the following specific objectives shall be accomplished:

Research Coordination

- Producing a common understanding of the nexus between the new internal and external realities in EU foreign policy. This involves: developing a shared terminology; and conceptualising the main characteristics of the new realities.
- Developing knowledge for new theories on the interaction of the new realities and related EU policy practices in the dimensions of perception, contestation, communication and relations moving beyond national research traditions.
- Integrating a fragmented research landscape: providing a platform for comparative work among dispersed research communities on EU foreign policy, targeting scholarship on individual policies areas with particular focus on climate & energy, migration, trade, and foreign policy. It will enhance Europe's research and innovation capacities in the field.
- Stimulating new common research: identifying new research gaps and ways of addressing them; drawing on theoretical insights developed to address the challenge; setting up joint pooling initiatives and collaborative project proposals during the Actions implementation period.
- Facilitating dialogue between academics and other professionals concerned with European policy practices facing new realities. This will be implemented through the interdisciplinary, multi-research community WGs established by this Action.
- Communicating comprehensive policy practice analyses considering the acquired knowledge on new

realities and identified shortcomings. The inclusion of the consolidated analyses and potential recommendations to the dissemination channels used regularly by the national, supra- and international policy actors is our highest ambition.

Capacity Building

- Training and strengthening an interdisciplinary community of early career researchers especially from ITC countries. Organisation of two Winter Training Schools on “Theory and Methods” (in year 1 + 2), two Spring-Schools “Young Academics meet Praxis” (year 3 + 4), Webinars on targeted topics.
- Facilitating mobility by organising Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) within the Actions network and beyond to complement perspectives, inspire research and forge new links among partners. STSMs Measureable in number of participants to the missions.
- Allocating Conference and Workshop Grants with a preference on ITCs through dedicated calls based on programme and selection criteria developed through this Action. Measureable in number of launched calls and allocated grants as well as involvement of ITCs.
- Inviting systematically new candidates from all stages of career and across disciplines to participate in the Action to produce new partnerships and collaboration. Measureable in new members joining the Action during its implementation.
- Founding space for cross-pollination between researchers and practitioners through using inviting more extensively participants from EU institutions and making use of transdisciplinary instruments. Measurable in EU members joining the Action and use of transdisciplinary instruments.
- Bringing together sectorial experts to build collaborative research proposals. Measureable through number of submitted proposals to EU and national funding schemes.
- Integrating researchers of ITCs through Leadership of WGs, Steering Committee and activities planned. Measureable in percentage of ITC member’s number.
- Generating leadership opportunities for Early Career Investigators (ECIs) through e.g. allocating workshop grants, representation in the Management and Steering Committee, leading the ECIs own network and building up a mentoring system with senior researchers as personal advisor. Measurable in number of ECIs in positions and mentor-roles.
- Setting up innovative formats for the dialogue on research questions and dissemination of results for stakeholders and the public to have novel inputs via “citizen science” approaches (such as iterative learning loops, Open Situation Rooms, European Lounge talks etc.). Measureable in amount of participants, disseminated information and received feedback.

TECHNICAL ANNEX

1. S&T EXCELLENCE

1.1. CHALLENGE

1.1.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE CHALLENGE (MAIN AIM)

The Action ENTER aims to improve our understanding of central properties of European Union (EU) foreign policy in times of major change and to develop strategies to help practitioners to make the EU more resilient. The EU's ability to effectively cope with these new realities is the key for the very survival of the European integration project as prominent observers like Germany's former foreign minister Joschka Fischer put it (Fischer 2016). Thus, foreign policy strategies in a broad sense in times of external challenges and internal turbulences are on the top of the EU's agenda.

Today, the EU seems no longer to enjoy the high degree of congruence between the nature of the European integration project and the nature of its external environment that prevailed in the 1990s and early 2000s. Both the domestic foundations of its liberal foreign policy paradigm as well as the international environment of EU foreign policy are in flux, requiring the EU to instantaneously respond to stimuli, constraints and pressures originating from both the international and the intra-EU levels. Externally, the EU is confronted with an unprecedented number of highly diverse challenges. Its global environment is characterized by the reconfiguration of power, the contestation of established liberal order, and growing divisions. Simultaneously, the EU's neighbourhood has become increasingly conflict prone and instable, triggering migration flows, spill-overs of instability and the proliferation of illiberal values. 'Domestically', the EU faces severe internal conflicts and challenges that put to test core achievements and values of the European integration process. In times of austerity, the UK's decision to leave the EU (Brexit), growing nationalism, populism and new protectionism, EU foreign policy experiences unprecedented turbulence (henceforth we subsume these internal and external changes under the term "new realities").

Against this backdrop, this Action addresses the following questions: How these new foreign policy realities could be conceptualized, how they impact on European views and practices and what can be recommended to the EU. The first approach will add clarity on how these new realities relate to - and are captured by - established theoretical approaches in the field. The latter will provide new insights on how those new realities are perceived by the EU; how different interpretations of those new realities are contested within the EU; and how these new realities challenge established practices and modes of the EU's communications and international relations.

The Action will improve communication and cross-fertilization among disciplines as well as across various research communities in the fragmented and compartmentalised field of EU foreign policy research. The Action understands EU foreign policy in a broad way, encompassing classical foreign policies such as the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as well as external domains like climate & energy, migration, trade, and development. This will facilitate comparative work across policy-domains guided by the core research themes addressed in this Action. Developing also global cooperation – in addition to national and EU cooperation – the action encourages comparisons between the EU and other international actors. The Action will, furthermore, diminish boundaries between academics and practitioners of EU foreign policy. Involving policy practitioners from EU institutions,

representatives from think tanks, as well as leading academics in the field, the Action multiplies the knowledge, expertise and research insights held by these different actors.

Starting from (1) the conceptualization of the new realities; the Action analyses how they are translated into European practices by looking at (2) perceptions, (3) contestations, (4) communication and (5) relations. By shifting attention to these core properties of EU foreign policy this Action takes stock of the conflict-laden status of the EU in an altered international environment. At the same time, it paves promising avenues for offering theoretically informed, policy relevant advice for the EU's strategic approach to its international relations, its communication, and for dealing with interaction dynamics between internal and external challenges. The different themes of this Action will be analysed in interdisciplinary Working Groups (WGs), which cross-cut policy fields and research communities and pursue a comparative approach.

1.1.2. RELEVANCE AND TIMELINESS

The EU's Global Strategy (EU High Representative 2016) considers the simultaneous occurrence of major challenges within and beyond the EU as a real threat to the European project. Key challenges faced by European societies in today's interconnected world - including security, the migration crisis, environmental challenges like climate change, a stable energy supply, or the stability of financial markets – are closely related to, and interact with, international developments. Over the past decades, EU foreign policy has been based on the premise that transnational challenges are best addressed through multilateral cooperation and the strengthening of a rule-based, liberal global order, shifting the focus of international relations to win-win rather than zero-sum issues. Yet, in many areas international politics appear less governed by rules, stable multilateral institutions and liberal democratic values. At the same time, populist parties and movements challenge the EU's supranational as well as global approach to societal problems from within, emphasizing national gains and national cultural identities. This produces novel tensions and contradictions in the EU's pursuit of its foreign policy, which are not yet analysed in a systematic and encompassing way.

At a time where the EU's traditional foreign policy priorities are concurrently challenged from the outside and the inside, it is indeed crucial to reflect on the EU's role as an international actor. Much of the previous debate on the EU's role in a changing world has focused on issues of EU strategy (Tocci 2016; Howorth 2010; Biscop, Coelmont 2010). Conversely, the Action ENTER shifts attention to deeper properties of EU foreign policy by exploring perceptions and contestation in the EU's international relations. This will facilitate new insights on the way the EU views its role in a changing world; on perceptions of the EU from the outside; as well as on the contested nature of the normative basis of EU foreign policy. A better knowledge of perceptions and contestation within EU foreign policy will also facilitate a sounder understanding of the EU's external communication and relations (see also description of Working Groups).

This Action will study the EU's current and future role in a changing reality through a programme of stock-taking, multi-disciplinary and comparative research, and complementary activities. Its main aims are to reflect on the theoretical debate and conceptualize core features of the emerging new realities; and to analyse how they are translated into European practices by looking at perceptions, contestation, communication and relations.

1.2. OBJECTIVES

1.2.1. RESEARCH COORDINATION OBJECTIVES

1. *Producing a common understanding of the nexus between the new internal and external realities in EU foreign policy.* This involves: developing a shared terminology; and conceptualising the main characteristics of the new realities.
2. *Developing knowledge for new theories on the interaction of the new realities and related EU policy practices in the dimensions of perception, contestation, communication and relations moving beyond national research traditions.*
3. *Integrating a fragmented research landscape: Providing a platform for comparative work among dispersed research communities on EU foreign policy, targeting scholarship on individual policies areas with particular focus on climate & energy, migration, trade, and foreign policy.* It

will lead to new concepts and recommendation for strategies which will enhance Europe's research and innovation capacities in the field.

4. *Stimulating new common research*: identifying new research gaps and ways of addressing them; drawing on theoretical insights developed to address the challenge; setting up joint pooling initiatives and collaborative project proposals during the Actions implementation period.
5. *Facilitating dialogue* between academics and other professionals concerned with European policy practices facing new realities. This will be implemented through the interdisciplinary, multi-research community WGs established by this Action.
6. *Communicating comprehensive policy practice analyses* considering the acquired knowledge on new realities and identified shortcomings. The inclusion of the consolidated analyses and potential recommendations to the dissemination channels used regularly by the national, supra- and international policy actors is our highest ambition.

Hence, output generated by these objectives will (a) include *breakthrough scientific developments in form of knowledge* on EU foreign policy that explore the nexus between the new internal and external realities in EU foreign policy as well as related EU policy strategies. It will (b) lead to *new concepts and recommendation for strategies* which will enhance Europe's research and innovation capacities in the field as well as stimulate the exchange with practitioners through an active dissemination strategy.

1.2.2. CAPACITY-BUILDING OBJECTIVES

The Capacity-building objectives are summed-up below including sketched activities that will be developed during the Action. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are envisaged to measure adequately the potential impacts:

- *Training and strengthening an interdisciplinary community of early career researchers* especially from ITC countries. Organisation of two Winter Training Schools on "Theory and Methods" (in year 1 + 2) to build capacity and sustainability in terms of theorizing within both European and International Studies, not least by building foundations for the young generation of academics. Two Spring-Schools "Young Academics meet Praxis" (year 3 + 4) are especially designed to offer early career researchers the possibility to discuss challenges and options for EU foreign policy with EU Commission and EEAS officials, NGOs and members of the European Parliament. Webinars on targeted topics will be offered based on the demand of young researchers. The number of attending participants and high representation of ITCs are measurable factors.
- *Facilitating mobility* by organising Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) within the Actions network and beyond to complement perspectives, inspire research and forge new links among partners. STSMs Measureable in number of participants to the missions.
- *Allocating Conference and Workshop Grants with a preference on ITCs* through dedicated calls based on programme and selection criteria developed through this Action. Measureable in number of launched calls and allocated grants as well as involvement of ITCs.
- *Inviting systematically new candidates* from all stages of career and across disciplines to participate in the Action to produce new partnerships and collaboration. Measureable in new members joining the Action during its implementation.
- *Founding space for cross-pollination* between researchers and practitioners through using inviting more extensively participants from EU institutions and making use of transdisciplinary instruments. Measureable in EU members joining the Action and use of transdisciplinary instruments.
- *Bringing together sectorial experts to build collaborative research proposals*. Measureable through number of submitted proposals to EU and national funding schemes.
- *Integrating researchers of ITCs* through Leadership of WGs, Steering Committee and activities planned. Measureable in percentage of ITC member's number.
- *Generating leadership opportunities for Early Career Investigators (ECIs)* through e.g. allocating workshop grants, representation in the Management and Steering Committee, leading the ECIs own network and building up a mentoring system with senior researchers within the Action and beyond as personal advisor. Measureable in number of ECIs in positions and mentor-roles.

Setting up innovative formats for the dialogue on research questions and dissemination of research results for stakeholders and the interested public to have novel inputs via "citizen science" approaches

(such as iterative learning loops, Open Situation Rooms, European Lounge talks etc.). Measurable in amount of participants in activities, disseminated information and received feedback.

1.3. PROGRESS BEYOND THE STATE-OF-THE-ART AND INNOVATION POTENTIAL

1.3.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE-OF-THE-ART

There is a considerable scholarly attention on the new external realities confronting EU foreign policy. Yet, research has remained scattered and compartmentalised within specific research communities, with low communication and cross-fertilization between individual strands of research. As discussed in greater detail below (see description on related efforts at EU and international levels) a number of previous research networks have addressed important aspects of the new realities faced by the EU. Some of these networks have evolved over time, often moving in new directions, whilst others have meanwhile been disbanded, underscoring the timeliness of the Action ENTER that links and integrates such previous efforts.

Research on the EU's international relations has traditionally displayed a strong internal-out focus, theorizing how the EU projects its internal norms, rules and policy-solutions to its international environment (Manners 2002; Damro 2012). Empirically, such works have made significant contributions to our understanding of the EU's enlargement and neighbourhood policies, as well as to our knowledge of the EU's role in international regimes and multi-lateral institutions (Börzel and Risse 2012; Lavenex and Schimmelfennig 2009). Progressively, scholars of the EU's international relations have employed theoretical concepts to examine an increasingly dis-jointed reality, where the EU's traditional commitment to liberal values appears out of sync with the new reality of its international environment (Smith 2011). In particular, scholars have diagnosed a crisis of liberal ideas in global politics (Niblett 2017), with the EU being confronted with the return of geopolitics and of realist power politics in its international environment (Mead 2014). Simultaneously, research has explored the EU's response to new external challenges and constraints caused by austerity programs in several EU member states at the level of institutions, policy-instruments, strategies, and actions (Kempin and Overhaus 2014; Müller 2016; Tocci 2016). Works also started to engage with the EU's policy response to a changing neighbourhood (Lehne 2014) and to a changing multilateral system (Barbé, Costa et al. 2016; Blavoukos and Bourantonis 2017).

Existing research on the EU's new foreign policy realities can also benefit from a more systematic engagement with more specialized literatures on external perceptions and norm contestation (see also description of WG below). Research on external perceptions has made valuable contributions to our knowledge of how the EU as an international actor is viewed around the world (Lucarelli and Fioramonti 2010; Chaban, Knodt and Verdun 2016). Research also began to explore the impact of key international crises, most notably the EU's sovereign debt crisis, on external perceptions of the EU (Chaban and Holland 2014). Yet, we know still relatively little about how other aspects of the new realities faced by the EU – including domestic issues such as the rise of populism and of right wing parties - impact on EU's image in the world. Similarly, little is known about how these important developments have influenced the EU's self-perception as an international actor.

Concerning the theme of contestation research has shown that key norms associated with the international liberal order are being challenged, including the norms against torture, related to mercenaries, or human rights (Großklaus, 2017). Conversely, the possibility that key norms that guide EU foreign policy may also be challenged within the EU has not yet been systematically addressed (an important exception is Wagner et al. (2017) on military interventions). Still, there is good reason to assume that the patterns of political conflict over EU foreign policy are changing. Among other things, this assumption is supported by works looking at the positions of “insurgent parties” on foreign policy debates (Balfour et al. 2016) and works on the politicization of European integration and international governance (De Wilde, 2011: 260). It is also supported by works on contestation of European integration itself, a process that is part of the transformation of political conflict in Western societies, as an effect of globalization (Grande and Kriesi, 2015).

Concerning works on EU foreign policy and communication previous works have pointed to democratic deficits in the EU's political communication and have underlined the need for a dedicated European public sphere that enhances visibility, inclusion and – as a matter of open discourse - contestation (Koopmans/Statham 2010). This call for action is echoed by recent assessments of the EU's diplomatic

performance in the communication domain (Jorgensen 2015). While these works provide valuable accounts of European communicative strategies, little is known how the EU is simultaneously communicating its identity to internal and external audiences. Moreover, interactive dimension of EU diplomacy in an increasingly interconnected global environment - i.e. the growing role of polycentric communicative networks that go beyond traditional bilateral diplomacy and require new dialogical strategies - is not yet systematically covered. Finally, there is a lack of systematic comparison of EU communication across different policy areas of the EU's international relations.

1.3.2. PROGRESS BEYOND THE STATE-OF-THE-ART

The ENTER Action focuses its efforts on the progress beyond the state of current research in the following ways:

First, to stimulate *theoretical* and political breakthrough about the key aspects of the new realities faced by EU foreign policy-makers, with active involvement of leading scholars in the field.

By aiming at theoretical innovation the Action has a strong potential to make an impact in the relevant scholarly fields of study well beyond its lifetime. EU foreign policy-making increasingly requires the ability to simultaneously manage complex international and internal challenges, an issue that is not yet sufficiently addressed in existing research. Thus far the academic literature on the EU's external relations has remained largely detached from works on the increasingly contested nature of intra-EU politics, which engages with issues such as the rise of right wing parties, Euroscepticism and populism in the EU. The COST Action will contribute to the understanding of the implications of these developments for the EU's foreign policy, including their effects on perceptions and contestation.

Second, to promote growing integration, cross-fertilization and dialogue between fragmented research communities through new approaches of sharing information and opinions. The Action provides a unique platform to facilitate sharing on research related to the key themes, identifying areas where novel contributions can be made and injecting new ideas into the debate (concept based on an "open innovation" approach).

Third, to provide for comparative analysis and the synthesis of new research findings. By exploring global changes at a deeper level – i.e. involving political contestation over EU foreign policy norms, perceptions, patterns of communication, and the nature of EU relations – it coordinates comparative research that cuts across different policy domains and geographic priorities of the EU's international relations. The comparative focus of the Action will also place the EU policies into broader perspective, assessing the ways in which the Union reacts to new foreign policy realities in comparison with other major international actors.

Forth, to coordinate better running and/or planned research initiatives based on interdisciplinary research themes, especially related to the areas of perceptions and communication. By bringing scholars from disciplines like communication studies, political psychology, cognitive linguistics, international relations and EU studies, the Action will establish novel multidisciplinary synergies between theoretical approaches that rarely interact with each other and that cross disciplinary boundaries. Such a multidisciplinary approach will warrant a comprehensive explanation of the role played by images, perceptions, narratives and communication flows in shaping EU foreign policy both internally and externally.

Fifth, to foster close dialogue and exchange between academic research on EU foreign policy and policy practitioners. EU foreign policy-makers face a considerably complex, changing and uncertain environment and this Action generates and facilitates new knowledge assessed and translated from the academic findings into policy relevant and comprehensible outputs (i.e. briefs, etc., see below).

1.3.3. INNOVATION IN TACKLING THE CHALLENGE

The innovative approach of this Action lies in:

- providing a systematic conceptualisation of the new realities for the EU's future foreign policy and its translation into the EU's foreign policy practices;
- focusing on features of the EU's foreign policy practices synthesized from the research on different policy fields. Avoiding separated policy studies and fostering pooling of information and conclusions

shall allow for a “macro picture” based on cumulative findings of previously compartmentalised research communities;

- creating new scenarios and analysis approaches on how the EU’s foreign policy responds to new realities;
- reinforcing links between disciplines and sub-disciplines (foreign policy as well as other previously mentioned policy field specific communities) to generate more coherent and rich knowledge concerning the EU’s foreign policy in new realities;
- involving policy practitioners via workshops, events and modern means of communication (remote and virtual sessions, Open Situation Rooms etc.) and share the acquired knowledge through new communication channels (blog, informal discussion groups on selected social networks). Thus, the Action will create a new interface for future research and dialogue between academia and practitioners.

1.4. ADDED VALUE OF NETWORKING

1.4.1. IN RELATION TO THE CHALLENGE

Networking is a key concept to effectively tackle the challenges of the Action ENTER. The research on the EU foreign policy as well as the research on policy responses has to catch up with the rapidly changing external and internal conditions. This Action is designed to foster networking and to break boundaries between academic silos by systematically and explicitly addressing new external challenges and by targeting the work around cross-cutting themes (contestations, perceptions, communications, and relations) through integration, interface and management.

Integration: Creation of an interdisciplinary network structured around cross-cutting research themes.

- Joined-up thinking and exchanges of information, data and knowledge between fragmented research clusters and projects on EU foreign policy, which tend to be organized around specific policy domains and geographic areas.
- Facilitating communication and cross-fertilization between scholars of EU foreign policy with related disciplines such as international relations, communication studies, and linguistics.

Interface: Creating opportunities for exchanges between academics and policy-makers.

- Making a combined effort between researchers and policy-makers to exchange knowledge and to translating research outputs into assessable, policy relevant lessons and conclusions about implications.
- Providing a platform for the exchanges between early career researchers and policy practitioners.

Management: Organising the Action to enhance joined knowledge-exchange and joint research

- Research Workshops are prominent areas to link relevant researchers and stakeholders to share knowledge and experiences and to enable the Action to respond to the challenges.
- Winter/Spring Training Schools dedicated to the training of Early Career Investigators (ECIs) in both Theory and Method as well as applied scientific aspects together with practitioners to make use of the integration aspect.
- Formation of an Early Career Investigators’ Network (ECIN) to link young researchers to their peers.
- Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs) as a specific instrument to punctually enhance exchange with special focus on ECIs and ITCs.
- Using the network to present outputs of the Action in special international sections and panels at top international conferences as well as at two of the Actions own international conferences.

1.4.2. IN RELATION TO EXISTING EFFORTS AT EUROPEAN AND/OR INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

To our knowledge, no other research has been examining the EU foreign policy in relation to concurrent changes at the intra-EU and international levels. From this perspective, the Action ENTER is timely scheduled and added value expected from the different participating and/or associated partners.

ENTER Action will establish synergies with other related projects and initiatives such as: GREEN (Europe's Role in the Emerging Global Order, FP7, 2011-2015) or MERCURY (Multilateralism and the EU in the Contemporary Global Order, FP7, 2009-2012) focused on defining the EU's role in the emerging world order. GREEN explored the role of transnational policy networks in the EU's external relations, whilst MERCURY targeted the EU's effective multilateralism. GLOBUS (Reconsidering European Contributions to Global Justice, Horizon 2020) is looking at the EU's contribution to global justice. EU Global Perceptions projects at NCRE, New Zealand (Jean Monnet and Erasmus Plus funded from 2002 until today) has pioneered research on the EU's external perceptions. The knowledge and outcomes from these links will be assessed and evaluated by the Action Steering Committee to avoid duplication of work, contribute to the gap analysis and further define the research priorities of the individual Working Groups.

Engaging with leading European Think Tanks dealing with challenges faced by EU foreign policy is envisaged by the Action. As an example the European Policy Centre (EPC) has produced a comprehensive mapping of the foreign policy positions of "insurgent parties" across Europe that needs to be considered. The European Power Programme of the European Council of Foreign Relations has engaged with the challenge to EU foreign policy emerging from populist parties, radicalisation and Euroscepticism, topics that are considered within the scope of the Action.

Identification of leading experts from past and ongoing European and national funded research projects related to the new realities faced by EU foreign policy has been started. The envisaged five Working Groups (new realities, perceptions, contestation, communication, relations) are led by researchers with a recognised track record in the respective areas of expertise, including with respect to past on ongoing international and interdisciplinary research projects. This fact shall ensure that the results of leading previous projects and initiatives will be fed into the work programmes of the Actions Working Groups.

2. IMPACT

2.1. EXPECTED IMPACT

2.1.1. SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM SCIENTIFIC, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND/OR SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS

As short-term scientific impacts, the Action will

- bring the challenges of new realities in EU Foreign policy in the spotlight of research communities in COST countries as well as internationally
- enhance the research and develop a shared terminology for areas of conceptualization, perception, contestation, communication and relations
- support the development of theoretical approaches to address the challenges
- map different EU responses to the new reality and suggest potential alternative options
- boost the volume and quality of research on EU foreign policy facing new realities
- offer new platforms for interdisciplinary collaborative research
- integrate the intra-disciplinary fragmented research landscape through cross-fertilization between scholarship on the EU's international relations and works on intra-EU politics
- facilitate sharing on interdisciplinary collaborative research and foster interactions within an multi-research community
- provide a platform for comparative work fuelled by diverse research communities on EU foreign policy, such as scholars working on theoretical approaches to the study of EU foreign policy and scholars working on individual policies areas
- identify new research gaps and bring together the experts in the field for future joint research proposals.

As short-term socioeconomic impacts, the Action will

- facilitate the dialogue between academics and stakeholders concerned with European policy practices facing new realities
- foster knowledge sharing and collaboration with EU policy makers
- inform future policy practices by developing usable knowledge on new global realities and shortcomings of the current response to them
- inform processes of national, supra- and international policy formation
- disseminate new and consolidated information to the interested public through transdisciplinary formats

As long-term scientific impacts, the Action will

- introduce an innovative conceptualization of the new realities by conceptualising the main characteristics of the new reality and related policy practices
- encourage early career researchers of the COST countries involved in the Action to establish themselves in the field and contribute to the debate also in the future
- foster a new generation of researchers who will produce follow up research of the Action's topic
- guarantee the continued functioning of the platforms for knowledge transfer created by the Action

As long-term socioeconomic impacts, the Action will

- increase public awareness on the challenges of the new realities for EU foreign policy including through televised round tables and live-stream events.
- establish dialogue on EU foreign policy as part of “citizen science”, such as Learning Loops, Open Situation Rooms, and face-to-face meetings.
- provide greater clarity and certainty to EU foreign policy-makers that are faced with increasingly complex decisions

2.2. MEASURES TO MAXIMISE IMPACT

2.2.1. PLAN FOR INVOLVING THE MOST RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

The Action will engage **three Stakeholder groups (STGs)**:

STG1: EU integration scholars (academics) – Members of STG 1 will be involved in conferences, workshops, annual lectures, working paper series and the blog during the lifetime of the project. Conference and workshops calls for proposals will be issued by the involved universities/organisations and distributed widely at national and international level through the website and blog. It is expected that participants will engage repeatedly in the events of the Action and maintain close research and exchange links with ENTER.

STG2: Civil society (non-governmental organizations, journalists/media) – The civil society shall be actively involved in ENTER activities, in particular through participation as well as audience of selected conferences, workshops and European Lounge Talks. This kind of transdisciplinary dialogue shall be promoted and/or co-organised through partners with a long tradition of civil society engagement. The Action will use already existing networks with appropriate transdisciplinary multipliers to engage in dialogue and to transfer relevant findings.

STG3: European policy-makers, shapers, diplomats and public diplomacy experts – This group shall contribute to ENTER with specific orientations, knowledge and “in-house” experience. Policy briefs considering also the daily policy reality are more credible and provide valuable input for the final reader. Speakers and chairs of the Action events will be sought among members of this group.

2.2.2. DISSEMINATION AND/OR EXPLOITATION PLAN

ENTER will develop and follow a dissemination and exploitation work plan for the project lifetime in order to ensure appropriate identification, monitoring and use of the resources. A Dissemination Board will be set up at the Kick-Off Conference in order to facilitate dissemination. Suggested activities will be monitored through the KPIs and tracked in respective deliverables. Different dissemination tools are

used for different audiences of the STG 1-3 with some tools used for all three audiences. The exploitation strategy is designed to highlight the information flows and assure multilateral interactions with the stakeholder groups and beyond. Measures added as KPIs to each tool.

Dissemination tools for STG 1:

- **Public website** with integrated (not public) platform for sharing documents and opinions will be developed [KPI: amount of entries and visits on the website].
- Online **blog** with an administrator (appointed at Kick-Off Conference) to assure the high quality level of contributions [KPI: amount of visits on the blog].
- A tool for monitoring events will be created and identified events will be communicated through a **public online calendar** integrated into the website (KPI: set up, amount of entries).
- **Flyer** introducing the Action and its activities and objectives [KPI: 3000 Flyers printed].
- **Social media** as **Twitter** (to communicate especially on relevant events, workshops, Winter Training/Spring Schools and publications [KPI: amount of tweeds]) and **LinkedIn** (LinkedIn group for researchers).
- **Winter Training School on “Theory and Methods”/Spring-School “Young Academics meet Praxis”** [KPI: 2 Winter- and 2 Spring-Schools].
- **Early Career Investigators’ Network (ECIN)** to disseminate PhD research results [KPI: amount of meetings of the ECINs, at least once a year].
- **Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs)** to disseminate selected content [KPI: amount of STSMs, at least ten, STSMs taking place after year 1].
- **Action’s Conferences:** [KPI: three Action’s conferences - Kick-off, Mid-Term and the Final Conference organised].
- **Series of Action’s workshops** planned within the WGs [KPI: amount of workshops, at least three workshops/WG].
- **Sections and Panels at international conferences** (such as IPSA, APSA, ISA, EISA, ECPR, UACES etc.) [KPI: amount of Sections and Panels at international conferences, at least one session and five panels].
- Publication of **Working Papers**, published at the website [KPI: amount of publications, at least fifteen]
- Publication of high-impact **peer-reviewed journal publications** and **special issues** with a significant proportion in open-access formats to ensure broad dissemination (in e.g. Journal of Common Market Studies, Journal of Public Policy, Journal of European Integration, European Journal of International Relations) [KPI: amount of publications, at least five articles and two special issues].
- Publication of an **edited volume** (preferable open access) published with a leading academic publisher as a joint final output to serve as long time legacy of the Action [KPI: one edited volume].

The assumption for the publications will be that dissemination is a collective endeavour e.g. most outputs will be multi-authored (senior and young researchers) across the Action.

Dissemination tools for STG 2:

- **Public website**, should generate interest in ENTER among the broadest possible audience, especially a news section written in intelligible to all style [KPI: amount of visits on the website].
- Online **blog** written in intelligible to all style [KPI: amount of entries and visits on the blog].
- **Flyer** introducing the Action and its activities and objectives, distributed by all partners in public events [KPI: 3000 Flyers printed].
- **Social media** as **Twitter** [KPI: amount of tweeds] and **Facebook** [KPI: set up, amount of entries]
- **Traditional communication media** (radio, newspapers and/or television) [KPI: amount of media articles/contributions].
- **European Lounge Talks** take up current EU Foreign policy and disseminate research outcomes into civil society [KPI: amount of Talks (at least five in at least two countries, one in an ITC) and participants from general public/civil society].

- **Policy Briefs** to be presented to an interested broader audience [KPI: amount of Policy Briefs, at least ten].
- Invitation of civil society stakeholders to **join certain workshops** [KPI: amount of stakeholders at workshop].

Dissemination tools for STG 3:

- **Public website**, should generate interest in ENTER among the broadest possible audience, especially a news section written in intelligible to all style [KPI: amount of visits on the website].
- Online **blog** written in intelligible to all style [KPI: amount of entries and visits on the blog].
- **Flyer** introducing the Action and its activities and objectives, distributed by all partners in public events [KPI: 3000 Flyers printed].
- **Social media** as **Twitter** [KPI: amount of tweets] and **Facebook** [KPI: set up, amount of entries]
- **High-Level Round Table discussion** events organised in Brussels and/or capitals of participating countries with representatives of the EU [KPI: amount of events organised (at least two), amount of participants].
- **Iterative learning loops** and **Open Situation Rooms** dedicated to exchanges among a small group of researchers and practitioners [KPI: amount of events].
- Participation in the **Spring-School “Young Academics meet Praxis”** to interact with ECIs [KPI: amount of practitioners taking part in the Spring-Schools].
- Invitation to **conferences, workshops and WGs meetings** [KPI: amount of practitioners taking part in the events].
- Direct dialogs in **face-to-face meetings** [KPI: amount of meetings].

2.3. POTENTIAL FOR INNOVATION VERSUS RISK LEVEL

2.3.1. POTENTIAL FOR SCIENTIFIC, TECHNOLOGICAL AND/OR SOCIOECONOMIC INNOVATION BREAKTHROUGHS

The Action ENTER has a great potential for scientific, and socioeconomic innovation breakthrough on themes related to EU foreign policy facing new realities. The integration of the fragmented research landscape and establishment of stronger links between disciplines and sub-disciplines as well as researchers working in different policy areas of foreign policy will enhance the quality of research. Notably, it will produce a shared terminology and contribute to our conceptual and theoretical understanding of EU foreign policy facing new realities, which will help to synthesize, systematize and integrate knowledge of the various aspects of the EU's external relations. This will also provide a solid basis for recommending strategies to enhance Europe's research and innovation capacities this domain. Simultaneously, the Action creates opportunities to set up a novel interface between science and practitioners. The finely spun net between these at the moment separated networks of senior/young researchers and EU politicians will contribute to open up transdisciplinary spaces needed in the times of new realities. The Action not only aims at producing novel scientific knowledge that can guide policymaking, but also seeks to foster a better understanding of the perspective, priorities and informational needs of EU policymakers among the scientific community. The workshops and roundtables that bring together researchers and policy practitioners (STG 3) are intended as truly interactive events that provide the basis for bridging the frequently perceived gap between science and politics. Simultaneously, the Action effectively builds on the experience of leading think tanks participating in the network with a view to optimizing the communication to policy practitioners through interactive formats as well as through, new communication channels (blog, informal discussion groups on selected social networks), or policy briefs.

Thus, the risk level of the Action is rather low and the return on investment to European research in this area and European politics is very high.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK PLAN

3.1.1. DESCRIPTION OF WORKING GROUPS

The Action is organized into five Working Groups: (1) New Realities, (2) Perceptions, (3) Contestation, (4) Communication and (5) Relations. Though the Working Groups are context wise distinct, this Action gives strong emphasis on realizing synergies and cross fertilization between them. The WG descriptions map the objective of each of the WGs. Whilst different in content, the five WGs have similar activities and deliverables. To avoid redundancies, they are described for WG 1-5 together below.

WG 1 New Realities: The purpose of WG1 is to characterize the main features of the external environment in which the EU is cultivating its foreign relations and to explore the link with intra-EU challenges. In the theoretical literature this external environment is conceptualized in different ways, including world order, global public domain and international environment. The WG will outline how different theoretical approaches balance factors of EU external projection and contestation in a changing international environment. Against this backdrop, the WG is keen to reverse the traditional inside-out out research agenda that portrays EU foreign policy as a projection of European values and interests. Specifically, WG1 seeks to conceptualize a reality where key norms and principles that underpin EU foreign policy are simultaneously challenged at the global and intra-EU level. In this fashion, the WG sets the scene and leaves it to the other WGs to determine if the EU is up to the task of facing these challenges.

WG 2 Perception: Both external and internal images of the EU are in the focus of this WG. Knowledge of EU external images – in the EU's Neighbourhood and far away from its borders – is the key to analyse gaps between expectations of the EU and the new realities. Systematic comparative analysis of self- and external perceptions in their interaction and co-construction is an effective means to chart the extent to which the EU is recognised by external partners and internal stakeholders to be a credible and leading actor able to shape global debate and policies at a time of major global challenges. By involving leading experts in the field of EU perceptions, a new dynamic field within EU foreign policy scholarship, the WG will ensure a range of theoretical and empirical approaches and facilitate an interdisciplinary innovative synergy between analytical models that rarely talk to each other – from IR (image theory, role theory, strategic narrative theory), EU studies (Normative Power Europe approach, capabilities-expectations gap), communication and cognitive studies (cascading activation framing theory, conceptual metaphor theory, blending theory and critical discourse approach), as well as social identity theories and a broader field of political psychology. The WG's focus on images, frames, perceptions and narratives projected by the EU - and understood by audiences inside the EU, in the European neighbourhood and around the world - will also involve the testing of new methods (and novel fusions of traditional and new methods). This will add to the explanation of external recognition of the EU in a changing world that poses new challenges.

WG 3 Contestation: WG 3 explores the extent and the ways in which core norms that traditionally underpin EU foreign policy are being contested within the EU itself. The existing literature tends to portray basic tenets that guide the role of the EU in the world essentially as consensual, considering the EU's foreign policy identity to be deeply rooted in shared internal values and arrangements. With the bulk of research focusing on the external promotion of EU norms, it has been difficult to conceive the EU as the venue for political conflict over fundamental normative questions of foreign policy. Yet, changing external realities – including the contestation of the international liberal order by emerging powers, but increasingly also by the US – erode internal support for a liberal world order and multilateral global governance. Simultaneously, the normative “consensus” underpinning EU foreign policy – based on liberal constitutive values - is also being challenged from within. Several EU member states are experiencing a rise of right wing populism, Euroscepticism and a return to national solutions, with prominent observers noting a crisis of the EU's liberal identity. WG3 hence looks at both the intra-EU and the international drivers of political conflict over the normative base of EU foreign policy, which is a matter of great policy relevance.

WG 4 Communication: WG 4 focuses on political dialogues as an instrument of European diplomacy, whose powers and performance are so far scarcely reflected. It will explore the EU's ability to counter new challenges while mastering information flows and communication practices – projecting and communicating its identity to internal and external audiences while tracking and factoring its reception and recognition to fine-tune EU foreign policy. While the EU speaks with many voices, it does not yet make proper use of this polyphony, resulting in communicative turmoil both internally and externally. To assess and explain this loss of voice and to outline strategies for reclaiming it, this WG concentrates on

analysing and comparing political dialogues across various EU policy fields (security, migration, climate & energy, trade, development). LHM Ling's (2013) concept of a dialogical world order is apt for assessing dialogues based on three qualities: relationality, resonance and intersubjectivity. Thus, WG 3 will (1) investigate dialogue platforms and analyse their dialogic quality (2) compare EU dialogues, (3) identify promising dialogues and develop strategies for improving their quality and outreach, and for using the EU's polyphony in a strategically sound way.

WG 5 Relations: WG 5 is concerned with the EU's adjustment to a changing external and internal foreign policy environment at the policy level. It coordinates research on the EU's relations with multilateral organizations (multi-lateral relations), such as the UN, the IMF, or the IAEA; with major global powers, such as the US, China, or Russia (bi-lateral relations); as well as with its neighbourhood (regional relations). Adjustments in the EU's external relations may involve the way the EU defines and articulates its strategic priorities and guiding principles, but it also relates to its concrete foreign policy conduct. At the level of its strategic rhetoric, the EU has long embraced concepts like 'effective multilateralism', "a comprehensive approach" in its strategic discourse, whilst more recently new terms like "pragmatism", "differentiation" and "flexibility" have gained in prominence. Here, the Working Group will facilitate research that takes stock of the guiding principles of EU foreign policy and the way these principles motivate and orient the Union's external relations.

WG 1-5 activities:

- Identify and reviews of the existing literatures (year 1).
- Define overlaps with the other WGs 1-5 and develop linkages between them (year 1)
- Map expertise and resources of different stakeholders related to WGs theme (year 1).
- Identify research gaps and needs, priorities and perspectives in the WGs focus (year 1-2).
- WG 1 conceptualises the new realities and their changing nature, WG 2-5 analyse the translation of the new realities into the EU's foreign policy practices within their specific focus (in comparing policy fields) (2-4).
- Communicate the Action to STG 1-3 (year 1-4)
- Work together with practitioners in developing and following its research agenda (year 1-4)
- Present their findings to STG 1-3 (year 2-4).
- Propose policy measures and recommendations (year 3-4)
- Communicate lessons learnt by all WGs that highlight how the EU can tap its full potential in the long run (year 4).
- Identify and evaluate future research needs and ways of funding them, based on the knowledge developed through the Action (year 4).

WG 1-5 deliverables:

- Contribute to traditional and social media and website performance of the Action.
- Carry out three Workshops per WG including ECIs workshops
- Contribute to the three main conferences of the Action.
- Contribute to the organisation of one joint section at an international conference organised by the Steering Committee.
- Organise one panel at an international conference
- Deliver 3 Working Papers
- Contribute to one Winter Training School (WG 1 and 2&4) and Spring-School (WG 3 and 5)
- Realise 2 STSMs
- Contribute to at least one special issue through joined effort of more than one WG
- Deliver one article in a high-ranking peer reviewed journal
- Contribute to the edited volume, organised by the Steering Committee
- Organise at least one European Lounge Talk
- Deliver 2 Policy Briefs
- Contribute to the organisation of at least one Round Table together with other WGs
- Make use of at least one form of Learning Loops, Open Situation Rooms, Face-to-Face meetings etc. (not in the Gantt Diagram in total because not plannable at this stage timewise).

3.1.2. GANTT DIAGRAM

The GANTT diagram shows the timing of the Action's deliverables. Whilst the chart provides the general planning for the distribution of workshops and seminars, the detailed timing will depend on the possibilities of co-location with appropriate conferences and workshops and might change slightly.

Year	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4			
Quarter	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
All	◀▶→ 🏠📄	📄		◆	→🏠			◀▶→ 🏠◆				◆→ 🏠			◀▶→ 🏠	◆◀
WG 1		○ ◇	◀◇	📖 ◇	▶◇	📅 ◇	📝 ◇	📖◇	▶◇	📅		📖 ◇	▶ ◇	◀◇	📖◇	📝 📖◇
WG 2		▶ ◇			📖 ◇	○◇ 📅	◀◇	▶ 📝 ◇	📖◇	📅		▶◇	📖 ◇	◀◇	📖◇	📝 📖◇
WG 3			▶◇			📖 ◇ 📅	▶ ◇		📖◇	📅	▶◇	📖 ◇	○◇	◀◇	📖◇	📝 📖◇
WG 4		▶ ◇			📖 ◇	○◇ 📅	▶◇	📝 ◇	📖◇	📅			📖 ◇	◀◇	📖◇	📝 📖 ◇
WG 5			▶◇	📖 ◇		📅	📖 ◇	▶◇	📖◇ 📝	📅	○◇	▶◇	◀◇	◀◇	📖◇	📝 📖◇

- ▶◀ Kick-off meeting, Half-Time-, Final Conference
 → MC Meeting
 🏠 ECIN Meeting
 📖 Paper/Journal article/Special Issue/edited volume/working paper
 📄 Website, etc. ◆ Reports ◇ Media 📝 Policy Brief 📅 STMS
 ○ Winter/Spring-School ▶ Workshop ◀ Round-Table, European Lounge Talk

3.1.3. PERT CHART (OPTIONAL)

3.1.4. RISK AND CONTINGENCY PLANS

There are no major inherent risks associated with the conduction of this research. Potential risks are listed below with expected mitigation measures:

Risk	Chance	Mitigation Measure
lack of common objective	L	If during the Action a deviation from the original objectives should be requested by partners, SC will consider the case. MC will decide on changes in objective.
low attendance of activities	M	Spread of responsibility among Action members. Close monitoring of the indicators (s. 2.2.1). If necessary fine tuning of the activities.
availability of expertise	M	The Actions is already compiled to cover the expertise needed. If due to developments during the Action additional expertise is required, the MC will take action to invite researchers to join ad hoc or permanently.
deliver within time frame	L	The SC will monitor deliverables and time table in close contact with WG leaders. Delegating responsibilities to Action members will enhance commitment.
partner drop out	L	MC will reassign the responsibilities of the partner to another (eventually new) partner having same expertise and capabilities.
intellectual property rights issues	L	MC will regulate the issue according to COST regularities and a procedure yet to be defined.

M=medium, L=low

3.2. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES

The organisation of the Action will follow the rules and procedures of “Implementing COST rules” and will adapt the typical COST Action Management structure. It consists of formation of a Management Committee (MC), a Steering Committee (SC), Working Groups (WGs), Working Group Leaders (WGLs).

The **MC** will meet at least once a year (–preferably synchronized with other Action activities) and is charged with the following tasks:

- to take charge of the coordination, implementation and management of an Action's activities as well as supervising the appropriate allocation and use of the COST funds with a view to achieving the Action's research coordination objectives and capacity building objectives.
- to elect of the Action Chair and Vice Chair and WGLs and SC at its first meeting. These roles will be taken up by members of the team with special respect of ITCs, ECIs and women.
- to assure that gender balance, proper presence of ECIs, [the inclusion of young researchers](#), and balanced geographical representation especially ITCs are respected in all the Action activities. A Gender Supervisor will be appointed, who observes all consideration of gender aspects during the research project as part of the MC and provides reports at the beginning, middle and end of the project.
- to approve the yearly Work and Budget Plans, as well as the Annual Progress Reports, as stipulated by COST templates.

The **SC** will hold meetings every month (skype/in person). The SC will

- implement, monitor and evaluate the agenda and decisions of the MC
- prepare the yearly Work and Budget Plans, as well as the Annual Progress Reports, as stipulated by COST templates.
- organise the three big conferences of the Action
- recommend on the selection of STSMs
- identify together with WG 1-4 bridging topics for collaboration and integration between the WG
- organise and promote joint activities between the different WGs. The creation and oversight of the Action website. The Chair will be responsible for the day to day operation.

The **WGLs** will organize the meetings of their WGs and report yearly on their progress.

- WGL should be carried out as a tandem solution of ITC and non-ITC in order to increase the visibility and integration of researchers to the leading knowledge hubs of Europe in the field.
- They will be closely involved in the coordination of the Action and their performance will be assessed by the MC.
- In case of a failure to discharge their responsibilities, the MC will convene to decide upon the necessity of adopting appropriate and timely measures.

3.3. NETWORK AS A WHOLE

1. This Action has been designed to become one of the main reference points in research that deals with new realities faced by EU foreign policy. The Action constitutes an outstanding and unique network for European researchers to jointly contribute to one of the major challenges the European integration project through trans-European networking of multinational and multidisciplinary research activities. To optimize the management of the network, the Action also seeks to implement lessons learned and good practices from previous experiences, e.g. avoiding a micro-management approach that often stifles creativity. These issues will be addressed early on during the kick-off meeting and will guide the approach to managing the network over the course of the Action.
2. The Action includes 28 researchers from 18 different countries (Eastern, Southern, Western, Central, Northern European, including IPC and NNC) and 25 institutions. Thus, it encompasses a sufficient critical mass of excellent scholars appropriated to the tasks envisaged to solve the Challenge.
3. The Action is diverse in a positive sense in generational, geographical, and expertise terms. The individual members of the Action have been selected carefully with that objective in mind. While a great deal of the individual members of the Action have collaborated in previous

research projects, the Action deliberately brings together groups of researchers that will force novel ties through the Action activities. Its design will ensure:

4. The Action includes outstanding scholars that made already main contributions to the field. It brings together some of the researchers and teams that have published most extensively on EU foreign policy since the beginning of the 1990s. The Action gathers complementary fields of expertise. The Action includes experts on a broad spectrum of EU foreign policy fields with an external dimension, which brings together an unprecedented amount of collective expertise and knowledge to have the potential of robust outcomes. It also contains experienced partners in trans-disciplinary dialogue and in transferring academic knowledge into practitioners' language to make it exploitable for the EU.
5. The network is interdisciplinary with a strong focus on Political Science. Where important, it includes researchers from other disciplines. After approval already identified colleagues from disciplines such as communication, psychology etc. will be invited.
6. The network aims at a strong involvement of European practitioners. As a starting point a senior partner of the European External Action Service is included, whilst several interested candidates from other European institutions agreed already to join the network or special activities. The Action already received great interest in EU foreign policy circles.
7. The Action includes 50 percent ITC and will stay open for other ITCs to join. ITCs will be involved in leading positions in the Action (MC, SC, WGL, STSM). Activities shall be carried out favourable in ITCs.
8. The Action incorporated already one International Partners Country (IPC). Prof. Martin Holland from the University of Canterbury in New Zealand will support the perception part of the Action as one of the experts in the field with an outstanding track record. The inclusion of other IPCs is envisaged, colleagues are ready to join. Research on perceptions, communication and relations will benefit from the participation of key experts from countries with which the EU has important bilateral or regional relations. Nevertheless, such engagement will be easier to articulate once research is under way and specific needs and opportunities have been identified. Under these conditions the Action is open to the incorporation of additional partners.
9. The Action also includes one partner from a Near Neighbour Country (NNC) and will extend its network in this direction. Contacts have already been made, some of the Actions partners are working long time in the area and used their networks. NNCs have especially ECIs interested in the Action.
10. The network yet includes 12 ECIs. In many partner institutions further ECIs have already been identified and are interested to join in case of approval. The Action aims to enhance the number of ECIs and give full support through the various measures described above.
11. The Action has a ratio of 50 percent women, which is even in European Studies/International Relations a high number, including some internationally very recognized researchers. Thus, women will play a prominent role in the Action, including in leading positions. The Action will continue to focus on attracting female scholars to work in the network.