

# **ETUDES HELLENIQUES**

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# **From a Good to a Poor Student: The De-Europeanisation of Slovenian Foreign Policy in the Light of (European) Economic and Financial Crisis**

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## **RÉSUMÉ**

Cet article traite de la question de la dé-européanisation de la politique étrangère slovène à la lumière de la crise financière et économique européenne. Il propose un cadre théorique qui établit une distinction entre l'europanisation comme une variable indépendante / dépendante et l'agence / structure, permettant ainsi d'identifier quatre types de mécanismes facilitant le processus d'europanisation et les résultats de celle-ci. La recherche empirique est réalisée par une étude du processus de la prise de décision au niveau de la politique étrangère slovène, basée sur des entretiens avec les principaux responsables slovènes du ministère des Affaires étrangères et des diplomates, ainsi que sur des documents primaires et de la littérature secondaire. Basé sur les conclusions issues de la recherche empirique cet article soutient que dans le contexte de la crise financière et économique européenne, l'Union européenne est devenue plus une partie du problème qu'une partie de la solution pour les priorités slovènes de la politique étrangère : ce qui explique pourquoi le processus slovène de décision politique étrangère s'est dégagé du niveau de l'Union européenne; la politique étrangère slovène en substance a été écartée considérablement du cadre normatif européen.

## **ABSTRACT**

This article deals with the issue of de-Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy in the light of the (European) financial and economic crisis. It proposes a theoretical framework that distinguishes between Europeanisation as an independent/dependent variable and between the agency/structure drivers, thus enabling to identify four types of mechanisms facilitating the Europeanisation process and (its) outcomes. Empirical research is based on a multi-case study of Slovenian foreign policy decision-making which draws on interviews with key Slovenian foreign ministry officials and diplomats, as well as on primary documents and secondary literature. Based on the conclusions stemming from empirical research this article

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argues that in the context of the (European) financial and economic crisis, the European Union (EU) has become more a part of the problem than a part of the solution for Slovenian foreign policy priorities: which is why the Slovenian foreign policy-making process has been disengaged from the European Union level and Slovenian foreign policy in substance significantly departed from the European normative framework.

## **Introduction: From a Good to a Poor Student**

After acquiring full membership to the European Union (EU) in 2004, Slovenian foreign policy underwent a process of Europeanisation. Being a relatively small country, dependent on other EU member states for trade, the process of integration and accommodation to the EU norms, rules and policies was essential for Slovenia's ability to pursue its national preferences. On the other hand, the EU norms, rules and policies played as an opportunity for Slovenian foreign policy makers to enhance their foreign policy instruments.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from influencing the means available to foreign policy makers, the integration into the EU has been influencing Slovenian foreign policy preferences as such. With a short post-socialist history of an independent foreign policy and lacking a particularly developed foreign policy agenda regarding various issues and areas of interests in world politics, Slovenia was inclined to adopt the EU policies.<sup>2</sup> As one of the few analyses of the Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy has demonstrated, Slovenia has downloaded significantly from the EU level in the post-enlargement period.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, departing from its socialist past, Slovenian foreign policy was in search of a new, western type liberal democratic foreign policy identity, which it sought to establish through the EU membership.<sup>4</sup> In the eyes of Slovenian foreign policy makers, the recognition of Slovenia as a good student bore huge importance and Slovenia did in fact come to serve as a model of a successful Europeanisation for other Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) and the countries in Western Balkans.<sup>5</sup>

Since the strengthening of the economic crisis in the Eurozone periphery, which followed the outbreak of the financial and economic crisis in 2008, the process of the Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy has been on a slowdown. The asymmetrical policy of the member

states from the Eurozone centre, demanding fiscal discipline without recognizing the structural difficulties faced by the EU periphery, increased pressures on Slovenian foreign policy makers to seek alternative opportunities of investment and growth. The search for alternative partnerships, the reorientation of capacities and the engagement in alternative institutional and normative frameworks (e.g. economic partnerships with Ukraine, Belarus and Russia) has weakened the drivers of the Europeanisation process. What is more, as perceived by Slovenian foreign policy-makers, the image of the EU has become antagonized and the EU itself began to treat Slovenia as a problematic student. Thus Slovenia went from a 'good student' to (literary) a 'poor student'.

This article addresses the issue of the de-Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy in light of the (European) financial and economic crisis. The conceptualizations of the Europeanisation process<sup>6</sup> are facing the problem of being too particular and insufficiently related with the more general theories of the (EU) integration process. The analytical differentiation between Europeanisation as a mean/process (dependent variable) and Europeanisation as a goal/outcome (independent variable), employed by standard conceptualizations are often epistemologically shallow. The conceptual framework proposed by this research establishes the differentiation between the mechanisms facilitating the Europeanisation of the foreign policies (a) as a consequence of governmental choice and (b) as a consequence of EU institutions and norms, as well as the differentiation between Europeanisation (I) as a means of pursuing national foreign policy objectives and (II) as a goal facilitated by the context of integration in which national foreign policies are being formed.

The blurred lines between Europeanisation as a dependent and as an independent variable raise methodological issues as well.<sup>7</sup> In order to establish the mechanisms facilitating the (De-)Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy, this article engages in a comparative analysis of cases from the pre- and post-crisis periods. The case studies draw on various empirical resources including the interviews with foreign policy decision-makers and foreign policy implementers and employ

the triangulation of different methods of empirical and logical reasoning.

### **Conceptual framework: the Europeanisation in the Period of Crisis**

The process of Europeanisation refers to the adoption of the EU norms, institutions and policies by a country, usually as a consequence of its integration and membership to the EU.<sup>8</sup> The conceptualizations of the Europeanisation process have tended to employ very specific abstractions of the mechanisms facilitating Europeanisation. Following Nicole Alecu de Flers, and Patrick Müller<sup>9</sup> various authors, such as Charalambos Tsardanidis and Stelios Stavridis, Reuben Yik-Pern Wong and Claudia Mayor and Karolina Pomorska have been more engaged in producing their own conceptualizations of the Europeanisation process than trying to rework the existing ones, which has resulted in a conceptual overspecialisation and duplication slowing down the progress in the field.<sup>10</sup> The problem of particularity in the conceptualizations of the Europeanisation process has had a more general dimension in the lack of attempts to better integrate the Europeanisation process into the general theories of European integration, both by the scholars of the Europeanisation as well as by the scholars of the European integration theory.

This article employs a differentiation between two general types of mechanisms through which the process of Europeanisation in the field of foreign policy of a member state occurs as a consequence of interest-based behaviour of national decision makers. The first mechanism (a) is based on opportunities and constraints provided by the agreements between national governments. Member states can engage in common foreign policy action and pool their sovereign powers, thus decreasing the policy costs and taking advantage of the policy of scale<sup>11</sup>. Small states which have fewer resources at their disposal and are in the position of an asymmetrical dependence are often under pressure to follow and support foreign policies of bigger countries in order to be able to pursue their own objectives.<sup>12</sup> The second mechanism (b) is

based on opportunities and constraints provided by the institutions, such as rules and procedures, and by the norms that are a part of the EU framework. Although the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is not characterized by a hierarchical type of organization and requires consent of the member states, regular attempts to establish a common EU policy as such, build trust among national policy makers and decrease the transaction costs for an EU policy.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, when arguing in favour of individual policy propositions, the decision makers employ certain norms, some of which have acquired a more permanent, institutionalized role. By influencing the legitimacy of individual claims, shared norms can facilitate the EU foreign policies.<sup>14</sup> The EU norms, institutions and policies can enable smaller member states to compensate for their lack of other resources when trying to project their foreign policy preferences onto the EU level.<sup>15</sup>

The second problem of the conceptualizations of the Europeanisation process in the field of member states' foreign policies is that national preferences which are the basis for choice of instruments that facilitate the Europeanisation process are not necessarily a consequence of various actors' individual interests; member states' foreign policies can be influenced by the ideational assumptions underlying governmental preferences as such, which can either promote or inhibit the Europeanisation process. The Europeanisation process can thus not be merely treated as a consequence of rational and institutional choice. It can also be a product of change in the preferences originating in various reasons, such as the process of learning or the internalization of preferences through the socialization process. Following Nicole Alecu de Flers, and Patrick Müller,<sup>16</sup> the role of the preferences points out the circularity of the independent and dependent variables in the process of Europeanisation. What is more, this process-based ontology also reflects a larger epistemological issue, since interest-based behaviour and its rationalist implications including institutional ones, are embedded in the perceptions of things that are often taken for granted and that can usually only be changed through a period of time.<sup>17</sup> Based on existing conceptualizations of the Europeanisation process, this article thus differentiates between (I) Europeanisation as a dependent

variable and (II) Europeanisation as an independent variable. In terms of independent variable, Europeanisation is taken as the source of influence on states' foreign policies, whereas in terms of dependent variable, Europeanisation is the object of analysis that has potentially changed due to national foreign policies. Europeanisation type I and II are portrayed in Table 1 in the top two horizontal boxes.

Europeanisation is thus understood as a process of social learning of European norms, whereby norms by definition concern behaviour – they embody rules and roles which channel behaviour (practices).<sup>18</sup> The most prevailing conceptualisations of social learning derive from social theory in International Politics.<sup>19</sup> In terms of preferences-based Europeanisation of national foreign policies, we can establish the differentiation between (a) more individualist and (b) more normative and institutional mechanisms facilitating the Europeanisation; in Table 1 shown in the vertical two boxes on the left. In the case of individualist mechanisms (a) Europeanisation is a product of learning through which foreign policy-makers adopt a certain set of preferences, which influences how they pursue various policy objectives. The individualist type of internalisation of preferences influencing the Europeanisation process is also known as the type 1 internalisation or 'strategic socialization'.<sup>20</sup> In International Relations, the latter is referred to as norm diffusion through the logic of practice as simple learning, i.e. thick rationalism, meaning causal identity formation by logic of consequences.<sup>21</sup> If agents have not deeply internalised norms, they have an instrumental attitude toward them. "They may go along with the group only because they have calculated that it is useful for them as individuals at the moment to do so" – the pathway of culture reproduction is self-interest.<sup>22</sup> In this situation individuals will constantly question the rationality of their rule-driven co-operation, constantly looking for ways to free ride and as such corporate cultures will survive only if they are efficient.<sup>23</sup>

In the case of normative and institutional mechanisms (b) Europeanisation is a product of more or less organised social interaction, through which agency takes over deep assumptions about things that later on influence its preferences-based behaviour. The structural type

of internalisation is also known as the type 2 internalisation or ‘deep socialisation’;<sup>24</sup> in the social constructivist language referred to as complex learning, i.e. constitutive identity formation by ‘logic of appropriateness’ (adopted after Alexander Wendt<sup>25</sup> and Finnemore<sup>26</sup>). This behaviour is structure-driven<sup>27</sup>. In Alexander Wendt terms<sup>28</sup> it has the highest degree of internalising social structure where the pathway for observing the norm and reproducing the latter is legitimacy, meaning that actors will observe a norm due to their preference formation based on a legitimate identity self-reference to the norm and not due to a strategic calculation of benefits.<sup>29</sup>

**Table 1:** Mechanisms facilitating the process of Europeanisation as a dependent and independent variable

	<b>Europeanisation as Dependent Variable (Type I)</b>	<b>Europeanisation As Independent Variable (Type II)</b>
<b>Europeanisation process</b>	<i>Process drivers</i>	<i>Process outcomes</i>
<i>a. Agency</i>	Governmental choice (policy of scale; asymmetrical dependence)	Internalization type 1 (learning/strategic socialization, logic of consequences)
<i>b. Structure (institutions, ideas, norms)</i>	Institutional choice (lower transaction costs; shared norms)	Internalization type 2 (deep socialization, logic of appropriateness)

*Source: own summary.*

The above reflection on the understanding and research of the Europeanisation process as shown in Table 1 does not challenge a more ‘conventional’ conceptual understanding of Europeanisation, established by processes of the Europeanisation, namely of down-, up-



and cross-loading of norms and practices as summarized by Claudia Mayor and Karolina Pomorska.<sup>30</sup> Down-loading of EU norms and values is represented by the IIa and IIb boxes; in both cases Europeanisation is understood as an independent variable, affecting member states identities, interests (preferences) and thus behaviour. Up-loading can be identified in the top left box (Ia) and cross-loading in bottom left box (Ib), both denoting the research of the Europeanisation process as a dependent variable, subjected to influence from member states' (or other actors') foreign policy actions.

Europeanisation in the field of member states' foreign policies is not a one-way process; the weakening of the mechanisms facilitating the adoption of the EU norms, institutions and policies or the strengthening of alternative mechanisms can produce De-Europeanisation of EU policies.<sup>31</sup> In terms of governmental choice, the changes in opportunities and constraints provided by agreements between the member states' governments as a consequence of events, such as the increased asymmetry of interests between the member states, changed balance of power and increased opportunities provided by the agreements with non-member states, are all factors which facilitate the re-nationalisation of EU policies.<sup>32</sup> The rules, norms and procedures facilitating the Europeanisation process can change as well. In terms of the Europeanisation as an independent variable, the estimation of poor results of pursuing the pro-European preferences can produce a more anti-European choice of a set of preferences. What is more, the EU can be viewed as a part of the problem and an antagonistic construction.

In this article, operationalisation of De-Europeanisation is thus two-fold: in terms of Europeanisation as an independent variable, De-Europeanisation means a change in the effects that Europeanisation has on national foreign policy in the form of disrespecting the practices and norms which had previously been internalised but have now changed due to interest-driven governmental preference (change from Europeanisation IIb into IIa). In terms of Europeanisation as a dependent variable, De-Europeanisation will denote any change in the observation of European practices and norms themselves which has resulted as a consequence of national deviations from previously

conducted practices or norms due to governmental (Europeanisation Ia) or institutional choice (Europeanisation Ib). De-Europeanisation in this respect may thus not necessarily refer to 'less' of EUropean practices and norms but to a different manner of the Europeanisation process.

## **Methodology**

The specific nature of the object of research and/or of the conceptual frameworks employed and the blurred line between the Europeanisation as a dependant and as an independent variable produce various methodological obstacles.<sup>33</sup> In order to establish the mechanisms facilitating the De-Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy, this article engages in a comparative analysis of various case studies taken from the pre- and post-crisis periods.<sup>34</sup> The global financial and economic crisis broke out in 2008 and turned into an asymmetrical crisis of the Eurozone area in the following years. Being a part of the Eurozone periphery, Slovenia found itself trapped in-between structural pressures and fiscal deficits

Selected cases represent a variety of issues that gained media attention in Slovenia and in the EU, as well as some other issues that are relevant from the perspective of the object of research, i.e. effects of Europeanisation on Slovenian foreign policy before and after the economic/financial crisis and effects of Slovenian foreign policy changes on the Europeanisation process itself. In terms of analysing De-Europeanisation as dependent variable, we concentrate on Slovenian foreign policy substance in the following two selected cases: Slovenian observation of the right of self-determination of peoples before the crisis (act of recognition of Kosovo independence in March 2008 despite potential negative economic effects on trade and investment flows with Serbia) and during the crisis (Slovenia's vote of abstention on the Palestinian observer status in the UN GA in November 2012, which was related with the United States' financial rescue of the high state budget deficit), and Slovenian observation of human rights and democratic principles of governance before the crisis and Slovenian veto during

the economic crisis period on the Council of the EU proposed sanctions in the form of visa blacklist of individuals allegedly related to Belarus undemocratic regime and accused of human rights violations, where one of the listed names was related to a highly valuable Slovenian company's business deal; In terms of analysing changes of the Europeanisation as a dependent variable, which is affected by the measures taken due to (European) economic and financial crisis as reflected in Slovenian foreign policy, we focus on a case of Slovenian foreign policy process in relation to Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) issues. The latter was affected by growing rationalisation of Slovenian capital-based experts' participation within the CFSP-related issues and other negative influences affecting the quality of Slovenian foreign policy process related to national representation in the EU, thus also potentially changing the practices of the process of Europeanisation itself.

The case studies draw on various empirical resources including interviews with decision-makers and employ triangulation of empirical and logical methods. Each of the case studies tries to provide for answers on the following questions; how does de-Europeanisation reflect the opportunities and constraints provided to individual governments by the intergovernmental agreements at the EU level (Europeanisation Ia); would the de-Europeanisation be different without the presence of the EU institutions (Europeanisation Ib); how have preferences of the decision makers been changed due to crisis effects (Europeanisation IIa); how have the normative assumptions underlying the choices of the policy makers influenced their preferences despite the crisis (Europeanisation IIb).

### **Europeanisation as an Independent Variable; De-Europeanisation of the Substance of Slovenian Foreign Policy**

In this section we analyse two case studies of the influence of economic and financial crisis on Slovenian substantive foreign policy standpoints and actions. Both cases refer to observation of otherwise highly important normative principles referred to by the Slovenian

national normative framework, European custom law and core EU values; namely the right of self-determination of peoples (case one) and observation of human rights and democratic principles of governance (case two).

The first case of the observation of the principle of right of self-determination of peoples is of a constitutive nature and thus of utmost importance to Slovenian people and the state since the country was formed on the basis of this 1974 constitutional principle of the Socialist Federative Yugoslavia. Nation-and state-building of Slovenians and Slovenia thus hold this principle very dear as it legitimised the break-up of Yugoslavia and enabled independent states to be formed in the early 1990s on the basis of the former Yugoslav republics. The Republic of Slovenia highly values this principle as it is written in the preamble of its constitution as the foundation of its formation.<sup>35</sup> Consistent with this domestic normative framework, Slovenia has been a steady promoter of this principle since it defines it in strategic foreign policy document(s) as its fundamental foreign policy value.<sup>36</sup> When a Serbian province Kosovo declared independence on 17 February 2008, Slovenia recognised Kosovo rather early, on 5 March the same year, as the twentieth state; fifteenth of the EU member states and the first of the states from the post-Yugoslav area.<sup>37</sup> There was much domestic deliberation on this act.

Besides the historically-rooted favourable inclinations of the Slovenian people and government to recognise Kosovo on the basis of the people's self-determination principle, the Slovenian government took into account also that it must act as a responsible EU member state, whose reaction is of extreme importance to the EU as firstly, Slovenia is a post-Yugoslav state which acts as expert bridge-builder between the EU and the Western Balkans and secondly, as Slovenia was at the time holding a six-month Presidency of the Council of the EU.<sup>38</sup> Also, since "the European Community had failed to speak with a single voice over the issue of recognition of Slovenia (and Croatia), Slovenia was determined to do everything in its power to avoid history repeating itself".<sup>39</sup> However, despite this strong historical nation-building and Europeanisation reasons, voices of economic interests were raised by domestic businesses that the act of Kosovo recognition could provoke

the Serbian government to apply negative economic measures towards Slovenian export companies and investors in Serbia.<sup>40</sup> This economic concern was of a realistic nature as at the time, the Serbian Foreign Minister, NAME, raised a strong official negative stance on Kosovo recognition; indeed, Slovenian exports to Serbia in 2008 were 708,5 million EUR yearly<sup>41</sup> and Serbia represented the biggest market for internationalisation of Slovenia with 1.625,5 million EUR (28.7 % of all Slovenian foreign investments abroad).<sup>42</sup> There was also Serbian governmental and popular discontent with Slovenian potential Kosovo recognition. Nevertheless, the Slovenian government decided to persist with its support of Kosovo independence even though it faced the prospect of deterioration in its economic relations with Serbia, quite extensive damage of its Embassy premises in Belgrade in a local popular uprising and even withdrawal of Serbian diplomatic representation from Slovenia. Nevertheless, the Slovenian government believed that Serbia would have to mitigate its negative stance on Kosovo over time also due to Europeanisation pressures/effects and its own economic interest linked to Slovenia.<sup>43</sup>

As an act of De-Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy in terms of its substance as a consequence of the economic crisis, we present the Slovenian decision to abstain from following its long-time valued principle of self-determination of peoples in case of the vote in the United Nations General Assembly (UN GA) for non-member observer status of Palestinian Authority in the UN at the end of November 2012. As mentioned above, the principle of self-determination is of Slovenian constitutive national importance and Slovenia had up to then firmly supported the Palestinian fight for an independent state, even funding a Slovenian humanitarian project for rehabilitation of Palestinian children. Only a year before the above mentioned vote, Slovenia voted for Palestinian membership in the UN specialised agency, UNESCO. However, as illustrated below by a Senior Official at the Slovenian Permanent Representation to the EU (SPREU)<sup>44</sup>, one of the strongest explanations for this sway of normative stance points to economic interests of the government directly related to management of the domestic financial crisis.

Despite the fact that the EU member states vote in the UN as individual states not as a block, there was a strong desire of the European External Action Service (EEAS) to assure a common vote of the EU member states, whatever it would be. Thus, intra-EU coordination on the issue was in due process within the Political and Security Committee (PSC), an ambassadorial level of consultation and decision-making in the EU just below the ministerial level of the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC). During this time, a Senior Official at SPREU<sup>45</sup> reports that it had been fairly quickly recognised that an EU-wide consensus on the issue was unattainable as three blocks of EU member states emerged on the basis of their positions towards the issue. These positions had been formed mainly according to previous track records of voting in the UN due to historical, political or economic reasons of individual EU member states; the latter being mainly tied to economic relations to Israel.<sup>46</sup> The three groups included: a) supporters of the Palestinian claim, such as Sweden, Portugal, Denmark, Malta, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, including Slovenia b) opponents of the Palestinian claim, most evident being Germany and United Kingdom and c) undecided states with no special interest engaged in the subject (e.g. Hungary). Slovenia thus initially belonged to the group of supporting states, but as the vote in the UN GA was approached, the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) started to inform the SPREU of its changing inclination towards a vote of abstention.<sup>47</sup> A Senior Official at the MFA confirms this was a top political decision as it was the case in other EU member states.<sup>48</sup> This is actually not an unusual practice, pertaining only to Slovenian foreign policy process, but a general *modus operandi* by EU member states; the latter usually resort to this type of top-level decision-making in cases of sensitive foreign policy issues of national importance. As this was definitely the case with regards to Palestinian observer status in the UN GA, the coordination meetings at various 'lower' political levels of representation to the EU in the Council of the EU structures (PSC, FAC) were quite ineffective, as state positions were not finalized until the very end of intra-EU consultations and the vote in the UN GA itself and eventually taken at the top national political levels.<sup>49</sup>

The reason for the eventual abstention from voting by Slovenia in this matter is assessed by interviewees as complex. In addition, as the decision was taken at the very top politically officials were not informed of it in detail despite being professional diplomats of their rank. Thus only speculative assumptions exposed by political analysts and the media reveal that the decision might have been connected to the poor economic and financial situation Slovenia found itself in during the time of the vote. To assure that the intervention of the EU institutions (and troika) would not be necessary in crisis management of the budget deficit, the government was seeking funding in the global market in US dollars to release state bonds.<sup>50</sup> It was the United States which was the potential likely buyer and some have thus indicated that the United States conditioned the purchase of Slovenian state bonds with the Slovenian vote on the Palestinian observer status in the UN. As Slovenian foreign policy-makers have historically demonstrated a tendency to subordinate to American interests, this would not have been entirely surprising.<sup>51</sup> Senior Officials at SPREU and at the MFA were also not aware that the Slovenian vote would in any way be connected to an Israel-related economic interest or business-in progress.<sup>52</sup> Most probably, therefore, the vote was related to the political will of the United States as the most relevant in the critical financial situation of Slovenia. Official explanation, however, holds that Slovenia has always argued for abstention from any unilateral acts that could endanger the two-state-solution through direct negotiation, thus having interpreted the Palestinian claim for the UN GA observer seat as such, and consequently abstained from voting,<sup>53</sup> and the Head of Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Policy has directly denied the Slovenian vote being connected to bilateral relations with the United States.<sup>54</sup>

As a preliminary conclusion based on the above presented cases, we can conclude that Slovenian recognition of Kosovo was a case of IIb type of Europeanisation, where downloading Europeanisation effects and deep socialisation is present in Slovenian argumentation for the act. The government felt responsible as the presiding EU member state and an expert on the post-Yugoslav area. Mostly, it acted consistently with the expected norms of a common EU position; it tried

to achieve a common EU stance on the issue due to previous European failure on the former-Yugoslav states' recognition and the norm that EU external action should strive for a concerted position. Slovenia stuck to the EU internalised norms even in threat of negative economic effects for its businesses. On the other hand, the case of the vote of abstention on Palestinian observer seat in the UN GA represents an act of De-Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy, namely interest-based action which led to diminished effects of European norms and thus IIa type of Europeanisation in terms of strategic socialisation. Slovenia accepted the consultation method of EU decision-making as long as its foreign policy interest (and norm) was assured but changed its vote from 'yes' into abstention due to immediate national economic interests. The state could not, however, vote 'no' as this would entirely delegitimize its previously consistent position on the Palestinian cause, its domestic attachment to the self-determination principle and the EU external action related norm on striving for a common EU position.

The second case of normative inconsistency of Slovenian foreign policy actions due to the effects of economic crisis which represents another example of De-Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy is the case of Slovenian observation of human rights and democratic principles of governance. As a small state, Slovenia has always highly valued principles of international law, especially those pertaining to human rights observation. Respect for human rights and especially rights of national minorities is a Slovenian constitutional provision,<sup>55</sup> and also Slovenian strategic foreign policy documents expose protection of human rights as the highest of Slovenian foreign policy values e.g. Declaration on Foreign Policy from 1999 refers to Slovenian engagement in "wholesome observation of human rights, as determined by international treaties and other international acts and international custom law."<sup>56</sup> Human rights observation is not only a normative principle in Slovenian foreign policy but there is also a concrete foreign policy action record of Slovenia consistent with foreign policy endeavours related to human rights and human security even from the very early times of establishing Slovenian statehood<sup>57</sup> and also after e.g. Slovenian Fund for demining and help to victims



of land mines (founded originally for Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1998) and Slovenian humanitarian project of Palestinian children.<sup>58</sup> As for democratisation principles being the core values of the EU itself, Slovenia socialised this principle as a value into its people by popular and political movement in the second half of the 1980s as a republic of the Former Socialist Yugoslavia. By holding a referendum on Slovenian autonomy and independence in December 1990, Slovenian people defined their state-hood on the will to detach themselves from a communist type of political system and to practice democratic governance.<sup>59</sup> Slovenian foreign policy-makers shortly after independence went as far as to define the entire Slovenian national identity on the image of being a western-type democratic state in contrast to the Balkan non-democratic practices of governance and grave breaches of human rights related to the post-Yugoslav conflicts in the region.<sup>60</sup> The state only became active in the post-conflict Southeast European initiatives upon conditionality from the EU and NATO in exchange for progress in respective accession processes.<sup>61</sup>

However, in the case of the early 2012 renewal of EU sanctions against the non-observation of human rights and non-democratic practices of the Belarus government, including travel-ban sanctions against individual Belarus citizens, Slovenia decided not to support the list of names put forward in the Council of the EU. Since the reason for this decision in the time of the economic crisis was entirely related to Slovenian economic interest in Belarus, the European media portrayed Slovenia as “shielding Belarus oligarch”, “putting a hotel deal before human rights”<sup>62</sup> and even that Slovenia holds the EU act “unjust” because it targets the Slovenian company thus referring to a Slovenian negative, De-Europeanised, attitude to the above two principles on the account of economic interests.<sup>63</sup>

The problem occurred after Slovenian company Riko Group beat other European bidders (French, German and Dutch companies) in a 200 million real-estate project to build a hotel in Minsk, Belarus. Before this result was known, the individual in question related to the hotel deal, Mr. Yury Chyzh (*Юры Чыж*), was not included on the visa blacklist. However, according to a Senior Official at SPREU (2013),

shortly after the above business agreement was settled with the Slovenian company, Heads of Missions of the EU members states (HOMS) in Minsk<sup>64</sup> held a meeting, producing a new draft visa blacklist with Mr. Chyzh's name added to it.<sup>65</sup> A Senior Official at SPREU reports on two related problems appearing for Slovenia at the time.<sup>66</sup> Firstly, as a small state with limited capabilities, Slovenia does not hold a residential embassy in Minsk and thus a Slovenian diplomat (who would have had to travel to Minsk from Moscow) was not present in the HOMS meeting. Consequently, Slovenia was not part of the agenda-setting phase of the EU decision-making process in this case and had thus found out about the added name of Mr. Chyzh only at the level of CFSP-related council working group, namely in COEST – Eastern Europe and Central Asia.<sup>67</sup> Secondly, another problem for Slovenia was related to improper communication between Ljubljana and Brussels; this is again a consequence of data not being received from the ground as Slovenia does not hold a residential embassy in Minsk.<sup>68</sup> For this reason, it was only after a few meetings at the level of COEST had been held that the Slovenian MFA sent to SPREU an alert on the specific name included on the Belarus visa blacklist. Slovenia thus initially did not react to the list and as such its unfavourable reaction to Mr. Chyzh's name on the list (still at the COEST level) was belated and seen as illegitimate – connected directly to the above mentioned hotel business deal.<sup>69</sup> As there was no progress in the Slovenian attempt to getting the name off the list, the open issue was raised in the PSC, and then – still unresolved – to the FAC where Slovenia still did not manage to omit the unacceptable name and thus it decided to vote with abstention. As achieving unanimity was demanded to be reached as a voting procedure on this matter, the Slovenian decision thus prevented the entire blacklist from coming into force. The official Slovenian explanation for the vote was that Slovenia had always been a proponent of a so called 'review of sanctions', and thus also in this case it claimed that the criteria on the basis of which Mr. Chyzh was put on the blacklist were unclear. Slovenian Foreign Minister, Mr. Erjavec, demanded more transparency in sanctions – determining procedures which would also add more relevant businessmen on the list and not hand-pick only Chyzh.<sup>70</sup> Slovenia did not stand alone in this argumentation, as Latvia,

too, opposed the non-transparent manner of determining sanctions policy, exposing worries over the effectiveness of the proposed coercive measures in terms of what exactly would be achieved by them. Latvia, as Slovenia, claimed that it would be counterproductive to see these sanctions “harm the people of Belarus, businessmen not associated with the ruling regime, as well as EU members themselves” more than the Lukashenka regime.<sup>71</sup>

In the end, the case of De-Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy, exposing Slovenian need to give priority to a business deal rather than to the observation of human rights and democratisation, is not such a clear-cut example of crisis effect, as the substantive argument on the need of review of sanctions and criteria for their application is in place. Nevertheless, it was of course of extreme importance to the Slovenian economy to assure the business project not to fail. As a consequence of this action, as mentioned above, Slovenia was in the European media portrayed as an illegitimate state, sheltering a supporter of the Belarus autocratic regime and breaches of human rights; a state which sold its ethical standards for 200.000. This media campaign was extremely harmful to the Slovenian image, changing the otherwise non-problematic, alliance-inclined and in terms of number of particular interests, low-profile record in the EU.

The Europeanisation effects that we have seen in terms of internalising EU democratic principles and human rights values were clearly present before the economic crisis, but in the case of the Belarus business project, the Slovenian government displayed a preference to support the latter rather than the former. This response fits the above explanation of abandoning the practice of internalised EU norms (Europeanisation type IIb) and returning ‘them’ when it suits the national interest (Europeanisation type IIa). Furthermore, we argue that this case also offers potential conclusions for the Europeanisation process as a dependent variable, as we have seen that the domestic unfavourable economic situation has pushed a small number of EU member states to display more hawkish behaviour in the Council of the EU compared to its previous low-profile, alliance-oriented record. Thus, this may be evidence of a change in the Europeanisation process

as such (type I). Additionally, we may also argue that the mentioned larger EU member states have played by the general norm of sanctions-proposal (Europeanisation type Ib) as long as this suited their interests, but when faced with a lost business deal, they abandoned the norm and acted according to the individual domestic interest of potentially safeguarding the business deal or have applied simple retaliation (change to Europeanisation type Ia).

### **Europeanisation as a Dependent Variable; Influence of the De-Europeanisation of Slovenian Foreign Policy Process on the Europeanisation Process**

As a case study of the influence of the economic and financial crisis on De-Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy we have chosen to identify the negative consequences that EU-dictated national government's austerity measures have posed directly to the Slovenian foreign policy process conducted in relation to the EU external affairs. As the most negative influence we can expose the financial limitations imposed on public spending and in this regard on the budgetary provisions of each of the ministries, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The latter has thus as a consequence of fewer available resources started to rationalize<sup>72</sup> the number of national-based experts who participate in foreign policy consultations in CFSP-related working groups.<sup>73</sup> The MFA was economising on the air-tickets due to the fact that the Council of the EU's policy is to refund the travel-related costs to the integral state budget. Due to austerity measures, the government did not return the Council refunds to the MFA but kept the money in the wholesome state budget.<sup>74</sup> This problem was even more present in the issues of COREPER 1 ('low politics') than COREPER 2 ('high politics') as diplomats in Brussels have more leverage in the area of foreign policy due to Slovenian smallness and rather clear foreign policy priorities (Western Balkans, enlargement). In more 'technical' areas, however, where there exists substantial demand for expertise unknown to career diplomats, national experts were of absolute need but could not attend the representation of Slovenia in the Council working groups.<sup>75</sup>

What is more, the negative consequence of this non-attendance of Slovenian capital-based experts in working groups did not lead to the immediate deterioration in the quality of Slovenian participation in the EU decision-making processes; indeed there were also more medium-term effects. As the Council plans for the national experts' participation one year ahead, the low quota of Slovenian experts in Brussels in 2010 was then taken into consideration when planning the ceiling for number of participants in 2011.<sup>76</sup> This problem was present from 2010 to 2013 and is now resolved but unfortunately in favour of the Financial Ministry instead of the MFA; as confirmed by the MFA Financial Audit Department, the Ministry of Finance has in January 2013 opened a subaccount of the integral state treasury account to receive refunds from the Council General Secretariat.<sup>77</sup>

This example shows a negative effect on the Slovenian foreign policy process which – in the light of the general limitations of the Slovenian small state, low foreign policy capabilities and narrow availability of foreign policy instruments, of which the state highly favours multilateral diplomacy – bears even more devastating effects on Slovenian performance in EU affairs. In this respect, we have obtained data that shows due to austerity measures, that not only Foreign Service representation was hampered,<sup>78</sup> but the MFA itself needed to cut expenditures on human resources. Firstly, the MFA already operates at an extremely negative ratio of people employed in the Domestic and Foreign Service (60%:30%); in financially well-off states, the ratio is 50%:50%. However, due to austerity measures, the MFA was one of the rare ministries which had to let employees go entirely due to financial restrictions (seven people which adds up to 1% of employees).<sup>79</sup> Secondly, two senior diplomats were retired due to provisions on retirement of public officials in 2012 Fiscal Balance Act. There is, however, eleven more senior diplomats who were supposed to retire, but the latter hold a so called 'federal employees' status, which is in terms of legal interpretation of the above act's applicability still to be resolved at the level of the Constitutional Court.<sup>80</sup> Secondly, for the last five years (2009–13), there has been no junior internship employment at the MFA which means no fresh human resources in terms of young graduates of

International Relations, European Studies or Diplomacy or any other expert field whatsoever.<sup>81</sup> Junior staff (students of above mentioned under- and post-graduate programmes), however, have been invited to participate in SPREU daily work in the form of a two - month voluntary (unpaid) traineeship, but this meant that the junior inexperienced staff sometimes had to cover the areas which had not been contributed to by capital-based experts.<sup>82</sup>

Despite the problem of External Representation and domestic austerity measures related to limited provisions on personnel, a Senior Official at SPREU (2013) reports that in the case of CSFP areas, the MFA's substantive<sup>83</sup> and procedural performance has not failed.<sup>84</sup> MFA has been sending instructions to SPREU with no damage to the substance or timing of the instructions needed, which confirms that the Political Director responsible for CFSP-related issues is highly responsive.<sup>85</sup> If sometimes instructions are not sent to the SPREU on a CFSP issue, this is interpreted as a non-position of Slovenia in the matter (no national interest lies in the matter debated). A Senior Official at the MFA (2013) adds that often a quality policy is made due to good informal relations among people working on the issue and that in a small Foreign Service this is very important.<sup>86</sup>

On the basis of this case we can conclude that rationalized representation of Slovenian national experts in Council working groups has hampered Slovenian performance in COREPER I-related issues but rather less in CFSP-related issues. However, the long term effects of Slovenian de-Europeanisation by non-participation in EU affairs were negative due to Council yearly planning ahead on the basis of previous quota of visits performed. This means that Europeanisation as a process might have changed since Slovenian performance was not as expected; institutional choice by Slovenia in terms of Europeanisation Ib has become less strong. Also, the very negative trends in functioning and human resources development of Domestic Service (MFA) have continued and become even more obvious which might hamper Slovenian potential for further Europeanisation downloading (of strategic, what else deep socialization).

## Conclusions

This article dealt with the issue of de-Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy in the light of the (European) financial and economic crisis. Based on existing conceptualizations of the Europeanisation process, we differentiated between (I) Europeanisation as a dependent variable and (II) as an independent variable, adding to the understanding of the ontological dimension of this process, namely agency (a) or structure (b) (Table 1). This conceptualisation is not conflictual with existing prevailing understandings of dimensions of Europeanisation. In terms of drivers of Europeanisation (type I) of national foreign policies, we established the difference between (a) more individualist and (b) more normative and institutional mechanisms facilitating this process. In terms of outcomes of the Europeanisation process (type II), we distinguished between a) strategic socialisation with interest-driven observation of EU rules and norms and b) deep socialisation with legitimacy-driven conformity to European rules and norms. De-Europeanisation was thus understood as any change from outcome b) to outcome a) in type II Europeanisation (independent variable) or any change within individual drivers of the type I Europeanisation process (dependent variable).

In our first two case studies, we focused on the observation of EU norms and principles in the content of Slovenian foreign policy (self-determination of peoples, human rights and democratisation standards) before and after the break out of the crisis. We established that Slovenian recognition of Kosovo was a case of IIb type of Europeanisation. On the other hand, the case of the vote of abstention on Palestinian observer seat in the UN GA represented an act of De-Europeanisation of Slovenian foreign policy, namely an interest-based action which has led to diminished effects of European norms and thus IIa type of Europeanisation. In the second case, we have seen that the Europeanisation effects in terms of internalising EU democratic principles and human rights values (Europeanisation type IIb) have clearly been present before the economic crisis, but in the case of the Belarus business project Slovenian government displayed preference to support its economic interest, changing the respect of EU principles

only when pragmatically suitable for national interest (Europeanisation type IIa). Furthermore, we argue that this case also offers potential conclusions for Europeanisation as a dependent variable (type I), as we have seen that the domestic unfavourable economic situation has pushed a small EU members state to display a more hawkish behaviour in the Council of the EU compared to its previous low-profile alliance-oriented record. Additionally, we have also shown the changed nature of conducting Europeanisation on the side of the large EU member states (Europeanisation type Ib changed to Europeanisation type Ia).

On the basis of the third case analysis of Slovenian changes in foreign policy process due to the crisis, we have concluded that diminished representation of Slovenian national experts in the Council of the EU working groups has left long term effects of Slovenian de-Europeanisation. This means that Europeanisation itself might have changed since institutional choice by Slovenia in terms of Europeanisation type Ib has by rationalised participation in EU affairs become less strong (Ia). Also, the very negative trends in functioning and human resources development of Domestic Service (MFA) might hamper Slovenian potential for further Europeanisation downloading (of strategic IIa, what else deep socialization IIb).

This article has shown that as far as Slovenia is concerned, the European normative framework has in the light of the economic and financial crisis lost its weight for member states' national foreign policies. The Europeanisation outcomes have changed from deep to strategic socialization effects, which can be related with the changed opportunities and constraints provided by the Community framework in the newly emerged context of the crisis. With regard to the methodologically-theoretical aspect, the study is relevant as it tests both interests-and structure-driven mechanisms of Europeanisation on the levels of Europeanisation as a process and as an outcome. Empirically, the study draws attention to the fact that Europeanisation is a fragile process that is not only dependent on member states' willingness to cooperate but requires sufficient mechanisms of distribution and institutions enacting individual responsibility for the common (EU) good.



## NOTES

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  22. Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, *op.cit.*, p.220.
  23. *Ibid.*
  24. Nicole Alecu de Flers, and Patrick Müller, *Applying the Concept of Europeanization to the Study of Foreign Policy: Dimensions and Mechanisms*, *op.cit.*

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26. Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*, *op.cit.*
27. *Ibid.*, p.30, p.129.
28. Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, *op.cit.*
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30. The process of downloading typically assumes the Community framework as an independent variable. In the case of new EU member states, the Europeanization is usually considered as a top-down process through which a country downloads existing norms, institutions and policies from the EU level. See, Claudia Mayor and Karolina Pomorska, “Europeanisation: Framework or Fashion?”, *op.cit.*, p.4, [http://www.academia.edu/191266/Europeanisation\\_framework\\_or\\_fashion](http://www.academia.edu/191266/Europeanisation_framework_or_fashion) (20.8. 2013). On the other hand, the countries can as well up-load their norms, institutions and policies to become part of the EU framework. See Tanya Börzel, “Pace-Setting, Foot-Dragging, and Fence-Sitting: Member State Responses to Europeanization, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No.2, 2002, pp. 193–214. The simultaneous and institutionalized process of up-loading provokes the specific effect of cross-loading.
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35. *Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia*, endorsed on 23.12. 1991 (Uradni list RS, no. 68/06), <http://www.uradni-list.si/1/objava.jsp?urlid=199133&stevilka=1409>, (20.8 August 2013).
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37. Of EU member states, Kosovo is not recognized by Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain. Out of post-Yugoslav area state, Kosovo remains internationally unrecognised by Bosnia and Herzegovina and by Serbia.

38. Senior Official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, interviewed by Ana Bojinović Fenko, Ljubljana, 30.8.2013.
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41. SURS, Statistični urad republike Slovenije [*Office for statistics of Republic of Slovenia*], <http://www.surs.si> (8. 9. 2013).
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43. Senior Official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, interviewed by Ana Bojinović Fenko, Ljubljana, 30.8.2013.
44. Senior Official at the Slovenian Permanent Representation to the EU, interviewed by Ana Bojinović Fenko, Brussels-Ljubljana, 28 August 2013.
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.*
48. In Slovenian political system, the highest executive competence lies with the Head of Government (Prime Minister).
49. Senior Official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, interviewed by Ana Bojinović Fenko, Ljubljana, 30.8.2013.
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53. Senior Official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, interviewed by Ana Bojinović Fenko, Ljubljana, 30.8.2013.

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55. Preamble, Art. 5 and the whole section II of the Constitution are devoted to human rights principles.
56. *Declaration on Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia [Deklaracija o zunanji politiki Republike Slovenije]* endorsed by the Parliament of the Republic of Slovenia on 17.12. 1999, [http://www.mzz.gov.si/si/zakonodaja\\_in\\_dokumenti/podzakonski\\_akti/deklaracija\\_o\\_zunanji\\_politiki\\_republike\\_slovenije/](http://www.mzz.gov.si/si/zakonodaja_in_dokumenti/podzakonski_akti/deklaracija_o_zunanji_politiki_republike_slovenije/) (29.7.2013).
57. For illustration, we offer the reference to the high importance of human rights observation Slovenian authorities put already in time before international recognition of the state, during the 10-Day independence war (27 June–6 July 1991). As there were a lot of Yugoslav Peoples' Army (YPA) soldiers, during the war considered as Enemy side, who deserted the YPA or surrendered to Slovenian troops, they still had to be ensured security against possible revenge measures of the YPA itself and granted certain legal rights. Information on these and on all prisoners of war related rules and procedures were dispatched by the Slovenian Secretariat for Internal Affairs to all police stations on 29 June 1991 while provisions of the Geneva Conventions and the cooperation with the Slovenian Red Cross, who detached itself from the Yugoslavian Red Cross, were particularly taken into consideration. See Ana Bojinović Fenko and Zlatko Šabič, "From the Balkans to Central Europe and Back: Foreign Policy of Slovenia" *op.cit.*, p. 50).
58. Saša Vidmajer, *Čas odraščanja; Dvajset let slovenske zunanje politike. [Growing-up period: 20 years of Slovenian foreign policy]* Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2012, pp.187 -190.
59. Ana Bojinović Fenko and Zlatko Šabič, "From the Balkans to Central Europe and Back: Foreign Policy of Slovenia", *op.cit.*, p.49.
60. Ana Bojinović Fenko and Jure Požgan, "Regionalisation of Slovenian Foreign Policy: Escape from the Balkans, Return to the Western Balkans", *op.cit.* pp. 59- 62.
61. *Ibid.*
62. See *EUobserver News*: <http://euobserver.com/foreign/115361>, <http://euobserver.com/foreign/115397>.
63. «Nouvelles sanctions européennes contre la Biélorussie», [New European sanctions against Belarus] *Le Monde.fr* avec AFP. 27.2.2012, [http://www.lemonde.fr/europe/article/2012/02/27/nouvelles-sanctions-europeennes-contre-la-bielorussie\\_1649021\\_3214.html?xtmc=slovenie\\_sanctions\\_bielorussie&xtcr=2](http://www.lemonde.fr/europe/article/2012/02/27/nouvelles-sanctions-europeennes-contre-la-bielorussie_1649021_3214.html?xtmc=slovenie_sanctions_bielorussie&xtcr=2) (30.8 2013).

64. These are regular meetings held by ambassadors of EU member states not only in Minsk but in other capitals of countries around the world as well.
65. EuObserver explains the decision that “Chyzh, a 48-year-old businessman from Soboli, is a close associate and regular hockey partner of Lukashenko known to EU officials as one of his ‘bag-men’. His Triple group of companies is involved in construction, leisure centres, restaurants, supermarkets, tourism, logistics and petroleum products. It also owns an Audi car dealership. It has extensive business links with Latvia, Lithuania, Germany, the Netherlands and Poland, making it vulnerable to an EU ban”. See, Andrew Rettman, “Slovenia Shields Belarus Oligarch from EU Blacklist”, EUobserver, 24.2.2012, <http://euobserver.com/foreign/115361> (20 .8. 2013).
66. Senior Official at the Slovenian Permanent Representation to the EU, interviewed by Ana Bojinović Fenko, Brussels-Ljubljana, 28 August 2013.
67. *Ibid.*
68. *Ibid*
69. *Ibid.*
70. Dnevnik V petek odločitev o sankcijah proti Belorusiji, na seznamu tudi poslovnež Čiž [On Friday, decision on sanctions against Belarus; the blacklist hold the name of businessman Chyzh]. 20.3.2012, p.3, <http://www.dnevnik.si/svet/1042517941> (30.8. 2013).
71. Konstanty Gebret, *Shooting in the Dark? EU Sanctions Policies*, European Council on Foreign Affairs Relations Policy Brief, No. 71, 2013, p.3., [http://ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR71\\_SANCTIONS\\_BRIEF\\_AW.pdf](http://ecfr.eu/page/-/ECFR71_SANCTIONS_BRIEF_AW.pdf) (28.8. 2013).
72. This means that there is never an empty seat in Slovenian representation, but for example that one national expert is to cover three working groups events instead of three experts travelling from Ljubljana to Brussels. The other possibility is that MFA asks SPREU to ‘cover’ the representation at a meeting instead of a national expert (Senior Official at the MFA 2013).
73. Senior Official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, interviewed by Ana Bojinović Fenko, Ljubljana, 30.8.2013.
74. National-based experts have to rationalize also other international participations, not only those related to the EU (foreign) policy-making (Senior Official at the MFA 2013).
75. Senior Official at the Slovenian Permanent Representation to the EU, interviewed by Ana Bojinović Fenko, Brussels-Ljubljana, 28 August 2013.
76. *Ibid.*
77. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Financial Audit Department, E-mail correspondence with Mr. Matjaž Longar, Head of Department, by Ana Bojinović Fenko, 12.9.2013.

78. Next to high limitations in its MFA staff travelling abroad, Slovenia closed 5 embassies and 2 consulates.
79. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Human Resources Department, Telephone interview with Ms. Jana Kvaternik, Head of Department, by Ana Bojinović Fenko, 6.9.2013
80. *Ibid.* Federal employees are Slovenian senior diplomats who had been working within Yugoslav Federal Diplomatic Service and have thus not served all their employment period in Slovenia, thus they remain out of Fiscal Balance Act applicability. Their status is currently regulated by a 2010 Slovenian-Serbian agreement which treats these federal employees as having been working in Serbia, thus withholding them of Slovenian-based pensions for that period to which they oppose at the Constitutional Court.
81. Before 2009, MFA had ten places for internships available yearly. The estimation holds that each year, 1 per cent of employees (for MFA this means five to six people) should be drafted as interns – new employees, which is approximately the annual rate of people leaving the institution. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Human Resources Department, Telephone interview with Ms. Jana Kvaternik, Head of Department, by Ana Bojinović Fenko, 6.9.2013
82. Trainees, Interview with junior trainees at the Slovenian Representation at the European Union by Ana Bojinović Fenko. Brussels, 7.6/2013.
83. In terms of foreign policy substance, Slovenia has non-crisis related problem since about 2003 when its last foreign policy strategic document became outdated with the closure of legal agreements on EU and NATO accession as primary foreign policy goals. For the last ten years, Slovenian foreign policy has thus been conducted without any domestic long-term plan what else consensus on strategic issues to be achieved by foreign policy and how. The Parliament has been endorsing a government-proposed document on Slovenian priority tasks in the EU for each period of EU presidency (previously six- and now eighteen- month troika related presidencies) but this document according to Senior Official at SPREU and Senior Official at the MFA, in no way replaces the much needed foreign policy strategy.
84. Senior Official at the Slovenian Permanent Representation to the EU, interviewed by Ana Bojinović Fenko, Brussels-Ljubljana, 28 August 2013.
85. *Ibid.*
86. There are about seventy people employed at the SPREU. Senior Official at the Slovenian Permanent Representation to the EU, Interviewed by Ana Bojinović Fenko, Brussels-Ljubljana, 28.8.2013.