

Weiss, T. & Edwards, G. (Eds.) (2022). *Small states and security in Europe: Between national and international policymaking*. London and New York: Routledge, 252pp, ISBN 978-0-3675-3551-3 (hbk) | ISBN 978-0-3675-3552-0 (pbk) | ISBN 978-1-0030-8245-3 (e-book). GBP£96.00 (hbk), GBP£29.59 (e-book).

This book offers a substantive addition to the literature on small states and territories. In exploring how small states shape security structures and the policymaking process in the Europe Union and beyond, this book incorporates empirical examples of case studies that shape the security process outside the traditional military-centred approach. The book also elaborates on the impact small states have on international organisations and institutions, such as the EU and NATO. Its twelve chapters are categorised into five distinct parts. Listed chapters explore certain case studies in more depth, highlighting the authors' expertise and research interests pertaining to these cases. Each chapter incorporates a separate theoretical framework, yet the authors and editors retain the universality of the book in line with the main theme of how domestic and external contestation shapes the policymaking process and external relations, while also adapting an "expansive conception of security" (p. xvi).

The introduction in Chapter 1, co-authored by the volume editors Tomáš Weiss and Geoffrey Edwards, situates the reader within existing policy practices, such as the EU's strategic approach, as well as related literature on International Relations theory and small states. The chapter also introduces the book outline. Despite the brevity of this chapter, the editors paint a coherent picture of how each respective chapter ties into the overarching theme of this volume.

In Chapter 2, Tomáš Weiss, Lucie Kadlecová, and Ondřej Ditrych build a theoretical framework for understanding different types of small state strategies and influences. The authors introduce four unique ways through which small states are prone to these influences: they openly challenge the international political agenda by abiding by the domestic populations' will; they politicise or securitise international threats domestically; they can "covertly ignore" international policy pressures using the excuse of their small size; and they can "covertly implement" policy that the state considers the small citizenry will not protest.

Chapter 3 by Jan Niklas Rolf illustrates the 1995 and 2004 EU enlargement processes and the concerns raised during different small states' candidacy and accession into the EU. The author assesses whether each historical enlargement has had an impact on loosening the Union's strategic culture (p. 41-42). He separates the first group of states (Austria, Sweden, Finland) from the second one (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), to present the differences in each group's strategic culture. The chapter concludes with an interesting observation regarding how small states can weigh in on key strategic cultural attributes that are similar to those encouraged by France and Germany.

The following chapter, co-authored by Jan Beneš and Tomáš Karásek, maintains a focus on strategic culture by examining how the Czech Republic and Slovakia utilise and retain such culture even in the face of "volatile external conditions" (p. 61). Beneš and Karásek build a timeline of important events: the collapse of the Soviet Union and the birth of the new Republics, NATO membership, 9/11 and the war on terror, the invasion of Afghanistan, and the "post-Afghanistan" period. The authors demonstrate how comparing both case studies, and their experience of these formative historical moments, may be particularly helpful when drawing conclusions for studying strategic culture in other small states.

Chapter 5 by Gerda Jakštaitė-Confortola and Ausra Park looks at how Lithuania's domestic contestations shape the state's foreign and security policy priorities. Jakštaitė-Confortola and Park utilise and build on Chapter 2's theoretical framework to elaborate on how Lithuania dealt with domestic and external pressures between 2014-2019. . Some of these pressures, such as the 2014 war in Ukraine and the perceived fear of Russia, significantly shaped defence policy, with the example of military conscription being reintroduced. The chapter makes an important contribution to understanding how pressures, including notable historical events, significantly shape small states' security policies.

Moreover, in the sixth chapter Joachim A. Koops and Sophie L. Vériter discuss the Netherlands' approach to missions, in particular CSDP and UN peacekeeping operations. The authors draw attention to examples like the Russian annexation of Crimea as a turning point for Dutch policymaking that led to a stronger commitment in the EU's CSDP apparatus for defence and security. Notwithstanding the Netherlands playing a significantly smaller role in UN missions over time, the state has been a key player in crafting policy for UN missions and operations, while also compensating by investing more on the CSDP. As a result, Dutch policy priorities, on the one hand, have situated the Netherlands more firmly within CSDP structures and helped revise UN-led operational structures. On the other hand, the authors argue that Dutch restraint within political elites has produced an "overcautious" policymaking process for defence and security, highlighted by the Netherlands feeling more secure when relying on bigger states and NATO.

Continuing the theme of multilateral participation, maritime security operations are the focus of the seventh chapter, written by Brendan Flynn. Flynn borrows a variation of the 'four ways' framework to showcase the importance of maritime security operations as tools of political importance for small states in dealing and negotiating with bigger states in cases such as Operation Atlanta. The author concludes with how small states, in fact, "paradoxically" contribute and complement bigger states' forces in existing multilateral maritime security operations (p. 128).

Chapter 8 by Anders Wivel, Baldur Thorhallsson, and Sverrir Steinsson covers Denmark and Iceland, and their transatlantic relations. The authors emphasise how geopolitical events have been responsible for drastically shaping domestic politics. They also employ the 'sheltering' framework to elaborate on how small states seek shelter from larger states – as Denmark and Iceland have historically sought shelter from the United States – while also highlighting that this relationship has changed over time, being less intense in nature. This reduced intensity means that Denmark and Iceland have been able to take the initiative to directly voice domestic security concerns to NATO and the United States, instead of simply adapting to their external security environment (p. 142, 146).

In another study on asymmetric relations, Chapter 9 written by Jean F. Crombois, looks at the transformation of Bulgarian foreign policy objectives and its engagement with Russia since 2014. The author addresses the alignment of Bulgarian foreign policy priorities with the EU, whilst also noting the challenges presented in domestic politics by pursuing this alignment. Crucially, Crombois finds that small states attempting to balance between playing by the rules of integration and retaining autonomy over decisions and the policymaking process is much more challenging than for bigger states.

One state reaping some relative success in this regard is Estonia. Indeed, the tenth chapter, co-authored by Laure Delcour and Sandra Fernandes, studies how Estonian foreign policy, as well as the state's membership in organisations like the EU and NATO, have enabled Estonia to "punch

above its weight” and retain its unique identity and policymaking crafting process, while also adapting to organisations’ norms. The authors demonstrate that Estonia is also capable of using its own policy priorities and self-image as a small state to push through related policy on Russia within the EU and NATO, thereby benefiting from its small-state status and still playing by the set rules and norms.

Focusing in on specific policy areas, in Chapter 11 Maria Chiara Vinciguerra focuses on Latvia’s and Luxembourg’s EU Council presidencies vis-à-vis refugee and irregular migrant policy, and particularly how both cases found it challenging to enforce their own national priorities and to reflect them within the Refugee Relocation Scheme. Such challenges, as Vinciguerra explains, were also the product of domestic political reactions to the refugee crisis, as documented in data collected via process-tracing, elite interviews, and documentary research.

Finally, the twelfth chapter by Claudia Morsut is a clear example of literature that goes beyond the scope of traditional security and military-centred approaches in the policymaking process. It considers the case of Norway, and how the state operationalises additional security dimensions. Morsut particularly illuminates how Norway’s societal security policy is integrated into the EU’s non-military security policy.

Overall, the book is well-organised and advances our understanding of key issues pertaining to small state security, such as the involvement of small states in missions and operations or small state contributions to the strategic culture of blocs like the EU. It is also particularly noteworthy that contributors discuss or incorporate in some shape or form the theoretical model adapted in the introductory section, thus paving the road for added theorisation on small states in future works.

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