

Vanguard of European Politics: The Role of Member States in the EU's Foreign Policy toward North Korea

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This article raises the question of what the driving force is behind the EU's North Korea policy. It then analyzes the policy measures undertaken by the EU towards North Korea on several fronts, including diplomatic recognition, human rights policy, Korean Energy Development Organization, and humanitarian aid. The investigation into this case shows that some of member countries lead initiatives and urge the EU to take action, whereby not only major members but also small members play a vanguard role.

Keywords: *EU, foreign policy, North Korea, KEDO, human rights*

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, the European Union (EU) has derived a remarkably active policy of engagement toward North Korea. The EU initiated its involvement in 1995, becoming one of the most significant donors of humanitarian aid to North Korea, and participating in the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) executive board founded in 1995 to help resolve the North Korean nuclear issue. In 2001, the EU formally established a diplomatic relationship with North Korea. This level of active engagement in North Korea has drawn particular attention in light of the fact that the United States, a powerful actor in Northeast Asia, has refused diplomatic recognition of and significant humanitarian aid toward North Korea.

After a decades-long process of successful internal economic integration, the EU entered into a stage of political integration and expanded its external activities to encompass relationships throughout the rest of the world. It has sought to expand foreign policy objectives and international cooperation; these efforts have assumed an ever-greater geographic scope and have progressed to include relations with North Korea. The EU's engagement in North Korea has the potential to significantly increase its visibility and influence as a global player; the Korean peninsula is doubtlessly one of the hotspots of international relations. It represents an area where contemporary issues of nuclear power are playing out and thus symbolizes the potential future unification of two long-divided states, all of which could significantly affect the future security order in Northeast Asia.

Despite the importance of EU-North Korean relations, the literature on this relationship remains very limited. This does not necessarily mean that the EU is an unimportant actor on the Korean peninsula. In reality, a number of characteristics place it in a unique position in relation to North Korea – characteristics that other powerful nations do not possess.

Initially, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) welcomed the EU's engagement policy for several reasons. First, the EU is a "distant power" with no strategic interests in the region. In addition, it has neither a colonial legacy (like Japan) nor "imperial" intentions (like the United States). The EU is also eligible to play the role of mediator through diplomatic channels with North Korea, a possibility that the United States and Japan

lack. Finally, the EU's policy position in relation to the DPRK is based mainly on fostering economic cooperation and providing humanitarian aid (Berkofsky 2003: 3).

Nevertheless, the DPRK has begun to question the potential benefits of deepening its relationship with the EU when a second nuclear crisis erupted on the Korean peninsula in November 2002 and the EU harshly criticized the DPRK's nuclear development program and followed the United States' hard-line position on the nuclear issue. The EU Council of Ministers was the first to issue a declaration of warning to North Korea. It stated that failure to resolve the nuclear issue would jeopardize future development of EU-DPRK relations. North Korea's Central News Agency responded by announcing that the DPRK no longer had an interest in the EU playing the role of mediator.

This paper raises questions as to the driving force behind the EU's North Korea policy in order to determine how EU foreign policy decisions are made. Two contending perspectives are generally used to explain how EU common foreign policy is developed, and will be discussed in this paper: supranationalism and intergovernmentalism. In other words, is Brussels deciding and driving a policy of active engagement in North Korea based on principles of supranationalism, or do member states determine the development of the EU's North Korea policy according to intergovernmentalism?

In the case of the stance regarding North Korea, we might see that without any prior intergovernmental consensus, some EU member states have led initiatives to incite Brussels to active engagement in North Korea. For this reason, the existing theoretical approaches of supranationalism and intergovernmentalism could not sufficiently explain the EU's North Korean policy. Thus, a need exists to explore a new conceptual perspective in order to understand better the EU's common foreign policy. The argument presented here is that an accurate understanding can be achieved by focusing on the interaction between all actors at both the national and supranational levels.

In exploring this matter, this paper first examines existing conceptual approaches to the EU's common foreign policy. After reviewing theories of supranationalism and intergovernmentalism, alternative perspectives to the common foreign policy are suggested in light of this information as to the interactions between the supranational and national levels. The article then analyzes the EU's policy measures towards the DPRK on several fronts, including diplomatic recognition, human rights policy, KEDO, and humanitarian aid. Such investigation into the various policy arenas will help to determine the characteristics of the EU's North Korea policy and the nature of the process by which EU common foreign policy is developed.

2. CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES TO FOREIGN POLICY COOPERATION IN THE EU

In 1970, the European Community (EC) foreign ministers launched the European Political Cooperation (EPC) to coordinate foreign policies of member states. This provided momentum for political spill-over, which meant that economic integration induced a politically more united Europe. While the long-term goal of the EPC was ambitious, its start was cautious. The EPC's institutional design was severely limited in that the organization was not based on a legal treaty and separate entity from the supranational EC and security matters were not considered on its agenda. Such limitations were overcome when the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) established in the framework of the Maastricht Treaty in 1991 replaced the EPC. The EPC was eventually institutionalized into a legally

binding policymaking process capable of producing common positions and joint actions on a wide range of global problems, including security issues (Smith 2004: 1).

The EU's attempts to cooperate on foreign policy have been suggested in essentially two ways: either through EU member states at the national level, or through EU organizations acting on behalf of EU member states. As a result, two mainstream theories have evolved in the growing literature on Europe's external relations.

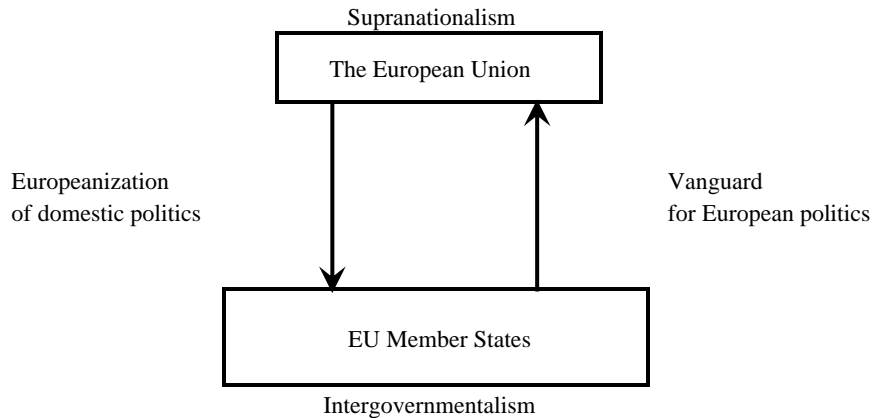
Intergovernmental theorists see the emerging order for international cooperation as the result of negotiations among sovereign states. For realists, international cooperation — particularly on security issues — is problematic even under propitious circumstances. Joseph M. Grieco points out that the relative gains garnered from cooperation often concerns states more than absolute gains. State actors fear that arrangements that benefit all, but provide greater benefits to some, expose some states to future external threats. Realists believe that international institutions are often created as a result of the active participation of dominant states whose power and interests determine outcomes of the cooperation (Grieco 1988: 493).

The concept of intergovernmentalism is realist-based and stresses the power of individual states. Strong countries willingly take part in the decision-making process, typically in the European Council or Council of Ministers, because they expect that their greater bargaining power will allow them to easily satisfy their national interests. If, for example, more powerful nations like Germany, the United Kingdom, and France dictate European policy toward the DPRK, then intergovernmentalism becomes the dominant principle in the implementation of the CFSP (Smith 2004: 20).

However, intergovernmental theories tend to overlook the role small EU states play in foreign policy cooperation. Supranationalism suggests another process and focuses on the activities of supranational EU actors, chiefly the European Commission and the European Court. This theory is supported by neo-functionalists, who argue that supranational organizations become independently strengthened and extended via the spill-over effect of cooperation from one domain into other domains (Caporaso & Keeler 1995). From this viewpoint, large states within the EU cannot dominate cooperation processes since the rules allow all states to play a leadership role and to veto actions they oppose. Powerful actors are certainly important in the decision-making process, as realists argue, but institutions can also constrain the relative power of those actors (Smith 2004: 26).

Different principles motivate cooperation according to each of the perspectives described above. While interest-bargaining is the main mechanism functioning at the intergovernmental level, the problem-solving mechanism is the binding force at the supranational level (Scharpf 1988: 239-78). Some member states attempt to maintain a strictly intergovernmental mechanism, while other pro-integrationist states fear the restriction of the CFSP's supranational aspects by intergovernmentalism. Due to these different positions, neither intergovernmentalism nor supranationalism dominates the CFSP.

A complex set of dynamics defines influences between supranational and intergovernmental levels. A bi-directional relationship exists between the EU institution and its member states. In the first, downward direction, CFSP decision-making activities influence foreign policymaking in EU member states. Robert Ladrech refers to this as the "Europeanization of domestic politics;" an incremental process by which the EU's political and economic dynamics reorient the direction, shape, and organizational logic of national politics and policy-making (Ladrech 1994: 69).

Figure 1. Approaches to Foreign Policy Cooperation in the EU

The second, or upward direction has so far drawn little attention in literatures on EU foreign policy cooperation. According to this approach, it is the initiatives of member states that induce the European institutions to actively engage in external affairs. This can be named “Vanguard of European politics.”

These two approaches, Europeanization of domestic politics and Vanguard of European politics, reflect the interactions between national and supranational levels and help bridge the gap between intergovernmental approaches, which highlight the interests and capabilities of member states, and supranational approaches, which highlight activity on EU institutional level. As Figure 1 illustrates, however, a closer look at the EU foreign policy decision-making process reveals four stages of foreign policy cooperation.

Intergovernmentalism represents the initial stage of international cooperation, whereas supranationalism is only achieved at the final stage of cooperation. The Europeanization of domestic politics and the vanguard of European politics can be used to describe intergovernmentalism and supranationalism’s intermediate stages. The former is, of course, at a more advanced stage than the latter. Since the CFSP has recently moved beyond its incipient phase, these intermediate mechanisms should more properly explain the current process of foreign policy cooperation within the EU. Departing from this conceptual perspective, the next section will examine the EU’s foreign policy stance toward North Korea. In this case, it is member countries that lead initiatives and urge the EU to take action, whereby not only major members but also small members play a vanguard role.

3. EU DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION OF NORTH KOREA

Within the span of a few years, diplomatic relations were established between North Korea and nine EU countries: Italy and Great Britain in 2000; the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Germany, Luxemburg, and Greece in 2001; and, Ireland in 2003. Thus, all EU member states except France have enjoyed diplomatic ties with North Korea even prior to the EU’s 2004 eastward expansion. In 2006, the DPRK established diplomatic relations with 24 of 25 EU member states. In addition, North Korea has ties with many of the G8 countries, with the notable exceptions of the United States, Japan, and France. These developments

have helped it — to some extent — shed its isolationist image within the international community.

The process of diplomatic normalization between the EU and the DPRK began in December 1998, when the EU launched the first, senior-level political meetings with Pyongyang to improve bilateral relations. Since then, the EU has held five rounds of political dialogues. In 2000, a series of events further prompted active EU engagement on the peninsula, including the historic inter-Korean Summit in June, and the “Declaration for Peace on the Korean Peninsula” during the third ASEM summit held in October in Seoul. In addition, during a visit to Stockholm to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, South Korean president Kim Dae Jung proposed that the EU visit North Korea (Lee 2001: 281-6).

A diplomatic breakthrough, however, was triggered by EU member states. In January 2000, Italy established diplomatic ties with the DPRK, despite the fact that the political dialogue between Brussels and Pyongyang was ongoing. This action went against two Council Conclusions of October and November 1999, which had stressed a more coordinated approach toward the Korean peninsula (European Commission 2005). Yet Italy’s move was motivated by national interests, and stemmed from the desire to secure a diplomatic channel to prevent North Korea from transferring missile technology to North African countries, particularly to Libya (Sigal 2000: 4). Other member states followed suit in establishing diplomatic relations, thereby forcing the EU Commission in Brussels to abandon its reluctance to forge ties with North Korea.

Finally, delegations from the European Parliament visited North Korea in February 2001. The date chosen for the visit was perhaps its most remarkable aspect, as these activities coincided with Chairman Kim Jong Il’s birthday. Official delegations from the West had usually tried to circumvent this date in order to avoid the implication of support for the regime. Although a delegation from the EU Parliament had visited every year since 1998, the date of the fourth visit was deliberately chosen to communicate goodwill toward the North Korean regime (Frank 2002: 96).

Soon after, in May of 2001, Council President and Swedish Prime Minister Persson paid an official visit to Pyongyang, along with CFSP High Representative Javier Solana and External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten. The senior EU delegation arrived during a time when the United States was reviewing its policy toward North Korea. After the Bush administration was inaugurated in Washington that same year, dialogue between the United States and North Korea had all but ceased. The EU emerged as an alternative actor to the United States seeking to foster dialogue with North Korea in order to reduce tensions on the peninsula (Economist 2001).

Two weeks after the visit to Pyongyang, the European Commission decided — after consultation with member states — to establish diplomatic relations with the DPRK. It is the norm for the EU to obtain the unanimous approval of its member states when reaching decisions on diplomatic relations. Accordingly, in May 2001, all member states agreed to the EU’s plan. Although France refused to forge diplomatic relations with North Korea itself, it consented to the EU plan. France has remained cautious in its approach toward Pyongyang, arguing that diplomatic ties should require progress in human rights and nuclear non-proliferation, a tack contrary to that taken by Germany. Then German Chancellor Schroeder drew a parallel between his North Korean policy and Brandt’s Ostpolitik, contending that dialogue and contact eventuate in desired change (The Korea Times 2000).

One of the most important observations to be gleaned from this series of events — at least as concerns my argument here — is that the EU in Brussels neither led nor coordinated

member states' efforts to bring about diplomatic recognition of North Korea. Instead, efforts were initiated by the member states themselves — first Italy, followed by additional countries. The United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, and Germany diplomatically recognized the DPRK prior to the EU.

4. EU HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY TOWARD NORTH KOREA

Respect for human rights, democracy, and the rule of law — principles enshrined in the Maastricht Treaty's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) — guide the EU's foreign policy. Since 1992, the EU has included the topic of human rights in the text of all agreements with foreign countries. In particular, the EU values human rights when making decisions on providing assistance to developing countries (European Commission 2002).

In accord with this global approach, the EU voiced human rights concerns in political dialogue with the DPRK, and to some positive initial effect. North Korea has liberalized certain laws related to human rights; the 1998 constitutional revisions were instituted to protect the freedoms of residence and travel, and legalized various religious activities and broadened economic freedoms. In addition, the country has signed international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, although it has failed to meet its treaty obligations.

In its dealings with North Korea, the European Council identified human rights as a key concern along with inter-Korean reconciliation, non-proliferation issues, and economic structural reform. Specifically, it made expanded EU assistance conditional on human rights advances. During a May 2001 visit, the EU delegation cited human rights as a key discussion topic and both sides agreed to include human rights on the agenda for their political dialogue. The fourth EU-North Korea political dialogue convened in Brussels on June 13, 2001. Prior to this meeting, a North Korean delegation attended a two-day human rights seminar organized by Lund University, Sweden, during which delegation members presented their positions on the status of human rights in North Korea (The Korea Times 2001).

However, the inclusion of the human rights issue in the formal framework of political dialogue only resulted in a breakdown of regular talks in the following year. Initial enthusiasm based on the belief that the EU could promote human rights in the DPRK through its political dialogue and financial assistance proved to be premature.

Subsequently, France and Ireland initiated an active drive to promote an improved human rights policy in North Korea. These countries severely criticized North Korea for its human rights conditions and drew international attention to the issue. France was the principal protagonist behind the EU resolution that urged North Korea to improve the human rights of its people and was submitted to the 59th session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission in 2003. This resolution demanded that North Korean authorities cease punishing defectors, openly resolve international disputes over abductions of foreign nationals and ratify international conventions on torture prevention and racial discrimination elimination (The Korea Times 2004). This was the first resolution ever adopted by the UN Human Rights Commission that expressed deep concern over reports of systematic, widespread, and grave North Korean human rights violations.

Ireland championed a resolution that went even further and was passed in the name of the EU during the 60th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights in 2004. This resolution

warned of possible sanctions for failure to make real human rights progress in the country. The UN Commission passed the resolution, and moreover, appointed Thai law professor, Muntarbhorn, as a special rapporteur to investigate the human rights situation in North Korea (PSPD 2005). While a large majority of the 53-member United Nations Human Rights Commission adopted the EU resolution, South Korea — as in 2003 — abstained, fearful that by partaking, it might undermine its own dialogue with Pyongyang. To date, the South Korean government remains reluctant to actively confront the North on human rights issues.

Actions such as those spearheaded by France and Ireland have positioned the EU as the preeminent advocate for human rights in North Korea. The EU submitted its draft resolution to the United Nations Human Rights Commission in three consecutive sessions: the 59th, 60th, and 61st. Its efforts to promote human rights in the DPRK could indeed be considered a threat to the dictatorship in Pyongyang; after all, the Korean Central News Agency accused the EU of “political provocation” and warned that the EU resolution would have a “negative impact” on further EU-DPRK cooperation. In August 2005, the DPRK ordered all NGOs to leave the country until the end of the year, affecting organizations such as Britain’s Save the Children, the French group Handicap International and Premier Urgence and Sweden’s PMU Interlife (ABC news 2006). Even so, the EU has made its intention to press hard on the issue clear, giving human rights a prominent place — equal to the nuclear program — in North Korean policy.

5. EU PARTICIPATION IN KEDO

KEDO resulted from the Geneva Agreed Framework of 1994, which ended the first North Korean nuclear crisis. North Korea agreed to freeze its nuclear program in exchange for two 1,000-megawatt light-water reactors (LWR), with an annual 500,000-ton shipment of free heavy fuel oil, to continue until the first LWR was built. The agreement forestalled United States air strikes against North Korean nuclear facilities, which Pyongyang had reason to fear after the United States’ 1991 Gulf War victory (Park 2000: 535-53; Feffer 1999: 415-22).

KEDO, with South Korea, Japan, and the United States among its founding members, was set up in 1995 to oversee construction of the reactors and fuel oil provisions. The U.S. Clinton administration asked the EU to contribute to the venture, particularly when it needed additional financing for the promised heavy fuel oil shipments because its Republican-dominated United States Congress had begun to balk at providing continued funding. With the support of the European Parliament, the EU eventually agreed to participate in the KEDO project, when — represented by the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC) — it entered KEDO as an Executive Board Member in 1997. This helped make KEDO more credible and confirmed to North Korea that the Agreed Framework had true international backing (Martellini & Vogelaar 2000).

In terms of KEDO funding, South Korea and Japan financed the construction of the LWRs. South Korea bore the lion’s share — 70 percent — and Japan a hefty 20 percent, to carry a total of 90 percent of the overall costs for building the South Korean reactors. The United States and the EU contributed mainly in the form of heavy fuel oil supplies. The United States funded more than three-quarters of these costs, while the EU covered nearly 20 percent. As of 2005, North Korea received close to 90 million dollars worth of heavy fuel oil annually (Manyin 2005: 25).

Table 1. Financial Support to KEDO (thousand USD)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
ROK	1,800	8,865	3,000	50,590	6,408	308,872	271,063	288,715	333,019	137,095
Japan	5,800	19,000	6,930	3,597	3,590	130,010	108,600	82,080	87,471	33,962
U.S.	9,500	22,000	25,000	50,000	65,100	64,407	74,879	90,500	3,720	-
EAEC	-	6,262	28,392	17,640	15,570	14,255	-	36,840	1,328	1,090
Finland	94	123	94	91	92	75	76	-	-	-
Netherlands	500	290	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
U.K	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Germany	-	1,011	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Greece	-	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
France	-	-	-	504	-	-	-	-	-	-
Italy	-	-	-	-	1,821	-	-	-	-	-
Others	7,614	4,882	3,181	2,020	2,217	3,270	2,153	2,018	-	-

Source: KEDO Annual Report 2003, pp. 12-5

Despite continued heavy fuel oil supply shipments, North Korea subsequently cited construction delays as justification for abrogating the Geneva Agreed Framework, and announced that it would resume nuclear activities in 2002. The second nuclear crisis erupted when North Korea admitted — during the United States' Special Envoy James Kelly's visit to Pyongyang in October 2002 — to secret efforts to develop a highly enriched uranium program and withdrew from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (Yun 2004; Cossa 2003: 7-31; Yoo 2003). The KEDO executive board in turn suspended fuel oil deliveries in November 2002. Since that time, the United States has made no financial contributions to KEDO. In 2003, the KEDO executive board resolved to suspend reactor construction for one year, and did so again in 2004 (Harrison 2005: 99-110). In January 2006, KEDO withdrew all workers from the LWR project site in Kumho, North Korea, effectively halting all future work on the reactor project.

As Table 1 shows, in addition to the four executive member states, a number of countries have participated in financing KEDO, largely in order to demonstrate that there was broad international support for the venture. Canada, New Zealand, and Brunei are among the relatively large, non-European donor countries. The order of all contributors is arranged in the table by executive members first, followed by EU members, and then other countries.

According to the table, the EAEC (European Atomic Energy Community) began to provide KEDO with financial support of around 6 million USD in 1996. In the subsequent year, upon becoming a member of the Executive Board, it expanded its contribution to 28 million USD. However, EU member states made individual contributions to KEDO earlier than the EAEC did. In 1995, Finland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom participated in the financing, and in 1996 Germany and Greece followed suit. All together, these countries supported KEDO projects with more than 3 million USD over its first two-year period. However, their support ceased after the EAEC officially took on the responsibility of financing the KEDO project in 1997. Exceptions include France, which contributed in 1998, Italy, which paid once in 1999, and Finland, which financially supported KEDO from 1995 until 2001.

It is important to note that member states participated in financing KEDO earlier than the EU did as a whole. Both large and small member countries took the lead in this case. Finland,

Greece, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Germany all played a vanguard role in the EU's participation in KEDO.

6. EU HUMANITARIAN AID TO NORTH KOREA

The EU is one of the largest and most consistent aid providers to North Korea. The first such EU undertaking came in 1995, when widespread famine due to heavy flooding prompted Pyongyang to make its first ever appeal for international aid. As Table 2 indicates, the EU responded with 290,000 euros (\$389,000) worth of humanitarian assistance. During the decade from 1995 to 2004, the EU donated approximately 300 million euros (\$400 million) to the DPRK, including contributions to the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) and the World Food Program (WFP). Donations to the WFP from individual EU member states have also been included in the table. Most of the humanitarian aid provided food and technical assistance.

The initial rounds of EU humanitarian aid were of an emergency nature, limited to emergency rations and supplies of medical kits, blankets, tents, and winter clothing. In 1997, however, following repeated natural disasters and economic crises, North Korea once again appealed for extensive food aid (Liem 1999: 325-32; Aaltola 1999: 371-86). In response, the EU drew 20 million euros (\$27 million) from its Food Aid Budget to launch a large-scale aid program for North Korea.

Since that time, EU humanitarian aid to North Korea has been scaled back as dramatic food shortages have declined. EU contributions plunged from 77.6 million euros (\$104 million) in 1997, to 59.9 million euros (\$80 million) in 1998, and further declined to 34.8 million euros (\$47 million) in 1999 (Table 2). Nevertheless, shortages continue to take a toll on North Korea's most vulnerable — children, the elderly, and pregnant and nursing women. Statistics on children's nutritional status in the country are alarming: 21 percent are underweight and 42 percent suffer from chronic malnutrition, while another nine percent suffer from acute malnutrition. Overall, the effects of ongoing deprivation are apparent across the population, with the average life expectancy in North Korea dropping by six years between 1995 and 1999 (Tomlinson 1997; Owen-Davies 2001). Recognizing that food aid alone cannot decisively resolve food deficiencies, the EU Commission subsequently adopted the strategy of combining food aid with agricultural rehabilitation and production in 1998, initiating structural food security assistance that focused on supplying fertilizer, agricultural expertise, and machinery.

The EU extended this same logic of instilling longer-term solutions to foster self-sufficiency and improve the humanitarian conditions in North Korea when it began providing technical assistance for long-term sustainable economic development in addition to food aid and humanitarian assistance. The EU investigated North Korea's economy in 2001 in order to devise a technical assistance strategy, an approach that resulted in several

Table 2. EU Humanitarian Aid to North Korea Between 1995 and 2004 (million euros)

Year	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	Total
Aid	0.29	0.5	77.6	59.9	34.8	33.4	27.9	41.1	26.0	65.0	302.0

Source: The Delegation of the European Commission to the Republic of Korea European Commission, *Humanitarian Assistance to North Korea* (2005), <http://www.delkor.cec.eu.int/en/eukorea/humanitarian.htm>

significant outcomes. It was concluded that the agricultural sector could not boost the economy. Instead, the EU determined that North Korea needed a major change in its legal environment and capacity building, which in turn would contribute to economic reform. This strategy was incorporated into the EU's National Indicative Program (NIP), a follow-up and amendment to the 2000 Country Strategy Paper that covered a period of three years (2002-2004) and foresaw 15 million euros (\$20 million) for technical assistance projects (European Commission 2001).

This capacity building strategy encountered significant political obstacles, however, when the nuclear crisis erupted in 2002. Technical assistance projects, scheduled to start in summer 2002, were put on hold, and the EU made fulfillment of the envisioned NIP project conditional on the abandonment of North Korea's nuclear weapons program. In other words, the EU shifted from a policy of "engagement" to one of "conditional engagement" (Berkofsky 2003: 31). In an effort to resolve the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula, the European Parliament passed a draft resolution urging the EU Commission and Council to host seven-party talks in Brussels to discuss the problem. At the same time, it was made clear that the EU would adopt a principle of "No say, no pay" with respect to its North Korean policy (Kwon & Ford 2005).

Although the EU showed extreme reluctance in providing the DPRK with any support beyond humanitarian assistance at the height of the nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula, its determination to continue humanitarian aid during that time can be understood as a decision to separate political and security issues from humanitarian issues. As Table 2 illustrates, the EU expanded humanitarian aid despite the nuclear crisis; aid soared to 65 million euros (\$87 million) in 2004, more than double that provided during 2003.

The EU has not changed this position even after North Korea claimed to have conducted a nuclear test on October 9, 2006. External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner condemned the DPRK saying the actions were not only a threat to the region but to the entire non-proliferation regime. She called on the EU member states with seats on the Security Council to make due response in the UN. Turning to humanitarian assistance, she, however, reaffirmed EU's solidarity with the people of North Korea (The European Union 2006).

Table 3. EU Humanitarian Aid to North Korea (thousand euros)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	SUM
ECHO	290	544	20,215	4,665	4,800	8,050	3,365	21,025	17,250	16,750	17,600	114,554
Germany	0	0	1,772	1,123	1,946	750	2,378	3,163	4,650	5,261	5,666	26,709
Sweden	0	0	1,496	3,367	468	3,522	2,940	2,829	0	4,270	3,356	22,248
Denmark	0	0	3,607	970	0	0	2,146	1,613	2,019	538	670	11,563
Finland	0	0	256	168	1,009	0	841	1,000	1,300	1,450	1,200	7,224
U. K.	0	0	1,814	0	0	83	1,912	0	0	1,540	0	5,349
Netherlands	0	0	953	226	229	304	0	665	700	500	0	3,577
Ireland	0	0	0	0	222	0	0	0	150	950	250	1,572
Luxemburg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	521	0	0	521
Austria	0	0	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	350	0	386
Italy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	150	0	0	0	150
France	0	0	0	91	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	141
Greece	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	0	30
SUM	290	544	30,149	10,610	8,675	12,709	13,582	30,445	26,590	31,689	28,742	194,025

Source: ECHO, HOLIS 14 Points, <https://hac.cec.eu.int/listReport>.

Table 3 shows the EU's contribution to the EC Humanitarian Aid Office and bilateral aid provided by a number of member states to North Korea. ECHO financed projects supervised through its Pyongyang support office that were implemented by NGOs (European Commission 2004). As described earlier, ECHO started its assistance with a contribution of 290,000 euros (\$389,000) in 1995. It spent the highest amounts — more than 20 million euros (\$27 million) — in 1997 and 2002. In recent years, the budget has remained constant at around 17 million euros (\$23 million) annually. The ECHO office in Pyongyang is the only Western institution that did not close at the end of 2005, when the DPRK forced nearly all humanitarian organizations to leave the country.

Unlike the EU as a whole, individual member countries did not begin offering bilateral assistance to the DPRK until 1997. Germany and Sweden in particular have been active and generous, running their own aid programs at an annual cost of more than 20 million euros (\$27 million), respectively. Denmark, Finland, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands have not shown as much enthusiasm for humanitarian aid to North Korea, while Luxemburg, Austria, Italy, France, and Greece have made the least and smallest contributions.

Humanitarian aid was the only area in which the EU in Brussels took the lead prior to member states and encouraged them to provide aid to North Korea. The European Commission offered the largest total amount of 114 million euros (\$153 million) by December 2005, whereas the member countries contributed only 80 million euros (\$107 million) altogether. In this respect, the European Commission took the initiative as a supranational actor, thereby creating an extraordinary place for humanitarian aid in its North Korean policy in comparison to its level of engagement in other areas.

7. CONCLUSION

This paper has addressed the question of how EU foreign policy has been conducted in regards to North Korea. In order to shed light on the pattern of common foreign policy making, four approaches have been analyzed. We have seen that supranationalism emphasizes the role of the EU Commission and European Parliament, and that its supporters argue that supranational actors lead the CFSP. Intergovernmentalism, on the other hand, stresses the role of sovereign states and contends that the CFSP can be made through successful bargaining among member states. The Europeanization of domestic politics reflects the interaction between the EU and its member states with an emphasis on the influence moving downward from above, while the vanguard of European politics stresses the movement of forces affecting policy in the reverse direction. This paper has argued that the EU's North Korea policy could be best understood using the concept of the vanguard of European politics. The evidence to support this argument has appeared through an examination of four key policy areas — diplomatic recognition, human rights policy, KEDO, and humanitarian aid.

This analysis of the EU's North Korea policy draws the following conclusions. First, some member states have played a leading role and encouraged the EU to become more actively engaged in North Korea in three key areas: diplomatic recognition, human rights policy, and KEDO. In only one area — humanitarian aid — did the EU take the lead and urge its member states to support the policy. Second, both strong states and small states played a leading role in EU's North Korea policy. Italy made a breakthrough in diplomatic recognition, whereas France and Ireland were central actors in seeing that human rights

policy was carried out in North Korea. In addition, Finland and the Netherlands participated in financing KEDO even prior to the EU's decision to do so.

One can understand the vanguard character of the member states in the EU's North Korean policy by examining the process by which the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy has developed. As we have seen, the EU's cooperation on foreign policy was established in 1970 in the framework of the EPC; however, it only gained substantial momentum after the 1991 Maastricht Treaty. Yet the CFSP still is not mature, as its hesitant actions regarding the issue of the former Yugoslavia and debates surrounding the situation in Iraq have shown. One should conclude that despite 15 years of experience in working towards foreign policy cooperation, the CFSP is still an underdeveloped policy area. From this viewpoint, the CFSP is in the process of evolving from a position determined by intergovernmentalism toward one of supranationalism. The EU's North Korean policy will continue to be determined by the relative characteristics of these two positions as its policy moves further along the continuum between them.

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