

EU-India relations

THE REACTION OF INDIA TO THE USE OF SOFT POWER BY THE EU

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Abstract

English

A lot of unexamined issues still exist for researchers in EU-India relations. A lot is going on since 2021, after almost a decade of standstill. In this thesis, my objective is to analyze what relations the EU and India have with each other and especially what forms of soft power the EU uses. I analyze documents published by the EU's institutions and documents from the Indian government, next to newspaper articles and scientific articles. India is a country with a particular history and this leads to distinct reactions on the use of soft power by the EU in its relations with India. I elaborate on the foreign policies of both parties as well as on a short history of their mutual relations, in order to be able to fully comprehend why both parties act in a certain way. I discuss four different forms of soft power; economic soft power, the EU as a normative power, development aid, and education and research. India reacts differently to the use of these forms of soft power, but there are important parallels that can be made. The Indian government does not appreciate any country trying to interfere in its domestic policies and it attaches great importance to its ideal of sovereignty. Overall, the EU has had not much success with the use of soft power, but India has opened up more recently and this is an indication that India's stance might be changing, which might provide the EU with new opportunities to use soft power in the future.

Nederlands

Er bestaan nog steeds heel wat niet onderzochte zaken voor onderzoekers in EU-India relaties. Sinds 2021 vinden er heel wat veranderingen plaats, na bijna een decennium van stagnatie. Mijn doel met deze thesis is om te analyseren welke relaties de EU en India met elkaar hebben en vooral welke vormen van zachte macht de EU gebruikt. Ik doe dit door documenten te analyseren die gepubliceerd zijn door de verschillende EU instituties, alsook officiële documenten van de Indiase overheid, krantenartikelen en wetenschappelijke artikelen. India is een land met een specifieke geschiedenis die als gevolg heeft dat India aparte reageert op het gebruik van zachte macht door de EU in de relaties met India. Ik ga verder in op het buitenlandse beleid van beide partijen en ik geef een overzicht van hun wederzijdse relaties om beter te begrijpen waarom ze op een bepaalde manier handelen. Ik bespreek vier verschillende vormen van zachte macht; economische zachte macht, de EU als een normatieve macht, ontwikkelingshulp en onderwijs en onderzoek. India reageert op verschillende manieren op deze vormen van zachte macht, daarnaast zijn er ook duidelijke overeenkomsten. De Indiase overheid waardeert het niet als een ander land zich probeert te mengen in het binnenlandse beleid en India vind soevereiniteit een enorm belangrijk ideaal. In het algemeen heeft de EU weinig succes gekend met het gebruik van zachte macht, maar recent heeft India zich meer opengesteld en

dit kan een aanwijzing zijn dat het beleid aan het veranderen is. Dit kan ervoor zorgen dat de EU in de toekomst nieuwe mogelijkheden zal hebben voor het gebruik van zachte macht.

हिंदी

यूरोपीय संघ-भारत संबंधों में शोधकर्ताओं के लिए अभी भी बहुत सारे अनपेक्षित मुद्दे मौजूद हैं। लगभग एक दशक के बाद, २०२१ से बहुत कुछ चल रहा है। इस थीसिस में, मेरा उद्देश्य यह विश्लेषण करना है कि यूरोपीय संघ और भारत के एक दूसरे के साथ क्या संबंध हैं और विशेष रूप से यूरोपीय संघ के मुलायम शक्ति का क्या रूप है। मैं यूरोपीय संघ के संस्थानों और भारत सरकार से दस्तावेजों द्वारा प्रकाशित दस्तावेजों का विश्लेषण करता हूँ, अखबार के लेखों और वैज्ञानिक लेखों के बगल में। भारत एक विशेष इतिहास वाला देश है और इससे भारत के साथ अपने संबंधों में यूरोपीय संघ द्वारा मुलायम शक्ति के उपयोग पर अलग-अलग प्रतिक्रियाएं होती हैं। मैं दोनों पक्षों की विदेशी नीतियों के साथ-साथ उनके पारस्परिक संबंधों के एक छोटे से इतिहास पर विस्तार से बताता हूँ, ताकि पूरी तरह से समझने में सक्षम हो कि दोनों पक्ष एक निश्चित तरीके से क्यों कार्य करते हैं। मैं मुलायम शक्ति के चार अलग-अलग रूपों पर चर्चा करता हूँ; आर्थिक मुलायम शक्ति, यूरोपीय संघ एक मुलायम शक्ति, विकास सहायता और शिक्षा और अनुसंधान के रूप में। भारत मुलायम शक्ति के इन रूपों के उपयोग के लिए अलग तरह से प्रतिक्रिया करता है, लेकिन महत्वपूर्ण समानताएं हैं जो बनाए जा सकते हैं। भारत सरकार अपनी घरेलू नीतियों में हस्तक्षेप करने की कोशिश करने वाले किसी भी देश की सराहना नहीं करती है और यह संप्रभुता के अपने आदर्श के लिए बहुत महत्व देती है। कुल मिलाकर, यूरोपीय संघ को मुलायम शक्ति के उपयोग के साथ ज्यादा सफलता नहीं मिली है, लेकिन भारत ने हाल ही में खोला है और यह एक संकेत है कि भारत का रुख बदल सकता है, जो भविष्य में मुलायम शक्ति का उपयोग करने के नए अवसर प्रदान कर सकता है।

Preface

Throughout my studies in the Oriental Languages and Cultures: India, I have developed a liking for the European Union's policies. I quickly decided I wanted to do research on the relations between the EU and India which would combine both of my interests. With the help of my professors I decided to research the EU's soft power, because it is a very important form of power for the EU in its relations with other entities. This research fits perfectly in my journey at Ghent University, because it is an extension of both my major in Indian languages and cultures and of my minor in political sciences. I hope this thesis might be a starting point for further research on EU-India relations, because a large part of it is still uncharted territory. At the same time, EU-India relations hold a large potential for the future since India is an upcoming power in international politics.

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Introduction

Soft power has become increasingly important in international relations since the end of the Cold War in the 1990s. The European Union is a particular case in this instance. In Europe, hard power like military might is rarely used anymore for many reasons. An important reason is that the EU does not have its own army, nor is the EU expected to have its own army in the future. The member states strongly disagree on the EU's security policy and an important point of conflict is the formation of an EU army. A second reason why soft power is more important for this research is because India does not border the EU. This means that it is unlikely the EU will use military means to influence its relations with India. It is therefore far more likely that the EU will adopt soft power policies in its relationship with India. The same applies to India. Furthermore, because of its history, India is wary to use military means against other countries in the first place, so India will also more likely use soft power in its relations with other countries, including the EU.

India is one of the most promising countries in the world. It is an emerging country within the world in many sectors and it has a growing middle class with a growing purchasing power. Despite the poverty that is still present in large amounts, India is a very interesting country for other countries to invest in. For the EU it is a way to gain an important Asian partner as the United States put an increasing pressure and sanctions on the People's Republic of China. The EU could look at other countries in Asia, however none of them have the internal market that India has. Besides, since the 1990s, the EU and India have been growing towards each other in several phases. At the beginning of the 21st century, they concluded several agreements that had to culminate into a Free Trade Agreement. However, this FTA has not been achieved so far and from 2013 onwards their relations were at a standstill. In recent years talks were resumed and this resulted into a Connectivity Partnership that was concluded in May 2021.

For the EU soft power is above all important because it sees itself as a normative power and it wants to export its norms and values all over the world. According to the EU the easiest way to conduct international systems is through multilateral cooperation within multilateral organizations and through stimulating regional integration in other parts of the world. Soft power is important in order for other countries to regard the EU as an example. Only then other countries might consider following the EU's example. Another approach the EU uses is negotiating treaties with other countries that go beyond trade. The EU has always preferred to conclude multilateral agreements, but since this has become increasingly difficult, the EU has tried to stimulate regional integration in order to be able to conclude agreements with other regions. In South Asia the EU has tried to work through both the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). So far regional cooperation

between the EU and South Asia has not yet reached fruition, as a consequence the EU has focused more on bilateral relations between the EU and single countries. India could become an important partner for the EU in the future, so the EU will use all kinds of soft power to try and influence the policies of the Indian government in order to create bilateral relations to the image of the EU's views as much as possible. However, the difficulty for the EU is that India does not follow the EU's model. It has its own way of conducting relations with other countries and it pursues its own internal policies as well. Just like the EU, India is internally very diverse. Different states pursue different policies and this makes it often difficult to come to an internal agreement. Since this applies to both partners, concluding an agreement consists of many inherent problems. Since 2014 the Bhāratīya Janatā Pārṭī (BJP) is in power in the national Indian government, this has changed India's foreign policy compared to the previous period. India's foreign policy has always been a mixture of many different ideas over time. India is a developing country and this is the main focus of its foreign policy, along with India's status in the world in general. It is a large country that wants to be acknowledged as such and thus wants to be treated as an equal partner during negotiations. The EU has to be careful to consider India's wishes, and not just apply large amounts of soft power to get the most beneficial relations from the EU's viewpoint. The EU often strives for full reciprocity in its trade negotiations but since EU-India relations are relations between a developed and a developing country, this might be disadvantageous to India. Besides this, India knows what it wants as well, and will not just give in to another country.

I will give a short overview of EU-India relations in general and afterwards I have identified four different areas in which the EU is able to use soft power towards India. The first is the EU's economy and mainly its market power. The EU has a large market without internal boundaries and a sizable population with a large market power. India has a small trade deficit in the trade in goods with the EU, while the EU has a small trade deficit in the trade in services. Overall the trade in goods is larger, which means India has an overall trade deficit as compared to the EU. The EU is a larger economic player in the world than India, but India has a larger population with more growth potential. For now, the EU is thus a larger player, and might thus use its economic attractiveness to convince India to make concessions in order to get better access to the EU's market. I argue that the EU was not successful in using its soft power so far, since the negotiations for the EU-India Free Trade Agreement were not concluded. This might change in the near future, because in May 2021 the EU and India have concluded a Connectivity Partnership, after years of standstill in their mutual relations. Secondly, the EU might use soft power when it is seen as a normative power. Being a normative power is essential for the EU and it tries to export its own norms and values throughout the international system. There is a debate going on in academic circles whether the EU is a normative power, but it is more important that the EU sees itself as such and acts accordingly in international

relations. I will consider the importance of the EU's normative power towards India in several different policy areas. I argue that India already follows many EU' norms and values, since the country is a democracy, but India has a problem with the EU trying to interfere in internal Indian policies by means of normative arguments. The EU also loses some of its normative power towards India because many EU countries used to be colonial powers and because India does not adhere to all the EU's norms and values, there are important cultural differences. I will discuss the divergence and convergence of the EU's and India's norms and values in international institutions, in the fight against climate change and in their bilateral negotiations. Another influential form of soft power the EU has at its disposal is development aid. I argue that the EU has the potential to execute soft power through development aid in India, but there are also particularities to India's development status that make this more difficult. A last important area is education and training, which is a form of soft power that is often overlooked. It can still play an important role through the exchange of students, researchers and officials between the EU and India.

Power and the foreign policy of the European Union and India

What is power?

It is important to begin with discussing the mechanism of power, because it is one of the most important things that plays in international politics. Both on the international playing field in general and between two single entities, like between the European Union and India. In order to understand better what power is exactly, I will describe different kinds of power. This should make it possible to distinguish between the different kinds and determine which are used by the European Union in its relations with India. First of all, if a certain country has power over a second country, it means that the first country can make the second country do something it wouldn't have done without the influence of the first country. Or, the second country might act differently than it would have done without the influence of the first country. Usually, power is divided into two types; the first one is hard power and the second one is soft power. Rothman places the different sorts of hard and soft power on a continuum from hard to soft.¹ He doesn't make a clear dichotomy between hard and soft power, but rather assigns a degree of harder or softer power to a certain situation. The hardest forms of power used in international relations are coercion and inducement. Coercion is the hardest power and consists of military means, while inducement consists of economic means and is slightly softer. Coercion can be done by threatening to use military might so that the second country does as the first country pleases. From this an actual invasion might follow and killing people to get what you want is the hardest form of power in this categorization. An example is the invasion of the United States and some allies like the United Kingdom in Iraq which began the second Gulf War. Then he also describes inducement. Inducement by means of economic power is more widely used in international politics today than military invasions. Governments need money and other resources to keep their country stable, this gives power to the one with the money and the economic resources. A country can influence a second country with inducement in two ways. First, a government can implement economic sanctions to alter the policy of a second country. This can be effective, especially when it harms strategic sectors of the economy. The European Union has implemented economic sanctions against the Russian government after the invasion of the Crimean Peninsula, and more recently the invasion of Ukraine. Secondly, a government can promise aid as a reward if the second government does what the first one wants. The European Union e.g. does this by tying conditions to government aid.²

¹ Rothman 2011: 51.

² Hymans 2009: 235.

Rothman 2011: 51-52.

Soft power is something entirely different. Nye describes soft power as follows:

...[Soft power is] the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced.³

To continue with Rothman's classification, he distinguishes two kinds of softer power; agenda-setting and attraction, in which attraction is the softest of the two. When a government uses attraction, it uses institutional means to accomplish changes. Rothman defines agenda-setting as: "...influence over outcomes outside of the regime and institutional approaches."⁴ Agenda-setting means that you have influence over the agenda of another country. This means that when a party has to make a decision on a certain subject, a second party influences the final outcome of the decision. The second party does this by power over the decision-making system. It is a means of softer power, so direct manipulation and coercion to make the decision are not considered as forms of agenda-setting. The second type of softer power can be used in several ways. E.g. by framing and by using rhetoric. This deals more with one actor influencing another actor, it is situated more on the individual level. A first type of framing is normative framing. By normative framing one actor appeals to the morals or emotions of the other actor. It tries to influence the second actor by convincing it that it is the right (or wrong) thing to do. If it can convince the other, the other will make different decisions than the ones it would have made without the influence. A second way of framing is analytical framing. It is used especially in situations where the course of actions is not entirely clear. One actor can present itself either as victim or as perpetrator, depending on the outcome it wants. If it convinces other actors of this, the other actors will act differently than in the situation of another framing. Actors can also highlight certain causes of a situation and withhold other causes to write the story according to their own benefit. These latter and softer forms of power are more likely those used by the European Union in its relations with India.⁵

The European Union's foreign policy

The EU and India normally won't use harder power to influence each other's actions. Softer power is more commonly used in their relations. I will elaborate on the specific uses of harder and softer power between the EU and India in the coming chapters. The EU sees itself as an actor who can and should interact in world politics to make the current situation better, according to the EU's opinions. The EU wants to end violence, terrorism, and wars all over the world, it wants economic prosperity for Africa, security in Asia and it wants to end climate change. This should be accomplished: "[...]

³ Nye (2004) as cited in Rothman 2011: 50.

⁴ Rothman 2011: 53.

⁵ Rothman 2011: 51-55.

guided by our shared interests, principles and priorities.”⁶ The EU Global Strategy states that the EU has an important role to play in the world. Central to the EU’s role in the world are the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The current global order is important to accomplish the SDGs. Most important is working together on all possible levels; with the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other international and multilateral organizations, as well as regional organizations, states, and non-state actors. The key in achieving prosperity for all citizens of the world is to work together and to be more connected. Within this global world order, the EU focuses on regional integration and cooperation, following the EU’s governance model. The EU is convinced of this mission and will achieve its goals through the networks it has built in the world and through its economic weight. But for this to work, the EU has to be internally strong and come out as a single, united entity, in order not to lose credibility in the world. Furthermore, the EU plans to keep investing in worldwide trade to become more prosperous and to allow other countries to develop themselves and fulfil the SDGs. It wants to shape the global economic system and environmental rules. The reason the EU wants to do this, is because it feels that it is its responsibility, because the EU has the power and resources to do so, together with other actors willing to take on this responsibility. The EU has committed to these general principles to shape its foreign policy and they will without a doubt also shape the EU’s relations with India.⁷

The EU has established all these principles and it is convinced that investing in resilience is the main way to accomplish these goals. This makes resilience an important keyword in the new EU Global Strategy. Resilience should take place on all policy levels and should be implemented everywhere. The EU Global Strategy states that “A resilient state is a secure state, and security is key for prosperity and democracy.”⁸ For the EU, resilience is connected to the SDGs, and a fully developed democracy with all its institutions. Another important part of resilience is environmental resilience, so that all countries are able to withstand difficulties caused by climate change. To encourage countries to implement new policies that should lead to more resilience, the EU wants to negotiate treaties with as many countries and regions as possible. This concept of resilience could have played a role in negotiating a treaty with India. Natural disasters are a constant threat to India, as seen recently in February 2021 when a glacier caused an avalanche and many deaths in the Northern Indian state of Uttarākhaṇḍ.⁹ Another strategy the EU uses, is working through international institutions, the main institutions mentioned in the Global Strategy are the UN and the NATO. For the EU these two are

⁶ Strategy, EU Global 2016: 7.

⁷ Strategy, EU Global 2016: 7-10, 14-18.

⁸ Strategy, EU Global 2016: 23.

⁹ Mogul and Talmazan 2021.

the two most important ones to reach its goals and the intention is to work even more closely than is the case today. Further in the Global Strategy the EU states that interventionism is not an option under consideration for it in the world. This means that the EU has no intention to use the hardest possible power according to Rothman's classification.¹⁰ Softer forms of power and maybe economic power are preferable over military threats and invasions. This means that the EU will not invade India to change how the Indian state system and structures operate. If the EU wants something changed, it will use other means. E.g. it will try to convince the Indian government and public that the way they are acting is immoral. Even though interventionism is not a strategy that will be followed, the EU does want to strengthen security and defence capabilities for other reasons. E.g. to help countries in the world who ask for military assistance through the UN Security Council, or to be able to defend the EU's borders in case a military invasion from outside the EU would happen. One of the EU's goals is to further coordinate civil and military missions. But, if the EU continues to extend its military capacities, other countries might perceive this as a threat and in extreme cases this might lead to a security dilemma. The EU will have to be careful in choosing what to expand. The security dilemma will probably not become a problem in the foreseeable future as there are no intentions to create a single European army for now.¹¹ I don't see a security dilemma forming a problem in relations with India, the EU and India are not neighbours, they are relatively far apart, and they are no enemies. This is why this paper focuses more on softer forms of power as these are more likely to take place between the EU and India.

As stated earlier, the EU prefers to cooperate with other regions, instead of engaging in country-to-country relations. This means that for the bilateral relations between the EU and India, the EU prefers to work with South Asia as a whole instead of only with India. But this regionalism is rather recent. At first, the EU tried to work mostly through multilateral organizations, like the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and later the World Trade Organization (WTO). But, as symbolised by the latest WTO negotiations round, the Doha Round, it has become increasingly difficult to reach one agreement with most countries of the world. Since it has not (yet) been possible to reach an agreement, officially the Doha Round has not ended. The last concluded round was the Uruguay Round that ended in 1994, this one was still negotiated under the GATT. As an alternative for full-scale multilateral agreements, the EU has focused more on regional interactions. The opinions of the EU have changed and now it believes that regional integration and cooperation are the best path to

¹⁰ Rothman 2011: 51.

¹¹ Rothman 2011: 51.

Strategy, EU Global 2016: 15-16, 20, 23-27.

Strategy, EU Global 2017: 12-15.

success, politically, economically, etc. For the EU regional cooperation doesn't have to be organized according to the EU model; every region should decide what is best for them. Nevertheless, the EU will try to promote regional integration as extensive as possible. These regions then should engage with each other in networks of international relations. The EU realizes that its own project is unique and unprecedented and is unlikely to occur anywhere else anytime soon. It knows that it is unlikely that other countries will work together as extensively as the EU does and surrender a part of their sovereignty to a higher authority. Many countries have been colonized, so it is unthinkable for most to give up their hard-fought sovereignty. This is why regional integration outside of the former colonial powers in Europe will most likely have a completely different form. Nonetheless, regional integration can go quite far, an example is Mercosur, whose members work together extensively, but they did not surrender parts of their sovereignty to a higher authority. In South Asia, there is a regional organization, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) on which I will elaborate further. For the EU, collaboration with Asia as a whole, and South Asia in specific, is especially interesting because of the economic possibilities in that area. According to the Global Strategy the EU will work more closely together with Central and South Asian countries to take actions against terrorism and migration and to engage more closely in economic activities. In order to work together economically, one goal of the EU is to negotiate a Free Trade Agreement with India.¹²

The EU wants to make the world a better place, better according to its own principles and ideas. To achieve this, it will try to influence other country's policies. It tries to influence India's policies, both internally and externally and does this by applying several kinds of softer power. At the same time, it will refrain from using the hardest possible forms of power, like military threats and invasions, because that would violate its own principles. It is important for all countries to become more resilient, in order to be able to withstand internal and external threats, because those could threaten democratic and capitalistic institutions. Because the EU believes these institutions are crucial for resilience, they should be crucial to other countries as well. The EU operates extensively in the international arena and tries to negotiate treaties with as many countries as possible. The EU and India have negotiated such a treaty. Besides negotiating bilateral treaties, both the EU and India work through international organizations. There are many possibilities for their bilateral relations to deepen when working together in international and multilateral organizations. An area where more intensive cooperation is

¹² Strategy, EU Global 2016: 32, 37-38.

World Trade Organization. "Doha Round: what are they negotiating?"

World Trade Organization. "The Uruguay Round"

possible, is the area of interregional cooperation. The EU and SAARC have many possibilities to further expand their relations as they are not elaborate (yet).

India's foreign policy

It is important to elaborate on the topic of India's foreign policy in order to later understand what India's goals are, and why they act in a certain way in relations with the EU. But, to describe and define India's foreign policy is a complicated task because the Indian government doesn't have a clearly outlined foreign policy framework. It is especially complex because its capabilities to actively engage in foreign policy don't agree with its goals. Indian politicians overestimate India's own capacities to engage with other countries. Another important point is that the coalition governments of the past decades consisted of many different views, so this made, and still makes, it difficult to create a clear foreign policy. Mehta claims that a possible reason for the lack of a general foreign policy in India is because there are many different views and different political movements.¹³ The same is going on in the EU, different countries have different views and different priorities. This makes it increasingly difficult for both the EU and India to deal with each other. Or perhaps it could be easier, because they understand the way the other works? I will elaborate on this further. It is not easy for other countries to engage in relations with India, because India's foreign policy is so imprecise. Usually, India's foreign policy depends on the ideology of the largest party in the government. But, because the largest party has to work together with its coalition partners, their views will also influence the foreign policy. In this way, it has become a mixture of different visions. For this reason, the current foreign policy of India, since 2014, will probably be influenced by populism and religion. As this is what the *Bhāratīya Janatā Pārṭī* (BJP), the current party in power, is known for. To cooperate with third countries, India wants to participate in existing multilateral organizations like the United Nations. In this respect they agree with the EU, but India also wants changes in these organizations, so that they represent the new world order, and no longer a unipolar order with the United States as only major power. This was how power relations were outlined at the end of the second World War. More than 70 years later, this situation is no longer valid. An example is that India wants to make the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) more democratic and India wants its own permanent seat as a major emerging power in world politics. The EU and India might collide over this issue because the EU is not able to take a stand due to internal disagreements.¹⁴

¹³ Mehta, Pratap Bhanu 2009: 210.

¹⁴ Jain and Sachdeva 2019: 318.

Mehta, Pratap Bhanu 2009: 209.

Plagemann, Johannes, and Sandra Destradi 2019: 289.

There is nonetheless some line to be found in India's foreign policy. Since the 2000s, India has followed a policy of liberalization. This resulted in a growing economy, which is necessary if it wants other countries to take India more into account, e.g. the EU. The same happened for its military power. Since India has successfully created a nuclear bomb, it has become more powerful, and the chances that other countries will reckon with India have increased substantially. Because India has a liberal democracy and an economic system similar to many wealthy Western countries, it has an advantage over many other countries. Western countries will be more inclined to cooperate with another liberal country than with an autocratic country. Of course, the economic systems of the countries in the world are not black and white, either liberal or autocratic. It is merely to prove the point that India might have an advantage that could make interaction with the EU easier, even though many other factors play a role in international relations, and trade, as well. One reason for this is the perception other countries have of India as a liberal democracy. Other countries might be more inclined to engage in close relations with India, because they perceive India's economic and political system as easier to engage with.¹⁵

The keyword in Indian foreign policy is status. The main reason why India engages in international relations and why it has a foreign policy is to be recognized by other countries. India wants its status as a major country in the world acknowledged. To ensure this, the Indian government does not have a single strategy. At every moment, in every occasion, it chooses a strategy that seems to suit it best. This means that it has a rather volatile foreign policy. It might not always be clear for other countries, like the EU, what India tries to establish and what it will do next. This could be confusing and could be a reason why other countries hesitate to interact with India. Shortly after independence, India wanted to participate in the international system to achieve its goals, but the capacity for India to do so was very small due to a lack of military, social and political means. Domestic issues have also shaped the Indian foreign policy more than issues in the international system. Another striking element that might help us understand the contemporary relations between India and the EU is that, according to Mehta, India does not engage with other countries to enlarge its power.¹⁶ After independence, when Nehru was the Indian prime minister, India tried to make its economy self-sufficient, so that it wouldn't have to rely on any other country. The economy was a key component to gain status and to ensure territorial integrity. During the Cold War, India did not participate in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) to form a power balance against the United States of America (USA) and the Soviet Union (USSR). India participated in NAM because it wanted to avoid being dragged into the camp of either country and become a pawn in the bipolar world order of the time. Regional

¹⁵ Hymans 2009: 234, 236, 253.

¹⁶ Mehta, Pratap Bhanu 2009: 219.

integration in South Asia is very difficult and a reason could be that India does not like making alliances with other countries. It does not want to depend on another country, because that would mean a threat to its status, and to its sovereignty. Another reason is that there are too many unresolved problems, like between India and Pakistan and between Pakistan and Bangladesh. Perhaps this might change over time, as within Europe there were major tensions between Germany and France for centuries, while now they are close partners. The hesitance of India to forge deep alliances has changed in more recent years. India fully participates in global trade in order to have a more stable and developed economy and so it has decided to negotiate as many Free Trade Agreements as possible. A Free Trade Agreement could be important in EU-India relations, as the EU also tries to negotiate many Free Trade Agreements. In other areas, like politics, India is more reluctant in negotiating alliances. It usually strives for full reciprocity and for many countries, this is just not beneficial as India is usually the larger country. Also, India often refuses to do many concessions, because that might make it too dependent on a second country.¹⁷

Besides the recognition of its status, Indian foreign policy has a second goal. It wants to make sure its territorial integrity is guaranteed. A very important idea for India and the Indian government is sovereignty. This could potentially cause problems in EU-India relations as the principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) has become very important to the EU, while India is unlikely to engage in any R2P actions, because it harms the sovereignty principle. There are a few reasons why territorial integrity is so important to India and the Indian government. One of these is the trauma of Partition after independence. The former British colony could not stay together and was divided into several parts. In addition, the split of India and Pakistan was accompanied by a lot of violence and many casualties. Nehru wanted to prevent this from happening again in the future, so it was key to keep the country together and not allow any other country to take what was perceived as Indian territory. A side-effect is the border conflict with China. A large part of the border is undecided, and a reason why it can't be resolved could be this trauma of the Partition. The main reason why the Indian government began to invest in a military and defence system is again to preserve its territorial integrity. Like the EU, India is very reluctant in using its military against other countries, but for a different reason. The Indian government will only use its military to defend its territory, not to attack other countries. Although some footnotes could be made regarding this statement, it is however the case that India has not used its own army, like e.g. the USA does. It is unlikely that India will attack a country like Iraq for ideological or for power reasons. As I mentioned before, India does not seek power in the international system, so it does not have to defend its power either. Even though India's

¹⁷ Mehta, Pratap Bhanu 2009: 212, 217, 219-221, 224, 226-227.

Plagemann, Johannes, and Sandra Destradi 2019: 291-292.

power is rising, mainly its economic power, because India decided to engage more in the global economy. It is a large country, with a large population, whose purchasing power is rising. This ensures that India's status is growing, and more and more countries will take India into account because it becomes an attractive economic partner.¹⁸ This could eventually cause a change of policy and India might want to defend the power it is getting in the future. Only time will tell how India's rising economic power will influence its other policies.

Plagemann and Destradi claim that a country's foreign policy might change when a populist leader comes into power.¹⁹ They call Modi a populist leader. Since the BJP is in power in India, its domestic policies changed and that influences its foreign policy as well. Under Nehru, India used to be a secular country, but the BJP emphasizes more Hindu nationalism and Hindutva. The BJP is strongly against pluralism, it has a very strong ideology and that affects its foreign policy as well. This might become a problem for the EU, because the EU is internally very diverse and cherishes that diversity. If India under the BJP government clearly favours a certain part of its population, the EU might use a form of soft power to try and change that. As mentioned before, in general, India hesitates to negotiate compromises with other countries, and this has started to shift more recently. Since Modi came into power in 2014, India has been willing to negotiate more treaties with more far-reaching compromises. Modi has set a new course in international relations and is more willing than his predecessors to compromise. This could be confusing for the EU and other Western countries since countries in Europe with a populist leader usually show the opposite trend. They grow weary of other countries and refuse to work with them, while Modi inclines more towards cooperation. The same could be said about populist leaders working with international organizations. European populist leaders perceive that kind of organizations more as a threat, while Modi again leans more towards working with them. Unlike former Indian prime ministers, Modi shows high levels of cooperation and he even shows initiative. E.g. at the Paris Climate Conference in 2015, Modi tried to present India as a pioneer in renewable energy, he was willing to make concessions. While former prime ministers usually had the opinion that countries who are industrialized for a very long time should pay the price, because historically speaking, they have contributed more to global warming. Modi does not seem to share that opinion. Working this closely with multilateral organizations might also be a way to emphasize and strengthen India's status worldwide. There is a purpose behind this change of the Modi government. In other cases, India has always worked together extensively with multilateral organizations, e.g. with the UN. India is one of the highest contributors of troops to the UN peacekeeping forces. This is important for EU-India relations, because the EU prefers to work through

¹⁸ Mehta, Pratap Bhanu 2009: 215-216, 229, 231-232.

¹⁹ Plagemann, Johannes, and Sandra Destradi 2019: 299.

international organizations as well. It is important that India, at least partially, shares that opinion, because the EU also likes working through regional organizations, but in the case of South Asia, that is very difficult. There is a regional South Asian organization, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), but it is more a name than an actual working organization. There are too many unresolved differences between the countries in South Asia and especially between India and Pakistan. A possibility for the EU and regional South Asian cooperation could be the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), that consists of all South Asian countries, except for Pakistan. The future will decide whether this organization will play a role in international relations or if it will remain on the sidelines. Another important evolution during the Modi government is that Modi has not rephrased the Indian desire to attain a permanent seat in the UNSC. As I have mentioned before, this could be a possible conflict point with the EU but is no longer a wish for Modi. Modi also continues the opening of India towards foreign investment, that has started when India emphasized a more liberal economy. This is again one of the possibilities for more elaborate EU-India relations.²⁰

It is not easy to grasp exactly what India's foreign policy is, but there are elements that return in the different coalition governments. India wants to participate through multilateral organization, like the EU, but it has long wanted to change these organizations in order to better represent the countries from the Southern hemisphere as they are more numerous. Since the 2000s India's economy has been rising and this made it a larger player in the international order. India has become more important over the years and more and more countries are eager to engage with such a growing power like India. India has always tried to get a high status globally and this started to occur with its growing economy. The fact that it is a liberal democracy makes it even easier for Western countries to engage with India without moral objections. Despite its eagerness to work with other countries through international organizations, India will not likely grant concessions to other countries in bilateral relations as this might increase India's dependence on those countries, which it wants to avoid. The Partition caused a trauma for the country and India will do whatever it takes to keep its country together. Conflicts with its neighbours arising from this make regional integration difficult. Which might be a stumbling stone for the EU that prefers working with regions as a whole. The BJP's growing emphasis on Hindutva might be another stumbling stone as it might cause segregation within the country. In the next chapter I will elaborate on the history of EU-India interactions to describe how they have interacted with each other.

²⁰ Plagemann, Johannes, and Sandra Destradi 2019: 287, 290, 292-294, 297, 299.
Strategy, EU Global 2016: 10.

History of EU – Indian bilateral relations

In the previous chapter I have delineated the general foreign policies of the EU and India separately. In this chapter I will elaborate on their mutual relations in specific. The EU and India have a history of mutual relations. India first established relations with the European Economic Community in 1963. This is only shortly after India's dependence and the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the forerunner of the EU. However, their relations only intensified from 2004 onwards. At first, the EU saw India solely as a developing country, so the relations mostly consisted of EU development aid to India. This began to change slowly from the 1990s onwards. After the Second World War, most Asian countries were mainly aid recipient countries and the EU only had broader bilateral relations with China. With the end of the Cold War, the EU turned more towards Asia to find possible partners for both security reasons and economic reasons. At the same time, during the 1990s, India became more important. Its economy increased, it had a large and ever-growing population with an increasingly sizeable middle class, it was democratic and was becoming a world leader in ICT. For these reasons, the EU saw potential in India as a future strategic partner.²¹

Like the EU, India has several strategic partnerships. This is a format both the EU and India like working through, and since 2004, they concluded a strategic partnership with each other. This strategic partnership could end up as a steppingstone to a Free Trade Agreement, which is something the EU would like to negotiate with India. To this goal there are both things that facilitate a potential treaty and things that complicate the negotiations. First, both of their primary objectives are to enhance economic relations. But, India wants these partnerships to be based on sovereign equality, while the EU tries to influence other countries to take over its ideology and systems. India did become, more or less, a market economy. On an economic level there are quite some similarities and India and the EU both have liberal market economies. Some of the problems that have to be overcome are the many tariff barriers India has on foreign goods and the many non-tariff barriers the EU has to trade. Both of these kinds of barriers can be considered as a form of protectionism, which does not correspond to the acclaimed liberal nature of both of their economies. Furthermore, these non-tariff barriers are a way of soft power used by the EU. The EU wants India to meet its requirements, in order to adjust the Indian internal market according to the example of the EU's internal market. If products don't meet the EU requirements they will be banned from the internal market, so India has no choice but to follow EU rules in trade. India, in turn, also applies soft power as a policy. Becoming a liberal market economy is a first example. India follows an economic model that the EU has as well, so India becomes more appealing to the EU and to other Western countries. Another example is that

²¹ Bava, et al 2008: 105-107.

India promotes its culture in the EU, through movies, music, etc. In this way, India will become more known in the EU and the people of the EU will have a positive look towards India, which in turn might enhance EU-India relations. The EU usually prefers full reciprocity in relations with other countries. However, this might actually harm the Indian economy.²²

Another important point of divergence in EU-India relations is the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle. As I have mentioned before, the EU has fully embraced the R2P initiative in the past, while India remains very sceptical. One of the key principles in Indian foreign policy is the guarantee of its territorial integrity. However, the R2P initiative is about protecting the citizens of a country when a government turns on its own people and commits severe atrocities. This means that a foreign country will intervene in another country directly, usually by military means. This is unacceptable for India and might even be something it fears. It reminds India of its colonial past and its many struggles after independence, e.g. the Partition, but also the 1962 border conflict with China that was never resolved.²³

The EU and India established relations with each other relatively early in both of their existences. A reason for this might be the relations India had during colonial times with several EU countries like France and the Netherlands. They knew India and thus might have been interested to establish broader relations. The interactions between the EU and India in the beginning focused primarily on economic issues and in 1973 they negotiated their first treaty: the Commercial Cooperation Agreement. This was followed by the Commercial and Economic Cooperation Agreement in 1980. By 1990 the EU even became India's most important trade partner. Nevertheless, this relationship was not reciprocal. There was a large trade deficit for India due to the barriers of the EU market on e.g. textile and The EU was much more important for India than vice versa. For the EU, India was only a small partner and within Asia the EU focused more on China. It is only since the beginning of the 21st century that the EU began to see India as a potentially important partner with the establishment of an annual EU-India summit. Shortly afterwards, in 2004, both parties signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement and they agreed upon a Joint Action Plan in 2005. In 2006 both parties opened up a Security Dialogue. This dialogue shows that India and the EU are growing towards each other in terms of different policy topics. Even though this dialogue only started out as a means to share views, it does have a lot of

²² Bava, et al 2008: 110.

Hymans 2009: 234-235, 252, 260.

Jain and Sachdeva 2019: 316-320.

²³ Global centre for the responsibility to protect. "What is R2P?"

Plagemann, Johannes, and Sandra Destradi 2019: 292.

potential for both the EU and India, despite the sensitivity of the subject. Eventually, in 2007, they initiated the negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement.²⁴

For India the EU is an attractive partner because the EU already is a major trading partner. According to the numbers from 2021 only the US and China are bigger trading partners for India. However in 2021, India was only the EU's tenth largest trading partner. This means that India is still not as important for the EU as the EU is for India. Concerning the trade in services, the EU imports a little bit more than it exports to India. The numbers of trade in goods are more in favour of the EU and here the gaps are somewhat larger. Although the differences stay small. This means that for both the EU and India, the other is an interesting partner, because the trade deficit remains rather small. This might be a reason why both countries were eager to negotiate a Free Trade Agreement. Talks began in 2007 but were eventually put on hold in 2013 without reaching any consensus. Since then the EU-India relations changed direction and the focus turned more to the Strategic Partnership and in 2020 during the EU-India Summit both parties put together a new plan, the EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025. The goal was to strengthen EU-India relations. This culminated in the EU-India Connectivity Partnership concluded on 8 May 2021. In recent years a lot moved in EU-India relations and for the EU, India might become one of the most important partners. This connectivity partnership could be seen as a part of the Global Gateway, launched during Ursula von der Leyen's State of the Union in September 2021. The future for EU-India relations is looking bright. Especially since in April 2022, both parties have established a Trade and Technology Council in analogy with the one the EU has with the United States.²⁵

²⁴ Bava, et al 2008: 109.

Goddeeris 2011: 4-5.

²⁵ EEAS 2020. "EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025"

European Commission 2021. "Countries and regions: India".

European Council 2021. "EU-India Connectivity Partnership, 8 May 2021"

Ministry of External Affairs 2022. "भारत-यूरोपीय संघ: व्यापार और प्रौद्योगिकी परिषद की शुरुआत पर संयुक्त प्रेस

विज्ञप्ति"

Economic soft power

EU-India economic relations in numbers

One of the most important forms of soft power the European Union is able to use is the attractiveness of its internal market. The 27 member states of the EU have together created one single market, which makes them a lot more attractive to other countries, in terms of trade, than they would have been each on their own. The single market in the EU also has a customs union. This customs union involves uniform rules for import and export between the EU and third countries. For the entire internal market, companies only need to pay import fees once and then they can distribute their goods, or services, all over the EU. This is incredibly favourable and means countries and foreign companies often wish to trade with the EU. This in turn gives the EU power over those other countries without having to resort to hard measures. Therefore the EU's market attractiveness is a very powerful form of soft power. Trade between the EU and India has been going on for quite some time, however it is only since more recently that the numbers are growing more rapidly. Even though the EU is a much larger trade bloc than India, there is no major trade deficit for either. The EU's imports and exports of goods and services in general outweigh those of India by far and in 2019 the EU accounted for 17.8% of the world's GDP, while India's GDP only accounts for 3.3%. This in contrast with the size of India's population which is in turn much larger, almost 1.4 billion as compared to 447 million in the EU. The size of India's population holds a promise for the future and is an important reason why the EU is, and should be, interested in India. This is an important argument for the EU to use soft power towards India and intensify their mutual relations. Because if those relations intensify, it will be to the benefit of the EU if India follows the EU's norms and rules.²⁶

Indian trade still has a lot of potential in the EU as only 1.8% of the EU's imported goods came from India in 2020. That makes India the tenth largest trading partner of the EU, while for India, the EU is the third largest trading partner, accounting for 11.1% of India's trade. This could be the reason that the EU still doesn't really see India as an important partner. However, this might change in the foreseeable future as the trade in goods between India and the EU grew by 12.5% in the last decade. Not only the trade in goods is rising, the trade in services is becoming more and more important as well, even though it is not nearly as large as the trade in goods (yet?). What is remarkable here is that India is particularly strong in providing services abroad. Especially since 2018, the EU's deficit in the trade in services has grown considerably to many millions of euros. The trade in goods is still

²⁶ Delegation of the EU to India 2021: 3, 5.

Statista 2022.

The World Bank Group 2022.

much larger, so this deficit doesn't weigh much, especially since the EU usually (except for 2018), exports more goods to India, than India exports to the EU. Another meaningful part of the economic relations between the EU and India is foreign direct investment. In 2019 the value of EU foreign direct investment in India rose to €75.8 billion and more than doubled during the last decade. Depending on the source, between 4500 and 6000 EU companies have expanded their operations to India and created several million jobs in India both directly and indirectly. All these numbers show that since the last decade, the trade and economic relations between the EU and India have been growing increasingly fast.²⁷ The promise for the future is there, but how come the EU and India were not able to negotiate a Free Trade Agreement to facilitate trade even better?

The EU-India Free Trade Agreement

The EU and India began negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in 2007. At that time it was expected that the negotiations would be concluded by 2011. However, in addition to many problems, the conclusion of such an agreement was for neither of the parties a priority. India was only the EU's ninth largest partner and vice versa, for India, the EU was not among its most important partners either. This lack of incentive is most likely an important reason why the parties could not overcome their differences and thus were not able to come to an agreement. At first sight an FTA would be beneficial for India, because now trade between the EU and India is covered by the EU's Standard Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP). Countries that are covered by the GSP can export their products to the EU and for India, tariffs on two thirds of the products exported to the EU are fully, or partially removed. According to WTO rules an FTA between two parties has to substantially liberalize all trade, which means that the tariff for most products has to be zero/ This means that India would be able to export more products at favourable rates to the EU than it does now. However, before this is going to happen, many issues have to be overcome.²⁸

Since the negotiations began in 2007, eight rounds of bilateral talks have been concluded without getting much closer in reaching an agreement. The first incentive for both parties to negotiate an FTA is to get more preferential access to each other's markets. The EU wants access because India has a very large population and its economy is growing: India's market shows a lot of potential for the future. But India has very large tariff barriers to trade, especially on agricultural and industrial goods. An FTA is the best way for the EU to lower these barriers, because some tariffs, mainly those on

²⁷ Delegation of the EU to India 2021: 4, 9, 11, 16, 19-20.

European Commission 2021.

²⁸ DG Trade Generalised Scheme of Preferences.

European Commission Generalised System of Preferences.

Goddeeris, 2011: 6.

agricultural goods, have even been increasing. For India it would be interesting to get better access because the EU has a large population, with a large purchasing power, and this combined with a very large economy. India's trade to the EU is growing, so it would gain more if it would get easier access. Especially considering trade in services, India has a lot to gain, as India already has a surplus compared to the EU in this area. This means that the FTA would not only cover trade in goods, but has to cover trade in services as well in order to be beneficial for India. The goal for the EU-India FTA is to reduce tariff barriers by 90% in the first years after the implementation of the agreement. The only products not included would be sensitive products, consisting of many agricultural goods. India insisted on an unequal agreement on this part of the FTA; it asked for the EU to lower 95% of the tariffs, while India itself would lower 90%. This proposal was meant to compensate India for its lower development status, but was fully rejected by the EU and was one of the causes for a standstill during the negotiations. For the EU it is important to treat both partners as equals. A subsequent disagreement concerns the General Agreement on Trade in Service (GATS). The GATS consists of four modes: cross border, consumption abroad, investment and movement of persons. India wants to liberalize mode 1 and 4, but the EU has a defensive interest in mode 4, while they want to liberalize mode 1, 2 and 3. This causes more disagreements and these were not overcome during the negotiations. Another important disagreement occurred during the negotiations to liberalize the trade in services. The EU wants to use the negative list approach, while India is pushing to use the positive list approach. The positive list approach means that in the case of liberalization of services, in the agreement both parties would write down the specific sectors which they don't want to liberalize and all other sectors would automatically be liberalized. The negative list approach does the opposite, the parties only list specifically those sectors in which they want to liberalize, all other sectors are automatically excluded. The problem with the first approach could be that in the future new sectors are invented and these new sectors, which we don't know yet today, would be automatically liberalized. However more recently the EU has favoured the negative list approach as well.²⁹

The EU and India disagreed on many levels. First of all, they didn't agree on the overall form the agreement should have. The EU prefers to include legally binding commitments, while India actually wants to work through non-binding commitments. Because for India the most important principle is national sovereignty, it does not appreciate that any other party wants to have a say in its internal policies. This is a reason why it most likely will not accept any legally binding commitments imposed by the EU. The EU uses legally binding commitments to influence a third party's social laws,

²⁹ Delegation of the EU to India 2021: 20.

Modwel and Singh 2012: 11.

Khorana and Perdakis 2010: 182, 186-187, 191-193.

including worker's rights, as well as a country's engagements concerning environmental issues and human rights issues. While India is still a developing country, this means that they prefer to focus on economic growth first and foremost, without too many restrictions. The opposition between the EU and India on trade relating issues is also visible within the WTO as they often find each other on opposite sides of an issue. Another substantial problem is the different manner in which both parties prefer to operate in the international system. India already has several good trade relations with single European countries, so there is no large motivation to also engage with the EU as a whole. The EU on the other hand has single competence in trade policy, so it would prefer to negotiate an agreement with India itself. As long as India keeps seeing the EU as just a collection of countries, instead of as a single body, it will be difficult to make it interesting enough for India to engage in negotiations with the EU. An additional complication is the expected gains for India that would follow the conclusion of a Free Trade Agreement with the EU. Overall, in absolute numbers, both parties would gain more in terms of trade than without an FTA in place. However, India would gain much less compared to the EU, especially in terms of trade in goods, which is a first problem. The primary reason for these unequal gains is the unequal economic weight of both parties. Since the EU is a much larger economic power compared to India, general gains from the FTA would be much larger and negative effects would influence India more heavily. Studies performed at the time of the initial negotiations showed that Indian exports to the EU would grow by about 19% and the EU's exports to India would grow by nearly 57%. This is a large gap between the net growth for both parties. Even more important is that it is possible that the welfare of Indian citizens would decrease because of liberalization measures included in the FTA. A part of this welfare loss comes from the reduction of tariff barriers to trade by India. An FTA has to include a lowering of barriers to trade, however for the EU this does not mean as much income losses, because the EU mainly has non-tariff barriers to trade. An area in which India will likely gain more is trade in services. The loss of the trade in goods would have to be made up for by the trade in services. However this seems unlikely as recent numbers show that the trade in services from India to the EU is much smaller than the trade in goods from the EU to India. The trade in services still has a large potential. When it increases, an FTA with the EU might become more appealing for India. Other benefits would include new jobs and overall export gains, but the benefits for India overall would remain very low compared to those for the EU. New jobs would only be created in certain sectors, while other sectors, like the manufacturing sector, would experience substantial job losses.³⁰

³⁰ Delegation of the EU to India 2021: 5, 16, 20.

Goddeeris, 2011: 6

Keukeleire and Hooijmaaijers 2013: 119, 121.

Because of all of these issues, several years have passed since the last FTA negotiations, but since then a lot has changed. We are currently more than ten years later and by now, the EU has become one of India's largest partners when you consider both imports and exports in goods and in services. For the EU, India is not as important, as I mentioned India is only the tenth largest trade partner of the EU, but the EU has been focusing more on Asia and has been taken India more into account. This means that a restart of the negotiations might be possible in the near future and perhaps this time, since more is at stake, they will be able to overcome their differences and successfully come to an agreement. On the eighth of May 2021 EU and Indian leaders came together and concluded a Connectivity Partnership while at the same time agreeing to resume negotiations for a trade agreement and two additional agreements, one on investment protection, and the other on geographical indications.³¹

Soft power in FTA negotiations

A large difference with other FTA negotiations between the EU and third countries is that India is not a small country that is fully dependent on the EU. The EU has asked for many different concessions from the Indian government with the underlying idea that many of them would be granted, but India came to the negotiation table with a clear plan and many demands of itself. The negotiations didn't end in a finalized FTA, this means that the EU was not able to use its soft power means adequately to convince India of a sufficient number of the points to finalize a deal. They disagreed on many topics and were thus not able to find enough common ground.

It is very hard to determine exactly which forms of soft power the EU used during the FTA negotiations, because very little information is available on the exact content of individual negotiations. It is most likely the case that the EU has used its market power. The EU's general market power is its most effective form of soft power. The EU has a large population with a substantial purchasing power, this makes the EU a very wealthy region. It is interesting for countries to have easier market access to export their own products to the EU. The EU can then use this power to push for liberalization of trade, but according to WTO rules, when negotiating a Free Trade Agreement, trade limitations have to be removed on substantially all the trade between the two parties. Both India and the EU are part of the WTO, which means they have to follow these rules anyway. It is therefore more likely that the EU has pushed for the FTA to go beyond just tariffs and possibly even beyond trade issues. The EU wants to include problems to market access for EU companies in India and it wants to address restrictive access to trade in services. The latter might be a consequence of the trade

Khorana and Perdakis 2010: 183-186.

³¹ European Commission 2021.

Keukeleire and Hooijmaaijers 2013: 119.

deficit the EU has relative to India in trade in services. The EU wants to address investment issues and non-trade issues like government procurement, environmental issues and human rights issues. India has demands of its own and this gives the EU some more power as they could negotiate in a 'this for that' approach. However it is problematic that India keeps considering the EU as just a collection of separate countries, which it isn't. The EU has exclusive competence in its common commercial policy, so the member states cannot have their own trade policy anymore.³²

India does not want to just grant the EU's every wish. They have many concerns and fears regarding the liberalization of several sectors and regarding the harmonization of rules. The EU wanted e.g. an opening up of government procurement, but India has also concerns regarding investment policy and competition policy. India fears that if they harmonize their competition rules with those of the EU, this might jeopardize India's development. It is important to state that the EU and India are not fully equal partners as India is still a developing country and is thus much less competitive overall on the world market. However this inequality is undone at least partially because India makes very strong demands itself and does not merely accept the EU's demands without much of a struggle. India's investment policies vary from state to state, so in order to harmonize India's rules with those of the EU, India would first have to reform its own rules which would most likely take a long time considering the number of parties involved. The same problems apply to government procurement in India. India's government procurement is very much closed to companies from other countries and has not been liberalized before. India is very protective over its government procurement and might not be willing to liberalize this sector at all, even with a lot of pressure from the EU. The EU has a history of focusing on human rights, social issues, like labour standards, and environmental issues in its trade agreements and wants to include such clauses in the EU-India FTA as well. If the EU negotiators don't succeed in including these clauses, it is possible that the European Parliament will not settle with the proposed agreement, which would make it impossible to get the agreement ratified. This is another form of soft power the EU has most likely used. In order for such clauses to be effective, the EU prefers to include legally binding clauses, and the fact that they would be legally binding is exactly the problem for India.³³ This shows that the EU's economic attractiveness and the use of economic soft power were not enough to overcome the differences between both parties. And this shows that India is not convinced by the EU's soft power. The Indian government sticks to its own agenda, refusing to just give in to the EU's demands.

³² Modwel and Singh 2012: 5, 7, 9, 11.

³³ Modwel and Singh 2012: 13-15.

The Brussels effect

An important economic form of soft power the EU has in its toolbox is the so called Brussels effect. This is a very cheap form of soft power the EU can ‘use’. The remarkable aspect of the Brussels effect is that it doesn’t cost the EU anything. The Brussels effect refers to unilateral regulations the EU imposes on companies that are active on the EU market. Many non-EU companies trade on the EU market, which means they have to follow all the internal EU regulations as well. These specific EU regulations are often stricter than those in their own country. This means that companies have to adapt their production processes in order to be able to sell their products on the EU’s internal market. It would be very expensive for these companies if they would have one production process for products that are sold in the EU and another production process for all other products. This has as a result that these companies apply the EU’s rules onto all of their products. In practice this causes for the EU regulatory model to be applied all over the world. Furthermore, the EU’s stricter rules cause more expensive production processes, which means that these large companies lose competitiveness compared to the other companies in their home countries. Often the companies that are exporting to the EU will put pressure on their own governments to take over the EU’s regulatory model, in order to restore their own competitiveness. This approach succeeds because multinationals have more lobbying power than other, smaller companies. This doesn’t cost the EU anything, and still the EU’s regulations in many sectors are exported to countries all over the world. This happened in India as well. Many Indian companies are active on the EU’s internal market, especially tech companies and their numbers are growing more than ever since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. These companies have to follow all EU regulations, e.g. the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which is important to all companies, but tech companies in particular. Another example is India’s competition law. According to Werts³⁴, the Indian government based the regulation of its new competition law on the EU’s regulatory model. A last example is India’s emission regulations. Since the beginning of the 21st century, India’s emission regulations became stricter and to reform the regulations, the Indian government used the EU’s emission standards as a guideline. During the 2000s India gradually applied the EU norms for vehicles onto all new 4-wheel vehicles in certain regions, and later across the whole country. India taking over the EU’s regulatory model, has created incentive for manufacturers across the world to produce all their vehicles in accordance with EU regulation, because now two major markets have adopted the same rules.³⁵

³⁴ Werts, Jan 2021

³⁵ Dieselnet 2018.

Pramanik, Ayan and Anandi Chandrashekhar 2021.

Werts, Jan 2021.

Connectivity Partnership

On the 8th of May 2021 the EU and India concluded a Connectivity Partnership. The goal of this partnership is to enhance the connectivity between the EU and India. The EU's External Action Service (EEAS) calls it a “[j]oint work on regulation and support for private investments in physical infrastructure across all sectors: digital, transport, energy, and people-to-people.”³⁶ The idea is that this partnership will bring “[s]ocio-economic benefits from sustainable growth, shared norms and values.”³⁷ Across the four mentioned sectors (digital, transport, energy, and people-to-people), the EU lists several ongoing cooperations between India and the EU and between India and EU-member states. The idea is that the existence of the partnership will bring more cooperations in the future, similar to those that exist already. This partnership is mainly important because it is a sign that the EU and India are moving closer together again, after the failed negotiations for an FTA. In the factsheet of the partnership, all kinds of initiatives are listed, initiatives by European companies and countries in India. This shows that many European companies and also European countries are investing in India. It might provide the EU with some amount of leverage over India, especially since the EU itself also invests in India through EU-India cooperations. The EU might be able to use the importance of these investments in India to ask the Indian government to liberalize its rules for e.g. investment and public procurement. The EU can use the presence it already has to show the Indian government what the potential is if the rules would be much more favourable. Many more companies might decide to invest in India, thus stimulating the Indian economy and maybe even contributing to India's development. In the agreement, the EU and India agreed to cooperate with each other to enhance sustainable connectivity in other countries. In order to efficiently work together, it might be easier to have similar internal regulations. The EU might argue that India should adapt its rules in order to get closer to the EU, because the EU is, economically speaking, a much larger entity. It is possible that the EU can use its economic success to persuade India to change, at least to some extent, its own rules to facilitate a better cooperation in third countries. Although India might not easily do this, as its own companies are very strong in certain sectors as well, e.g. in the services sector. This is proof that India has economic success as well. As I described earlier, India usually does not do whatever the EU wants it to do.³⁸

³⁶ EEAS 2021: 1.

³⁷ EEAS 2021: 1.

³⁸ EEAS 2021: 1-2.

European Council 2021: 3.

Ministry of External Affairs Government of India 2021.

In September 2021 the EU has launched its Global Gateway, which is a new name for its connectivity policy. The EU wants to enhance its visibility in the world through the Team Europe approach. All projects from the EU's institutions and the EU's member states are grouped together under the name of the Global Gateway. This might be considered as a form of soft power. The EU enhances its visibility in an attempt to show other countries more clearly what exactly the EU does in the world and to show how good a partner the EU can be. It is a means to convince countries to deepen their relations with the EU. The EU-India Connectivity Partnership is now also a part of the Global Gateway, making it a component of a larger unit. If the EU engages in connectivity relations with other countries that go further than the EU-India Connectivity Partnership, the EU might be able to persuade India to follow the example of those other countries so that it remains an important EU partner. A lot of the commentaries on the Global Gateway argue that it is an attempt to provide third countries with an alternative to the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The BRI has shown many inherent problems for countries with whom the Chinese government cooperates, e.g. when China uses the debt-trap diplomacy tactic. India does not have easy relations with China itself and might engage more willingly with the EU in the framework of the Global Gateway as a measure to counteract the Chinese influence in the Indian Ocean and Africa. This might provide the EU with more opportunities to influence India's course and to align it more with the EU's policies. The EU itself is looking for better access to countries along the Indian Ocean, both in Asia and in Africa and by having India as its partner, this access might be more readily provided. This provides India with some soft power of its own to influence the EU's actions. The EU and India agreed to restart the FTA negotiations³⁹, however whether the negotiations will actually result in an FTA this time remains to be seen.

Progress in 2022

A new step to try to proceed with the FTA negotiations has been taken at the end of April 2022. The president of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, has visited India from the 25th to the 27th of April to intensify the EU-India partnership. Von der Leyen travelled to India to celebrate the 60th birthday of EU-India relations, of which trade is an important part. This visit shows that the EU is interested in India and is willing to put effort in EU-India bilateral relations again. The EU's intentions are also visible in a tweet von der Leyen send out right before she left for India. She states the intention to deepen EU-India relations, including through "Negotiating ambitious trade and investment agreements"⁴⁰. On the 25th of April, in a new tweet, she even said that the EU and India

³⁹ Energy Industry Review 2021.

European Commission 2021.

Moreschi, Andrea 2021.

⁴⁰ Von der Leyen, Ursula 2022.

will shortly begin negotiating agreements on both trade and investment. It is not entirely clear where the incentive came from to effectively restart the negotiations at this specific moment. A possibility is a change of heart in India. During the first months of 2022 India has begun and continued trade related negotiations with several countries. One of these countries includes the United Kingdom with whom India formally began trade negotiations in January 2022. Since the UK left the EU, they have to negotiate their own trade agreements, for the EU it might be an incentive to begin negotiating with those countries the UK is approaching as well. For the EU the Brexit was a very difficult process. If the EU wants to show the UK what a mistake it made, the EU has to show how successful it is through its own actions. Furthermore, negotiating an extensive agreement with India, perhaps even before the UK does, might save some of the face they lost during the Brexit. However, the UK is just one country, while the EU has to take 27 countries into consideration. A new failure in EU-India negotiations would be very painful for the EU, especially towards the UK.⁴¹

Because of the Brexit the EU is under pressure to prove that it is still a relevant actor. The EU has to prove this to the world, in order to remain part of the most important actors in world relations. But in addition to this, the EU also has to prove its own citizens that it is still a relevant and important actor. This pressure could be an encouragement for the EU to use many different forms of soft power so that it can negotiate an EU-India trade agreement with which the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union can be satisfied, because these two ultimately have to ratify a trade agreement negotiated by the European Commission. It is important that both the Parliament and the Council agree with the content of the agreement, because as recent history shows, the Commission has negotiated a trade agreement with Mercosur countries, but the Parliament and the Council refuse to ratify it. They have many concerns regarding the agreement and now the agreement is at an impasse. Which forms of economic soft power the EU will use during its negotiations with India, remains to be seen, but it is likely that it will use similar forms as before. The will most likely use its market power to get as many concessions from India as possible. To get more concessions, it could also use the argument that in order for the Parliament and the Council to ratify the agreement, India will have to go further in its commitments. This is a powerful negotiating tool, because the Commission can show that its hands are tied and that there is no other option than for India to make more commitments. An incentive for both India and the EU to conclude the negotiations successfully

⁴¹ Cyrill, Melissa 2022.

Ministry of External Affairs 2022. “रायसीना डायलॉग - 2022”

Seli, Yeshi 2022.

Von der Leyen, Ursula 2022.

is their cooperation through the Global Gateway. It would give both India and the EU a more important position in the world in general and especially in world trade.⁴²

I believe that the EU's economic soft power is its most powerful soft power tool and notably the EU's market power. This has proven to be successful in the past, resulting in many different trade agreements with countries all over the world.⁴³ However, India has shown not to be as willing to concede to the pressure used by the EU. It is no longer a developing country that doesn't really know what it is getting itself into. The Indian negotiators have a clear idea about what they want from the EU in this agreement. The EU's wishes and India's wishes don't always add up and this has caused a standstill in the past. We are several years later now and both parties want to try again. The potential benefits might be even larger now, than they were years ago. India is still growing and better access to the EU could add to this growth, especially if it gets more preferential access to the EU's services market. For the EU it would be most beneficial if India would lower its tariff barriers to trade and if EU companies would get access to public procurement. In order for this agreement to succeed, the EU can use its soft power tools, but they have to treat India as an equal partner, since this is of utmost importance to India. On the other hand, India might be more willing to give in to the EU's demands and thus get preferential access to the EU's internal market in order to become more economically competitive as compared to its rival, and neighbour, China, in light of China's economic rise.

⁴² Blockmans, Steven and Michael emerson 2016.

Van der Loo, Guillaume 2021.

⁴³ European Commission.

The EU as a normative power

What does it mean for the EU to be a normative power, and are they really seen as such a power in the world? In order to answer this question it is important to first determine what a normative power is exactly. A normative power in general is an actor who has power over the opinions of other actors in the world. In addition, normative power is also ideological power which means that a normative power has the ability to shape other actors' ideas. The EU has developed certain norms and values that it fully adheres to because of its history. The European institutions were founded shortly after the end of the second World War and this has shaped the EU's way of thinking and acting over the years of its existence. The EU wanted to be a different kind of power, it didn't want to rely on military might like the United States and the Soviet Union did during the Cold War. Instead the EU rather wanted to rely on civilian power, like normative power, in order to play a meaningful role in the international system. It believes strongly that its norms and values should be universal. So, in its external relations, the EU will try to convince other actors to adopt these norms and values as well. The EU promotes many different norms and values, depending on the policy area in case. However most come down to the following ones; adherence to the rule of law, democracy as the best political system, respecting basic human rights and a final important one is social justice. These norms and values can be interpreted very widely, which means that it is not always entirely clear what the EU's exact position is. A further difficulty could be that the EU's member states might have different opinions on the exact meaning of these norms and values. This ambiguity is partially taken away because the EU has consolidated democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and fundamental freedoms in its Treaty on the European Union (TEU). Being a normative power means that the EU is able to shape the norms and values of other countries, but some authors, like Therborn, argue that without a military force to back the EU's norms, it won't be effective.⁴⁴ I don't agree with this standpoint, because I believe that using military force or even just threatening with the use of military force will have the opposite effect. Countries will feel threatened by the EU and will try to distance themselves from the EU as much as possible. As history has shown, military invasions usually have many consequences, except for those consequences the invaders envisioned in the first place. I think the EU's approach is better, because the EU has no army. Countries are not afraid that the EU will invade them and a true dialogue is possible. I really believe that dialogue will bring insight and thus in this way, the EU might change the norms and values of other countries.

⁴⁴ Cited in Manners, Ian 2002: 241

For more details on the EU as a normative power see Jain, Rajendra K. and Shreya Pandey 2013: 110-111. and Manners, Ian 2002: 239-241.

In academic circles there is an extensive debate going on about the questions what a normative power exactly is and whether the EU is such a normative power. I am of the opinion that the EU is a normative power, but also that this is not the only way in which the EU engages in international relations. It is a part of the EU's external action along with e.g. economic relations. In his article Manners describes six different ways in which the EU can spread its norms and values.⁴⁵ The first way he calls contagion. Contagion means that the EU is able to spread its norms, without the explicit intention to do so, e.g. through leading by example. Leading by example is very important for the EU, and it uses this form actively in the fight against climate change, which would mean that contagion can be intentional as well as unintentional. The second form is informational diffusion and includes unipolar initiatives coming from the EU's institutions, e.g. the strategic communications and other policy initiatives. The next form is procedural diffusion. Here EU norms are spread through treaties, through inclusion in an international organization, through inclusion in the EU itself, etc. The fourth form is called transference. This means that the EU is able to spread its norms e.g. through trade and through foreign aid. This occurs when the EU directly engages with another country and direct benefits would come if another country takes over (some of) the EU's norms. The following one is overt diffusion and results from the EU's presence in other countries, in international organizations, etc. The last way in which the EU can spread its norms and values is through cultural filter. Manner describes this as follows: “[C]ultural filter [...] affects the impact of international norms and political learning in third states and organizations leading to learning, adaptation or rejection of norms”.⁴⁶

For the EU, being a normative power means that it wants to export its own liberal norms and values to other countries and regions in the world and this has an influence on the EU's relations with India. The EU wants to shape the global rules concerning the environment, human rights, labour rights and so on and also wants to promote those rules in the world. Another goal the EU states in its 2016 Global Strategy is to promote democracy worldwide, but without resorting to interventionism.⁴⁷ It believes that when it is internally united, the EU will be able to obtain its goals in the world. It is convinced that because it is an important international player, it has the obligation to take responsibility, and this includes doing as much as it can to end problems in the world, problems that include conflicts, but also human rights violations, environmental pollution, etc. The EU only truly

⁴⁵ Manners, Ian 2002: 244.

⁴⁶ Cited in Manners, Ian 2002: 245.

For more details see Orbie, Jan and Sangeeta Khorana 2015: 4-6.

and Manners, Ian 2002: 244-245.

⁴⁷ EU Global Strategy 2016.

becomes a normative power when other countries and regions accept its norms and values and internalize them as well, this can only happen when other parties in the world accept the EU as an example. The EU's liberal norms and values include many different aspects, some of the most well-known are adherence to the rule of law, being a democracy, having a market economy, respecting human rights, etc. The EU wants to export its norms and values because it believes that these are universal. Norms and values can play an important role in EU-India relations. At first sight, the EU and India share many norms and values. They are both large liberal democratic entities that emphasize the practice of liberalism in many areas of their respective policies. This suggests that norms like democracy and freedom of speech are important to both of them. And to spread its norms and values through the world, the EU wants to work with other major powers. Here India might become a promising partner. Moreover, the EU believes it is important to help other countries reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and here India might be an aid recipient as well as a partner. However, in the EU's belief in the universality of its norms and values lies an inherent danger as well, it might remind countries of the EU's former colonial power. The universality of the EU's norms and values, stemming from the Enlightenment, might be rendered obsolete. Different cultures can have different norms and values, therefore it is important for the EU to avoid acting as a neo-colonial power, but rather make an example of itself to convince other countries to take over its norms and values, without imposing them in any way on other actors in the international system. Many non-European countries were traumatised because of the colonial period and the EU acting as a neo-colonial power will most likely backfire.⁴⁸

After independence, when the constitution had to be written, India chose to become a democracy. At that time it followed the prevalent political norms of Europe and the United States. In 2011 and 2012 Jain and Pandey⁴⁹ have interviewed 30 people who play a role in Indian politics, either as politicians, as heads of companies, or within business networks, etc. They were asked for their opinions about the EU at the time. In general they had positive ideas about the lives of the people in the EU, but this was always accompanied by negative images as well. One of these negative images is the interference by the EU in Indian internal affairs. This suggests that the people interviewed see the EU as having a positive influence at home, but they don't want the EU to try to influence India in the same way. In addition, many of these people saw the EU as an important power in the world, but not as the most important one. This suggests that they have doubts about the EU's influence in the world in general,

⁴⁸ EU Global Strategy 2016.

Hettne, Björn and Frederik Söderbaum 2005: 539, 548.

Hymans, Jacques EC 2009: 234.

⁴⁹ Jain, Rajendra K. and Shreya Pandey 2013: 114.

especially since the eurozone crisis. This was worsened even more because of the lack of internal unity in the EU following that crisis. The people interviewed will most likely not consider the EU to be an important normative power, let alone that they would be susceptible to the EU's attempts to influence India's norms and values in the international system. When a country violates human rights, the EU sometimes imposes non-tariff barriers to trade, and in these interviews the people considered such measures as protectionist measures. The EU does this because it is convinced that human rights are universal and should be applied everywhere. The Indian elites interviewed, don't seem to agree, and this shows again the lack of normative influence by the EU on India at the time of the interviews. Another criticism on the EU is that it doesn't treat all countries equally, e.g. when considering human rights violations by China, the EU does not impose sanctions in the same way as it does when other countries commit similar violations. The people that were interviewed in 2011 and 2012 did not see the EU as a major normative power that could influence India's norms and values, moreover many of them were convinced that the EU should not try to influence India's norms and values. India is able to determine its own agenda as well as the norms and values by which it acts.⁵⁰

Many non-European countries, including India, believe that soft power is not enough in international relations. According to them, a country always needs hard power. One reason for this is that the EU's norms and values are not universal according to many other countries in the world. This means that the EU is a normative power only towards those countries that accept the EU as a normative example. Another problem is that for many non-European countries like India, not all EU's norms and values are compliant with their own norms and values. The closer to the EU, the more the EU's norms and values are seen as compliant with those of the countries' themselves. This suggests that norms and values are mostly culturally determined. The EU's and India's culture are very different which could explain the different emphasis laid in their respective foreign policies. This is also reflected in the fact that India is a member of the EU's Standard GSP Scheme and not a part of the GSP+ Scheme. The GSP+ Scheme gives countries more beneficial tariffs to export their products to the EU as compared to the Standard GSP, but in exchange GSP+ beneficiaries need to ratify more International Labour Conventions, more Human Rights Conventions and they have to do more regarding the protection of the environment and towards promoting and fostering good governance. India is not a part of the more extensive scheme which shows that India does not agree with the EU as to which international rules, norms, and values are a priority. It might also show that India does not want the EU to be involved in its internal policy choices.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Jain, Rajendra K. and Shreya Pandey 2013: 114-120.

⁵¹ DG Trade Generalised Scheme of Preferences.

Norms and values in international institutions

At first sight, the EU's norms and values and India's norms and values are quite similar. In order to find out if this is really the case, I will look at the EU's and India's opinions on norms and values in international institutions. Here the research by Keukeleire and Hooijmaaijers⁵² on the voting cohesion of the EU and India in the General Assembly of the United Nations (UNGA) is very interesting. They looked at how India and the EU voted in the UNGA in normative situations. The voting behaviour of both countries shows that even though they are both liberal democratic countries, and thus it seems like they share many norms, that this is not the case. In general, in less than half of the cases that concern norms and values, like human rights issues, development issues, international security issues, etc. the EU and India did not vote in the same way. The EU really wants to be a normative power, and wants to become an important world power through its normative might, but even though India is a liberal democratic country, it does not regularly share the EU's opinions. For the EU this is problematic, because when a large country like India does not share its opinions, how much power does the EU really have? The EU considers human rights to be among the most important norms, but India does not always agree. A reason might be that for India national sovereignty is one of the most important norms and thus, India might be much less inclined to get involved in human rights issues in other countries. This is an example of the EU's norms not being universally valid. The EU's focus on its own norms and values might be problematic for India as this can collide with national sovereignty. This means that it is possible that the EU's use of soft power to advance liberal norms in India might be met with a hostile attitude from the Indian government. A recent example of differing voting behaviour is the UN resolution on Ukraine. A resolution that demands Russia to end its military operations in Ukraine was put to a vote in the UNGA on the second of March 2022. All the EU's member states voted in favour of the resolution, while India abstained. This abstention from India is a recent example of what I described above. This does not mean that India approves of the attack from Russia on Ukraine, but it might mean that for India, other norms and values are more important than human rights. It is possible that it believes that it is a problem between two sovereign countries that should be worked out between themselves. Another example of divergence of norms between the EU and India is the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle. The EU is a strong proponent of R2P as it is a way to react when countries commit severe atrocities, like genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity against their own population. India does not support such severe atrocities, it will condemn them as well, but India will never agree that the UN intervenes in a

Jain, Rajendra K. and Shreya Pandey 2013: 120.

Kavalski, Emilian 2014: 304, 307, 310-311.

⁵² Keukeleire, Stephan, and Bas Hooijmaaijers 2013: 120-121.

country that commits such atrocities. India follows a so called “Middle path”⁵³. As I mentioned before, India does support liberal democratic values, according to which human rights are important, but the Indian government will never agree to a foreign intervention, because this undercuts that country’s sovereignty. Another reason I mentioned before is that India is not a member of the UN Security Council, despite India being a large upcoming country. India will not give the Security Council too much power through R2P if it can’t be a permanent member itself. According to India the UNSC is not democratic and discriminates against developing countries. A third reason would be that according to India an intervention through the R2P principle is the same as a humanitarian intervention. And these kinds of interventions are often not just about protecting the population of a country, but also about protecting the interests of the countries that decided to intervene. In the eyes of India it is merely another form of imperialism used by the developed countries to impose their own norms and values on developing countries. Consent by countries before the UN gets involved is still one of the main principles of India’s foreign policy.⁵⁴

The middle path that India follows regarding norms and values in international relations is quite unique in the world. India has secular and liberal values, but will not easily intervene in another country, even if that country commits crimes against humanity or other severe atrocities. Another important aspect of Indian foreign policy relates to it being a developing country. This means that, in contrast with developed countries, for India norm and value promotion is not its priority. For India and other developing countries their political priority is development. The EU should take this into account when it tries to influence the norms and values of India’s foreign and internal policies. In international relations important norms and values according to Hansel and Möller are “promoting the ideas of mutual respect for national sovereignty, nonaggression, mutual non-interference in domestic affairs, equality, and peaceful coexistence”⁵⁵. This does not entirely add up with the EU’s priorities in international relations as I mentioned before; adherence to the rule of law, democracy as the best political system, respecting basic human rights and social justice. India does participate often in UN peacekeeping missions, which are always held with the explicit agreement of all parties involved. Therefore, such missions are not a violation of the sovereignty of any country and helps contribute to India’s goal of peaceful coexistence. Sometimes Indian policymakers do refer to the

⁵³ Pai, Nitin 2013: 303.

⁵⁴ Hansel, Mischa and Miriam Möller 2015: 89-92.

Keukeleire, Stephan, and Bas Hooijmaaijers 2013: 120-121.

Pai, Nitin 2013: 303-305.

United Nations 2022.

United Nations 0:37-0:52.

⁵⁵ Hansel, Mischa and Miriam Möller 2015: 84.

promotion of democracy in the world, which is a political priority for the EU as well, but unlike for many Western countries, this never consists of invading a country, nor does this refer to the use of any violent means. This also indicates that it is highly implausible that India will introduce sanctions against another country. The EU on the other hand has sanctions against several countries, of which a recent example is Russia.⁵⁶

A case in international relations where the EU and India have long been on the opposite sides, concerning norms and values, is the case of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The EU is a strong supporter of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty signed in 1970. According to this treaty, the signing parties are not allowed to develop nuclear weapons if they didn't have them already by the time the treaty was signed initially. One EU country is a nuclear power, France, and several others have nuclear weapons stationed on their territory since the Cold War. India itself is also a nuclear power. At the time of its signing, India was strongly opposed to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, but more recently it has tried to become a member of those countries that are allowed to have nuclear weapons. So far India has not been successful. All it succeeded in getting was an exception at the time of the conclusion of the US-India nuclear deal. At the same time the EU tries to influence nuclear powers to get rid of their nuclear weapons and it tries to advocate against nuclear weapons to prevent new countries from attaining them. The EU also tried to influence India to get rid of its nuclear weapons, but as a normative power in the non-proliferation case, the EU has very little power since France, as an EU member state, still possesses nuclear weapons. India has not been susceptible to the non-proliferation demands made by the EU. However, if the EU would allow for India to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty without giving up its nuclear weapons, the whole non-proliferation regime would lose credibility. This would give the impression that all countries can become nuclear powers, and then just be accepted as such by the other countries.⁵⁷ This shows that so far the EU has not been able to influence India's norms and values in general in the international system. The middle path in international relations is very important for India, which means that it is very unlikely that the EU will have much influence on India in the future, especially if the goal is for India to agree with an intervention. If the EU tries to change the mind of Indian officials, this attempt will most likely be unsuccessful at the very least, and in the worst case will be met with open hostility.

⁵⁶ Hansel, Mischa and Miriam Möller 2015: 79, 83-84, 86.

Manners, Ian 2002: 239-241.

Pai, Nitin 2013: 303.

⁵⁷ Kienzle, Benjamin 2015: 36-37, 48-49.

Norms and values in the fight against climate change

India and the EU are not really on the same page when it comes to the fight against climate change. The EU really emphasizes its normative power in this area, because The EU wants to position itself as the leading expert in the world by making an example of itself. The most important internal policy concerning climate change within the EU is the European Green Deal and the goal of this policy is to make the EU climate neutral by 2050. All other EU policies need to take the Green Deal into account for it to work, and this influences the EU's foreign policy as well. It is important to notice that economic interests are also subject to the Green Deal. Both the EU's foreign policy and its economic interests have an influence in EU-India relations. It is essential to know that The EU is the only entity in the world that made the Paris Agreement enforceable by law. The Paris Agreement is a United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) agreement which is not legally binding. Being the only country that made the Paris Agreement enforceable, gives the EU a large amount of normative power. To ensure that the EU companies don't suffer from declining competitiveness, the EU has proposed several measures like the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) that has to prevent carbon leakage from the EU to other places in the world. This is also important for India since Indian companies will be subjected to the CBAM. The EU does not only rely on its soft power as a green example but it also implements concrete measures. This might put a lot of pressure on India to invest in measures against climate change as well. But India believes that development is more important than addressing climate change. India sees the consequences of climate change on their own territory, so it is not that it doesn't want to address climate change, it is more that India has other priorities right now. And these priorities are poverty reduction and economic growth. It is easier for developed countries to take climate friendly measures, while India still relies heavily on the fossil fuel industry to make its own development possible. In 2021 78% of India's electricity came from fossil fuels, while for the EU that was only 37%. The EU could help India to lessen its carbon footprint by providing funds for climate action to the Indian government or individual companies, so that measures against climate change do not come at the cost of India's development.⁵⁸ India might accept these funds to effectively make itself less reliable on fossil fuels, if it thinks that the EU is an example to follow in the fight against climate change. I will discuss India's views on foreign aid more broadly in the next chapter.

⁵⁸ Billett, Simon. 2010: 10.

Goddeeris, Idesbald 2011: 8.

Our World in Data.

Krämer, Ludwig 2020: 268-270, 272.

First of all, it is important to stress once more that India is not unwilling to take measures against climate change, but it simply thinks that development should always come before taking such measures. It is more important to get people out of poverty, than to take measures to reduce carbon dioxide(CO₂) emissions. India, like most other developing countries, considers the developed countries to be responsible for climate change. Because developed countries were historically able to develop thanks to a massive increase in CO₂ emissions. There exists a widely held belief in the world that it is not possible for a country to develop without increasing its CO₂ emissions. Developed countries trying to make large polluters reduce their CO₂ emissions is seen as a new form of imperialism, reminding developing countries of their colonial pasts. In the eyes of India, this reduces the EU's normative power in the context of climate change. Still, the EU, as a normative example in the fight against climate change, focuses on India because the country is among the most polluting countries in the world in terms of CO₂ emissions, especially because of its large heavy coal industry. In order to become less dependent on coal and other fossil fuels, India does invest heavily in wind energy and uses its own public funds to do so. Despite its reservations because of historical responsibility, the Indian government is taking measures. When researching English language newspapers in India, Billet⁵⁹ found that these newspapers present climate change as a scientific reality that is taking place right now in India and as something that will have social consequences. This means that all the people who read these newspapers (mainly the big city elite) will get scientific facts and might thus realize the sincerity of the problem. This shows that among certain parts of the Indian public opinion, climate change is an important issue. If these people put pressure on their government, India might become more inclined to take more far-reaching measures. More so than when the EU puts pressure on the Indian government.⁶⁰ It is very unlikely that the EU has much soft power over India in the case of climate change, because India considers the EU to be part of the historic polluters, those that caused climate change in the first place. That the EU is taking the lead in the fight against climate change and is making itself an example, is likely to be considered as something the EU is supposed to do, to right the wrongs from its past. It is more likely that India will take measures against climate change because of internal incentives. India has large problems with melting water coming from the Himalayan mountains and causing landslides because of deforestation. Another major issue is the air quality in India's large cities. The poor air quality causes a risk to the health of many citizens. Along with a reduction in the quality of life, air pollution might also jeopardize agricultural production along with economic production. A recent problematic example of climate change in India and its neighbour Pakistan are the unusually high temperatures in March and April 2022. March 2022

⁵⁹ Billett, Simon. 2010: 4.

⁶⁰ Billett, Simon. 2010: 2-9, 12.

Siefert, Silvan. (2017): 331-333, 339.

was the hottest one in 122 years and in many places temperatures were above 40°C, even coming close to 50°C, while in the mountains the snow is melting very quickly. Climate change is taking lives and is threatening the economy, this means that climate change might even pose a threat to India's development and this will be a much larger incentive to take measures against climate change than the EU's small normative power in the eyes of the Indian government. The Indian government has been taking measures to reduce pollution without the EU's normative power being involved.⁶¹

EU-India FTA negotiations

The EU can try to use many forms of soft power in its negotiations with India for the Free Trade Agreement. These forms include normative power. In its bilateral treaties with other countries, the EU rarely limits itself to issues like tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade. Since the EU sees itself as a normative power and since it has taken upon itself the responsibility to advance its own 'universal' norms and values in the world, the EU's negotiators will always try to add other subjects to trade agreements, like e.g. human rights issues, environmental issues, good governance issues etc, because bilateral treaties are the easiest way through which the EU might influence other countries. It is even possible for such treaties to make normative issues binding. Most often the EU tries to include a sustainable development chapter in a treaty which can cover several normative issues. In the case of bilateral treaties, the EU can even use its other soft power forms to persuade the other parties to include normative issues. However, the Indian government prefers trade-only agreements and does not want the EU to try to impose European norms and values onto India. From the beginning of the first FTA negotiations, India refused to discuss the possibility of a sustainable development chapter. India was clearly not impressed by the EU's normative power at the time. The failure to negotiate the FTA more than a decade ago began already before the first negotiations. This happened because the European Parliament wanted to include human rights, social and environmental issues, but at the same time the Indian negotiators blocked all such attempts beforehand. The European Parliament kept forcing the EU's negotiators to include an extensive sustainable development chapter in the FTA. This was a signal to India that an FTA without such a chapter would never get ratified. Nonetheless, India did not succumb to the pressure, which can clearly be seen in the fact that an EU-India FTA has not been negotiated so far. A solution in order for the sustainable development chapter to be included could be for the European Parliament to step away from legally binding clauses and instead agree with non-binding clauses. During the negotiations for the FTA, the Indian government decided to meet some proposals made by the EU. An example is the liberalization of the retailing sector, this

⁶¹ Sanchita Pathak 2022.

Siefert, Silvan. 2017: 341-343, 350.

would mean that that foreign investors would get access to this sector, but this was met with widespread massive protests all over India. Getting the Indian population on its side is an important element for the EU in getting an FTA finalized, they have an important say in the exact content of the FTA as well, because India is a democracy.⁶²

With an FTA with India, the EU doesn't just want to liberalize bilateral trade, for the EU it is important to export its own models of liberalization and governance to India. Liberalization is a form of normativity for the EU and it wants to push India to liberalize more sectors, like the retail sector I talked about, but also government procurement. For EU companies it is essential to get access to Indian government procurement, because it is currently fully closed to foreign companies. There is still a lot to gain for EU companies in this sector. The EU has expressed that a finalized FTA with India is impossible without at least some access to government procurement for companies registered in the EU. However, India does not want to liberalize government procurement even a little. First of all, for India it is very difficult to liberalize the sector because of the many government levels it has and because it is completely decentralized without generalized rules. Even if the Indian government would change its mind and decides to liberalize government procurement to some level, it would be a process lasting many years. For the EU this provides an even larger incentive to make clear rules and liberalize the sector, because all these elements make Indian government procurement unreachable and EU companies see this as a form of discrimination and national favouritism. The EU as a normative example in government procurement has not convinced the Indian government at all to change its position. This is another example that shows that the EU has very little normative power over India. Another example is that the EU tries to convince India to take over more EU labour and human rights. The EU wants India to ratify certain core labour standards as stated by the International Labour Organization (ILO). Similarly the EU wants India to implement more core human rights as well. Both labour standards and human rights are a central topic for the EU as a normative power. India is not necessarily against these standards and rights, but it is against including social clauses within its FTAs. This would force India to comply and in the eyes of the Indian government this would touch upon its sovereignty which is unacceptable. It is especially problematic because the EU strives to include legally binding clauses, which would limit India's sovereignty even more. The European Parliament is unlikely to diverge from the path of including labour standards and human rights issues, because there are still reports on violations of both issues in India. These reports include mainly marginalized communities in the Indian society. According to, the Indian government this behaviour from the EU negotiators is patronizing, in its eyes the EU does not treat India as an equal partner in the FTA negotiations. Another concern the Indian government has, is that these normative

⁶² Leeg, Tobias. 2014: 336, 345, 347-350, 352-353.

concerns are nothing more than a diversion, and that the EU prioritizes first and foremost protectionist measures for its own market and thus mainly puts forward its own economic interests. The EU might indeed have market protectionist measures in mind, but it is also important for the EU to get as many countries as possible to adhere to international standards as written down by several international organizations like the ILO. The EU does not only have market issues in mind, it does go further than mere economic interests. For India to consider the EU more as an actual normative power, the EU will have to continue proving itself. New negotiations will begin in 2022 and maybe this reflects a changed vision of the EU by India. Whether the EU will have more success in presenting itself as a normative power and will thus gain legitimacy in Indian eyes remains to be seen.⁶³

More recently, India and the EU have begun to cooperate again with their shared values as basis. Asia has become more important for the EU in general, and India can play a large role in that area for the EU. That India and the EU share values can be seen in the EU-India Connectivity Partnership signed on 8 May 2021. This Connectivity Partnership has become a part of the EU's Global Gateway, launched in September 2021 which has as goal to provide an alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative. In this alternative, normativity is very important to the EU. The first lines of the partnership state the following: "Affirming the shared values of democracy, freedom, rule of law and respect for human rights"⁶⁴. These are the most important norms for the EU and India clearly adheres to these as well by allowing them to be phrased on the first line of the official text of the EU-India Connectivity Partnership. The intention is that the EU and India will work together in third countries, taking into account certain operational principles that adhere to the values stated in the partnership. This shows that India agrees for these values to be applied to other countries as well. This might be an indication of a shift in the Indian government's policy regarding the EU's programme of distributing its norms and values. It might mean that the Indian government does not see this programme as negatively as it did about a decade earlier. There is also an emphasis on partnerships that are more fair and there is a focus on sustainability and green initiatives. These norms and values are stated explicitly in the partnership text, so India has to take these into account when working together with the EU within the partnership. When a country as large as India starts operating more clearly through these norms and values, this might provide the EU with more normative power in the international system. The EU's goal is to shape the norms and values that govern international relations in general, India backing the EU, at least for projects within the partnership, might be an important improvement for the EU as a normative power. For this to actually become the case, the EU and India will first have

⁶³ Leeg, Tobias 2014: 352.

Orbie, Jan and Sangeeta Khorana 2015: 8-11.

⁶⁴ European Council 2021.

to enhance the visibility of the projects they set up together. This visibility is needed to show other countries how effective the EU's norms and values are, in order for these to spread to those other countries. It is important here that India is a partner, since India is not a former colonial power, stressing this is necessary to increase the legitimacy of the EU's norms and values towards those countries that have been colonized in the past. This is essential because the geographical focus of the partnership is the Indo-Pacific and many of these countries have been colonized at some point in time.⁶⁵

In general India does value the EU's most important norms like democracy, the rule of law, human rights and social justice. However, the largest problem for India is that the EU is trying to force these norms upon its partners, including upon India. For India retaining its sovereignty is of utmost importance before all else, and having an entity interfering with its sovereignty only generates adversity. During the last decade global power relations are shifting, and while India still adheres strongly to its sovereignty, it might come closer to the EU in an attempt to counter China's continuing growth and importance. I think it is unlikely that India will fully comply with the EU's norms and values, since having full sovereignty is important for India, but the Indian government might compromise more to gain importance globally through being an important partner for the EU. In order to become an important partner, India will have to give in to the EU's norms and values at least partially, since these are essential to the EU. How far India will go in this, the future will have to tell.

⁶⁵ European Council 2021.

Moreschi, Andrea 2021.

Development Aid

Development aid can be a very influential soft power tool, since countries receive aid for their own country, which they might really need. Many countries rely on such aid, which means they might be more inclined to agree with certain demands the EU makes in return for its development aid. Development aid from the EU to India is a very important sector for several reasons. Firstly, in the world, the EU is the largest donor overall. Development aid by the EU includes both development aid from EU institutions as well as development aid from its member states. All these numbers combined, make the EU the largest donor in the world. EU development aid to India is relevant because between 2007 and 2022 India was the third largest recipient of EU aid with 17,56 billion euros, closely behind Afghanistan.⁶⁶

The EU's development policy

Since 2017 the EU has a new European Consensus on Development. In this document, the primary goals the EU states for its development aid are ending poverty, as well as creating a world that is more fair and more stable. In addition to these targets, the EU also focuses on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), on the promotion of several EU norms and values and on sustainability and resilience. Development aid is seen by the EU as a part of its foreign policy, which might jeopardize the effectiveness of the EU's aid. Another element that might reduce the efficiency of the EU's development aid is a promise it made years ago. In 1970 all developed countries within the United Nations (UN) promised to spend 0.7% of their GDP to aid. The EU as a whole does not reach this target and very few member states do. Only four of them have reached the UN threshold, Sweden, Luxembourg, Germany and Denmark, of which the first two countries have spent over 1% of their GDP on development aid in 2020. Nonetheless, the EU's development aid program is closely linked with the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as with the SDGs as I said. This embedding of the EU's policy in international structures might increase the EU's influence and credibility towards its recipient countries, including India. The EU focuses on its own values and principles like sustainable development and human rights, while the SDGs include both of these as well. This is another example that might make countries more willing to take over these values. This is crucial for the EU, because its development aid is often conditional upon the recipient countries implementing effectively several values as well as principles of good governance. The EU calls this "a rights-based approach to development"⁶⁷, meaning that development aid needs to advance many

⁶⁶ EU Aid Explorer, "Overview".

EU Aid Explorer, "Recipients" 2022.

⁶⁷ European Parliament, Council of the EU and European Commission 2017: 7.

different human rights. Another focus for the EU in its development aid is climate change. Through development aid, the EU aims to help countries to implement the Paris Agreement more easily, especially those countries who don't have the funds to do it themselves. This could be important for India. I established in the previous chapter that India wants to concentrate first on developing its country, and that fighting climate change is secondary to this. Here, the EU could provide India with funds, so that it can concentrate both on developing itself and on the fight against climate change. One more important goal of the EU's development aid for India is the use of aid to extend the benefits of India's growing economy to its entire population, including the marginalized communities, who might otherwise not enjoy the benefits of a generally rising living standard. The EU works together with the governments of other countries, because they have the ability to provide a legal framework for development, while especially the national government has access to the whole country to ensure that the aid reaches all those that need it. In addition to governments, the EU also wants to work with civil society organizations in recipient countries as much as possible, because they are part of the society itself and the EU believes that they can implement the EU's values and principles of its development aid most effectively. The EU doesn't just give money to projects, it is important to enhance the effectivity of the projects as well. The EU recognizes that there are many challenges to global development, and an important one of these for India is the rapid growth of its population. Which in its turn causes problems to e.g. the environment and to economic progress, but there is also a high chance of rising poverty, while ending poverty is the most crucial goal of the EU's development aid policy. The many different goals of the EU's policy are all interlinked with each other, so it is important to keep focusing on a wide range of areas as determined by the European Consensus on Development. Countries like India that are developing countries, but that already have a more advanced development, have a specific importance for the EU. Because with these countries, the EU can expand its development aid beyond the basic needs of the country and can work together on policy issues that are important for the EU, like climate change. Climate finance will occupy an increasingly important part of the EU's development aid, in accordance with the Green Deal internally, because many countries don't have the funds to provide for climate friendly measures themselves.⁶⁸

India is still a developing country, however it is also an advanced developing country, which means that it does not belong to the least developed countries who need aid the most. India is now considered as a middle-income country, since its economy has been growing very fast to around 7% per year,

⁶⁸ European Commission, "International Partnerships"

European Parliament, Council of the EU and European Commission 2017: 3, 5-9, 43, 46-47, 51.

Tindale, Stephen 2013: 1-2.

and there has been criticism on the EU for still considering India as an aid recipient. The reason why India still receives aid from the EU is because the progress of India's economy is not spread evenly across the country and a large part of its population still lives in extreme poverty. A significant part of the world population with an income below the poverty threshold lives in advanced developing countries. Therefore it is necessary that the EU keeps providing development aid to such countries like India. There is no agreement on when development aid should cease. It could be argued that first the majority of the population of a developing country should have an income compared to other, similar developed countries, while others argue that development aid should cease when the majority of the population of a developing country has an income just above the poverty threshold. I argue that even people who have an income just above the poverty threshold do not have enough financial means to live without too much worry about their income, because the poverty threshold, as determined by international organizations, is still very low. It is necessary and useful that the EU continues its development aid to India, however the aid from the EU to India has shifted with India becoming a middle-income country, the EU did adapt to India's new status. This means that a large part of the EU's aid is used to make sure that the poorest part of the population shares in the increasing wealth too. Another important part of the EU's aid to India is assisting the country in its fight against climate change. This might provide India with the opportunity to focus its own means on its development and use foreign means like EU development aid for issues that have a lower priority like climate change. Many of the EU's projects in India are related to the environment. E.g. in certain coastal areas the EU's aid is being used to clean the ocean and beaches, while in forest areas the aid is used to help the community make the transition to cleaner energy sources for cooking their food. The EU also focuses on resilience e.g. by making sure food systems are adapted to climate change, since India has been hit by the consequences of climate change already, as I mentioned in previous chapters. In general, more and more of the EU's general development aid is used for climate finance. The focus of EU development aid to India has been on the EU-India Agenda for Action-2020 and then afterwards on the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.⁶⁹

Development aid in India

According to World Bank statistics⁷⁰, India received 2.61 billion US dollars in aid in 2019. That is a bit less than 2.5 billion euros. India has received more aid during the COVID-19 pandemic than it

⁶⁹ European Commission "International Partnerships: India"

Glennie, Jonathan 2010.

Glennie, Jonathan 2011: 12.

Tindale, Stephen 2013: 5-6.

⁷⁰ The World Bank "Net official development assistance received (current US\$) – India"

received in recent years, but this is most likely temporary aid and the aid India receives annually is expected to drop again after the COVID-19 crisis. The aid India receives seems a lot, especially since India is considered to be a middle income country, but the official development aid India receives only constitutes less than 1% of its total central government expenses. India receives aid from many different countries, institutions and organizations. In 2018-2019 Germany was the third largest donor, followed at a distance by France and the EU institutions. In general, the lion's share of the development aid to India, namely 82%, goes to infrastructure and services. This includes both economic and social infrastructure and services. The focus on infrastructure corresponds to India not being a least developed country. In order for India to be able to continue developing, it needs infrastructure above all to facilitate its economic growth and to spread its wealth among its population. Some part of the aid also goes to education, but this constitutes only 4% of the total aid, which might mean that India invests mostly in its own education and does not use the development aid for that. In 2018-2019 only 2% of the aid was spent on the health of the people and on the population in general, this most likely has increased during the COVID-19 crisis. Another interesting development is that India donates more aid than it receives. India provides aid especially to neighbouring countries in which it has a regional geostrategic interest. India provides a lot of its aid to Bhutan, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. These changes don't mean that India does not need development aid anymore. Despite spending a lot of money abroad, India still has many internal issues. I already mentioned its infrastructure, and also poverty. An important issue in the future will be related to climate change, where aid might be used to make infrastructure more sustainable and to be able to continue developing, but in a cleaner and greener way than India does now.⁷¹

For India there is an important difference between humanitarian aid and development aid. Humanitarian aid is usually short term and is used to help after a disaster, while development aid is more long term and is used to tackle structural problems. India wants to show countries that its status has changed and that it is now a major country in the world as well. Being able to provide its own humanitarian aid as well as providing aid to other countries is an important way of showing off its new status. For many years India has been refusing humanitarian aid. The Indian government has officially refused to accept aid for internal disasters since 2004. The only exception to this refusal was during the COVID-19 crisis when India accepted medical aid from many foreign countries.

⁷¹ OECD - DAC "Interactive summary charts by aid (ODA) India"

Glennie, Jonathan 2010.

The New Indian Express "Emerging power India gives more aid than it receives"

The World Bank "Net ODA received (% of central government expense) – India"

The World Bank "Net official development assistance received (current US\$) – India"

Before 2004, India could not control on what terms it received aid, and it was dependent on the conditions set by the donors. In 2004, this most likely played a part in India trying to control the aid it receives from other countries. It was not possible to do this before 2004, because the government was too highly dependent on aid. Only when the economy got stronger, the government was able to move away from aid. Another benefit is that the Indian government was able to decide which sectors receive aid, and in this way it could choose those sectors that are vital to India's development. Aid with conditions tied to it, has a negative influence on India's sovereignty since donors try to influence what India does with its aid, and thus try to influence India's internal policies. As I have established before, India is very wary of anything that compromises its sovereignty. Another reason for India to stop accepting parts of the aid, was because many different countries offered aid, and it was very difficult to coordinate the different amounts and origins of the money. India wants to make sure other countries know India can take care of itself. However, it is important to note that the Indian government never refused long-term aid, it only refused short-term, or humanitarian aid. Long-term aid is more beneficial for the development of a country, and this exclusive acceptance of development aid, shows how focused India is on developing itself and on becoming more important in the international system, along with increasing its status. Moreover, short-term, or humanitarian aid, has the reputation of being disruptive to the local economy and the local systems, especially if it flows in unchecked. India providing for its own humanitarian aid, is a way of controlling this disruptive inflow. Since 2004, India has decided to mostly accept aid through international and multilateral organizations, which makes it easier to coordinate the different programmes. In addition, the Indian government also decided to only accept aid from large countries who are able to provide large funds over a long period of time. As such, the EU is considered as a partner and India continues to accept aid from the EU since the EU is able to give aid over a long period of time and in substantial amounts. In addition, the EU provides aid to specific programmes that are essential for India's development. As I described, most of the EU's funds are used to build infrastructure.⁷²

It is most likely that India will continue accepting development aid from the EU for the foreseeable future. India decided to only accept aid from large entities and from international and multilateral organizations. The EU is one of the entities that is allowed to donate aid directly to India, as long as the amounts are substantial enough and are meant to be over a long period of time, which is the case. How much of the EU's aid India accepts, will depend on the conditions the EU ties to the aid. The EU is used to tying conditions to aid as a form of soft power in order to advance its own worldview.

⁷² Bagchi, Indra. "Why it's perfectly justified for India to refuse foreign aid for Kerala"

Kumar, Mohan. "The evolution of India's pragmatic policy on foreign aid"

Miller, Manjari Chatterjee and Vidhu Priya Mukundan. "The politics of foreign aid in India"

However, India sees such conditions as a violation of its sovereignty, and thus will avoid such aid at all costs, especially since 2004. This is also a reason why India is part of the EU's GSP scheme and not the GSP+ scheme, because in order to be a part of the latter, countries have to ratify additional international conventions. Whether India ratifies such conventions should be an internal choice, not influenced by an economic scheme coming from another entity, like the EU.

Education and research

The role of soft power in education and research is an often neglected form of soft power. Exchange of students and researchers between the EU and India can play an important role in the image both have of each other. These kinds of exchanges are a remarkably easy way to spread one's own country's norms and values across the globe. The EU and India have signed an Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation in 2001. This agreement has been regularly renewed and the last time was in 2020, when it was renewed for five more years. The agreement coordinates the cooperation between the EU and India for research and innovation. This makes it also easier for India to obtain funding through Horizon Europe. Horizon Europe is a funding programme mainly directed to projects that deal with climate change, the SDGs and the EU's competitiveness. Most calls for funding are open to people from all over the world who want to work with researchers from within the EU. Horizon Europe is also listed as one of the projects in the EU-India Connectivity Partnership, it is mentioned as a part of the human dimension. This dimension includes research and innovation in general. Since Horizon Europe is mentioned in this partnership, it means that both the EU and India want to continue cooperating in the fields of research and innovation. Through the objectives of Horizon Europe, the EU is able to fund those projects that it considers to be most essential. Non-EU nationals are able to participate as well, and thus gain experience in topics the EU considers to be important. After the end of the project, these people take their new knowledge with them and might influence projects in their own countries with the EU projects as a model. Recently, the EU and India have regularly stated that they would like to enhance cooperation in higher education as well. In the EU an increasing number of young people pursue higher education. India has a growing young population, with a large potential for higher education attendance. Because India's population is immense, many people pursue higher education, and a lot of these students will study abroad at some point. This means that it is in the interest of the EU to raise awareness in India of the available scholarships to study in the EU, and of the available grants for research in the EU as well.⁷³

There are several programmes through which Indian students and researchers can come to Europe to study or to pursue their research. In 2021, the EU has organized a European Higher Education Virtual Fair. A similar fair has been organized regularly the previous years. The goal was that as many Indian students as possible get to know the European institutions, because the ultimate goal was to attract many of those students to come and study in the EU. The EU promotes itself as "the world's leading

⁷³ EEAS. "EU-India Connectivity Partnership"

European Commission "Horizon Europe"

European Commission "India"

Van Haaften, Lourens Wouter 2021: 3-4, 7.

destination for higher education”⁷⁴, because about a fourth of the EU’s higher education institutions are listed among the top 200 best higher institutions in the world. One of the means for Indian students to study in the EU is through acquiring an Erasmus Mundus scholarship. Erasmus Mundus is a part of the EU’s Erasmus+ programme. The Erasmus Mundus programme consists of a joint master degree and allows students from all over the world, including from India, to study in at least two different European countries. This means that these students will live in the EU for a longer period of time and thus get to know the EU’s system and society from the inside out. In addition, these students will receive a European master’s degree, that might give them the opportunity to find a job in the EU, and thus spend even more time in the EU. This is important, because foreigners who know the EU well, might be able to influence the opinions of their family and friends at home in India. If many Indian students study in the EU, it is possible that an increasing number of people in India will know someone who has studied and lived in the EU and thus might get to know the EU better. When people know the EU better, they might look more favourably upon the EU and they might even influence the Indian government’s policies towards the EU. In addition, students with a European master’s degree might decide to live more permanently in the EU and thus become a direct contact for Indian companies in the EU, which will facilitate an easier integration of those companies in the EU. From 2014 until 2020, the entire Erasmus+ programme made it possible for 6 000 Indian students and staff to receive a scholarship or grant to study or work in the EU. In 2021 153 Indian students received the Erasmus Mundus scholarship, these are 19 more students than in 2020, and from all the participating countries India has the highest number of students receiving such a scholarship. In 2019 there were about 70 000 Indian students in Europe to pursue some kind of higher education degree. Which means many Indian students already find their way into European higher education institutions, but there still is a lot of potential. And in the future, more and more Indian students might come to the EU, providing the EU with an increasing amount of soft power in the field of education and research.⁷⁵

Another programme through which Indian officials, along with officials from several other Asian countries, can come to Europe is through the Competition Cooperation Project. The goal of this project is for Asian officials to learn more about the EU’s competition law, “including: procedures,

⁷⁴ Delegation of the European Union to India and Bhutan “120 higher education institutions from 25 European countries to come together at the European Higher Education Virtual Fair 2021 24-26 November 2021”

⁷⁵ Delegation of the European Union to India and Bhutan 2020.

Delegation of the European Union to India and Bhutan “Over 150 Indian students win the Erasmus Mundus scholarships for higher education in Europe”

Delegation of the European Union to India and Bhutan “120 higher education institutions from 25 European countries to come together at the European Higher Education Virtual Fair 2021 24-26 November 2021”

Erasmus Mundus Association “About EMA”

restrictive agreements, cartels, abuse of dominance, mergers, State Owned Enterprises and State Aid.”⁷⁶ When officials are able to discuss such topics in an informal way, they will get to know each other better, as well as each other laws, and perhaps the reasoning behind those laws. Which in turn creates the potential to facilitate better cooperation between the EU and other Asian countries, including India. The Competition Cooperation Project includes competition weeks. These are intensive weeks the EU organizes in Asia where officials from the EU and India engage in discussions with each other. The fourth such EU-India competition week took place in December 2021. The next one is already scheduled for December 2022. Such projects might lead to better mutual understanding, and thus might result in progress in the bilateral EU-India relations. The cooperation also includes summer schools where Indian officials take part in lessons about the EU’s competition law. Officials from Asian countries stay for ten days in Europe, and thus also get first-hand experience about what the EU is like. Competition law is often a complicated matter and these programmes offer Indian officials an opportunity to learn about lesser known parts of the EU and its policies. In the past, the fields that were studied by Indian students and researchers in Europe, were mainly limited to engineering and business. More recently the range of topics has diversified to include almost anything that European universities offer. Now, students and researchers are coming to Europe to study or work in a wide range of topics. A possible reason for this could be because there are more and more opportunities and grants for Indian students and researchers to study and live in the EU, which results then in an increasing presence.⁷⁷

Education and research can play a role in the EU’s soft power, because the EU actively promotes education and research opportunities among non-EU citizens. A reason why India has been reluctant in the past to engage in more broader relations with the EU, could be that India did not really know the EU, let alone what the EU stands for and why it acts in a certain way. This form of soft power has the capacity to change that. So far, it seems that many Indian students and researchers want to come to the EU to advance their careers, and this shows the many opportunities the EU has to expand this form of soft power even more in the future.

⁷⁶ Competition Cooperation “About”

⁷⁷ Competition Cooperation “About”

Competition Cooperation “Competition Weeks”

Competition Cooperation “4th EU-India competition week”

Competition Cooperation “Summer Schools”

EEAS “EU-India higher education cooperation”: 1-2.

Conclusion

Soft power is an important tool the EU has at its disposition in international relations. It properly suits the EU's foreign policy, and also the image the EU wants to convey of itself in the world. Within EU-India relations, the EU uses many different forms of soft power, both directly aimed at India and also other forms used more generally in the international system. The latter might affect India as well. India reacts differently to the various forms of soft power used by the EU, but an overall parallel is that India attaches great importance to its sovereignty and in general does not react positively to attempts by the EU to influence the norms and values of India's policies. Whether the EU is able to influence India through its soft power, depends on the EU's power in the international system as well as on the EU's legitimacy in the eyes of the Indian government and its population. And in general the EU does not have much influence on India's policies through its soft power, even though it still varies in accordance with the policy area. That the EU is a soft power has been established by many authors before, because the EU focuses mostly on forms of soft power, instead of hard power as defined by e.g. Nye. This is especially true for the EU's relations with India. An important goal of the EU is to shape the norms and values of the international system, so this should be reflected in its relations with India. However, India has a complicated history, including having been a colonized area, and this still strongly influences its policies, just as the EU's history influences its own policies as well. Aside from the historic influence on both of their policies, current elements in the international system shape their behaviour as well. India being a developing country with a rapidly growing economy and population and the EU being an important global power, whose power has been declining for some time now. Throughout the entirety of EU-India relations, India holds strongly to the ideal of full sovereignty. The Indian government is thus very reluctant to give in to the EU, regardless of which soft power the EU uses and regardless of which promises it makes.

I have discussed four broad areas of soft power the EU is able to use. Of these its economic soft power is the most important one, and also the most powerful one. Both for the EU as for India, economic relations are a crucial element of their foreign policies. Both have their particular ideas concerning their economies and this results in mutual relations that are often very complex. A broadening of their mutual economic relations has proven to be difficult. The EU's economic soft power is very large, because of its large internal market, its wealthy citizens and all the benefits that come with this. Despite this substantial amount of soft power the EU has at its disposal, India did not deem access to the EU's market sufficient as a prerequisite to give in to the EU's wishes during the FTA negotiations. India's status as a developing country is important in its economic relations, because the EU is a much stronger economic power. This means that India does not want full reciprocity, which the EU always strives for. In addition, the EU makes several demands during negotiations which India refuses to

accept, because it would bring too much harm to the Indian economy, or to India's sovereignty in general. An example is the EU's wish to include non-trade issues in trade deals, like human rights issues, environmental issues, labour issues, etc. India's internal system also causes problems as some sectors are very hard to liberalize because each Indian state has different rules, an example here is government procurement. For many issues the Indian government refuses to give in to the EU for a combination of reasons. India's economy has been influenced by EU regulations, as a result of the Brussels effect. This does not involve direct relations between the EU and India, but arises from the EU being an important economic power in the international system, and Indian taking part in that international system as well. India has based several regulations on the EU's regulations, e.g. its competition law and its emissions standards for vehicles. The EU and India have recently scaled up their relations again, partially because of new developments in the international system. The rise of China and its Belt and Road Initiative have been a concern for both the EU and India and might make India more susceptible to the EU's economic soft power in the near future. India has been more willing to negotiate trade agreements recently, and it is possible that one with the EU will be negotiated as well, which is impossible without fulfilling some of the EU's demands. India wants to become more economically competitive next to China and the EU could be an important partner.

The EU's economic power might be its most important soft power tool, for the EU it is at least equally as important to be a normative power. In international relations, the EU strongly focuses on its norms and values and on conveying those to others. An important aspect of this is that the EU considers its norms and values to be universal, which might cause many problems with other countries, including with India. The most important norms and values in international relations for the EU are adherence to the rule of law, being a democracy, having a market economy, and respecting human rights. Many other norms and values the EU adheres to are derived from these. Outwardly, India acts by these as well, since it is a liberal democracy with a market economy, but for India these norms and values are not as important as they are for the EU. There are cultural differences between the EU and India, and these explain some of the different priorities that are set in India's policies. Again here sovereignty is crucial for India, and the EU dictating which norms and values the Indian government should prioritize, is not received well in India. In general, India does not see the EU as a normative example, which means that the EU has very little normative power over India. This can be seen in the different voting behaviours the EU and India have in the General Assembly of the United Nations. One of India's priorities is to protect the sovereignty of other countries, next to its own sovereignty, and it means that India will not cooperate with the EU to try to influence other countries to take over the EU's norms and values. In order to promote norms and values, the EU has put sanctions on several countries (which are a form of hard power), including on Russia since the war against Ukraine, but India does not follow the EU's example in this, since sanctions reduce a country's sovereignty.

Another important example is the fight against climate change where the EU wants to position itself as an example to inspire other countries. But India has other priorities, including focusing on its own development instead of on measures against climate change. India does take measures, but it does not appreciate the EU's interference. During the EU-India FTA negotiations, the EU tried to include normative issues in the final agreement, and tried to enforce them through legally binding clauses, India did not appreciate either. Examples are far-reaching trade liberalizations, ratifying more labour and human rights standards, etc. More recently, the EU and India signed a Connectivity Partnership, based on their shared values. This could be an indication that India will focus more on norms and values in the future, and thus might be more susceptible to the EU's wishes. This might also be a sign that India sees the EU more as a normative example, which would provide the EU with more normative soft power in its relations with India.

Development aid is a third significant soft power tool the EU uses in its relations with India. The EU is the largest donor of aid in the world and often ties conditions to its development aid. Usually these conditions try to spread the EU's norms and values across the world. Especially countries that are dependent on aid have long had no other option than to accept the EU's aid, with its conditions. However, India is not dependent on aid, and has the liberty to carefully choose its donors. This already diminishes some of the power the EU potentially could have had over India through development aid. India has become a middle-income country, but it still needs to invest heavily in its infrastructure to be able to better distribute the wealth. The EU plays a large role in this, but is also still able to focus on certain infrastructure projects that align with the EU's own wishes. The EU wants to fully commit to eradicating poverty and to ending climate change. It has succeeded in mainly funding projects in India that address poverty or the consequences of climate change and there are also projects that address both key issues. In this sense the EU does have soft power over India in its development aid, even though the EU is not able to tie conditions to its aid, as it does with other countries. This means that the EU is much less able to address issues like human rights violations, labour rights violations and issues concerning good governance. These are all also very important to the EU, but if the EU would try to address such issues, this would become a threat to India's sovereignty and thus is unacceptable.

A last form of soft power the EU has at its disposal is soft power in the field of education and research. It is a much less visible form of soft power that is mainly about getting to know each other, which leads to a better understanding of each other, and then might lead to an improvement in mutual relations. The EU organizes scholarships specifically for non-EU students and also promotes these among higher education institutions in India. In addition, the EU also organizes trainings for Indian officials to immerse themselves in particular EU policy areas. Both the scholarships and the trainings

are used by Indian students, researchers and officials who stay in the EU for a short or for a longer period. The exchange of students, researchers and officials might influence the Indian public opinion of the EU. If the EU has an overall positive reputation and if the Indian government better understands what the EU stands for and why it acts in a certain way in specific situations, it might ensure that India will become more willing to give in to demands made by the EU. These programmes intensify relations between the EU and India on different levels and might lead to increased cooperation in several policy domains, like trade with an FTA.

There are of course many more forms of soft power that play a role in international relations, but the discussion of these goes beyond the scope of this thesis. I have limited myself to those forms that play the most important role in the relations between the EU and India. That does not mean that there are no other forms present in EU-India relations. Other forms of soft power include cultural exchanges and the spread of soft power through digital means. These and additional forms of soft power that play a role in EU-India relations could be subject to further research in the future. The standstill in EU-India relations seems to be over with many new developments since May 2021. New FTA negotiations are planned for July 2022 and already both parties are talking more extensively with each other. This change in relations, as well as the future cooperations of the EU and India with each other could be another subject of further research and it will be interesting to see how the EU's soft power will play a role during these new negotiations. However if the EU wants to be able to influence India's policies more, it will have to put more emphasis on treating India as an equal partner and the EU will have to make concessions itself, in order for India to make concessions to the EU. The EU should keep focusing on an open dialogue with its Indian partners, and should at all times avoid trying to impose anything on the Indian negotiators or on the Indian government. Sovereignty is still one of the most important ideals for India's foreign policy.

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