

Triangular Diplomacy and the Crisis in Ukraine:
The European Union, the United States and the
Russian Federation

Alasdair R. Young and Vicki L. Birchfield

Working paper GTJMCE-2015-3

This working paper along with others in the same series can be found online at:
<http://pwp.gatech.edu/jmce/jmce-working-papers/>

Sam Nunn School of International Affairs
Georgia Institute of Technology
Atlanta, GA, 30332

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



This text may be downloaded only for personal research purposes. Additional reproduction for other purposes, whether in hard copies or electronically, requires the consent of the author(s), editor(s).

If cited or quoted, reference should be made to the full name of the author(s), editor(s), the title, the working paper, or other series, the year and the publisher.

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the author(s), and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein.

© Alasdair Young and Vicki Birchfield 2015

The **Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence** engages with Europe's place in a changing world with an American reference point, but a broader focus. It considers the bilateral relationship (specifically the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP) negotiations); triangular diplomacy towards Russia; transatlantic competition over global rules (particularly with respect to data privacy); and the EU's role in peacekeeping.

The Centre is designed to leverage existing expertise at Georgia Tech; to foster new interdisciplinary collaboration; and to engage audiences within and beyond the campus. To that end it draws together an interdisciplinary team of scholars from across the Ivan Allen College, as well as from the Scheller College of Business. It is funded with support from the European Commission (Jean Monnet Center 2014-1842). The working papers reflect the views only of their authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information presented.

The Jean Monnet Center is housed in the **Center for European and Transatlantic Studies** (CETS), which serves as the locus for the Georgia Tech campus and the metro Atlanta community for research, teaching, and public events and programs related to the study of Europe, the European Union and the EU-U.S. relationship. Specifically, CETS aims to:

- promote and disseminate policy-relevant research that pertains to Europe and the transatlantic relationship;
- strengthen and expand the Nunn School curriculum and course offerings on Europe and transatlantic relations and lead an annual study-abroad program in Europe;
- provide a focal point for the local European diplomatic corps and transatlantic business community; and
- enhance public awareness and understanding of the EU-U.S. relationship.

The **Sam Nunn School of International Affairs** draws on its unique setting at one of the world's leading technological universities and on the unparalleled integrity and insight of the distinguished senator for which it is named to deliver innovative programs and cutting-edge research that integrate technology and the study of international affairs. At a time of rapid change, the School is dedicated to delivering programs in education, research, and public outreach that provide a greater understanding of factors that shape the world in which we live and work. The School strives to connect learning and experience through its interdisciplinary degree programs, policy-relevant research with a strong theoretical foundation, and regular interaction with practitioners.

Founded in 1990, the School enrolls more than 400 students in its bachelor's of science, professional master's, and research-focused doctoral programs. Twenty-two full-time faculty members teach and conduct research on a broad array of topics with a particular focus on how technological innovations affect national security, economic competitiveness, and prospects for international cooperation and conflict.

This page is intentionally left blank.

**Triangular Diplomacy and the Crisis in Ukraine:
The European Union, the United States and the Russian Federation**

Introduction¹

Alasdair R. Young and Vicki L. Birchfield

This paper introduces a collection of papers (currently being considered for publication) based on a workshop organized by the Jean Monnet Center of Excellence at Georgia Tech in May 2015.

Abstract

Russia's annexation of Crimea and the subsequent conflict in eastern Ukraine represent both the greatest security challenge to western Europe since the end of the Cold War and a profound challenge to regional stability, as well as international norms. This paper argues that dynamics of the responses to the crisis are best understood by using 'triangular diplomacy' as a heuristic device, with the United States, the European Union and Russia as the vertices of the triangle and Ukraine as the 'object' in the middle. Moreover, this paper explicitly compares the EU's response to the crisis to that of the U.S. It thus contrasts a conventional, if exceptional, great power – the U.S. – with a very non-traditional foreign policy actor – the EU, which is typically depicted as distinctive in terms of capabilities, organization and motivations. The Ukraine crisis is a particularly appropriate case, as it presents an especially critical test for the EU's foreign policy as it concerns aggression by its neighboring great power – Russia. This paper provides the background to the crisis and surveys the responses of the U.S. and EU to Russia's aggression before introducing the value of the "triangular diplomacy" frame as a heuristic for comparative foreign policy analysis and summarizing the contributions of the other papers from the workshop.

¹ This paper is part of a wider project that has been funded with support from the European Commission (Jean Monnet Center of Excellence 2014-1842). It reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein. We are grateful to Simeon Bruce, Joshua Jacobs, and Daniel Yoon for their research assistance.

Russia's annexation of Crimea and the subsequent conflict in eastern Ukraine represent both the greatest security challenge to western Europe since the end of the Cold War and a profound challenge to regional stability, as well as international norms. Focusing on the short-term response to the annexation of Crimea and subsequent conflict, this volume explores the interactions between the United States, the European Union and Russia. These three powers represent the vertices of the triangle in 'triangular diplomacy,' with Ukraine as the 'object' in the middle. This volume is distinctive in two particular ways. First, it is explicitly comparative, considering how the U.S. and EU are responding to the same crisis, although the stakes are different for each and the nature of the problem is not necessarily understood in the same ways (see Hutton, Morrell and Hayes, this volume). It thus contrasts a conventional, if exceptional, great power – the U.S. – with a very non-traditional foreign policy actor – the EU, which is typically depicted as distinctive in terms of capabilities, organization and motivations. This volume, therefore, will shed light on what kind of international actor the EU is and help to inform foreign policy analysis more broadly. The Ukraine crisis is a particularly appropriate case, as it presents an especially critical test for the EU's foreign policy as it concerns aggression by its neighboring great power – Russia.

The second distinctive feature of this volume is its "360-degree" perspective.² Rather than focusing on the perspective of a single party in a bilateral relationship or even the contending perspectives of a bilateral pair, this volume engages both with how the US and EU each regard the other in its dealings with Russia, but also how Russia and Ukraine perceive the motivations and effectiveness of the western powers. This 360-degree perspective is enhanced

² Triangles have 180 degrees, but 180 degrees implies only a bilateral focus. We, therefore, have plumped for a 360 degree perspective, which is familiar from business and arguably also captures Ukraine as a reference point.

by considering the interactions of the parties in cross-cutting, thematic issues of particular relevance to the crisis and response.

Investigating the crisis in Ukraine through the lens of “triangular diplomacy” helps to elucidate the complexity of crisis response when the three core actors have very different relationships with the affected party, as well as varying perceptions of the nature of the crisis. As a heuristic device the concept of triangular diplomacy probes the parameters and consequences of foreign policy behavior and reactions in ways that would be missed by analyses of bilateral and multilateral engagements. To be clear, this volume does not seek to provide a definitive account of an unfolding, high-stakes story. Rather, it takes a snap-shot – roughly the 18 months after the annexation of Crimea – to shed light on foreign policy choices of great powers at a time of crisis.

This introduction aims to set the stage empirically and analytically for the other contributions. It begins with a brief summary of the origins of the crisis and how the US and the EU have responded. This is primarily scene setting for the subsequent contributions, which will go into more detail, but it also covers the collective response through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and EU and US support for Ukraine, which are not the primary focus of the other contributions. This chapter then introduces the conceptual context for the volume by identifying the analytical debates about foreign policy, transatlantic relations and international security with which it engages.

Empirical scene setting: The Contours of the crisis

Although the focus of this project is on the efforts of the U.S. and the EU to halt and roll-back Russian aggression in Ukraine, it is necessary to rehearse, at least briefly, the origins of the

crisis. As will become clear below and in the contributions that follow, although the sequence of events is broadly accepted, which of those events constituted a provocation to whom is vigorously contested, both within and between the parties.³ What is less contested is the significance of Russia's aggression for the West.

Real world significance

There is broad agreement that Russia's aggression in Ukraine presents a stern test for the transatlantic alliance, particularly the EU. Then NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen (2014: 1) stated, "How Western democracies respond to [Russia's aggression in Ukraine] and reshape Euro-Atlantic security will be, I believe, the defining challenge of the next decade." Former US Secretary of State Madeline Albright (2014) wrote that "Russia's behavior is a game-changer in the post-World War II world." The 2015 U.S. National Security Strategy concluded that "Russia's aggression in Ukraine makes clear that European security and the international rules and norms against territorial aggression cannot be taken for granted" (White House 2015). A rare, moderately dissenting voice was Stephen Walt (2014), who argued that Russia "can be a regional spoiler and a local troublemaker, but it is not and will never again be a true peer competitor [to the U.S.]." Nonetheless, there is a clear sense that Russia's aggression in Ukraine represents the most profound security challenge to the West since the end of the Cold War.

Russia's aggression is a particular challenge to and for the EU. In the most straightforward sense, because of proximity and relative capabilities, Russia, as Walt's assessment implies, is a threat to Europe, not the U.S. Russia's aggression, however, also poses a challenge to the EU's aspirations to be a global actor. The 2003 European Security Strategy

³ Elizabeth Pond in a pair of blog posts provides a nice summary of the contending views. See <http://berlinpolicyjournal.com/what-next-for-ukraine/>. Accessed May 11 2015.

proclaimed, “Europe should be ready to share in the responsibility for global security and in building a better world.” There has since been a burgeoning literature on the EU as a ‘global actor’ (for an overview, see Peterson 2012). Russia’s aggression poses the sternest test to date to that aspiration for two, reinforcing reasons. First, Russia is the EU’s neighboring great power. As great powers tend to be assessed in terms of how they engage with each other, the EU’s response to aggression on its border is a particularly apt test of its great power credentials. This is particularly the case as Ukraine falls within the great powers’ overlapping spheres of influence – the EU’s neighborhood and Russia’s ‘near abroad’. Second, the EU’s international influence is widely understood to dissipate sharply with distance (Lavenex 2011; Res 2011; and Smith 2008). As the Ukrainian crisis is on its borders, it should be one that the EU is relatively well equipped to deal with. If it cannot respond effectively to a crisis on its borders, what does that imply about crises further afield? Reflecting this assessment, former EU High Representative Baroness Catherine Ashton said that the EU should be judged as an international actor “by how it deals with its neighborhood.”⁴

From trade talks to conflict via annexation

This profoundly challenging crisis has its origins, ostensibly, in a trade agreement, or rather the rejection of a trade agreement. The EU and the Ukraine were due to sign an Association Agreement, which, to be fair, is considerably more than just a trade agreement, at the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius at the end of November 2013. Just before the summit, Ukraine’s then President Yanukovich announced that he would not sign the agreement, as had been expected. This precipitated what became known as the Euromaidan demonstrations that

⁴ Remarks to the European Union Studies Association’s 14th Biennial International Conference, Boston, March 6, 2015.

ultimately led to the change of government, which created the opportunity for Russian aggression (see Box 1).

Box 1: Timeline: Origins of the Crisis

3/??/07	Association Agreement talks begin
2/18/08	Negotiations of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) start
7/1/09	Ukraine joins Eastern Partnership
2/25/10	Yanukovich becomes president
12/19/11	EU postpones signing of Association Agreement due to imprisonment of former Prime Minister Tymoshenko
3/30/12	Association Agreement initialed
7/19/12	DCFTA initialed
6/13/13	Ukraine becomes observer to the Eurasian Customs Union
8/14/13	Russia blocks exports to Ukraine
11/21/13	Ukraine suspends preparations to sign Association Agreement Euromaidan protests begin
12/17/13	Russia agrees to lend \$15 billion to Ukraine and provide 33% discount on gas
2/21/14	Yanukovich loses vote of no confidence and flees Ukraine

Association Agreements, which go beyond liberalizing trade to include political cooperation and reforms (see Box 2), are the EU's principal tool for institutionalizing relations with politically significant countries, including those in its 'neighborhood.' The EU and Ukraine had begun negotiating the Association Agreement in 2007 to replace the ten-year Partnership and Cooperation Agreement that they had concluded to structure their relations following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Negotiations of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), the trade portion of the agreement, began in February 2008. The negotiations were

concluded in 2011 and the agreement initialed in March 2012. Russia did not raise any objections to the Association Agreement until the summer of 2013 when the text was published and it seemed that Ukraine would actually sign (House of Lord 2015: 53-4). Former EU High Representative Baroness Catherine Ashton contends that Russian President Putin did not raise the EU's Association Agreement with Ukraine in any of the twice yearly summit meetings prior to August 2013.⁵ A highly critical, House of Lords (2015: 6) report accused the EU of 'sleep walking' into the crisis. Baroness Ashton denies that Europe slept walked into the crisis, but admits that the EU 'didn't see it coming.' John Mearsheimer (2014) contends that the West did not anticipate Russia's response because it was suffering from the "liberal delusion" that great power politics were no longer relevant in post-Cold War Europe. As the contributions to this volume make clear, very different perceptions of events and actions by the key actors contributed to the crisis, but these misunderstandings were mutual: Russia misjudged the West as much as the West misjudged Russia.

Box 2 Summary of key elements of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement⁶

- political dialogue
- cooperation in energy, transport, and education.
- requires Ukraine to adopt parts of EU legislation and implement reforms and respect democratic principles, human rights and the rule of law.
- provides for greater movement of workers
- Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area

⁵ Remarks to the European Union Studies Association's 14th Biennial International Conference, Boston, 6 March 2015. For instance, there is no mention of Ukraine in the joint press statement following the June 2013 EU-Russia summit in Yekaterinburg. Available at: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/18253>. Accessed June 28 2015. See also House of Lords 2015: 53.

⁶ EU-Ukraine Association Agreement: "Guide to the Association Agreement," http://eeas.europa.eu/images/top_stories/140912_eu-ukraine-associatin-agreement-quick_guide.pdf. Accessed June 28 2015.

In immediate response to Yanukovitch's decision not to sign the Association Agreement, a small demonstration in favor of Ukraine signing swelled into a major demonstration, with tens of thousands of protestors occupying Maidan Nezalezhnosti (Independence Square) in central Kiev, starting what became known as the Euromaidan protests (Diuk 2014). As demonstrators remained on the streets, Yanukovich struck a deal with Russian President Putin on December 17, under which Russia agreed to prop up the Ukrainian government by buying \$15 billion in Ukrainian government bonds and cutting the price it charged Ukraine for natural gas by a third. Although there had been periodic attempts to clear the square earlier, the violence escalated sharply during 18-20 February 2014, with the police using live ammunition to disperse the protesters. As political support for the regime ebbed in response to the violence a political solution was sought. A deal between Yanukovich and some of the leaders of the demonstrations that was brokered by France, Germany and Poland was rejected by the protesters on the streets. On February 21 Yanukovich lost a vote of no confidence in the Parliament and fled the country (House of Lords 2015: 57).⁷ On February 23 Ukraine's Parliament formally impeached Yanukovich, and its Speaker Oleksander Turchynov was appointed interim president until elections scheduled for May 25.

The international crisis subsequently unfolded rapidly. On February 27 Russian troops, in un-marked uniforms, occupied strategic buildings in Crimea.⁸ On March 6 the Crimean parliament voted to secede from Ukraine and join Russia, which was endorsed by a dubious

⁷ Traynor, I. "Ukraine protests: end nears for Viktor Yanukovich despite concessions." *The Guardian*, February 21, 2014. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/21/ukraine-protests-viktor-yanukovich-election>. Accessed June 28 2015.

⁸ Booth, William. "Armed men take control of Crimean airport." *The Washington Post*, February 28, 2014. http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/pro-russia-separatists-flex-muscle-in-ukraines-crimean-peninsula/2014/02/27/dac10d54-9ff0-11e3-878c-65222df220eb_story.html.

referendum on March 16. Two days later, Russia formally annexed part of Ukraine. Fighting in eastern Ukraine – primarily in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts – broke out in April 2014 as pro-Russian separatists, with military support from Russia, sought to emulate Crimea. As a result of the on-going conflict, as of early autumn 2015, more than 1.5 million people had been internally displaced, while nearly 7,000 people had been killed and more than 17,000 injured.⁹ It is this crisis that is the focus, from different perspectives, of the contributions to this volume.

Recent transatlantic relations with Russia

While our focus is on relations among the EU, U.S. and Russia (and Ukraine) in the context of the conflict in Ukraine, it is worth considering what their relations were like prior to the crisis. Two features stand out. First, relations between both the EU and the U.S. and Russia were cordial, even cooperative. If anything they were characterized, at least on the part of the West, by disinterest, if not neglect. Second, there were two entirely separate bilateral relationships – U.S.–Russia and EU–Russia; there was next to no transatlantic dimension to their relations with Russia to speak of.

European Union: Interdependent, but inattentive

The EU's relations with Russia are institutionalized in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which entered into force in 1997. It is primarily a trade agreement, but is broader, institutionalizing political dialogue and committing both sides to respect democracy and human rights, including the right of minorities (Timmerman 1996). As with Ukraine's PCA, the

⁹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees "Ukraine Factsheet October 2015." Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/5614d38e3.html> . Accessed October 8 2015; UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Ukraine: Humanitarian Snapshot (as of 2 September 2015) ," available at: <http://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-humanitarian-snapshot-2-september-2015>. Accessed October 8 2015.

agreement was originally for 10 years, but it renews automatically annually unless either side decides to terminate it. The EU and Russia, consequently, began negotiations on a more far-reaching, 'New Agreement' in 2008. These negotiations began at the same time as the DCFTA talks with Ukraine. These negotiations, however, stalled in 2011, because the trade portion of the negotiations was complicated by Russia's efforts to create the Eurasian Union; the EU was dissatisfied with Russia's implementation of its obligations under the World Trade Organization; and Russia was reluctant to engage in further liberalization (House of Lords 2015: 23; Young and Peterson 2014: 205). Particularly during Vladimir Putin's second spell as president, Russia has turned away from Europe (Mankoff, this volume; House of Lords 2015: 18-20).¹⁰ It has become more authoritarian and more securitized, and the government has become more actively involved in the economy. In addition, Russia came increasingly to see the EU as a "decadent" rival. European policy did not adapt to these changes, becoming less effective as a result (House of Lords 2015: 23). As a result, the EU effectively did not have a Russia policy prior to the crisis in Ukraine (Whitman, this volume). On both sides, arguably, the relationship suffered from political neglect (House of Lords 2015: 26-7).

Prior to 2014 the EU had only episodically and briefly sought to use trade policy to shape Russian policy. It delayed the adoption of an interim agreement on the trade elements of the PCA for three months in response to Russia's initial military campaign in the Russian territory of Chechnya in December 1994, but it was adopted despite only limited improvements on the ground. The resumption of hostilities in Chechnya in the 2000s did not result in any suspension of preferential access (Schmidt-Felzmann 2011: 206-14). There was no trade policy response to the erosion of democracy in Russia, highlighted most vividly by the mass protests that followed

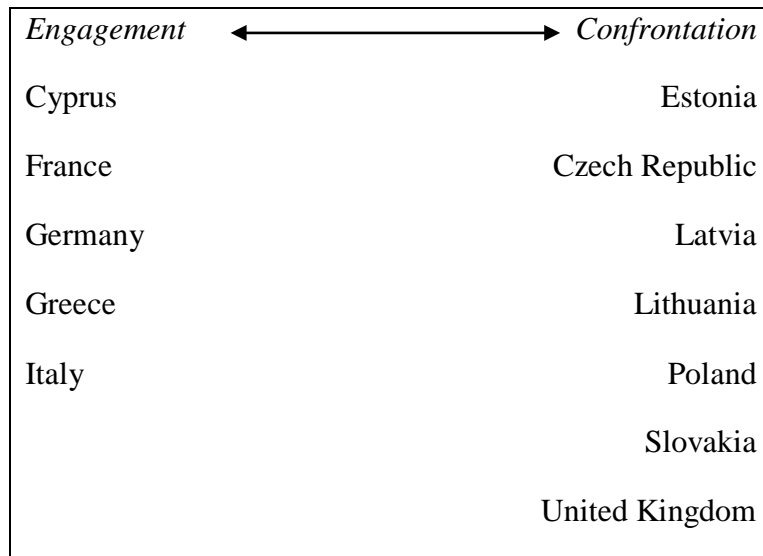
¹⁰ Comments by Timothy Snyder, Emory University, February 6 2015.

the (widely-viewed as flawed) 2011 election of Vladimir Putin for the second time as president. The EU did suspend negotiation of the New Agreement in response to Russia's invasion of Georgia in 2008, but that suspension lasted only a few months. Consequently, James Hughes (2006: 19) argued that: "the relationship is heavily loaded with pragmatic calculations about the costs and benefits of an interdependency of trade, that trump concerns over other more value-based issues, such as democratisation or human rights." Moreover, he contends that the EU's policy has become more pragmatic and less principled over time. The EU's recent history with Russia has fostered two assessments that are essentially opposite sides of the same coin. On one side, the EU has had little impact on Russian behavior when it has sought to use trade policy as a stick. On the other side, the EU has lacked the resolve to stand by its principles.

An important reason for the EU's lack of resolve was that the EU's member states had very different attitudes towards Russia, with five favoring engagement and seven quite confrontational (see Figure 1) and the rest not taking consistent or strong positions. In particular, the member states differed on the extent to which they viewed Russia as a political or military threat or as an economic opportunity. This was a roughly, but only roughly, east-west divide. It is worth noting that a number of the member states that have favored a more confrontational approach towards Russia – notably the Baltic states and Slovakia – are also among the most heavily dependent on Russian natural gas, so gas dependence did not determine EU member state's attitudes towards Russia even before the crisis in Ukraine. Russian aggression in Ukraine, particularly the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight ML17 in July 2014, has upset rough balance among the EU member states and prompted a number of them to reassess their approaches to Russia (House of Lords2015: 61). Germany, in particular, has shifted its position

and now sees Russia's actions in Ukraine as a threat to European security. It is this shift in attitudes towards Russia that opened the door to the imposition of sanctions against Russia.

Figure 1: Spectrum of EU member states' attitudes towards Russia (late 2000s)



Source: reflects the consensus view in the literature (based on Schmidt-Felzmann 2011: 52)

United States: Tensions without respect

Since the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, the United States has regarded Russia as a secondary, regional power, much to the irritation of the Russian leadership, particularly Putin (Larson, this volume; Roberts 2014: 3). U.S.-Russian relations particularly soured during President George W. Bush's second term, not least because of Russia's incursion into Georgia (for a review see Roberts 2014: 2-5). The U.S.'s support for Georgia during the conflict was interpreted by Russia as an indication that the U.S. did not respect its regional interests and traditional sphere of influence (Roberts 2014: 4).

Relations had grown sufficiently poor that President Obama felt the need to "reset" the relationship. This reset led to a more pragmatic approach focused on mutual benefits (Roberts

2014: 2). For the U.S. this meant cooperation on security measures, combating terrorism, and upholding the arms control regime. These were of interest to Russia too, but so was rebuilding the economic relationship, particularly encouraging foreign direct investment (see also Stent 2012).

But after initial successes such as the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and securing Russian support for sanctions on Iran over its nuclear weapons program, the U.S.-Russian relationship was allowed to languish (Larson, this volume).¹¹ Russia, unlike the Soviet Union, was not a central preoccupation for the U.S., rather it was an important player that could be helpful on some issues and an obstacle on others (Stent 2012: 125).

Takeaway

Prior to the events of late 2013, Russia was not a priority for either the U.S. or EU. It was important across a range of issues and it needed to be engaged, but it was more as a means to an end than an end in itself. In addition, relations between Russia and both the U.S. and EU were already strained prior to the crisis. Russian concerns about western disrespect, encroachment on its sphere of influence and interference in its internal affairs and western concerns about Russia's illiberal democracy and increasingly statist capitalism soured both relationships. Tellingly, although there were strong parallels and overlaps between the EU-Russia and U.S.-Russia relationships, they were, by and large, separate relationships. It was only in response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine that the EU and U.S. have begun to coordinate actively their policies towards Russia.

¹¹ An indication of the U.S. not prioritizing Russia is that in October 2013 the U.S. Department of State eliminated its funding program for advanced language and cultural training on Russia and the former Soviet Union (Title VIII) (King 2015: 88).

The Transatlantic Response

There are three related, but distinct aspects of the transatlantic response to Russia's annexation of Crimea and subsequent aggression in eastern Ukraine:

- efforts aimed at halting the conflict in Ukraine – including diplomatic initiatives and the imposition of restrictive measures and economic sanctions on Ukrainian separatists and Russian officials and firms;
- measures intended to support Ukraine – statements of political support; bilateral and multilateral economic assistance; non-lethal (thus far) military assistance; trade liberalization; and
- steps to reassure NATO members bordering Ukraine.

The focus of volume is on the efforts to address the conflict in Ukraine, but efforts to support Ukraine and to reassure other European states are also important. We briefly review EU and US actions to realize those objectives here before returning to the central issue of the conflict in Ukraine.

Efforts to support Ukraine

The EU and its member states and the U.S. have sought to bolster the Ukrainian state. This has come through repeated rhetorical commitments to Ukraine's territorial integrity and rejection of Russia's annexation of Crimea (see Fabry, this volume). For instance, the Council of the European Union in March 2014 stated:

The European Union strongly condemns the clear violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by acts of aggression by the Russian armed

forces as well as the authorisation given by the Federation Council of Russia on 1 March for the use of the armed forces on the territory of Ukraine. These actions are in clear breach of the UN Charter and the OSCE Helsinki Final Act, as well as of Russia's specific commitments to respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity under the Budapest Memorandum of 1994 and the bilateral Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership of 1997 (Council 2014: 1).

President Obama speaking in Tallinn, Estonia on 4 September 2014 stated:

[Russia's aggression against Ukraine] is a brazen assault on the territorial integrity of Ukraine -- a sovereign and independent European nation. It challenges that most basic of principles of our international system -- that borders cannot be redrawn at the barrel of a gun; that nations have the right to determine their own future. It undermines an international order where the rights of peoples and nations are upheld and can't simply be taken away by brute force.¹²

The EU and U.S. have also both individually and through the International Monetary Fund (IMF), provided substantial financial assistance to Ukraine (see Box 3). This financial assistance is conditional on policy reforms, including tackling corruption, overhauling the energy sector, repairing the financial system, strengthening the business environment and adhering to the rule

¹² Remarks by President Obama to the People of Estonia, Nordea Concert Hall in Tallinn, Estonia on September 03, 2014. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/03/remarks-president-obama-people-estonia>

of law, and putting Ukraine's finances on a sustainable path.¹³ In addition, in April 2014, the EU unilaterally granted Ukraine preferential access to the EU market until 31 December 2015.¹⁴

In contrast to rhetorical and financial support, military assistance to Ukraine has (at least as of October 2015) remained limited. On 22 July 2014 the Council of the EU established the EU Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform Ukraine (EUAM Ukraine), which is a civilian mission under the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy. The United States, Poland and the United Kingdom have provided non-lethal military aid to Ukraine. In addition, the UK and the U.S. began military training missions in Ukraine in March and April 2015, respectively.

¹³ U.S. Treasury, "Statement of U.S. Treasury Department on Additional Economic Assistance to Ukraine," 1/13/2015. Available at: <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl9737.aspx>. Accessed June 29 2015.

¹⁴ Directorate General for Trade, "Countries and Regions: Ukraine," <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/ukraine/>. Accessed June 29 2015. In order to guarantee Ukraine's access to Russia's market under the Ukraine-Russia bilateral preferential regime and in conjunction with the Minsk Agreement, the EU in September 2014 postponed implementing the DCFTA until January 2016 while talks are conducted with Russia to address its concerns about the implementation of the DCFTA (Directorate General for Trade, "Outcome of the Trilateral Consultations on the Implementation of the EU-Ukraine AA/DCFTA Joint Operational Conclusions," May 18 2015. Available at: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1313>. Accessed June 29 2015.)

Box 3 Highlights of assistance to Ukraine

4/14/14	EU approves €1 billion in macro-financial assistance (MFA) to Ukraine
4/16/14	US sends medical supplies and other non-lethal aid to Ukraine
4/21/14	US announces \$50 million assistance package to Ukraine
4/29/14	European Commission adopts €65 million Special Measure to support state building in Ukraine
4/30/14	IMF Executive Board approves Stand-By Arrangement for Ukraine
5/20/14	EU disburses first loan tranche of €100 million of MFA I to Ukraine
6/4/14	US pledges an additional \$23 million in security assistance to Ukraine
6/7/14	US announces \$48 million more in economic assistance to Ukraine
6/17/14	EU disburses first €500 million of MFA II to Ukraine
6/27/14	EU signs Association Agreement with Ukraine
8/23/14	Germany pledges \$690 million in aid to Ukraine
9/16/14	Ukraine ratifies Association Agreement. European Parliament gives its assent.
9/18/14	US announces \$53 million in non-lethal military aid to Ukraine
11/12/14	EU disburses €260 million of MFA I to Ukraine
11/20/14	US increases provision of non-lethal military aid to Ukraine
12/03/14	EU disburses final €500 million of MFA II to Ukraine
12/19/14	Obama signs bill authorizing the provision of lethal military assistance to Ukraine
1/28/15	US agrees to provide additional \$1 billion in loan guarantees to Ukraine
3/11/15	IMF Executive Board approves \$17.5 billion Extended Fund Facility
3/11/15	US sends additional \$75 million in non-lethal assistance to Ukraine
3/19/15	British troops training Ukrainian soldiers
4/15/15	EU approves up to €1.8 billion in macro-financial assistance to Ukraine
4/21/15	US troops begin training Ukrainian national guard
	EU disburses final €250 million of MFA I to Ukraine

Sources: European Commission, Economic and Financial Affairs: Ukraine. Available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/international/neighbourhood_policy/ukraine_en.htm. Accessed June 29 2015.

U.S. Treasury, "Statement of U.S. Treasury Department on Additional Economic Assistance to Ukraine," 1/13/2015.

Available at: <http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/j19737.aspx>. Accessed June 29 2015.

Efforts to reassure NATO members

Russia's aggression in Ukraine has stoked security concerns in a number of eastern European countries, particularly those bordering Russia. Although the European Union has developed a European Security and Defense Policy, as the House of Lords (2015: 10) notes, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) remains the "cornerstone of defense for its EU Members." Consequently, NATO has been at the forefront of efforts to reassure the eastern EU member states that they are safe from Russian aggression.

Reassurance has taken two principal forms. The first is the repeated articulation of the commitment under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty that an attack on any NATO member is considered an attack on all. On March 26, 2014 then NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen affirmed "Clearly, collective defense of our allies is a core task for NATO.... Our commitment to the defense of our allies is unbreakable...." U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden, speaking in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 19 March 2014, stated: "President Obama and I view Article 5 of the NATO treaty as an absolutely solemn commitment which we will honor." The president himself was even more unequivocal in Tallinn, Estonia on 4 September 2014, saying:

I say to the people of Estonia and the people of the Baltics, today we are bound by our treaty Alliance. We have a solemn duty to each other. Article 5 is crystal clear: An attack on one is an attack on all. So if, in such a moment, you ever ask again, "who will come to help," you'll know the answer -- the NATO Alliance, including the Armed Forces of the United States of America, right here, [at] present, now!¹⁵

The U.S.'s commitment was reiterated in the 2015 National Security Strategy, which states: "We are reassuring our allies by backing our security commitments and increasing responsiveness

¹⁵ Remarks by President Obama to the People of Estonia, Nordea Concert Hall in Tallinn, Estonia on September 03, 2014. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/03/remarks-president-obama-people-estonia>

through training and exercises, as well as a dynamic presence in Central and Eastern Europe to deter further Russian aggression.” (White House 2015: 25). In October 2015, spurred additionally by Russian incursions into Turkey’s airspace, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg “We are implementing the biggest reinforcement of our collective defense since the end of the Cold War. All of this sends a message to NATO citizens: NATO will defend you, NATO is on the ground, NATO is ready.”¹⁶ Words, however, are (relatively) cheap.

The second form of reassurance has been more concrete. An initial step was to bolster the Baltic Air Patrol, by increasing the number of planes from four to 12 and adding a second airbase, in Estonia. Planes were also deployed to Poland and Romania. Joint naval patrols in the Baltic were also stepped up. Further, the NATO Summit in Wales in September 2014 adopted a “Readiness Action Plan” (NATO 2015). The package of associated measures included establishing six multinational command and control elements – NATO Force Integration Units (NFIUs) -- in Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania. These NFIUs were intended as “a visible and persistent NATO presence in these countries” (NATO 2015: 4). They will also facilitate the rapid deployment of Allied forces to the region; support collective defense planning; and assist in the coordination of multinational training and exercises. In addition, the Wales Summit agreed to increase the NATO Response Force (NRF) from 13,000 to 40,000 troops and to establish a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) or “spearhead force” of 5,000 troops that can start deploying within 48 hours. The VJTF had its first deployment exercise in Poland in June 2015. This exercise was part of a wider program of stepped up and larger NATO exercises in central and eastern Europe (Schmidt and Meyers 2015). In June 2015 the U.S. also announced plans to deploy battle tanks, infantry fighting vehicles and other heavy

¹⁶ Quoted in Helene Cooper and James Kanter, “NATO, Alarmed by Russian Actions in Syria, Shores Up Defenses,” *New York Times*, 8 October 2015.

weapons in the Baltic states and eastern Europe for the first time. In October 2015 western officials they said that they had stepped up military exercises and deployed a small number of logistics personnel in Eastern and Central Europe. The British government announced that it would send soldiers to the Baltic countries, Poland and Ukraine after the show of force by Russia in Syria.¹⁷ Thus Russia's aggression in Ukraine and subsequently Syria has reinvigorated NATO and prompted an upgrading of its capabilities in an effort to deter Russian aggression, at least against NATO members.

Efforts to end the conflict

Western efforts to end the conflict fall into two broad categories: trying to mediate the conflict and imposing political and economic costs on Russia and the separatists in Ukraine. While there has been close coordination between the U.S. and EU on the imposition of costs, the mediation of the conflict has fallen primarily to the Europeans (Larson and Whitman, this volume), much to the disappointment of the Ukrainians who think that the U.S. would take a tougher line with Russia (Feklyunina and Romanova, this volume).

Mediating the conflict

The U.S. has effectively 'outsourced' efforts to mediate the conflict to Europe (Larson, this volume). Within the EU France and Germany – specifically French President François Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel – have taken the lead. They have not been operating with a formal mandate from the other EU member states, but there is a “permissive consensus” behind their efforts (Whitman, this volume).

¹⁷ Helene Cooper and James Kanter, “NATO, Alarmed by Russian Actions in Syria, Shores Up Defenses,” *New York Times*, 8 October 2015.

The primary mediating framework has been the Normandy format, which brings together high-level representatives from Germany, France, Ukraine, and Russia. The first meeting occurred on June 6, 2014, between Angela Merkel, François Hollande, Petro Poroshenko, and Vladimir Putin in Normandy on the 70th anniversary of D-Day. The second occurred on October 16, 2014, in Milan as part of the Asia-Europe Meeting. The third was the February 11, 2015, meeting in Minsk, which led to the signing of the Minsk II agreement. A fourth meeting in the Normandy format took place on June 10, 2015, in Paris. A fifth meeting, intended to oversee the final implementation of the Minsk II agreement, took place in Paris on October 2, 2015.

The original Minsk Protocol –concluded on September 5, 2014 – was not drafted through Normandy format. Rather it was reached within the Trilateral Contact Group on Ukraine, which consisted of representatives from Ukraine, Russia, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The Protocol called for an immediate bilateral ceasefire to be monitored by the OSCE. It also called for a decentralization of political power within Ukraine. The other elements included monitoring of the Ukraine-Russia border by the OSCE, release of all hostages, amnesty for persons in some areas of the Donbass, an inclusive national dialogue, humanitarian improvement measures, lawful early local elections, withdrawal of Russian arms and militia from Ukraine, and an economic reconstruction program. Following continued fighting, an additional memorandum was appended to the protocol two weeks later. The memorandum specified a 30-kilometer buffer zone in eastern Ukraine, a ban on offensive operations, a no-fly zone, withdrawal of all foreign fighters, and an OSCE mission to monitor implementation of the protocol. The cease-fire, which was never religiously observed, collapsed in January 2015 with a new separatist offensive.¹⁸

¹⁸ Lyman, R. and Kramerjan, A. E. (2015), 'War Is Exploding Anew in Ukraine; Rebels Vow More,' *New York Times*, Jan. 23.

The Minsk II package, agreed through the Normandy Format on February 11, 2015, sought to re-establish the cease-fire. Its eleven primary points, reiterate or overlap with the main specifications of the first Minsk Protocol. Minsk II calls for an immediate bilateral ceasefire, withdrawal of all heavy weapons, monitoring of weapons withdrawal by the OSCE, immediate dialogue on local elections, amnesty for all figures involved in the Donetsk and Luhansk conflicts, release of all hostages, unimpeded and internationally supervised delivery of humanitarian aid, restoration of social and economic links, Ukrainian government control over its internationally recognized borders (through the conflict zone), withdrawal of all foreign fighters, and constitutional reform for Ukraine. The fighting did not stop, but its intensity fell considerably. The agreement is supposed to be fully implemented by the end of 2015.

Punishing Russia and the separatists

The EU and the U.S. have taken political and economic steps to signal their displeasure with Russia's aggression in Ukraine (see Box 4). The political measures include reverting to the G7 format that existed prior to 1998 when Russia was invited to join the informal club of industrialized democracies that meets annually to discuss global economic governance among other things; the EU suspending its formal bilateral summits with Russia; and NATO suspending all civilian and military cooperation with Russia.

Box 4 Evolution of the crisis

2/28/14	Several hundred Russian forces occupy strategic buildings in Crimea
3/1/14	Russian parliament authorizes use of force in Ukraine
3/6/14	US and EU announce restrictive measures
3/16/14	Crimea votes to secede in referendum
3/17/14	EU restrictive measures take effect
3/18/14	Russia officially annexes Crimea
3/20/14	US and EU implement additional sanctions
3/20/14	Russia adopts restrictive measures on US officials
3/21/14	EU and Ukraine sign parts of Association Agreement
4/1/14	NATO Foreign Ministers suspend civilian and military cooperation with Russia
4/7/14	Uprising begins in eastern Ukraine
4/11/14	US implements additional sanctions
4/28/14	US implements further sanctions
4/29/14	EU implements further sanctions
5/11/14	Donetsk and Luhansk vote for independence in referenda
5/12/14	EU implements further sanctions
5/25/14	Petro Poroshenko elected president of Ukraine
6/16/14	Russia cut off gas supplies to Ukraine over unpaid bills
6/20/14	US implements additional sanctions
7/11/14	EU implements additional sanctions
7/16/14	US implements additional sanctions
7/17/14	Flight Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 shot down
7/29/14	US implements additional sanctions
7/31/14	EU implements additional sanctions
8/7/14	Russia bans western food imports
9/5/14	Minsk Agreement
9/8 & 12/14	EU and US implement additional sanctions, including restrictions on supporting Russian oil exploration and development
10/31/14	Russia-Ukraine gas dispute resolved

11/2/14	Donetsk and Luhansk hold elections
11/29/14	EU imposes additional sanctions
12/18/14	EU and US prohibit foreign investment in Crimea
1/29/15	EU extends sanctions on Russia for six months
2/12/15	Minsk II agreement
3/11/15	US adopts additional sanctions on Russia
6/19/15	EU extends sanctions on Crimea until 6/23/16
6/22/15	EU extends sanctions on Russia until 1/31/16

The EU and US have pursued broadly similar approaches trying to impose economic costs on Russia and the separatists, although there have been differences in the timing and in some of the details. These efforts are explored in detail by Drury and Patane (this volume). Both have frozen the assets of and imposed travel restrictions on individuals and groups seen as particularly involved in the conflict, although the US has targeted more Russian officials, while the EU has targeted more Ukrainian separatists (see Table 1). They have also imposed restrictions on providing financing to particular Russian companies; on weapons and dual use goods; and on providing goods and services to specified sectors (notably oil exploration) (see Table 2); and on doing business in Crimea (see Table 3). The U.S. also suspended export credits to Russia, although the EU did not.¹⁹ More symbolically the U.S. also suspended development assistance to Russia, although it had not received any assistance in at least the previous three years.²⁰ Russia had not received development assistance from the EU since 2011.²¹ Subsequently and more significantly, in September 2014 both the U.S. and the EU prohibited

¹⁹ According to Freshfields, Bruckhaus, Deringer. See http://www.freshfields.com/en/knowledge/Ukraine/Russia_sanctions_5th_Jan_2015/. Accessed September 15, 2015.

²⁰ See <http://beta.foreignassistance.gov/explore/country/Russia>. Accessed September 15, 2015.

²¹ See https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/countries/russia_en. Accessed September 15 2015.

their citizens and firms from providing goods or services used in deep-water oil exploration and production, off-shore Arctic oil exploration and production, or shale oil projects in Russia.²² The European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development also curtailed their lending to Russia. In June 2015 the EU agreed to extend its sanctions on Russia until 1 January 2016, aligning with the deadline for implementation of the Minsk II agreement, and its sanctions on Crimea until mid-2016.

Table 1 EU and U.S. Restrictive Measures

	Russian individuals	Ukrainian individuals	Russian entities	Ukrainian entities
EU	71	97	10	26
US	42	32	24	17

Note: Individuals or entities associated with Crimea or the disputed Donetsk and Luhansk territories are counted as Ukrainian regardless of nation of origin.

Table 2 Economic Sanctions

	EU only	US only	Both
Number of sanctioned entities	2	9	13

Note: We used the distinction between restrictive measures and economic sanctions suggested by the European Union. See “EU Sanctions against Russia over Ukraine crisis,” Available at: http://europa.eu/newsroom/highlights/special-coverage/eu_sanctions/index_en.htm. Accessed October, 8 2015.

Sources: Own calculations based on: EU Council Regulation 833/2014, “Concerning Restrictive Measures in View of Russia’s Actions Destabilizing the Situation in Ukraine,” 31 July 2014; EU Implementing Council Regulation 961/2014, “Concerning Restrictive Measures in Respect of Actions Undermining or Threatening the Territorial Integrity, Sovereignty and Independence of Ukraine,” 12 September 2014. Extension of Executive Orders 13660, 13661, and 13662, “Announcement of Treasury Sanctions on Entities Within the Financial Services and Energy Sectors of Russia, Against Arms or Related Materiel Entities, and those Undermining Ukraine’s Sovereignty,” 16 July 2014. Extension of Executive Order 13662, “Announcement of Additional Treasury Sanctions on Russian Financial Institutions and on a Defense Technology Entity,” 29 July 2014; Directive 4 of Executive Order 13662,

²² With regard to the EU: Council Regulation 960/2014, 8 September 2014. With regard to the U.S.: Directive 4 of Executive Order 13662 “Sectoral Sanctions Identifications (SSI) List Updates,” 12 September 2014.

“Sectoral Sanctions Identifications (SSI) List Updates,” 12 September 2014. Asset freeze and prohibition on transactions by U.S. persons or within the United States, as outlined in the extension noted in “Announcement of Treasury Sanctions on Entities within the Financial Services and Energy Sectors of Russia, Against Arms or Related Material Entities, and those Undermining Ukraine’s Sovereignty”.

Table 3 – Restrictions on Doing Business in Crimea

European Union (Council Regulation 1351/2014) (December 18, 2014)	United States (Executive Order 13685) (December 19, 2014)
<p>Expansion of sanctions to prohibit foreign investments in Crimea and Sevastopol. Includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. acquiring or extending participation in ownership of real estate; 2. acquiring or extending participation in ownership or control of an entity; 3. granting any loan or credit or otherwise provide financing; 4. creating any joint venture; 5. providing investment services.²³ 	<p>Prohibition of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. U.S. personal investment in Crimea; 2. Import and export to/from Crimea; 3. Approval of transactions by U.S. financial institutions to persons looking to engage in the above illicit activities. <p>Extension of above action to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Senior officials in Crimea; 2. All sponsors of activities in Crimea; 3. All accomplices to the above persons.^{24,25}

In August 2014 Russia imposed retaliatory sanctions, cutting off imports of food items from selected countries. These sanctions and counter sanctions have imposed considerable costs on the Russian economy (World Bank 2015: 36-42), although they did not (at least not initially)

²³ EU Council Regulation 1351/2014, “Concerning Restrictive Measures in Response to the Illegal Annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol,” 18 December 2014. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:JOL_2014_365_R_0006&from=EN.

²⁴ US Executive Order 13685, “Blocking Property of Certain Persons and Prohibiting Certain Transactions with Respect to the Crimea Region of Ukraine,” 19 December 2014. http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/ukraine_eo4.pdf.

²⁵ Extension of Executive Order 13660, “Issuance of a New Ukraine-Related Executive Order and General License; Ukraine-Related Designations,” 19 December 2014. <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/OFAC-Enforcement/Pages/20141219.aspx>.

have negative political implications for the Putin regime. In fact, the Russian government has exploited the sanctions for its own ends, particularly avoiding blame for the poor state of the Russian economy (see Drury and Patane this volume).

Although the substance of transatlantic restrictive measures has been similar, there have been big differences in how the measures have been adopted. The US restrictive measures and economic sanctions have been adopted in a series of executive orders²⁶ signed by President Obama exercising powers delegated to him by the Constitution and U.S. legislation, including International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (8 U.S.C. 1182(f)), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code. By contrast, the EU's measures have all been adopted by the Council of the European Union²⁷ and require the unanimous support of all 28 EU member states reflecting a fundamental difference in the foreign policy capacities of the U.S. and the EU. In the U.S. the federal level is the established level of action and extensive authority has been delegated to the president. In the EU the member states retain considerable foreign policy authority and decision-making is only pooled at the EU level. As a consequence, the EU's actions have had to overcome considerably higher decision thresholds than their US counterparts and internal coordination is a much bigger challenge for the EU than the U.S. (see Whitman, this volume).

Takeaway

²⁶ Executive Orders 13660, 13661, 13662 and subsequent extension to them.

²⁷ Council Regulation No. 208/2014; Council Regulation 269/2014; Council Implementing Decision 2014/145/CFSP; Council Decision 2014/265/CFSP; Council Implementing Regulation 753/2014; Council Implementing Regulation 810/2014, Council Decision 2014/508/CFSP, Council Regulation 833/2014; Council Regulation 960/2014 and Council Implementing Regulation 961/2014; Council Implementing Regulation 1270/2014; Council Regulation 1351/2014.

The crisis in Ukraine, therefore, confronts the U.S. and the EU with a serious challenge.

Although the crisis is ostensibly the same for both the U.S. and the EU, it has differential implications for them and they have very different decision-making capabilities. It is, therefore, striking that they have responded largely in concert and in very similar ways. We explore why in the remainder of this volume.

Analytical scene setting

While there is a great deal of literature that aspires to explain foreign-policy making, little of it is explicitly comparative (Kaarbo 2003: 157; an exception is Brown 2014).²⁸ Rather there is a tendency to focus on the foreign policies of individual actors (Hill 2003: 5-6; Kaarbo 2003: 157). This lack of comparison is problematic, because as James Rosenau (1968:308) observed, “only by identifying similarities and differences in the external behavior of more than one national actor can analysis move beyond the particular case to higher levels of generalization.” This is a step that this volume aims to take.

Our comparative task is complicated by the tendency of the literature on the EU as a foreign policy actor to treat it as *sui generis* and particularly that it is a different kind of foreign policy actor than the U.S. The literature on EU foreign policy, therefore, is dominated by a debate about what kind of foreign policy actor the EU is: a civilian power (Duchêne 1973), normative power (Manners 2002) or market power (Damro 2012) among others (for a review see Peterson 2012). In this volume we adopt a distinctive approach to this debate. Rather than starting with the EU, we start with the problem and ask how has the EU dealt with that problem and how is that response similar or different from that of the U.S., a traditional, if distinctive,

²⁸ A Google Scholar search of citations of Rosenau 1968 and Kaarbo 2003 did not pick up any additional comparative works since 2003.

foreign policy actor? In doing so we also help to address the lack of systematic empirical explorations of the EU as a foreign policy actor (Niemann and Bretherton 2013: 262).

Although the empirical case for comparing the responses of the EU and the U.S. to the crisis in Ukraine is strong, there are some analytical challenges to the comparison. Two sets of differences particularly stand out (see Table 4). First, the EU and U.S. vary considerably in their power resources relative to Russia. As Mearsheimer (2014) and Walt (2014) contend, Russia is not a peer competitor to the U.S. It is a regional power. In particular, this reflects the relative military capabilities of the two countries. Although the U.S. has military superiority, its forces are relatively remote, after the draw-down of its forces in Europe after the end of the Cold War. The EU, by contrast, does not have a centralized army. Taken together its member states have considerable armed forces, but there is much duplication and there is considerable doubt about their combat readiness (Cooper 2003; Soesanto 2015). European forces are nearer to Russia than American ones, but weaker.

In economic terms, by contrast the EU is much more important to Russia than is the U.S. The EU is by far Russia's most important trade partner, accounting for more than 40 percent each of Russia's exports and imports (House of Lords 2015: 12; WTO 2014). In 2012 Russia's trade with the EU was 14 times greater than that with the US. In 2013 crude oil, natural gas and petroleum products accounted for 68 percent of Russia's total exports.²⁹ Seventy-one percent of its gas exports went to the EU (Commission 2014-330: 2). Much is made of EU's dependence on Russian natural gas. That dependence, however, varies sharply among the member states with some – such as Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia – getting all of their natural gas from Russia, while others – such as Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Romania and

²⁹ Energy Information Administration. Available at: <http://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.cfm?id=17231>. Accessed June 28 2015.

The UK – get less than 20 percent of their natural gas from Russia (Commission 2014-330: Annex 1). Moreover, the EU is a vital export market for Russia (see Stulberg, this volume). This interdependence is a source of both influence and vulnerability for both the EU and Russia, while the U.S. is largely on the sidelines.

Table 4 Comparing the transatlantic partners

	EU	U.S.
Geostrategic	Near peer	Not near peer
Military capacity	Limited, but proximate	Substantial, but at remove
Economic capacity	Significant, but highly interdependent	Low with low interdependence
Locus of authority	Decentralized with pooled decision-making	Highly centralized
Veto players (at central level)	Many veto players	Few veto players

The second major set of differences between the EU and the U.S. as foreign policy actors concerns how foreign policy is made. Foreign policy-making in the U.S., at least in the macro-sense, is relatively straight-forward. Responsibility for foreign policy is centralized at the federal level. Moreover, as the earlier discussion of the adoption of sanctions noted, under both the Constitution and secondary legislation, the president enjoys considerable authority to respond to crises such as that in Ukraine (Larson, this volume). The situation is very different in the EU, where foreign policy decision-making remains primarily in the hands of the member states, although they can and do take collective decisions (White 2001; Whitman, this volume). Because of the pooled nature of decision-making, all of the member state governments must

agree, meaning that any one member state can block common action. Thus the U.S. and the EU are very different in terms of the material and decision-making capabilities. Nonetheless, their policy choices look remarkably similar.

The other analytically distinctive feature of this volume is that we do not treat bilateral relationships in isolation. There are extensive, if largely descriptive literatures on U.S.-Russia (e.g., Roberts 2014; Stent 2012), EU-Russia (e.g., Haukkala 2010; Schmidt-Felzmann 2011), and U.S.-EU relations (e.g., McGuire and Smith 2008; Peterson and Pollack 2003), but these are treated as discrete bilateral relationships. In this volume, we explicitly consider how the three bilateral relationships interact.³⁰

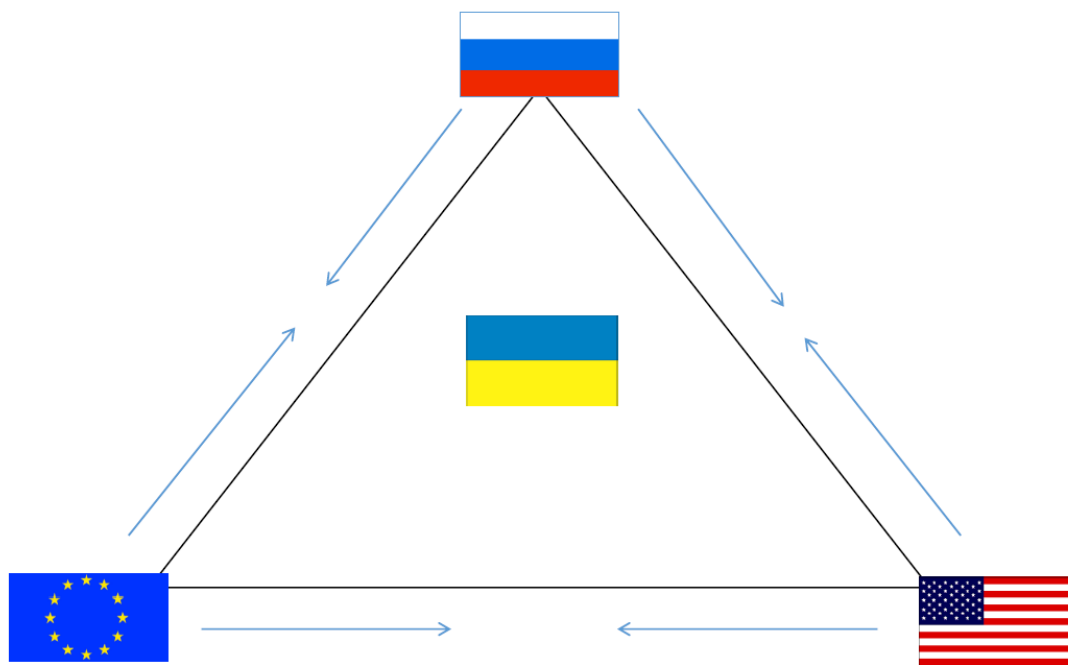
Introducing the triangular diplomacy frame and the volume

We deploy the framework of triangular diplomacy as a heuristic device to capture the interaction between the EU, the U.S. and Russia in the Ukrainian crisis. These three powers represent the vertices of the triangle in ‘triangular diplomacy,’ with Ukraine as the ‘object’ in the middle (See Figure 2). The idea, therefore, is to capture transatlantic cooperation in putting pressure on Russia. Our usage, therefore, differs from the triangular diplomacy of the 1970s when the U.S. sought to develop relations with China as a counter to and source of leverage against the Soviet Union.³¹

Figure 2 Triangular diplomacy

³⁰ A similar approach was used by Brown (2014) with respect to China.

³¹ U.S. Department of State Archives: *Foreign Relations of the U.S. 1969-1976*. Vol. 1 (<http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/nixon/i/21100.htm>)



While the three bilateral relationships provide the sides of our metaphorical triangle, our focal points are the three vertices. Rather than focusing on the bilateral relationship per se, we focus on how each of the protagonists views the situation and, critically, the behavior of the other major players. Thus we are in each case interested not just in why each party is doing what it is doing, but how it perceives the behaviors of the other parties and how the other parties perceive it. Thus we adopt a 360 degree perspective.

This volume has three complementary types of substantive contributions:

1. analyses of the foreign policies of the U.S. (Larson), EU (Whitman) and Russia (Mankoff), as well as Ukraine (Feklyunina and Romanova);
2. analysis of the internal debates and understandings of the crisis in the transatlantic partners (Hutton, Morell and Hayes) ;

3. analyses of the interactions in cross-cutting issues: international law (Fabry); sanctions (Drury and Patane); and energy (Stulberg).

The overarching aim of the volume is to draw together the findings of the substantive chapters and draw out the implications for foreign policy analysis and, in particular, how we can understand the EU as an international actor. The remainder of this chapter provides a more detailed overview of the organization and content of each contributing chapter.

Part One: Actors and Vertices

The first four chapters in Part One offer analyses of the principal players and their respective policies with regard to the immediate outbreak of the crisis. Deborah Larson's "Outsourced Diplomacy: The U.S., EU and the Ukraine Crisis" argues that the Obama administration was caught off guard by Russia's swift takeover of Crimea in March 2014 and the subsequent separatist conflict in southeast Ukraine. The crisis caused by Yanukovich's flight from Ukraine came as a surprise due to lack of US attention and involvement in EU negotiations for a partnership agreement with Ukraine, which Russian President Putin perceived as incompatible with Russian political and economic interests in Ukraine. Despite the seriousness of the threat posed by the Ukrainian crisis to European security, the Obama administration has delegated responsibility for negotiating with Putin to the EU and in particular Angela Merkel, largely because the crisis is viewed as mainly affecting European rather than global U.S. interests. Since the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, the United States has regarded Russia as a secondary, regional power. The crisis caused by Yanukovich's flight from Ukraine came as a surprise. Nonetheless, the US has worked with the EU to impose targeted economic sanctions on Russia, but imposing economic costs is not an effective response to nineteenth-century style power

politics, especially when Putin and the Russians define the issue as one of national identity. The US outsourcing of diplomacy also reflects Obama's personal antipathy toward Putin and the belief that high-level diplomacy is unlikely to dissuade the Russian President from his current policies. Larson concludes the chapter by arguing that the triangle of the U.S., EU, and Russia requires a stronger American axis in order to resolve the conflict.

The next chapter "The European Union and the Crisis in Ukraine: Observations on Actors, Instruments and Outcomes" by Richard Whitman examines how the crisis in Ukraine and the European Union's response to it informs observations about the EU in terms of actors, instruments and outcomes. First, it is necessary to disaggregate the EU as an international actor and to draw distinctions among the EU member states and European institutions. In the crisis Germany has, almost by default, emerged as the pivotal player. Second, the EU's reliance on 'structural diplomacy' in pursuit of milieu goals has been revealed to have considerable weaknesses and may even have contributed to the crisis with the pursuit of an association agreement with Ukraine seen as a threat by Russia. Third, despite considerable investment, including in the Lisbon Treaty, the EU's crisis management remains a work of considerable imperfection. Russian aggression has changed perceptions of threat and, for the first time, has prompted a real debate about European security, but there remains a profound aversion to military conflict. Thus, although the EU has been more effective than many had anticipated in imposing sanctions, the crisis in Ukraine has revealed serious limitations to the EU's aspirations to be an international actor.

The third chapter is explicitly comparative, analyzing the internal debates and the role of identity and norms within the European Union and the United States. Hutton, Hayes and Morell tackle these questions by contrasting the core discourses of elites in both the European Union

and the United States. The central premise of “Transatlantic Identity, Norms and Interests” is that the crisis exposes processes of meaning making, and that deeply embedded in these processes are societal systems of meaning making like identity. These societal systems establish the norms by which Russia’s actions are judged, the interests believed to be at stake, and set the stage for policy responses. The approach put forward here is unabashedly discourse oriented, in line with emerging literature treating foreign policy as discursive. The trilateral nature of the crisis provides an opportunity to examine how states and societies with different societal referent points negotiate the dynamic of meaning-making with a view toward the important process of crafting a coherent policy response. Put differently, while it is obvious that U.S. and EU policymakers have turned to sanctions as a response to Russia’s action in Crimea and the Ukraine, the questions of interest in this chapter center how the processes of meaning-making in the U.S. and EU and the international interaction of those processes made sanctions possible and likely.

In the fourth chapter “Russia’s Response to the U.S., the EU and Ukraine” Jeff Mankoff argues that Russia’s response to U.S. and EU policy in Ukraine is colored by resentment at what Moscow views as a long history of the West ignoring legitimate Russian interests, and a conviction that the current crisis is less about Ukraine than about the nature of the European security order itself. While the West perceives Putin’s Russia as a revisionist power seeking to overturn the post-Cold War order, Russia’s narrative focuses on the West’s alleged ongoing efforts to build security in Europe at Russian expense, with the EU’s Neighborhood Policy and Eastern Partnership, which aim to transform governance in partner countries along European lines, being seen as a major threat to Russia’s continued economic and political influence. Thus to Russian eyes the West was in essence taking advantage of Russian weakness to continue and

extend the policy of containment that motivated Western strategy during the Cold War. This narrative extends to the West's actions in Ukraine, with Ukraine's efforts to sign an association agreement with the EU sparking the crisis. In the Russian telling, the ouster of former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich was the culmination of a Western plot to promote regime change throughout the former Soviet Union, installing pro-Western governments as part of a strategy to push back Russian influence. Russia interprets the U.S. and EU sanctions policy similarly. Rather than change Russian behavior in Ukraine, which is the stated goal of sanctions, Moscow argues that the sanctions aim to promote both discontent both within the Kremlin elite and among the public at large sufficient to eventually bring down the Putin regime. Ironically though, the sanctions have allowed the Kremlin to deflect blame for Russia's economic problems to the West, at least for the time being.

The final chapter of the first section gives space to the eye of the storm. In "Looking through Ukraine's Lens: Kyiv's Assessment of Triangular Diplomacy" authors Valentina Feklyunina and Valentyna Romanova investigate how Ukrainian authorities have viewed the crisis, finding that they see it as a dramatic turning point not only in Ukraine's existence as a sovereign state, but also in the broader security environment in Europe and globally. More specifically, they see the crisis as testing the ability of the EU to prove itself as 'a powerful and effective subject of the global security policy'. This interpretation points to the significance of the EU's response (and western response more broadly) for Ukraine's domestic and foreign policies. The chapter examines how Ukrainian decision makers and political elites have reacted to and sought to influence the policy debates taking place in the EU and in the US, with a particular focus on the perceived conflict between their normative commitments and their economic interests.

After considering the primary actors and the various interests and identities at play in this conflict, **Part Two** brings into focus the cross-cutting nature and interactions of core issues such as energy, the role and limits of international law and the impact of sanctions and their various implications and impact in the crisis in Ukraine. The first chapter in this section poses a central question in its title, “Whose International Law? Legal Clashes in the Ukrainian Crisis.”

Here, Mikulas Fabry demonstrates that the United States and the European Union, which have led global opposition to Russian involvement in Ukraine, have held uniform views on the pertinent international legal issues raised by the crisis, including those related to Russian military intervention, the Crimean referendum and the absorption of Crimea into the Russian Federation. This uniformity is a notable development for two reasons. First, the last 20 years have been noteworthy for disagreements both among the member states of the European Union and between European Union member states and the United States over the interpretation of legal norms involved in high profile cases involving the actual or potential use of force. The Kosovo intervention (1999) and recognition (2008), the Iraq war (2003), and negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program (2003-) all generated significant divisions. Second, Russia consciously drew upon contested matters, especially those raised by Kosovo, to construct a plausible legal case for its actions in Ukraine. However, the impressive unity within the European Union and between the European Union and the United States does not necessarily signal a new era in EU common foreign policy or transatlantic relations. It may be a mere reflection of the sheer brazenness of Russia's conduct so close to the European Union, above all its execution of the first forcible incorporation of a territory across interstate boundaries in Europe since the end of World War II.

Next, Drury and Patane, examine the role of sanctions in the crisis in “Sanctions and Russia”. The authors argue that the impasse between the US, EU, and Russia over the invasion of Ukraine is a perfect illustration of how well states can coordinate a sanction policy, how well the sanctioned state can act both ex ante and ex post to mitigate the sanction’s impact and the sanctioning state’s unity. The US and EU levied significant economic sanctions against Moscow and particularly Putin’s ruling elite. While those sanctions cause distress, their impact is limited due to Putin’s policies and ability to control his base supporters. His maneuvers consequently widened cracks in the US- EU policy.

The last and arguably the most complex cross-cutting issue involves the implication of energy politics and is the subject of the chapter by Adam Stulberg titled “ Strategic Restraint and the Emerging Europe-Russia Gas Network.” Paradoxically, gas diplomacy throughout the 2013-15 Ukrainian crisis has been caught between restraint and cooperation. On the one hand, Russia, Ukraine, and the EU have each avoided acting rashly so as to avoid provoking the other, even as natural gas was wielded as an instrument of political gamesmanship. Unlike the episodes in 2006 and 2009, Russian gas deliveries to Ukraine and transit onto European markets were not arbitrarily disrupted at the apogee of the political conflict. Gas continued to flow through mid-June 2014, notwithstanding the annexation of Crimea, the unraveling of political authority in Ukraine, and the de facto flow of Russian fighters and weapons across the border. Successive temporary gas cut-offs occurred after negotiations began and substantive differences narrowed, and have not (to date) caused arbitrary transit shortfalls to Europe. On the other hand, strategic restraint has fallen far short of formal reconciliation. Although they avoided an outright gas war, the parties continued to posture for favorable commercial terms amid uncertainty of precipitous disruption. Agreements constituted temporary stopgaps, but did not resolve fundamental threats

to respective energy security posed by each other. What transpired to date constitutes more of a pause than secular shift to stable gas relations, leaving Russia, Ukraine and EU in a suspended but costly state of mutual dependence at risk of uncontrolled escalation. This chapter explicates the puzzle of “no war, no peace” in gas relations during the 2013-15 Ukrainian crisis through the lens of triangular diplomacy. Unlike other chapters in this volume, however, the three poles of central concern in the gas trade are Russia, Ukraine, and the EU, with the U.S. largely watching from the sidelines. It explores emerging opportunities and limits to coercive energy diplomacy, as well as prospects for mitigating tensions and strengthening U.S.-Euro-Russian energy security cooperation and governance.

Wrapping up the volume, the editors find the most apt summary of the reactions and policy positions taken by the transatlantic players might best described as “Similarities despite Differences” and thus the subtitle of the conclusion. Given the differences in their material capabilities; their stakes; their perceptions and their decision-making capacities the EU and the U.S. have responded to the crisis in such similar ways. Consequently, the volume argues that in this singular, but particularly demanding case, the EU behaved similarly to a much more conventional great power. Thus it makes a distinctive contribution to the burgeoning literature on the EU as a global actor. The conclusion also draws out three contributions to the literature on foreign policy analysis. First, by highlighting the strategic interaction among the key protagonists, the triangular diplomacy heuristic helps to illuminate how the crisis has evolved; the moves and counter moves of the key actors. Second, one of the most striking takeaways from the volume is the significance of misperceptions amongst the protagonists and the associated unanticipated consequences of their actions. Third, the volume highlights that the crisis in Ukraine is being contested not only on the ground, but also in the realm of ideas and norms, with

the different actors seeking to persuade their own and the others' publics of the validity of their actions. By exploring the most fundamental challenge to the European security architecture since the end of the Cold War through the heuristic of triangular diplomacy, this volume contributes to our understanding of the EU as an international actor and to the analysis of foreign policy more broadly.

About the authors

Alasdair Young is a Professor in the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs at Georgia Tech. He is Co-Director of the Center for European and Transatlantic Studies (CETS) and Director of the Jean Monnet Center of Excellence. He is chair of the European Union Studies Association (USA). He has authored or co-authored three books, including *Parochial Global Europe: 21st Century Trade Politics* (Oxford University Press, 2014) and edited or co-edited eight other volumes, including the seventh edition of *Policy-Making in the European Union* (Oxford University Press) and a special issue of the *Journal of European Public Policy* on the European Union as a global regulator (Vol. 22/9) both in 2015.

Vicki Birchfield is an Associate Professor in The Sam Nunn School of International Affairs at Georgia Tech and Director of the study abroad program on the European Union and Transatlantic Relations. She served as Director of the European Union Center of Excellence from 2008 to 2011 and currently co-directs the Center for European and Transatlantic Studies. She is presently working on a book manuscript entitled *The Transatlantic Values Debate and the Quest for Global Leadership*.

References

- Albright, M. (2014), "A United Front," *Foreign Policy*, 4 Sept.
- Brown, S. (2014), 'Power, Perception and Policymaking: The Foreign Policies of the US and the EU towards China,' PhD thesis, University of Glasgow.
- Commission (2014), "European Energy Security Strategy," COM(2014) 330 final, 28 May.
- Diuk, N. (2014), "Euromaidan: Ukraine's Self-Organizing Revolution," *World Affairs*, March-April.
- Fogh Rasmussen, A. (2014), "The Future of Euro-Atlantic Security," Carnegie Europe, 15 September. Available at: <http://carnegieeurope.eu/publications/?fa=56616>. Accessed Oct. 14 2015.
- Haukkala, H. (2010), *The EU-Russia Strategic Partnership. The limits of post-sovereignty in international relations*, London: Routledge
- Hill, C. (2003), *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, Palgrave.
- House of Lords (2015), "The EU and Russia: Before and Beyond the Crisis in Ukraine," European Union Committee, 6th Report of Session 2014-15, HL Paper 115, 20 February.
- Karbo, J. (2003), "Foreign Policy Analysis in the Twenty-First Century: Back to Comparison, Forward to Identity and Ideas," *International Studies Review*, 5/2: 156-163.
- King, C. (2015), "The Decline of International Studies: Why Flying Blind is Dangerous," *Foreign Affairs*, July-Aug., 88-98.
- Lavenex, S. (2011), "Concentric Circles of 'EUropean' integration: A Typology of EU External Governance Relations," *Comparative European Politics*, 9/3: 372-393.
- Mearsheimer, J. J. (2014), "Why the Ukraine crisis is the West's fault: the liberal delusions that provoked Putin." *Foreign Affairs*, Sept.-Oct.
- NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] (2015), 'The Readiness Action Plan,' up-dated 25 June. Available at: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_119353.htm?selectedLocale=en. Accessed June 29 2015.
- Niemann, A. and Bretherton, C. (2013), 'EU External Policy at the Crossroads: The Challenge of Actorness and Effectiveness' *International Relations*, 27/3: 261-75.
- Peterson, J. (2012), "The EU as a Global Actor," in E. Bomberg, J. Peterson and R. Corbett (eds), *The European Union: How Does It Work?* 3rd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

- Rees, W. (2011), *The U.S –EU Security Relationship*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Roberts, K. (2014), “Détente 2.0? The Meaning of Russia’s ‘Reset’ with the United States,” *International Studies Perspectives*, 15/1, 1-18.
- Rosenau, J. N. (1968), “Comparative Foreign Policy: Fad, Fantasy, or Field?” *International Studies Quarterly*, 12/3, 296-329.
- Schmidt, E. and Meyers, S. (2015), “NATO Refocuses on the Kremlin, Its Original Foe,” *New York Times*, June 23.
- Schmidt-Felzmann, A. (2011), ‘With or Without the EU? Understanding EU Member States’ Motivations for Dealing with Russia at the European or the National Level,’ PhD thesis, University of Glasgow.
- Smith, K. E. (2008), *European Foreign Policy in a Changing World*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Soesanto, S. (2015), “Europe needs less soldiers – but more European ones,” *NATO Review*, 12 February.
- Stent, A. (2012), “US-Russia Relations in the Second Obama Administration,” *Survival*, 54/6, 123-38.
- Walt, S. M. (2014), ‘NATO Owes Putin a Big Thank You,’ *Foreign Policy*, 4 Sept.
- White House (2015), *US National Security Strategy 2015*
- World Bank (2015), “Russia Economic Report: The Dawn of a New Economic Era?” Report No. 33, April.
- WTO [World Trade Organization] (2014), “Trade Profile: Russian Federation,” September. Available at:
<http://stat.wto.org/CountryProfile/WSDBCountryPFView.aspx?Language=E&Country=RU>. Accessed 24 April 2015.