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## THE EUROPEAN UNION'S CLIMATE POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE: NORMATIVE POWER EUROPE IN ACTION?

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### Abstract

The EU's aspirations for leadership are also evident in regional and global climate policy, especially given the urgency of the problem of rising global temperatures. Since 2014, EU member states have been actively involved in shaping the organisation's legislative framework on climate policy.

This article set out to determine when the EU gained the capability to act as a normative green power and to assess whether the EU acted as an established normative power in forming a climate partnership with Ukraine from the 1990s to the first half of 2024. The research is organized into two chapters. Chapter 1 explores two dimensions of the behavioral logic of different foreign policy actors: norm compliance and norm diffusion. Normative actors of foreign policy, unlike non-normative ones, are guided by the logic of appropriateness in the process of compliance with norms and the logic of argumentation in the process of diffusion of norms. Chapter 2 identifies the periods when the EU complied with climate norms according to the logic of appropriateness and spread climate norms in Ukraine according to the logic of arguing.

After analyzing two dimensions of the EU's behavioral logic in detail, it can be concluded that it was only after 2019 that the EU began to act as an established normative power in building a climate partnership with Ukraine. In other words, from this point onward, the EU both complied with climate norms according to the logic of appropriateness and diffused them in Ukraine according to the logic of arguing. The European Climate Law, enacted in 2021, further demonstrated the EU's dedication to complying with climate norms based on the logic of appropriateness, establishing legislative obligations to achieve climate neutrality by 2050.

**Keywords:** normative foreign policy actor, EU's climate policy towards Ukraine, normative power, EU's climate acquis, climate partnership between Ukraine and the EU, behavioral logic of foreign policy actors, EU's foreign policy behavior paradigm

## КЛІМАТИЧНА ПОЛІТИКА ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОГО СОЮЗУ ЩОДО УКРАЇНИ: НОРМАТИВНА СИЛА ЄВРОПИ В ДІЇ?

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### **Анотація**

Прагнення ЄС до лідерства простежується й питанні регіональної та глобальної кліматичної політики, особливо з огляду на нагальність проблеми підвищення глобальної температури. Починаючи з 2014 р. країни-члени ЄС активно долучаються до формування законодавчої бази організації щодо кліматичної політики.

Стаття має на меті визначити, коли ЄС набув спроможності активізувати політику «нормативної зеленої сили», а також оцінити, чи діяв ЄС як сформований нормативний актор зовнішньої політики в процесі формування кліматичного партнерства з Україною у період з 1990-х років до першої половини 2024 року. Стаття містить два розділи. У першому розділі розглядаються два виміри поведінкової логіки різних акторів зовнішньої політики: дотримання норм і поширення норм. Нормативний актор зовнішньої політики, на відміну від ненормативних, керується логікою доречності в процесі дотримання норм і логікою аргументації в процесі дифузії норм. У другому розділі визначаються періоди, коли ЄС дотримувався кліматичних норм відповідно до логіки відповідності та поширював кліматичні норми в Україні, керуючись логікою аргументації.

Проведений аналіз двох вимірів поведінкової логіки ЄС дозволив дійти висновку, що лише після 2019 року ЄС почав діяти як сформований нормативний актор зовнішньої політики в процесі розбудови кліматичного партнерства з Україною. Інакше кажучи, лише відтоді ЄС почав поширювати кліматичні норми в Україні відповідно до логіки аргументації, водночас дотримуючись таких норм відповідно до логіки відповідності. Європейський кліматичний закон, прийнятий у 2021 році, ще більше продемонстрував відданість ЄС дотриманню кліматичних норм, заснованих на логіці доцільності, встановивши законодавчі зобов'язання щодо досягнення кліматичної нейтральності до 2050 року.

**Ключові слова:** нормативний актор зовнішньої політики, кліматична політика ЄС щодо України, кліматичні норми, кліматичне *acquis* ЄС, кліматичне партнерство між Україною та ЄС, поведінкова логіка акторів зовнішньої політики, зовнішньополітична поведінкова парадигма ЄС

**Introduction.** Enhancing the EU's global presence and influence on decision-making was a key priority for the Juncker Commission. Consequently, the EU's ambition to lead in strategic areas has been evident in the European Union's legislative framework, especially since 2014. Among these, the EU's leadership in regional and global climate policy stands out, particularly given the urgency of rising global temperatures. According to the UN Environment Programme, if greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced as outlined in the Paris Agreement, global temperatures could rise by 2.8°C by the end of the century.

The EU's desire to position itself as a global climate leader has been reinforced in legislative acts developed especially after the Paris Agreement and with the European Green Deal. However, the EU began pursuing this leadership at the end of the last century, participating in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Framework

Convention on Climate Change before the Earth Summit. The EU's fifth Environmental Action Programme (1993-2000) acknowledged the need to protect the climate from human-induced changes and promoted sustainable development worldwide, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, through technical and financial support.

The EU has thus positioned itself as a climate leader, seeking to foster collective responsibility for climate action. This raises questions about its foreign policy means and whether it exercised 'normative power' in its climate policy toward various countries.

**Discussions.** Scholars have long debated the impact of the EU on global climate policy formation. One of the main challenges faced by many researchers is the identification of approaches that the EU is taking to achieve climate leadership. Some researchers, such as R.K.W. Wurzel, J. Connelly, D. Liefferink, M. Grubb, J. Gupta, J.B. Skjærseth, F. Yamin, K. Biedenkopf, C. Dupont, D. Torney (Wurzel, Connelly, & Liefferink, 2017; Gupta & Grubb, 2000; Skjærseth, 2017; Yamin, 2000; Biedenkopf, Dupont & Torney, 2022), argue that the EU does not function as a genuine normative foreign policy actor because it sometimes employs a structural approach<sup>1</sup> to establish its climate leadership. On the other hand, however, other researchers, including M. Speroni, I.-M. Marcu, L. Cohen-Tanugi, G. Dikaïos, M.E. Biresselioğlu, B.S. Zehra, and F. Savaş (Speroni, 2018; Marcu, 2021; Cohen-Tanugi, 2021; Dikaïos, 2024; Biresselioğlu, Solak & Savaş, 2023), do not dispute the EU's role as a major normative power in promoting global climate sustainability. The study aims to determine if the EU has acted as a normative green power throughout its history.

Another area of interest for researchers is to explore whether the EU has exercised 'normative power' in its climate policy toward specific countries worldwide. While some studies have been conducted to identify whether the EU acted as a normative green power in its interactions with China (Pilsner, 2016; Shaohua, 2015; Ferenczy, 2021), Brazil (Afionis & Stringer, 2012), New Zealand (Macdonald, 2009), and African states (Scheipers & Sicurelli, 2008), etc., there have been no attempts to thoroughly investigate the behavioral logic used by the EU to promote climate norms in Ukraine.

Ukraine represents an interesting case to test the normative character of the EU's foreign policy decisions. There is a clear willingness from Ukraine to voluntarily comply with EU climate norms<sup>2</sup> and align its domestic laws with the EU's climate acquires. However, due to the lack of research, it is unclear whether this willingness is due to EU prolonged pressure or a long-term EU normative foreign policy.

To address this research gap, this study set out to determine when the EU gained the capability to act as a normative green power (i.e. when the EU began to prioritize the logic of appropriateness in the climate norm compliance) and to assess whether the EU acted as an established normative power in building a climate partnership with Ukraine from the 1990s to the first half of 2024 (i.e. whether the EU acted in accordance with the behavioral logic of a normative foreign policy actor during the specified period<sup>3</sup>).

**Research Design.** This qualitative study employs document analysis, analytic generalization, and logical methods to understand the specifics of the behavioral logic of normative foreign policy actors. By using these methods and the historical method, the study also seeks to illuminate key aspects of the EU's long-term climate strategy and its interaction with Ukraine. The research is organized into two chapters, as follows:

Chapter 1 begins by laying out the research's theoretical dimensions and examines the peculiarities of the normative foreign policy actor's behavioral model. This chapter

<sup>1</sup> The state's structural power is measured by its ability to dominate the peripheral states, typically through hard power (Galtung, 1973: 33-47).

<sup>2</sup> Throughout this research paper, the term 'climate norms' will refer to norms derived from acts making up the EU's climate acquires.

<sup>3</sup> This entails examining whether the EU both complied with climate norms according to the *logic of appropriateness* and diffused them in Ukraine according to the *logic of arguing* from the 1990s to the first half of 2024.

explores two dimensions of the behavioral logic of different foreign policy actors: norm compliance and norm diffusion. It explains that the normative foreign policy actor, unlike non-normative actors, is guided by the logic of appropriateness in the norm compliance process and the logic of arguing in the norm diffusion process. Additionally, this chapter focuses on the behavioral models of non-normative actors, such as the status quo, imperial, and realpolitik foreign policy actors.

Chapter 2 identifies the historical periods when the EU acted as an established normative power in building climate dialogue with Ukraine. Subchapter 2.1. identifies periods when the EU complied with climate norms according to the logic of appropriateness. Subchapter 2.2. defines the periods when the EU diffused climate norms in Ukraine according to the logic of arguing.

**Behavioral models of (non)normative foreign policy actors.** Danish professor J. Manners introduced the term ‘normative power’ to denote the EU’s ability to shape perceptions of ‘norm’ in international relations and to lead by example in upholding the principles of morality and social values (Manners, 2002: 238-239, 252). His beliefs regarding the nature of the EU’s power are embodied in the corresponding concept of ‘Normative Power Europe’ (NPE) developed within the liberal-idealist paradigm. Since the introduction of Manners’ concept in 2002, scholars, practitioners, policymakers, and the general public have become increasingly interested in defining the behavioral model of a normative foreign policy actor.

The normative foreign policy paradigm assumes that actors act in accordance with the logic of appropriateness in the process of norm compliance<sup>4</sup> – i.e. they comply with internationally recognized norms<sup>5</sup>, such as those endorsed by the UN, “even if these norms minimize their utility because they consider this behavior appropriate” (Janusch, 2016: 6; Kahler, 1998: 919-941). Norms that are complied with the logic of appropriateness are known as ‘constitutive norms’<sup>6</sup>, and goals to spread such norms are known as ‘the milieu goals’ (or normative foreign policy goals) (Wolfers, 1962: 73-78; Wolfers, 1962: 73-78). According to N. Tocci, these goals are “pursued consistently over time and not only at the time when they also represent immediate possession goals” (Tocci, 2008: 7).

Genuine normative actors are guided by the logic of arguing when implementing foreign policy. This means that normative foreign policy actors use arguments to persuade other parties without resorting to threats, sanctions, coercion, or rewards. They are also open to being persuaded by better arguments (Janusch, 2016: 6; Risse, 2000: 3-23).

Unlike a hegemon, empire, or great power, the normative power is typically considered to be less aggressive, martial, and evil<sup>7</sup>. It more often uses positive incentives (i.e. normative foreign policy means) such as diplomatic means, social aid, technical assistance, etc. to achieve normative foreign policy goals – i.e. to have a major normative impact on other actors, resulting in socialization, partnership, and joint ownership (the logic of arguing) (Manners, 2009; Tocci, 2008: 7).

I. Manners systematized the primary foreign policy means used by the normative actor to diffuse constitutive norms: contagion, informational diffusion, procedural

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<sup>4</sup> As noted by T. Risse, normative foreign policy actors prioritize doing what they believe is the right thing rather than simply maximizing or optimizing their given preferences (Risse, 2000: 4).

<sup>5</sup> I. Manners identified a set of norms comprising the *acquis communautaire* that could be promoted by a normative foreign policy actor. Such norms include the rule of law, peace, democracy, liberty, human rights, sustainable development, anti-discrimination, social solidarity, and good governance (Manners, 2002: 242-244).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> It demonstrates ideational power rather than material or physical power and conducts politics guided by morals, justice, human rights, democracy, and free markets (Telo, 2007; Whitman, 1998; Manners, 2002; Manners, 2009).

diffusion, transference, overt diffusion, and cultural filter<sup>8</sup>. In simple terms, a normative foreign policy actor contributes to the spread of certain norms in a particular state by setting an example to follow (contagion), establishing strategic relations (informational diffusion), formalizing relationships, in particular, by concluding joint agreements (procedural diffusion), offering trade preferences, technical or financial assistance (transference), establishing a permanent mission or representative (overt diffusion), and promoting a shared social, cultural and political identity (cultural filter) (Manners, 2002: 244-245).

Apart from the normative foreign policy actors that are characterized by the choice of the logic of appropriateness in the process of constitutive norm compliance and by normative foreign policy means to achieve milieu goals (the logic of arguing), there are also non-normative foreign policy actors that comply with norms in accordance with the logic of consequentialism. This means that these actors will follow a norm as long as it maximizes benefits and find themselves 'competing with others for a share in values of limited supply'. Norms that are complied with the logic of consequentialism are known as 'non-constitutive' or 'regulative' (Janusch, 2016: 6-7).

These norms 'exist only in relation to the subject to whom the benefit or advantage, moral or material, would accrue' (Thin, September 6, 2019). The desire to comply with regulative norms is commonly referred to as 'the possession goal'. Such a goal is focused on enhancing or preserving things that are valuable to the actor<sup>9</sup>. Some of the non-normative foreign policy actors also diffuse norms in accordance with the logic of consequentialism, which is based on three assumptions: 1) actors will use any means to spread the norms that maximize their own benefits; 2) they will not easily be persuaded by superior arguments and will rarely abandon their norms; 3) physical power will determine which norms are accepted in world politics (Janusch, 2016: 6).

There are three main types of non-normative foreign policy actors: *realpolitik*, imperial, and status quo. *Realpolitik* foreign policy actors behave according to the logic of consequentialism. They use any foreign policy means, both coercive and non-coercive foreign policy means, in a way not authorized by international law to achieve the possession goal (i.e. the non-normative foreign policy goal) (Janusch, 2016: 5-7; Tocci, 2008: 12-13; Wolfers, 1962: 73-74)<sup>10</sup>. Accordingly, they refuse to abide by a certain norm if it minimizes benefits. These actors often use hard power to advance their interests, are not open to 'persuasion by superior argument', and rarely deviate from their usual line of conduct (Janusch, 2016: 6).

The imperial foreign policy actors do not feel constrained by existing laws, similar to the *realpolitik* actors. Empires, hegemons, and civilian powers may pursue normative foreign policy goals, not solely focused on maximizing benefits, but on imposing certain norms that they directly observe (Janusch, 2016: 6-7, 10-11; Tocci, 2008: 13; Wolfers, 1962: 73-74.). As H.J. Morgenthau rightly pointed out, a policy of imperialism is pursued by a state that aims to acquire more power through the 'expansion of its power beyond its frontiers' and 'seeks a favorable change in power status'. The imperial type of actor is not concerned with the truth implicit in its norms (Janusch, 2016: 7).

Convincing states to adopt certain norms is done by this actor using non-normative foreign policy means (in accordance with the logic of consequentialism). The likelihood of the empire changing its behavior under the normative actor's argumentative power is minimal, as in the case of the *realpolitik* foreign policy actor. On the other hand, status quo

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<sup>8</sup> In this article, the 'non-normative means' are considered as those chosen by the international actor in a way not authorized by international law to maximize its material gains and achieve possession goals.

<sup>9</sup> Such goals may include acquiring new territory, securing a seat on the United Nations Security Council, or gaining tariff preferences. Wolfers, *The Goals of Foreign Policy*, 73-74.

<sup>10</sup> The goal is to maximize their material benefits and gains, including economic and geopolitical ones.



actors aim to keep power and do not seek to change the distribution of power in their favor (Morgenthau, 1948: 21)<sup>11</sup>. They choose not to act if the 'expected utility costs of acting exceed the expected utility benefits' (the logic of consequentialism)<sup>12</sup> (Elster, 2015: 256-257; Tocci, 2008: 12-13).

In addition, these actors prefer using normative foreign policy means to achieve their goals, relinquishing physical strength in the norm diffusion process, and adhering to their domestic and international legal obligations (Manners & Diez, 2007: 173-88; Tocci, 2008). Thus, status quo actors, despite employing normative foreign policy means, do not seek to exert normative influence on other actors, resulting in a higher level of socialization or partnership (i.e. they prefer to achieve non-normative foreign policy goals) (Tocci, 2008: 7).

Understanding the behavioral logic of different foreign policy types makes it possible to determine if the EU acted as an established normative power in building climate dialogue with Ukraine from the 1990s to the first half of 2024.

### **Normative behavioral logic regarding the climate norm compliance and climate norm diffusion in Ukraine: a myth or a reality?**

**2.1. The EU's behavioral logic regarding the climate norm compliance.** Until the late 1980s, the EU's environmental policy was largely influenced by external narratives of the WMO, UNEP, and other entities. At that time, the EU lacked a basic legal framework for climate change mitigation and adaptation and the necessary knowledge to develop an effective strategy to address contemporary environmental challenges. European states gained the ability to act independently, establishing their own environmental and climate norms and determining foreign policy means for their further spread, only after the signing of the European Single Act in 1986<sup>13</sup>.

The EU's common climate policy formation was driven by significant events, including the first high-level Conference on the Environment in the Hague (1989), the Toronto Conference on the Changing Atmosphere (1988), The Noordwijk Ministerial Declaration on climate change (1989), the first session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in Geneva (1988), the Earth Summit (1992), and more.

The events outlined above prompted the EU to consider the assessment of the role of greenhouse gases in climate change for the first time in the early 1990s. A direct mention of the need to take measures to prevent and combat climate change in Europe occurred only in the fifth EU Environmental Action Program, which ran from 1993 to 2000. Therefore, the type of the EU's behavioral logic regarding climate norm compliance will be determined precisely from 1993, when the Union began developing its climate acquis.

Since the early 1990s, EU climate policy has shown two contrasting trends. On one hand, there has been a continuous expansion and strengthening of the legal and institutional framework for climate policy:

- In 1993, the fifth environmental action programme 'Toward Sustainability' was launched. This programme first separated the problem of climate change from other global environmental problems (European Union, 1993).

- In the 1990s, several important legal acts were adopted as part of the new environmental strategy. These include the Commission's Community strategy to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from cars and to improve fuel economy (20.12.1995), Directive 99/32/EC on the sulphur content of certain liquid fuels (26.04.1999) and Council Directive 96/61/EC concerning integrated pollution prevention and control (24.09.1996).

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<sup>11</sup> These foreign policy actors typically strive to establish a format of interaction with other states that involves no more than minimal risk for themselves.

<sup>12</sup> I.e. such actors do not seek to achieve normative foreign policy goals.

<sup>13</sup> The introduction of Chapter VII 'Environment' to the EU's primary legislation (Treaty of Rome), along with granting the Community the authority to develop and enforce an environmental policy, is a direct outcome of the adoption of the Single European Act in 1986 (European Union, 1987).

– Additionally, the Maastricht Treaty (1992) gave environmental action the status of an EU policy (Art. 130r), established the principle of integrating environmental issues into other types of EU policy, and set the goal for EU member states to achieve sustainable and balanced development. The treaty also mandated member states to implement all conventions adopted at the EU level within specified time limits (European Union, 1992).

– In 1994, the European Environment Agency (EEA) was officially established in Copenhagen (European Environment Agency).

– The Amsterdam Agreement, adopted in 1997, made environmental policy a key political objective of the Union (European Union, 1997).

– According to the results of the 3rd Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the EU agreed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 8% by 2008-2012 in 1998 (Commission of the European Communities, 1998: 5). The EU initially pushed for a 15% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, but ultimately settled for an 8% reduction to reach a consensus (United Nations, 1997)<sup>14</sup>.

However, on the other hand, as American professor Anthony R. Zito rightly pointed out, the increasing legal and institutional anchoring of the European environmental policy thus paradoxically went hand in hand with stagnating political dynamics (Zito, 1999: 30-31). In the early 1990s, due to the economic downturn, high unemployment, and heightened competition in the wake of international market liberalization, most EU member states were hesitant to adopt strict environmental regulations that could potentially harm their industries in the global market (Knill & Liefferink, 2007: 23-24).

They preferred not to sacrifice economic benefits for the climate norm compliance – i.e. to act in accordance with the logic of consequentialism, which characterizes them as non-normative foreign policy actors. Only a few member states, including Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands were willing to set ambitious targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, despite the limited benefits for themselves (the logic of appropriateness) (Historical archives of the European Union. Vol. 1; Schunz, 2014: 64-65).

The unwillingness of all EU member states to act in a coordinated manner<sup>15</sup> and compromise their own interests to achieve the goal set out in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere “at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system” (United Nations, 1992: 2), put into doubt the EU’s ability to establish itself as a normative power in the 1990s.

After the Bush administration announced in March 2001 that it would not ratify the Kyoto Protocol (Coon, 2001), the EU decided to continue the ratification process, demonstrating a commitment to established climate norms<sup>16</sup>. From that moment, the EU began to prioritize the logic of appropriateness to a greater extent in the climate norm compliance. This can be illustrated by the following examples.

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<sup>14</sup> The EU initially pushed for a 15% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, but ultimately settled for an 8% reduction to reach a consensus. This highlights the European Commission’s commitment to higher normative standards during the Kyoto Protocol negotiations, compared to the USA and Japan. The Commission’s approach demonstrates a willingness to set stricter internal goals for the global benefit (the logic of appropriateness), in contrast to the EU member states, which were reluctant to make strict commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions due to the significant financial costs involved (the logic of consequentialism).

<sup>15</sup> There were doubts about whether the EU’s ‘common position’ on climate change was really as fixed (or as common) at the Commission liked to claim. For example, after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, EU member states proposed different approaches to stabilizing greenhouse gas emissions. This caused a split within the EU and delayed the ratification of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (Vogler, 1999: 37).

<sup>16</sup> The decision made at the Environment Council in Göteborg in June 2001 emphasizes the EU’s commitment to the Kyoto Protocol and its principles, despite the lack of support from the USA. (European Council, 2001: 6).

The EU used the logic of appropriateness to comply with the commitments undertaken in Kyoto. According to these commitments, the European Commission was required to develop a system of emissions trading system within the EU and reinforce the common climate policy and strategies<sup>17</sup>.

To start, a group of experts, led by the head of the General Directorate for the Environment J. Delbeke, developed specific proposals for the design of the greenhouse gas emissions trading system. These proposals were included in the Green Paper adopted by the Commission in March 2000 (Commission of the European Communities, 2000b). Three years later, after the approval of Directive 2003/87/EC on 13 October 2003, a system of greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Union was implemented<sup>18</sup>.

To achieve the second task, ambitious measures were introduced at the EU level, and the new phase of EU environmental legislation development was launched. In 2000, the Commission adopted a Communication recognizing the need to balance economic growth with environmental protection. It outlined an EU strategy to enhance the integration of environmental and economic aspects of sustainable development (European Union, 2000)<sup>19</sup>. In 2002, the Sixth Environment Action Programme (Sixth EAP) was launched, adopting the sustainable development approach as the fundamental objective of the Union (European Union, 2000). In June 2006, the European Council adopted the 'EU Sustainable Development Strategy', which acknowledged the necessity of implementing measures to prevent climate change to secure the EU's environmental and socio-economic future (Council of the European Union, 2006).

Thus, the Sixth EAP and EU Sustainable Development Strategy reinforced the emphasis on sustainable development and environmental integration as the main conceptual paradigm of climate policy. Their implementation coincided with the EU big bang enlargement in 2004. The increase in the number of member states allowed for the expansion of the territorial scope of the EU environmental law application.

Since the Kyoto Protocol came into force in 2005, the European Union has continued to trend towards complying with 'constitutive' climate norms. In 2008, the EU introduced a comprehensive package that raised the Union's energy and climate policy ambitions. The package included ambitious goals such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020 compared to 1990 levels, increasing energy efficiency by 20%, and achieving a 20% share of renewable energies in EU energy consumption by 2020<sup>20</sup>. The plan also aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions covered by the EU emissions trading system (EU ETS) by 21% from 2005 levels by 2020 and to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions in non-ETS sectors, including transport, agriculture, waste, and construction, by 10% from 2005 levels (Commission of the European Communities, 2008).

Despite an unsuccessful attempt to lead at the Copenhagen Summit in 2009 (COP-15) (Dupont & Oberthür, 2017: 70; Oberthür & Groen, 2016: 445-446), the EU continued to work towards creating a climate-neutral Europe. In the Council Conclusions on EU position for the summit, the EU announced its intention to reduce its GHG emissions by 25 to 40% by 2020 and by 80 to 95% by 2050 below 1990 levels (Council of the European Union, 2009). Later in 2014, these intentions, as well as targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions covered by the EU ETS by 43% and to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions in non-ETS sectors by 30% from 2005 levels by 2030, were formalized in a

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<sup>17</sup> To implement the Kyoto Protocol, the European Climate Change Programme was established to develop all elements of a European Climate Change strategy. These included "mitigation of emissions through policies and measures and the flexible mechanisms, capacity building/technology transfer, research/observation, and training and education" (Commission of the European Communities, 2000a).

<sup>18</sup> This is the world's first international system of trading quotas for carbon dioxide emissions.

<sup>19</sup> Communication on Bringing our needs and responsibilities together Integrating environmental issues with economic policy, COM/2000/0576 final. Retrieved from <https://cutt.ly/3eoh133R>

<sup>20</sup> These are known as the '20-20 targets'.



“policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030” (Council of the European Union, 2014).

The commitment to climate norms became most visible after the launch of the European Green Deal in 2019 (European Communication, 2019). This initiative is based on the provisions of the Paris Agreement, which replaced the Kyoto Protocol after 2020. One of the distinguishing features of the European Green Deal is its integrated approach to overcoming the negative consequences of global climate change. The European states focus on nine main directions of action to achieve climate neutrality, including increasing the EU's climate ambition for 2030 and 2050, supplying clean, affordable and secure energy, mobilising industry for a clean and circular economy, building and renovating in an energy and resource efficient way, and more.

The European Green Deal sets an ambitious goal for the EU to become a climate-neutral continent by 2050. The European Climate Law, adopted in June 2021, legally obligates EU member states to achieve this goal. It also sets an interim target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels (European Union, 2021). To achieve the set quantitative goals, a package of legislative proposals called ‘Fit for 55’ was presented in July 2021. This package includes the introduction of a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, revision of the CO<sub>2</sub> emission standards, stimulation of the use of renewable and low-carbon fuels in maritime transport, and other measures (European Communication, 2021).

The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, which began in February 2022, posed a significant challenge to the implementation of the European Green Deal. Despite this destabilizing factor, the EU continued its course with even greater enthusiasm, reaffirming its willingness to comply with climate norms according to the logic of appropriateness. In March 2022, EU member states, which imported 45.3% of natural gas, 27% of oil, and 46% of coal from Russia in 2021 (European Commission, April 20, 2022), made a historic decision to stop purchasing natural gas from Russia and gradually reduce their reliance on Russian oil and coal before the end of the decade (European Communication, 2022). This move aimed to hasten the transition to clean energy and achieve energy independence from Russia. Additionally, the EU set a binding goal to increase the 32% target to at least 42.5% renewable energy sources in the EU's overall energy mix by 2030, with aspirations to reach 45% (European Union, 2023).

According to the Report 2023 that assesses progress under the European Climate Law, the European Union's strategy, which aims at achieving ambitious climate goals, including a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030 and reaching climate neutrality by 2050, is progressive and comprehensive. However, the current rate of emission reduction in the EU follows a linear trajectory, which might be insufficient for meeting long-term targets without additional efforts. The construction and transport sectors require the most significant emission reductions, as their decarbonization progress is slow or even reversing. States such as Sweden, Finland, and Denmark are leading in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by actively implementing effective energy conservation policies. On the other hand, states like Poland, Ireland, and Latvia need to exert additional efforts to achieve their set goals (European Commission, 2023).

The upcoming European Parliament elections, scheduled for June 6-9, will have a significant impact on Europe's green transition. With increasing opposition to the Green Deal, particularly from farmers and industrialists in EU member states (Malingre, January 29, 2024), the future of the Green Deal depends on democratic support. If this support wanes, it could jeopardize the continuation of the Green Deal. This could lead to the EU prioritizing the use of the logic of consequentialism in climate norm compliance in the future, making it challenging for the EU to act as a normative green foreign policy actor.

**2.2. The EU's behavioral logic regarding the climate norm diffusion in Ukraine.** The European Union's relations with Ukraine regarding climate change mitigation have been governed by various agreements and policies over the years. These

relations were guided by the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement followed by the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership, and most recently the Association Agreement. In fact, for 30 years, the EU has been actively using procedural and informational means to spread climate norms in Ukraine.

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, signed in 1994, aimed to support Ukraine's political and economic transformation and laid the foundation for further collaboration on addressing global climate change (European Union, 1994). Subsequently, the launch of the European Neighborhood Policy in 2004 and the Eastern Partnership in 2009 marked the next stage in EU-Ukraine relations. Ukraine, along with other neighboring countries on the EU's southern and eastern borders, became part of a framework aimed at helping the EU "develop a zone of prosperity and a friendly neighborhood – a 'ring of friends'". Through this framework, the EU seeks to strengthen close, peaceful relations with these countries, "based on a long-term approach that promotes reform, sustainable development, and trade" (Commission of the European Communities, 2003: 4).

The signing of the Association Agreement in 2014 reaffirmed the shared commitment of the EU and Ukraine to the ongoing process of a comprehensive transformation (European Union, 2014). Article 361 of the Agreement states that bilateral cooperation, among other things, shall aim to promote measures to address regional or global environmental problems, including those related to climate change. Additionally, Article 376 emphasizes the importance of "enhancing cooperation, notably in the context of multilateral agreements such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change" (European Union, 2014: 361, 376).

Accompanying these agreements and policy frameworks were several programs to provide technical and financial support to Ukraine (The mean of 'transference' was in action). In 1992, the EU initiated the Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States program (TACIS) to assist former Soviet republics in implementing Partnership and Cooperation Agreements by providing know-how and granting finance to support projects in a variety of fields, including energy, nuclear safety, the environment, food production, etc. (TACIS Programme). Although TACIS initially focused more on economic and political transformations in Ukraine, after 2002, it included projects addressing a range of issues related to environmental governance, particularly focusing on the implementation of Global Climate Change commitments and supporting the Kyoto Protocol implementation (European Commission, 2010).

Starting in 2007, as part of the reform of EU assistance instruments, the Tacis program was replaced by a single instrument known as the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. From 2011 onward<sup>21</sup>, the EU provided assistance to Ukraine through this instrument, with a focus on the sustainable development (Directorate General Development and Cooperation, 2014: 48; European Union, 2006: 2 (e)). From 2014 to 2020, the European Union provided support through the European Neighborhood Instrument to reduce Ukraine's energy intensity and dependence on fossil fuels, achieve efficient and environmentally-friendly mobility, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and strengthen climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts (European Union, 2017).

The European Union is increasingly using normative foreign policy means to promote its climate norms in Ukraine. This is particularly evident through means such as 'transference' (Horizon Europe, Program for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE), Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), Neighborhood, Development and

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<sup>21</sup> In the period from 2007 to 2010, the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument was not used by the EU to finance climate actions in Ukraine. Instead, during this period, Ukraine received financial support for democratic development and good governance, regulatory reform and administrative capacity building, and infrastructure development (Directorate General Development and Cooperation, 2014: 48).

International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)<sup>22</sup> etc.). The EU is using this mean to finance several initiatives in Ukraine<sup>23</sup>, including the 'New European Bauhaus' program<sup>24</sup>, which aims to bring Ukraine into "a more sustainable and inclusive future, upholding a sense of common identity and belonging rooted in the local culture" (Actions for Ukraine).

Another initiative, the 'Phoenix' project, focuses on providing expert and financial support for post-war green reconstruction in Ukraine, developing climate-neutral strategies, exchanging knowledge on smart green city management, and sharing best practices for sustainable development and climate neutrality (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine, 2023). The 'EU4Climate' project is also contributing to building Ukraine's climate resilience and decreasing its energy dependence on fossil fuels (Eastern Partnership, 2023: 14). Additionally, the 'Ukraine Facility' program aims to support Ukraine's 'transition to a sustainable, climate-neutral, and inclusive economy', with at least 20% of the funding contributing to climate change mitigation, environmental protection, and the green transition (European Union, 2024).

In addition, to promote its climate norms in Ukraine, the EU uses normative foreign policy means such as 'contagion', by demonstrating its own climate-responsible behavior through the successful implementation of initiatives outlined in the Paris Climate Agreement and the European Green Deal. Additionally, it employs 'overt diffusion' by informing Ukraine through the Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine about EU climate action and European climate-related values.

Although the EU has employed normative foreign policy means, rather than forceful realpolitik means, to spread its own climate narratives in Ukraine, in the period from 1991 to 2020, the EU's policies were often guided by pragmatic and strategic considerations. In other words, the EU's goals of establishing an effective climate dialogue with Ukraine were of secondary importance to its foreign policy objectives in Ukraine during that period.

The EU was mainly interested in deepening relations with Ukraine to ensure energy security and stable energy transit through the country (Smith, 2014: 590-593). Although the EU expressed through the European Neighborhood Policy, the Eastern Partnership, and the Association Agreement the wish to engage in close cooperation with Ukraine, it did not consider Ukraine as a potential candidate member state and refrained from offering the prospect of membership, which cast doubts on the degree of its normative commitment to Ukraine (Emerson, 2008: 62).

In addition, the influence of Russia, which sought to maintain Ukraine within its sphere of influence, complicated the process of establishing a climate dialogue between Ukraine and the EU. The EU often prioritized stable relations with Russia over deepening ties with Ukraine, reflecting a 'Russia-first' approach in its policies (Deugd, 2019: 124-126).

The launch of the European Green Deal marked a shift in the EU's approach to building a climate partnership with Ukraine. Under the leadership of Ursula von der Leyen, the EU set the normative foreign policy goal of establishing a green partnership with Ukraine. Collaborating with Ukraine to implement the initiatives outlined in the European Green Deal became a priority for the EU, crucial for achieving the ambitious goal of making Europe the first climate-neutral region by 2050.

In March 2020, the EU and Ukraine began working together towards environmental and climate sustainability after establishing long-term policy objectives for the Eastern Partnership beyond 2020. The EU's condemnation of Russia's full-scale attack on Ukraine in February 2022 and the subsequent imposition of tough sanctions against Russia, along with the decision to refrain from purchasing Russian energy resources, signaled the EU's commitment to a close dialogue with Ukraine. This commitment was further solidified in

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<sup>22</sup> The Multi-Annual Indicative Program for 2021-2027 outlines assistance to Ukraine through the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument, including activities aimed at promoting environmental and climate resilience. (European Commission, 2021: 5-7, 17-18).

<sup>23</sup> '*Information diffusion*' of climate norms occurs through these initiatives.

<sup>24</sup> This program can serve as a '*cultural filter*' mean.

June 2022 when Ukraine was granted candidate status for EU membership, marking the beginning of a new phase in EU-Ukraine relations and climate change prevention dialogue.

Thus, the EU's policy towards Ukraine was primarily driven by non-normative goals from 1990 to 2020, despite normative language used in political declarations and official documents on Ukraine – i.e. the EU acted in ways that may be characterized as status quo. It is only in recent years that the EU has transitioned from normative rhetoric to concrete actions towards Ukraine, signifying its intention to build a climate dialogue with Ukraine according to the logic of arguing.

**Conclusions.** This study emphasizes the differences between normative and non-normative foreign policy actors. Normative foreign policy actors adhere to internationally recognized norms, even if these norms minimize their utility (the logic of appropriateness) and diffuse them through normative foreign policy means such as contagion, informational diffusion, procedural diffusion, transference, overt diffusion, and cultural filter to achieve normative foreign policy goals which are related to the establishment of socialization, partnership, and joint ownership (the logic of arguing). On the other hand, non-normative foreign policy actors typically act based on the logic of consequentialism, seeking to maximize their own benefits and using non-normative means such as threats, sanctions, or rewards to achieve their objectives.

Since the early 2000s, the EU has consistently adhered to its climate norms according to the logic of appropriateness. The EU's commitment to higher climate standards was evident through the strengthening of its legal and institutional framework for climate policy, starting with the adoption of the Green Paper in 2000 and becoming more apparent in 2019 with the launch of the European Green Deal. The European Climate Law, enacted in 2021, further demonstrated the EU's dedication to complying with climate norms based on the logic of appropriateness, establishing legislative obligations to achieve climate neutrality by 2050.

In terms of promoting climate norms in Ukraine, while the EU used normative foreign policy means, its specific normative goals for fostering a climate dialogue with Ukraine were set only after the adoption of the European Green Deal in 2019. Until this moment, the EU acted as a status quo actor towards Ukraine, because its policies were often guided by geopolitical considerations, and not by specific normative goals related to climate policy.

Thus, after analyzing two dimensions of the EU's behavioral logic in detail, it can be concluded that it was only after 2019 that the EU began to act as an established normative power in building a climate partnership with Ukraine. From this point onward, the EU's approach to both climate norm compliance and diffusion in Ukraine became normative.

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