

# Escalation and De-escalation of International Crises: The Case of the Accession of the Republic of Crimea to the Russian Federation



First supervisor:

Prof. Dr. René Torenvlied

Second supervisor:

Dr. Irna van der Molen

Xenia Fomin (s1613146)

Xenia Fomin (s1613146)

University of Twente

Faculty of Behavioral, Management and Social Science

European Public Administration

29<sup>th</sup> June 2016

## Summary

Studies on international crisis management have revealed how national actors and international actors deal with the consequences of a crisis. Studies show that strategic crisis communication is an essential part of crisis management. International crisis management concerns a wide range of activities by many different national and international actors.

This particular research will deal with the critical case of the international crisis post – Crimea- annexation. In the year 2014 Ukraine experienced a violent conflict of immense impact, with separatist groups fighting for the independence of parts of the Eastern-Ukraine. This changed the conflict into an international crisis. Russia played, according to the Western governments, an important part in the escalation of the conflict. According to Russian officials the internal conflict stated to escalate with the Maidan Square speeches of European Union officials, who publicly spoke up for Ukraine to denounce Russia and align with the European Union. The international conflict escalated further as Russia annexed Crimea. For this research, international crisis management will be about how the actions of international actors tried contribute to the escalation or de- escalation of the crisis. The meaning, which the actors draw from the circumstances and actions of the actors, plays a crucial role in the decisions making process. Allison assume that analysts – professional or civilian, think in conceptual models to understand a problem (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, pp. 18, 19).

For his study of the Cuban Missile Crisis he uses three models: Rational Actor, Organizational Behavior Model and Governmental Politics Model (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, pp. 18, 19). This study will build upon the theoretical perspective of the conceptual models by Allison and will determine if Allison's framework is still applicable to the conflicts of the 21<sup>st</sup> century or if it has to be improved. It is also interesting to elaborate it on this particular critical case, since Allison applied this framework on the Cuban missile crisis. The Cuban missile crisis has remarkable similarities with this crisis due to the similar actors involved and the level of internationalization.

The international crisis after the annexation is a very critical case, which challenged the international crisis management. This research will focus on Russia's perspective on this issue.

Furthermore, it will follow a qualitative research design and collect the data through methods like interviews and literature research, which will make it possible to study the units and variables of this critical case in more depth. The qualitative research design is being flexible

considering the time and place, which is advantageous for analyzing an international crisis as this one. Also it becomes possible to consider more details and perspectives on the issues.

This research shall address the following research question: *In relation to the Ukrainian Crisis and the accession of Crimea on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2014: To what extend and how did the strategic crisis communication of Russia and Ukraine effect the actions of the international actors (in terms of affecting the escalation or de-escalation the conflict)?*

This research shall contribute to the existing knowledge on international crisis management, especially in relation to strategically communication and also help to prepare for possible similar events in the future.

## Table of Contents

<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>LIST OF ACRONYMS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>9</b>
1.1. Background Information	10
1.2. Problem Definition, Research Questions and Sub-questions	12
1.3. Scientific and Social Relevance	13
1.4. Overview of the Research	13
<b>2. THEORY</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1 Scientific Theories	14
2.2. Analytical Framework and Models	19
2.3. Expectations about Causal Relationships	21
<b>3. METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>22</b>
3.1. Research Design: Single Case Study	23
3.2. Case Selection and Data Collection	24
3.3. Evaluation Methodology: Qualitative Approach	25

3.4. Operationalization, Indicators, Conceptualization and Measurement	26
<b>4. CASE DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>30</b>
4.1. Stages of the Crisis	36
4.2. Protocols & Treaties	38
<b>5. ANALYSIS</b>	<b>39</b>
5.1. CRS and Escalation	39
5.2. Trade indicators	44
5.3. Conclusion and Discussion	49
5.4. Limitation of the Study and Reflection on the Research Design and Validity	58
<b>6. FINAL CONCLUSION</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>7. SCIENTIFIC REFERENCES</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>8. ANNEXES</b>	<b>63</b>
A. Information and Data Sources	63
B. ECU and the former Soviet States	67
C. Full Documents	Error! Bookmark not defined.
C. Research Protocol	Error! Bookmark not defined.

## List of Acronyms

Association Agreement (AA)

Black Sea Fleet (BSF)

Causal- process-tracing (CPT)

Crisis responds strategies (CRS)

Donetsk People's Republic (DPR)

Eurasian Custom Union (ECU)

European Union (EU)

German Democratic Republic (GDR)

Luhansk People's Republic (LPR)

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Situational crisis communication theory (SCCT)

Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC),

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)

United Nations (UN)

United States (U.S.)

World War II (WWII)

## **Preface and Acknowledgments**

This thesis was written within the joint Bachelor ‘Public Governance across Borders’ between the University of Muenster, Germany and the University of Twente in Enschede, Netherlands.

My personal motivation to conduct a study on the topic of the Crimea crisis and the Russian – Eastern tensions, resulted from my personal interest in that matter also due to my Russian background. Furthermore, through my study program 'European Public Administration' I am very interested of international relations and communication as well as global issues and problems. Since I am considering a master program in the field of international relations this topic is ideal to combine my personal and professional interests.

Lastly I want to thank all the people, who have helped me to write this thesis. I would like to thank my university and my thesis counselors for the support and help during the entire process of the thesis research. I would like to thank my family and friends for their everlasting support in every aspect imaginable. Without your help none of this would have been possible and no words can describe my gratitude for your support.

Xenia Fomin, spring 2016

## List of Figures and Tables

<i>Figure 1 Situational Crisis Communication Theory.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Figure 2 Analytical Framework.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Figure 3 Rational Actor Model (Model I).....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Figure 4 Organizational Process Model (Model II).....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Figure 5 (Bureaucratic) Politics Model (Model III).....</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Figure 6 Hypothesis 1 .....</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Figure 7 Hypothesis 2 .....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Figure 8 Hypothesis 3 .....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Figure 9 General Approach to inferring Causal Mechanism.....</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Figure 10 Separatists Areas in Ukraine .....</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Figure 11 Ukraine Crisis Timeline November 2013 – May 2016 .....</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Figure 12 Ukraine's Gross National Income in PPP dollars .....</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>Figure 13 Ukraine Foreign Direct Investment- Net Inflows .....</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Figure 14 Ukraine's Balance of Trade .....</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Figure 15 EU's trade with Russia 2005-2015.....</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>Figure 16 U.S. - Russia Trade Balance .....</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>Figure 17 Russia's Balance of Trade.....</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>Figure 18 Combined Model .....</i>	<i>57</i>
 <i>Table 1 Crisis Response Strategies.....</i>	 <i>16</i>
<i>Table 2 Fink's Stages in a Life of a Crisis .....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Table 3 Indicators of Escalation and De-escalation .....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Table 4 Actions of Russia, Ukraine, EU, and U.S. during the Stages of the Crimean Crisis.....</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Table 5 CRS in the first stage of the Ukrainian and Crimean Crisis .....</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Table 6 CRS in the second stage of the Ukrainian and Crimean Crisis.....</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Table 7 CRS in the third stage of the Ukrainian and Crimean Crisis .....</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>Table 8 CRS in the fourth stage of the Ukrainian and Crimean Crisis .....</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>Table 9 CRS in the Stages in the Life of the Crimean Crisis .....</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Table 10 Indicators in Russian - Ukrainian Relation.....</i>	<i>56</i>



## 1. Introduction

Throughout human history the annexation of foreign territory was not an uncommon military tool to establish political power. The annexation of Crimea, in 2014 by Russia is a very current event, which had an effect on political relations at a global level. This research intends to analyze the international crisis resulting from that event. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2014, the day Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a legal ordinance on the annexation and shocked the international diplomatic and political world. Russia's forceful interventions, and the successful attempt to take control of a non-Russian territory, constituted a challenge for the European order that had been established after the Cold War (Allison, 2014, p. 1256).

Studies on international crisis management have shown how national actors and international actors deal with the consequences of a crisis and how strategically crisis communication is an essential part of the crisis management. In this context Graham Allison relays on Schelling's theory of strategy, which explains the impact of information and strategic interdependency on the behavior of nations (G. T. Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 44). They show that an important aspect of international conflict stems from domestic sources. Kapstein discusses how specific conditions make domestic political and ideological factors shape a country's foreign policy. This policy may lead to outcomes like overexpansion and even war (Kapstein, 1995, p. 752). The domestic sources determine the country's choice for war or peace. Hence, for a proper understanding of international crisis management, the domestic perspective should be taken into account. This is important as there is the need to understand and explain if and how international relations (and crisis communication) between countries are determined from inside out (Kapstein, 1995, p. 757).

As the Cuban missile crisis has many similarities with the Crimean crisis (in terms of similar types of actors' involved, strategic game play, and power threats) Allison's framework will be used as a base for the present study. I will analyze to what extent Allison's model, which successfully explained the decision making during the Cuban Missile Crisis, is applicable on a modern crisis like the Crimean.

The annexation of Crimea is an excellent example of a critical case in the 21<sup>st</sup> century for the study of crisis management (in terms of the escalation and de-escalation of the crisis), as well as strategic communication (in terms of its influence on the action of the actors).

Allison bases his theoretical perspectives on the rational expectation that governmental actor act in consideration the options, choosing the one that maximizes the gain. This is a perspective often used in the economic sphere, but is also applicable on international political relations (G. T. Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 18). This research focuses on the strategic communication, because communication is- according to Schelling strategic theory, important for the actor's information and choices (G. T. Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 44). As in the Cuban crisis strategic communication can be a political tool and it has the ability to influence the actions of others in an escalating or de-escalating way. In that sense, strategic communication is interdependent and part of the rational choice of an actor.

So far it is known that the annexation of Crimea was an illegal act violating Ukraine's sovereignty rights according to international law. It is important to understand Russia's motives and the Russian government's own legal claims on this issue as Russia's actions in the Ukraine conflict could also pose a threat to the security of its neighboring countries and, eventually, European security (Allison, 2014, p. 1257). Adequacy of crisis management is defined here as the influence on the escalation and de-escalation of the crisis. Thus, the present research shall contribute to the existing body of knowledge in international relations on the intensity and (de-) escalation of international.

This research object concerns the international crisis in the context of the annexation of Crimea and the adequacy of international crisis management from Russian perspective. Adequacy of crisis management is defined here as the influence on the escalation and de-escalation of the crisis. This research shall contribute to the existing body of knowledge in terms of how the international actors' actions affected the intensity of the crisis or with other words the escalation or de-escalation of the conflict.

### **1.1. Background Information**

Sevastopol is a city in Crimea that was founded in 1783 as a naval base for the Black Sea fleet. Since then Crimea had always been a crucial strategic point for Ukraine and Russia. After many violent conflicts, like the Crimean War (1853-1856) and World War II (1939-1945), Crimea remained Russian. In 1954 Nikita Khrushchev assimilated Crimea to Ukraine as a friendly gift to mark the good relationship between the countries (Buba, 2010, p. 1). Although

after the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) fell apart, Crimea legally belonged to Ukraine.

Ever since the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, Ukraine suffered from a lack of economic growth and was torn between Europe and Russia. In 2013 Ukraine wanted to strengthen their relationship with the European Union (EU) by signing an Association Agreement and a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area agreement, which would provide Ukraine with funds for future reforms. At last the Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich declined the agreements (Smith & Harari, 2014, p. 1). After that, public anger erupted and led to major protests erupted in Kiev (Telegraph, 2015). The tense situation within the country led to immense protests resulting in violent civil riots, dividing Ukraine in two fronts – pro-European in the west and pro-Russian in the east (BBC, 2014). In February 2015 Yanukovich has fled to Russia and a new government was established (Smith & Harari, 2014, p. 1). The escalations took their peak when on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2014 elections in Crimea took place. It was said that 97% of the Crimean people have voted to join Russia. Two days later Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law incorporating Crimea (Telegraph, 2015).

The power tensions and the issues of legality are also due to the fact that 65, 2 % percent of the Crimean population in 2014 was counted as Russian nationals (Statdata, 2016). So many official positions were filled by Russians or Russia-friendly authorities (Buba, 2010, p. 2). In that sense, Russia has an internal legitimacy, which is related to the population living in Crimea (Buba, 2010, p. 3). Ukraine has the legal legitimacy, which the Western countries and international actors like the United Nations (UN) and EU support. This violation of Ukraine's sovereignty prompted the West to target Russia with economic and diplomatic sanctions like the exclusion from the Group of Eight in 2015 (Smith & Harari, 2014, p. 1).

The new tensions between the West and Russia reminds of the Cold War period, especially the crisis post- Crisis- annexations has remarkable similarities with the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962. For this the assumption of Allison that the main motivation of the USSR was to 'overcome the large margin of the U.S. strategic superiority' will be accepted as true. Could it be that in the Crimean crisis the motives of power?

## 1.2. Problem Definition, Research Questions and Sub-questions

The analysis of the Crimean crisis on the basis of Allison's analytical framework of the Cuban Missile crisis shall explain how strategic decisions in crisis situations are made by governmental actors. Furthermore, by using Allison's framework it will be analyzed in how far it is still applicable to a modern crisis. This is in particular interesting when thinking of the parallels and similarities of the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Crimean crisis. In both cases there was a high risk of so many human lives endangered by a nuclear confrontation between the USA and Russia/ USSR. In both cases Russia's/ USSR's actions were counted as highly offensive in terms of political aggression and it was aiming that their policy interests are accepted by the opposite side (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 31). Also the actions took place on non-Russian territory in both cases, which makes the crises very highly geopolitical issue. Moreover, arguments of defense were presented as the official justification of Russia's and Soviet actions, including the assertion that the actions were taken to protect Cuba/Crimea against the aggression of the U.S./Ukraine (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 47).

As the strategic crisis communication show close resemblance in both cases the research question, which will address in this thesis, is the following:

*To what extend and how did the strategic crisis communication of Russia affect the actions of the international actors (in terms of affecting the escalation or de-escalation the conflict)?*

This research question is of explanatory kind and will try to make meaning of the events and after the annexation of the Ukrainian territory, also seen from the perspective of international actors like the UN and EU. The setting of the research will be the international context of the Ukrainian crisis and the accession of Crimea on 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2014. So the moment of the annexation is the setting. The independent variable is the "communication of Ukraine and Russia". The first dependent variable is the "activities of international actors to affect the conflict" and the second variable is the "escalation/ de-escalation level of the crisis".

To help answer the main research questions the following sub- questions were designed:

- What were the issues of this crisis in the geopolitical context and in how far did this affect the level of crisis?
- In how far did the international actors contribute to the escalation of the crisis?

As additional indicators for adequacy of international crisis management, trade indicator such as foreign direct investment, bilateral trade balance and GPD will be analyzed.

The time frame of the research will focus on the main period of tensions – major decisions between beginning 2014 and the end of 2015.

What makes this research particularly relevant is the fact that, being a modern crisis, it has many similarities with the Cuban missile crisis from over 50 years ago.

This crisis deals with a so called “wicked problem”, since it has conflicting political sphere with a big impact on society. This crisis is socio-cultural problem, with a small level of certainty of knowledge, while at the same time having a small level of consensus (Sheet, 2013, p. 1).

### **1.3. Scientific and Social Relevance**

This research study will be elaborating the actions of a governmental crisis management in a very unique situation. The annexation of Crimea does not only have an influence on the Ukrainian- Russian collaboration and communication but it also on other international actors. There is only very little research on what really informed the actions of the actors, how they made meaning out of the given circumstances and what it meant to be make decisions in a situation of uncertainty. This research also aims to analyze the level of escalation and de-escalation of the crisis, thus it discusses different procedure of force and withdrawal in the arena of international crisis management.

Thus, the scientific relevance involves a contribution to the existing knowledge on crisis management, while the social relevance involves the future reaction to similar events, especially in terms of political and military tensions. The present study will put the framework Allison developed, on the bases of the Cuban missile crisis, into a critical test in the context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century international conflict. A fundamental question in international crisis management is whether the theoretical foundation for the study of international crisis management still holds in the modern context.

### **1.4. Overview of the Research**

Following this introduction section, the theoretical framework and the models, which will be used to analyze the crisis, will be elaborated. In the third chapter the methodological approach will be introduced, which was used to answer the research question and to prove or falsify the

hypotheses of this study. Also the limitations of this research study in general is elaborated in the methodology section.

In the fourth chapter the case is described in detail, including the timeline of events in different stages of the crisis as well as the actions of the international actors. Furthermore, the treaties in relation to the legality of actions are elaborated. In the fifth chapter the Ukrainian and Russian communication, as well as the treaties and of the international actors, will be analyzed. Then the results are summarized in a conclusion.

## 2. Theory

The theories and models, which are described in this section, will be used as the basis of the framework of this research. The theories and models are simplified and applied on the Ukraine and Crimea crisis. The framework will be the bases for the analyze and will be used to answer the hypotheses and research questions.

### 2.1 Scientific Theories

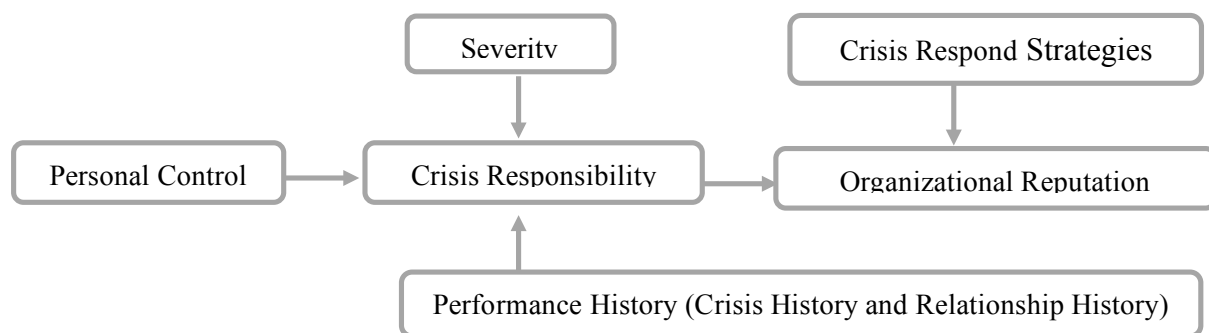
The post- Crimean crisis has strong similarities with the Cuban Missile Crisis from October 1962. This is for once due to Russia's/ USSR's role in the conflict and second, due to the complex international setting of the crisis. Graham Allison analyzed in 1999 in his book "Essence of decision: Explaining the Cuban missile crisis" the decisions of the actors and the reasons for those. Allison's theories will be the base of this research, as it will determine if Allison's framework is still applicable on modern crisis. Allison uses three main models: (a) Rational Actor Model, (b) Organizational Behavior Model and (c) Governmental Politics Model. These models shall be applied in the context of the Ukrainian crisis, the accession of Crimea and the international applications that resulted from it. With those models Allison managed to explain the events and the decisions of the actors during the Cuban Missile crisis. The models worked well in this scenario, hence they could be helpful for the Ukrainian- Crimean crisis as well. Nevertheless, it needs to be considered, that the models were applied in a cold war situation. Although there are most defiantly tensions between the West and Russia, it is not a new cold war (Interview I).

*Figure 2* describes the analytical framework, within which Allison's models will be applied, shall picture the research objectives more specifically. The starting point of this research

will be the strategic crisis communication of Ukraine and Russia and its effect on the actions of international actors.

*Crisis communication*, especially the strategic kind, is determined by certain factors such as strategic planning, proactive strategies and strategic respond (Seeger, 2006, p. 236). So crisis communication relates to the decision making process itself. In general, crisis communication theories help to understand factors, which influence the crisis and the reputation of the actors and organizations (Coombs, 2007, p. 163). The theories are also helpful to analyze the cooperation and post-crisis communication of the actors and stakeholder. Crisis communication is part of the rational choices and strategic interdependence of the interacting actors. Communication can help to establish stability in critical times, but can also lead to tensions with other actors during a crisis (Seeger, 2006, p. 336). Coombs' and Holladays' *situational crisis communication theory* (SCCT), as seen in *Figure 1*, shall help to combine the further mentioned theories with the analytical framework and put it in the context of this particular crisis. In the relation to this theory, many factors, which are interrelated with each other, influence the procedures and decision making process (Coombs, 2007, p.167).

**Figure 1 Situational Crisis Communication Theory**



Source: Coombs, W. T. (2007). Attribution theory as a guide for post-crisis communication research. *Public Relations Review*, 33(2), p. 168

The personal control of the actors describes their ability to influence the situation within the crisis. The crisis responsibility determines, in how far the crisis (in this case the escalation of the crisis) is to be blamed on the actor. The severity of the crisis is an important contributing factor to the level of responsibility. The higher the level of responsibility the higher the potential damage of the reputation. Also the performance history needs to be considered. Especially in this

crisis is the historical relationship between the actors a not to be neglected aspect. Hence, in order to minimize the damage to the reputation to the actors must choose the most efficient crisis respond strategy (Coombs, 2007, p. 168). Coombs' theory of *crisis responds strategies* (CRS), described in *Table 1*, will be applied as a frame on *strategic crisis communication* and will be the measurement mechanism for the causal process tracing (CPT) approach.

**Table 1 Crisis Response Strategies**

<b><i>Primary crisis response strategies</i></b>	<b>Deny crisis response strategies</b>
<i>Attack the accuser</i>	Crisis manager confronts the person or group claiming something is wrong with the organization.
<i>Denial</i>	Crisis manager asserts that there is no crisis.
<i>Scapegoat</i>	Crisis manager blames some person or group outside of the organization for the crisis. Diminish crisis response strategies.
<i>Excuse</i>	Crisis manager minimizes organizational responsibility by denying intent to do harm and/or claiming inability to control the events that triggered the crisis.
<i>Justification</i>	Crisis manager minimizes the perceived damage caused by the crisis. Rebuild crisis response strategies.
<i>Compensation</i>	Crisis manager offers money or other gifts to victims.
<i>Apology</i>	Crisis manager indicates the organization takes full responsibility for the crisis and asks stakeholders for forgiveness.
<b><i>Secondary crisis response strategies</i></b>	<b>Bolstering crisis response strategies</b>
<i>Reminder</i>	Tell stakeholders about the past good works of the organization.
<i>Ingratiation</i>	Crisis manager praises stakeholders and/or reminds them of past good works by the organization.
<i>Victimage</i>	Crisis managers remind stakeholders that the organization is a victim of the crisis too.

Source: Coombs, W. T. (2007). Protecting organization reputations during a crisis: The development and application of situational crisis communication theory. *Corporate reputation review*, p.170

In the case of this theory organization will be understood as the national governments or respectively the leader. For the purpose of this research, the focus will be on the primary strategies: attack, denial and justification. Attack will be defined as escalation, while denial is a mixed form, not an escalation per se, but neither a de-escalating action. Justification will be described as a de-escalation method. Additionally, measurements of appeasement will be analyzed. As such measures will be considered the signings of treaties, provision of financial



support and democratic measures. These measurements are measures of de-escalation. Nevertheless, this crisis also involves military actions from the actors and territorial violation. Thus it is necessary to include real life events in the relation to the escalation and de-escalation of the crisis.

At last, also the following aspects are to be considered when analyzing the actions of the international actors as well as the strategic communication of Russia and Ukraine: preparation, recognition and signaling (the situation to be a crisis), provision of information, analysis, judgment and preparation of decision making and decision making itself.

For the purpose of this research it is necessary to realize that the actions of the acting parties result from different interests and backgrounds. Similar studies use “realism” to search for explanations of the events. Nevertheless, the research in this thesis also deals with a highly politicized social context and the importance of human subjectivity and *meaning making* will be considered. Like some other researches this research will use the model of the *paradigm* of *Relativism*. This means that it will be recognized that the perspective on the situation depends on the personal perspective of an individual, but at the same time this study will not deny a certain level of objectivity on the issue either (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545). In that relation governmental politics - the motives of the strategic execution of actions, the goals and the tools of execution, will be analyzed. Hence, the act of nation is important (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 25). Those actions and the meaning of making of them, influences the actions of the international actors. Of course due to the subjectivity of meaning making, the definitions of crisis may conflict. Bion states that, a crisis is reflected through the individual experiences and values of a person and thus is viewed from the eyes of the beholder (Boin, 2005, p. 138). Conflicting meaning making can intensify the effect of the actions on the escalation and de-escalation of the crisis. The tensions which arose between Russia and the Western countries, also due to the different meaning making of this situation, the actions and counteractions (e.g. economic and political sanctions) are highly influenced by the meaning making of the individual actors. Conflicting meaning making (also due to domestic factors) can make it difficult to adequately address a crisis.

Escalation and de-escalation refer in this context to situations in which actions do not work as predicted. Although rational escalation is possible as well and can closely be related to meaning making. For closer insight on that issue Drummond *Escalation Theory* will be used in

this research (Drummond, 1995, p. 266). When such circumstances occur actors are believed to tend towards irrational persistence. This can happen due to different reasons, but is often more likely to occur if the other party is reacting negatively so that the pressure of persistence increases (Drummond, 1995, p. 266). In that sense escalation and de-escalation are part of a power play with rational persistence and withdrawal as well as the respond to those actions. This is a very important aspect in this specific crisis situation and a major part in the meaning making of the activities of the parties involved. Especially considering the power tensions in the political arena the theory becomes more important. Historically, periods like the Cold War and the Cuban missile crisis have shown how self-justifying reasons have threatened to cause wide range escalations. For the international crisis resulting from the Crimea accession the game of persistence and negative feedback is seen in the sanctions against Russia and counter-sanctions from Russia in respond.

The development of the escalation Crimean crisis was a long process involving many actions and aspects. In order to frame the theoretical structure of this research better and to put the below described models into the context of the events of the crisis escalation, Fink's theory of the stages in a life of a crisis shall be applied. Fink describes the four stages in a life of a crisis as following:

**Table 2 Fink's Stages in a Life of a Crisis**

<b>Stage 1</b>	Prodromal stage: when it becomes apparent that the crisis is inevitable
<b>Stage 2</b>	Acute stage: the point of no return when the crisis has hit and damage limitation is the main objective
<b>Stage 3</b>	Chronic stage: clean-up, post-mortem, self- analysis and healing
<b>Stage 4</b>	Resolution: routine restored or new improved state

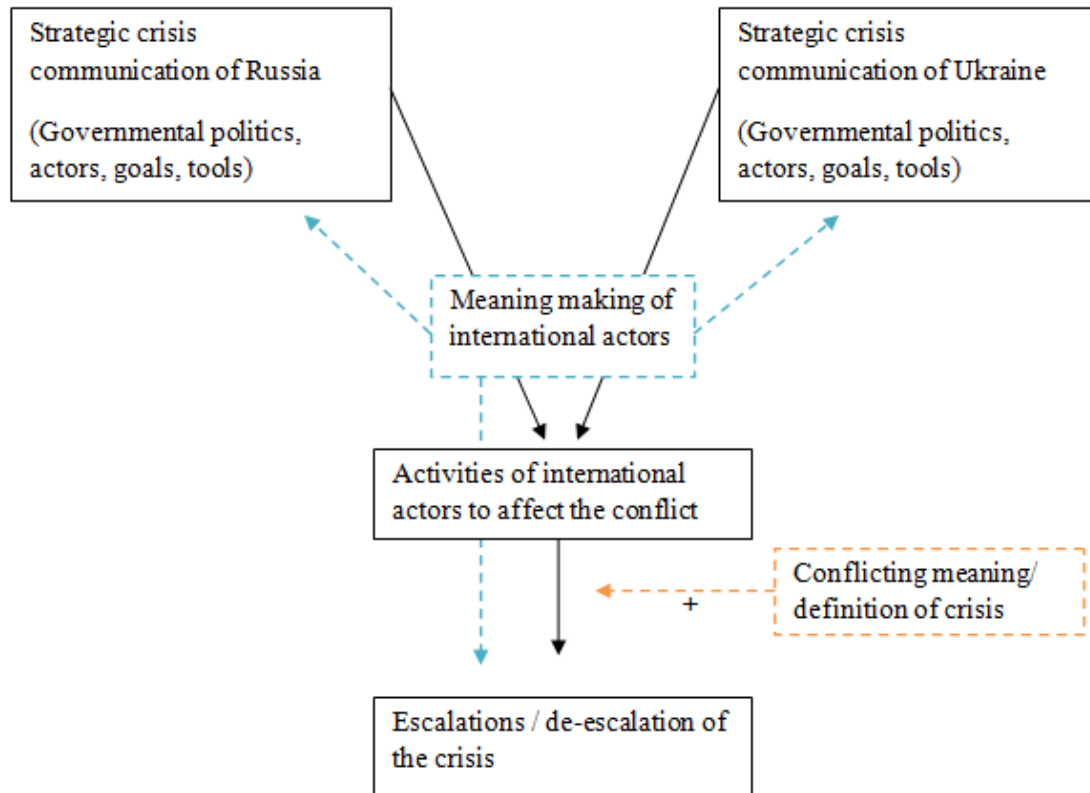
*Source:* Ritchie, B. W. (2004). Chaos, crises and disasters: a strategic approach to crisis management in the tourism industry. *Tourism Management*, 25(6), p.672.

This theory analyzes, when there are signs that a potential crisis is about to emerge and when it breaks out. It will help to determine, which crisis respond strategies actors and stakeholders use in an attempt to deal with the crisis and also when the organizations have regained the status quo as before the crisis.

## 2.2. Analytical Framework and Models

The models and framework is the basis for the analysis of the research. It will set the conceptual framework for the analytical context as well as for the interpretation of the information and interviews.

Figure 2 Analytical Framework

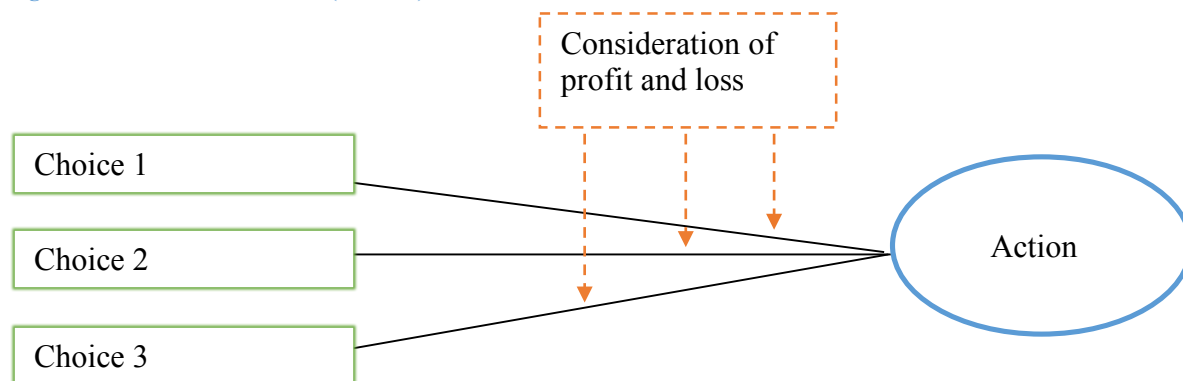


In addition to this framework the three models used by Allison shall provide a deeper analysis of the crisis and the motives and circumstances of the crisis communication. It needs to be considered, that the escalation and de-escalation is put in relation with the adequacy of crisis management.

The Rational Actor- Model (Model I) states that events on this magnitude have an important cause (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 5) The focus lies on the governments and their choices as well as their goals. This model aims to explain in how far the crisis communication of Russia and Ukraine was rational and reasonable in terms of the previous mentioned units of analysis and concepts. In this context a rational actor would decide for one of the choices by

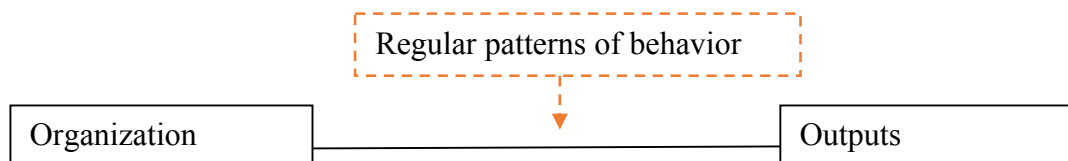
calculating the gains and losses of every option, before taking action. According to that the actor chooses the alternative which has the highest payoff (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, pp. 17, 30). This model is highly dependent on the ideological tendencies within the country, the principles that determine the value alternatives. Below is the analytical framework to this model.

**Figure 3 Rational Actor Model (Model I)**



The focuses of this model is on organizations and political actors involved in the policy making process (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 6). The model aims to explain the event by identifying the organizations (by this means the Russian) and displaying patterns of their behavior. From this behavior the organizational actions emerge (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 6). This models reflects on the fixed procedures and programs of the governmental organizations. This model analyses the context and different circumstances from which the organizational decisions emerge. It focuses on the organizational outputs which come from the organizational functioning according to regular patterns of behavior (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 6). Concepts such as strength, standard operating procedures as well as organizational repertoire are analyzed. Below is the analytical framework is displayed.

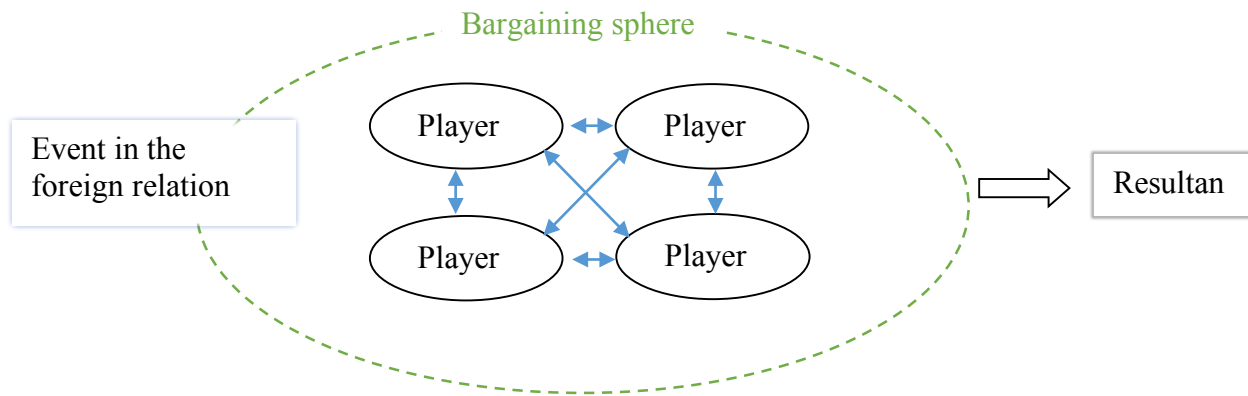
**Figure 4 Organizational Process Model (Model II)**



The (Bureaucratic) Politics Model (Model III) focuses the political sphere of the governments and the player. It aims to explain an event by analyzing the actions as a resultant of different

bargaining processes among the actors in national governments. This model asks what critical decisions and action yielded to others in the bargaining game (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 6). So the political resultant and concepts such as the discernment, motives, position, as well as power stratagem of the actors, are important for understanding the bargaining concepts. For the prediction of the future events it is necessary to identify the player and the bargaining game, in which specific issues arise (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 6).

Figure 5 (Bureaucratic) Politics Model (Model III)

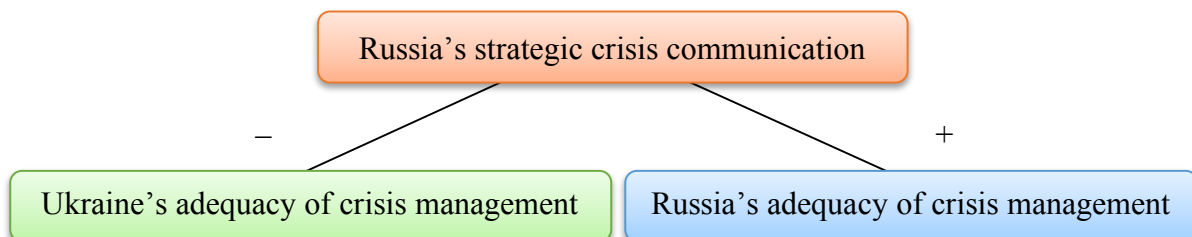


### 2.3. Expectations about Causal Relationships

In this section the hypotheses and the expectations for the causal relationships between the variables are described. The hypotheses are drawn from the theoretical framework, the information retrieved and the statements of the interviewees.

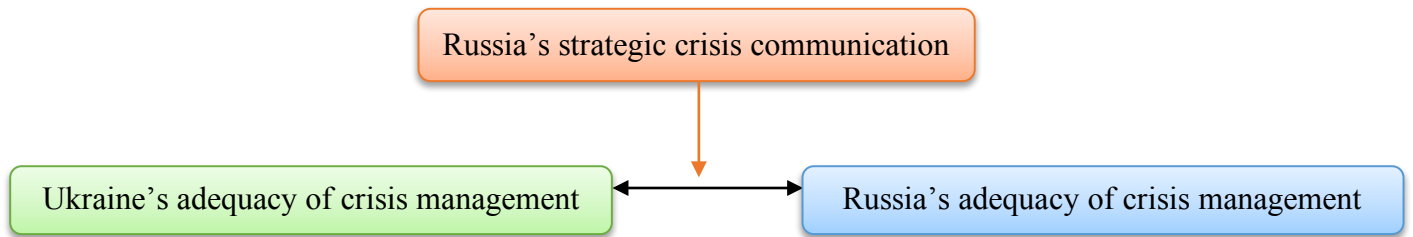
- Hypothesis 1: The strategic crisis communication of Russia affected the adequacy of international crisis management (a) of Russia positively and (b) of Ukraine negatively.

Figure 6 Hypothesis 1



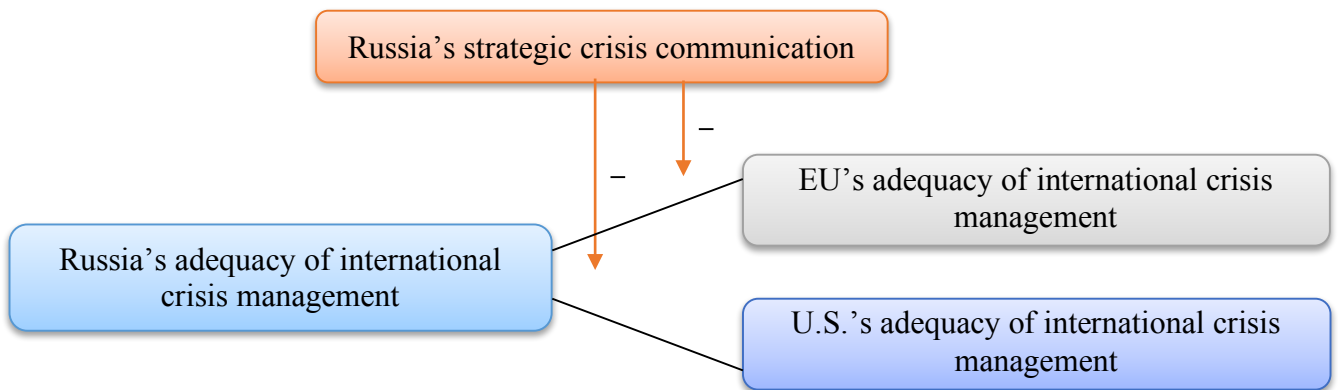
- Hypothesis 2: The strategic crisis communication of Russia negatively affected the adequacy of international crisis management between Russia and Ukraine.

Figure 7 Hypothesis 2



- Hypothesis 3: The strategic crisis communication of Russia negatively affected the adequacy of international crisis management between Russia and the EU / U.S.

Figure 8 Hypothesis 3



It is to be considered that the hypotheses are subject to *sufficient condition*, which implies that the independent variable leads to the outcome, but the outcome could have been possible even without the independent variable (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 91). This is important, since this is a qualitative study and the aim is to determine in how far the independent variable (Russia's strategic crisis communication) has influenced the dependent variables and thus the outcome (escalation of the crisis).

### 3. Methodology

The Ukrainian crisis and the annexation of Crimea have shown that there is still a conflict potential between the East and West. It has to be analyzed what actions took place and how the international actor displayed their crisis respond strategy. More importantly there is the need to answer why certain strategies were used in the different phases of the crisis unfolding.

In this section the methodological approach will be described, which shall prove or falsify the hypotheses.

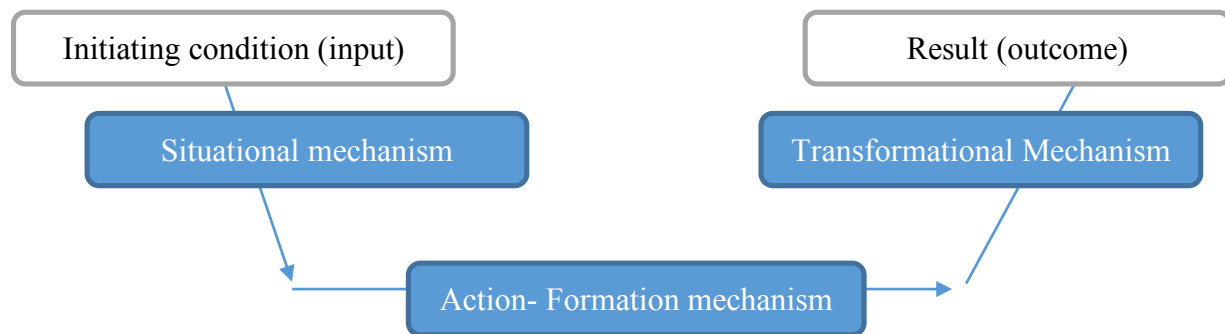
### 3.1. Research Design: Single Case Study

The research design follows a qualitative, explorative approach since this study focuses on one specific case. A qualitative case study approach is used in this case to describe a phenomenon (de-/escalation level) in a specific setting. This allows the research to be focused on individuals, organizations and other actors of importance in this specific setting (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 550).

In that sense, this research design seeks to answer how and why the actions after the annexations of Crimea lead to such consequences. Thus, a case study like this is used when (a) no experimental treatment is present to change or manipulate the behavior, (b) when the contextual conditions are relevant for the research as well and (c) when there is no clear distinguishing line between the phenomenon and contextual conditions (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545). This is especially true for such international crises involving many aspects and actors. As this research revolves around actors and meaning making it is a rather interpretive research. Haverland states in his article that knowledge and social realities are inter- subjective constructs and thus interrelate with the meaning making and *Relativism* (Haverland & Yanow, 2012, p. 404).

This research involves many human actors and as Allison mentions in his book scientists study human behavior ‘as as purposive, goal-directed activity’ (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 27). Thus, humans are studied best in qualitative research, because the sense making is subjective and complex. This is the reason why this particular case is best studied as a case study. This research implies that there are causal configurations, which have led to this specific crisis outcome (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 94). The choices and the action of the actors are part of social mechanisms, which combined result in a crisis specific causal mechanism (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 95). Those mechanisms, as mentioned in Blatter’s book ‘Designing case studies: explanatory approaches in small-N Research’, will be important in this research design.

Figure 9 General Approach to inferring Causal Mechanism



Source: Blatter, J., & Haverland, M. (2012). *Designing case studies: explanatory approaches in small-N Research* p. 95

In this aspect *the Situational Mechanism* are the treaties, which should be the basis of the actions and the strategic crisis communication. Those are the legal boundaries on which the international actors have agreed on. The important treaties are described in the case description below. The *Action-Formation Mechanism* are the actions and strategic communication statements of the actors on an individual level (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 117). At last, the *Transformational Mechanism* is the period when the combination of the action actually leads to the outcome (escalation/ de-escalation) of the crisis.

### 3.2. Case Selection and Data Collection

Since this is a qualitative single case study, the case selection does not require a co-variation of the variables between several cases (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 99). As the selection of this case study was made in relation to the outcome of the crisis, there is no reason to analyze more than one case in order to provide causal inferences (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 100). This research is of explanatory type so the variables are measured at a one specific moment at the time as this is a unique and not duplicable crisis situation.

The data collection will be conducted through a qualitative research approach. The data will be gathered through an intense literature research and through a conduction of interviews with secondary information sources, who have interviewed responsible crisis managers and actors, will be conducted and transcribed. Those sources shall include individuals like journalists and reporter, who have conducted interviews with primary sources, but also other information of adequate information sources such as specialists on crisis management and government representatives were considered. The interviews and contained open question as this will give the



interviewees the opportunity to elaborate their view in more depth. The interviews were constructed individually depending on the person interviewed. Thus, the formulation of the questions depended on the kind of information the individuals had access to (e.g. journalists interviewing different crisis managers or other relevant actors).

The following people have been contacted: speakers of the German Federal Agency of Civic Education (Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung), speaker of German – Russian Forum, representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, Russia correspondents from radio station Deutschlandradio and journalists from Russia Today. It so happened that neither of the people responded, or have rejected to participate. One Ukrainian journalist, news correspondent and founder of a Ukrainian crisis center has agreed on an interview. The interview was conducted on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2016 and lasted about 45 Minutes.

As other data sources, public statements e.g. speeches of the Russian President Vladimir Putin, will be taken into consideration. Also the protocols of the NATO concerning the international crisis management and respond procedures and the changes that have been conducted as a result of the Ukrainian crisis.

Since this is a qualitative study, with subjective views on the issue, the data will be nominal and measured accordingly. This shall help the intense study of the answers and data, giving insights on the crisis. Thus, the variables which are measured in this research have more than two attributes and are not ordered.

Different sources were used in order to describe the case as well as to retrieve the necessary information and data for the analysis. For the timeline and the recreation of the events as well as actions, newspaper articles from BBC and CNN were used. Also statements and reports from governmental organizations such as the European Union, the European Council, the European Parliament Research Service Blog, the US Department of State. The full list of the references, data and information sources including official documents and news sources can be found below in the appendix.

### **3.3. Evaluation Methodology: Qualitative Approach**

This study focuses on a specific case, so the data analysis will be conducted through an intense and critical study of the crisis around the annexation of Crimea. This procedure seems the most appropriate to answer the research questions as this the annexation has caused a complex

crisis situation of global proportion. An intense critical study of the actors, communication procedures, the actions of the actors as well as their influence on the level of escalation and the international contest, is necessary to understand the outcomes of this crisis.

This crisis deals with politicized social conditions in a unique situation and requires a specific evaluation methodology. To evaluate the causal relationship between the variables the causal- process-tracing (CPT) is most suitable for this research design. Blatter mentions, that the CPT approach aims to increase the internal validity, since the approach focuses on the outcomes and which potential causal factors or causes that have led to this outcome (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 80). The approach follows the assumption that the combinations of different causal aspects and factors produce different social outcomes. The same or similar outcomes can be reached through different ways but at the same time the *causal heterogeneity* is not excluded. Hence, the same factors can have a different effect on the outcome, depending on the context and its combination with other causal factors (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 80). There are many factors, which are important to consider when analyzing the Crimean and Ukrainian crisis, which is why a configurational approach is useful for this research study. It makes it possible to consider the interests of the actors and their effect on the outcome (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 81). The CPT shall be applied in combination with the mechanisms of Coomb's CRS (attack, denial, justification, compensation). Additionally, with the consideration of Allison's models the CPT will help to determine whether Allison's theoretical framework is applicable on a modern day crisis. In order to apply Coombs' theory of CRS into the stages in a life of a crisis, it is necessary to analyze the statements and actions of the actors for certain signal words. This shall help to determine whether the statements can be categorized as attack, denial or justification.

### **3.4. Operationalization, Indicators, Conceptualization and Measurement**

In this sections conceptualized the terms which will be analyzed in this paper. Firstly, it is important to understand what is meant by a *crisis*. There are many types of crises but what they all have in common is, that they negatively affect the "peaceful" order of modern society (Boin, 2005, p. 15). Thus, a crisis is an unexpected situation bringing disorder and negative threats, so that there is a need for the leaders of the government to react fast and under pressure. So there is an overall sense of urgency and uncertainty (Boin, 2005, p. 18). As normal operational ways do not work due to the uniqueness of every crisis governmental leadership has to find operational ways of protocolled actions and improvisation.

For the purpose of specification on the one hand and the hope to come to more generalizable results, this study will differentiate between domestic and international crisis management. This is because in a politicized context, strategic crisis communication is used with different purpose and thus can have different effects on crisis management.

*Crisis communication* is closely connected to meaning making. Bion's states that crisis communicative meaning making is a task of the leaders to communicate the events in a crisis in a narrative and explanatory way to the public (Boin, 2005, p. 69). In this sense *meaning making* will mean the construct of new knowledge from a new information input and also learning from it (Hein, 1999, p. 16). Hence, meaning making closely related to the individual motivation and perspective on the crisis. For the purpose of this research the term *strategic crisis communication* will be used. This means that the actors communicate in a strategic, conscious and goal driven manner in the international context.

Strategic crisis communication will be categorized in Coombs' CRS: attack, denial, justification and appeasement. By attack are meant actions such as reassuring, confronting, Attacks are CRS of escalation. By denial will be meant the denial of the existence of the crisis or the denial of attacks. Denial is a mixed CRS of escalating and de-escalation, depending on the circumstances of the denial. By justification is meant the minimization of the damage explaining the own actions in order to justifying them as being reasonable. By appeasement are meant measures of cooperation, participation in dialogues and signing of peace agreement. So the attack, denial justification, appeasement will be judged as whether those actions were reasonable, in the sense of being legal and appropriate.

It needs to be considered, that this crisis also involves real life actions, which influenced the actions of the international actors. Thus, this research will also consider real life actions like military mobilization will be considered. Unnecessary aggressive military actions will be considered as an action of attack, hence contributing to the level of escalation.

When referring to the strategic crisis communication of the actors, this research will focus mostly on the actors – Russia, Ukraine, the EU and U.S. Most specifically the analysis will be on the actions of the leaders, hence of the Russian President Vladimir Putin, United States President Barack Obama, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, the former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich and the current President Petro Poroshenko. This choice was made because

as leader those actors are the main decision makers, who had the most influence on the escalation and de-escalation level of the crisis.

In the context of this research *international crisis management* is the ability of a government to deal with the interrelated and extraordinary challenges (Boin, 2005, p. 11). While the *adequacy of international crisis management* will be the dependent variable of this research study and will be estimated by its ability to *escalate* or *de-escalate* the crisis. The ability to escalate or de-escalate will be measured by the CRS the actors have chosen.

For the understanding of *escalation* and *de-escalation* this research will use the *Escalation Theory* also used by Drummond. According to this theory “Escalation refers to predicaments where investments fail to work out as envisaged” (Drummond, 1995, p. 266). This research also does not exclude that a crisis or its escalation can be a rational and calculated event. Escalation and de-escalation will be measured by the presence or absence of the following indicators introduced by Christopher Mitchell, in “The Anatomy of De-escalation”:

**Table 3 Indicators of Escalation and De-escalation**

<b>Escalation</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>De-escalation</b>
Closed	<b>Channel of communication</b>	Open
Introduce	<b>Sanctions</b>	Suspend
-	<b>Removal of (extremist) leadership</b>	-
Not acknowledged	<b>Public acknowledgement of some responsibility for the conflict</b>	Acknowledged
Unrecognized	<b>Recognition of adversary's existence and legitimacy</b>	Recognized
Present	<b>violent coercion</b>	Absent
No participation	<b>Participation in informal discussions about solutions/ formal agreements on solution</b>	Participation

Source: Mitchell, C. R. (1999). The anatomy of de-escalation. *Conflict resolution: Dynamics, process and structure*, p.52.

For the purpose of this research the indicator of the “removal of extremist leadership” will not be used as an indicator per se nor categorized in escalation and de-escalation, but will be elaborated in the analysis.

Those indicators are indicators as well as tactics of de-escalation. Their absence indicates the escalation of the crisis.

As additional indicators for adequacy of international crisis management variables, based on Reed's Article 'A Unified Statistical Model of Conflict Onset and Escalation' will be considered: a) *Interdependency*, which in this research refers to the ties the actors have with each other. It will be differentiated between the *economic independency* and the *alliance ties* of the actors. The economic independency will be analyzed through the national income of a country and the intensity of the trade relations with the other involved parties. The alliance ties relate to the diplomatic treaties and agreements between the countries (Reed, 2000, p. 89). Hence in this study it will be distinguished between a high and a low level of interdependency.

b) *Satisfaction with the status quo*. The status quo refers to the 'recognized order of international interaction' (Reed, 2000, p. 85). The satisfaction with the status quo will be identified as satisfied or not satisfied. The satisfaction depends on the *power parity*, what refers to the similarity of capabilities of the parties involved. When the actors have a rather equal power parity relationship the status quo can be changed accordingly to the satisfaction of both. The domination of the power parity by one actor usually results in the exposition of the status quo in favor of the hegemon. The power parity will be estimated as equal and unequal. When there is a dissatisfaction with the status quo there is a higher chance of a conflict or even war (Reed, 2000, pp. 86, 89). The satisfaction with the status quo will be analyzed through surveys, official statements, legal documents, news articles and the statements in interviews. It will be paid attention to certain signal words (negative expressions e.g. aggression, accusations etc.). Nevertheless, real life events such as the presence of protests and demonstrations play an important role when referring to the satisfaction of the status quo.

c) *Willingness of the actor to engage in a conflict or war*. This involves aspects such as the readiness to violate international treaties and bilateral agreements, as well as to take military action and the use of force. (Reed, 2000, p. 89). The willingness will be estimated between the high and low. It is also important to consider, that actors sometimes engage in conflicts with limited information on the willingness of taking risks of the other actors. In that sense, media is an important tool in the politicized communication sphere, since actors often retrieve most information through media. Media can be used to 'weaponize' information. The weaponization of information for a political cause is known under the expression *CNN Effect* (Livingston, 1997, p. 1).

## 4. Case description

In this section the major events of the crisis are described. This involved the actions and the strategic crisis communication approaches, which will be interpreted in terms of the stages proposed by Fink (Ritchie, 2004, p.672) The case description is based on newspaper articles and footage from CNN and BBC from 2014, and reports of governments and international organizations (e.g. EU and US). The treaties, as the accepted functioning norm in a crisis are an important aspect in the turnout of the event, which is why the treaties and their violation is described in accordance to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) below.

It is commonly known, that ever since World War II there were tensions between the East and the West. Even after the disintegration of the Soviet Union the tensions continued. Ukraine has been an important part of the tensions, especially when considering the current development. Ukraine has been under Russian influence for a long time, but has also experienced pro-Western developments. Events like the the Orange Revolution in 2004 and the Euromaidan in 2013/2014 have led to immense movements in the civil society and a more negative attitude towards Russia. While the Orange Revolution lasted for 17 days, the Euromaidan protests lasted longer and had more fatal consequences. The Association Agreement, which has been negotiated since 2007 was seen as an opportunity to intensify the relationship towards the West and EU. By many it was seen as an opportunity towards a possible EU- membership (Banakh, 2014). The Association Agreement could have brought new perspective to the country and encouraged economic growth, as well as initiated a step towards modernization. So on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, when Yanukovych has decided to decline the planned agreement, student protests have erupted in Kiev (CNN, 2014).

The student protests were beaten down by the Berkut Special Force in a violent matter, causing another wave of protests. By 1<sup>st</sup> December 2013 800.000 Ukrainian citizens were protesting Yanukovych's decision (BBC, 2014). On the 16<sup>th</sup> of January Anti- Protest Laws were invoiced, which resulted in violent attempts to break up the protests. Yanukovych signed a compromise deal with the opposition, which had no result. The protests grew more violent and Yanukovych was forced out of the office and has fled to Moscow. As an attempted to smoothen the relationship, Russia also offered to buy out \$15 Billion of Ukraine's debt – without success (CNN, 2014).

In February, unmarked military gunmen, who said to be pro-Russian occupied strategic government facilities in Crimea. Shortly after a referendum was held in Crimea, according to which 97% of the Crimean population was in favor to join Russia. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2014 Putin signed the bill to unite Crimea and Russia (BBC, 2014). This act was considered a violation of the Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Thus it was a violation of the agreed on treaties and the international law (European Union, 2016). The EU has imposed several sanctions (European Union, 2016):

1. Diplomatic sanctions: Exclusion from G8, suspension of negotiations about Russia's membership in OECD, suspensions of bilateral negotiations about new visa agreement.
2. Restricting measures: Freezing of assets and visa bans for certain individuals, who stand in relation to the situation in Ukraine.
3. Crimea restrictions: Restriction of imports from Crimea, prohibition to invest in to the region as well as to provide technical assistance and tourism services.
4. Economic Sanctions: restrictions to buy/ sell financial instruments like bonds to/from certain Russian banks, energy and defense companies, suspension of finance operations.

For the same reasons the U.S. have also responded with sanctions against Russia, including:

1. Restrictions of access to the property of certain individuals (Russian officials, separatist leader and businessman)
2. Restrictions on bilateral cooperation in the sectors of financial services, energy and defense (U.S. Department of State, Department of the Treasury, 2014).

The sanctions shall put economic and diplomatic pressure on Russia and Putin, but no sanctions were imposed on Putin himself. The West still needed to be able to cooperate with Russia and have meetings in order to address certain global issues like the situation in Iran (BBC 2014).

Although, the Maidan protests have ended around the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2015, when Petro Poroshenko was elected new President of Ukraine, there were still military confrontation in the east of the Ukraine between the Ukrainian military and pro- Russian separatists. Especially the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk have been engaged in the military confrontation. The regions have self-declared "Donetsk People's Republic" (DPR) and "Luhansk People's Republic" (LPR) announced independence from Ukraine on 11<sup>th</sup> of May, which was not recognized by the Ukrainian government.

In *Figure 10* below shows the by the pro-Russian separatist occupied territory in Ukraine. It shows the landmarks before and after the first Minsk Agreement. According to the Ukrainian government, the area influenced by the separatist have widened. This is why the adjustments were made in the second agreement.

**Figure 10 Separatists Areas in Ukraine**



**Sources:** Map created by CRS. Map information generated by Hannah Fischer using data from the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (2016), Department of State (2015), Esri (2014), and DeLorme (2014).

*Secondary Source:* Morelli, V. L. (27. April 2016). *Section Research Manager Congressional Research Service: Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*. Retrieved 16. May. 2016 from: <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33460.pdf>

It was said that Russia was supporting the rebels by providing military equipment, monetary support and allowing military personal to enter Ukraine. At the same time Russia denied, that Russian troops were involved in Crimea and also refused to call to the rebels to stop fighting (U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesperson, 2014).

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of July 2014 the MH17 was shot down over the rebel occupied territory in Ukraine. Following this incident, the EU has expended the sanctions against Russia, to which Russia responded with contra-sanctions restricting food imports form the EU (European Parliamentary Research Service Blog, 2015).

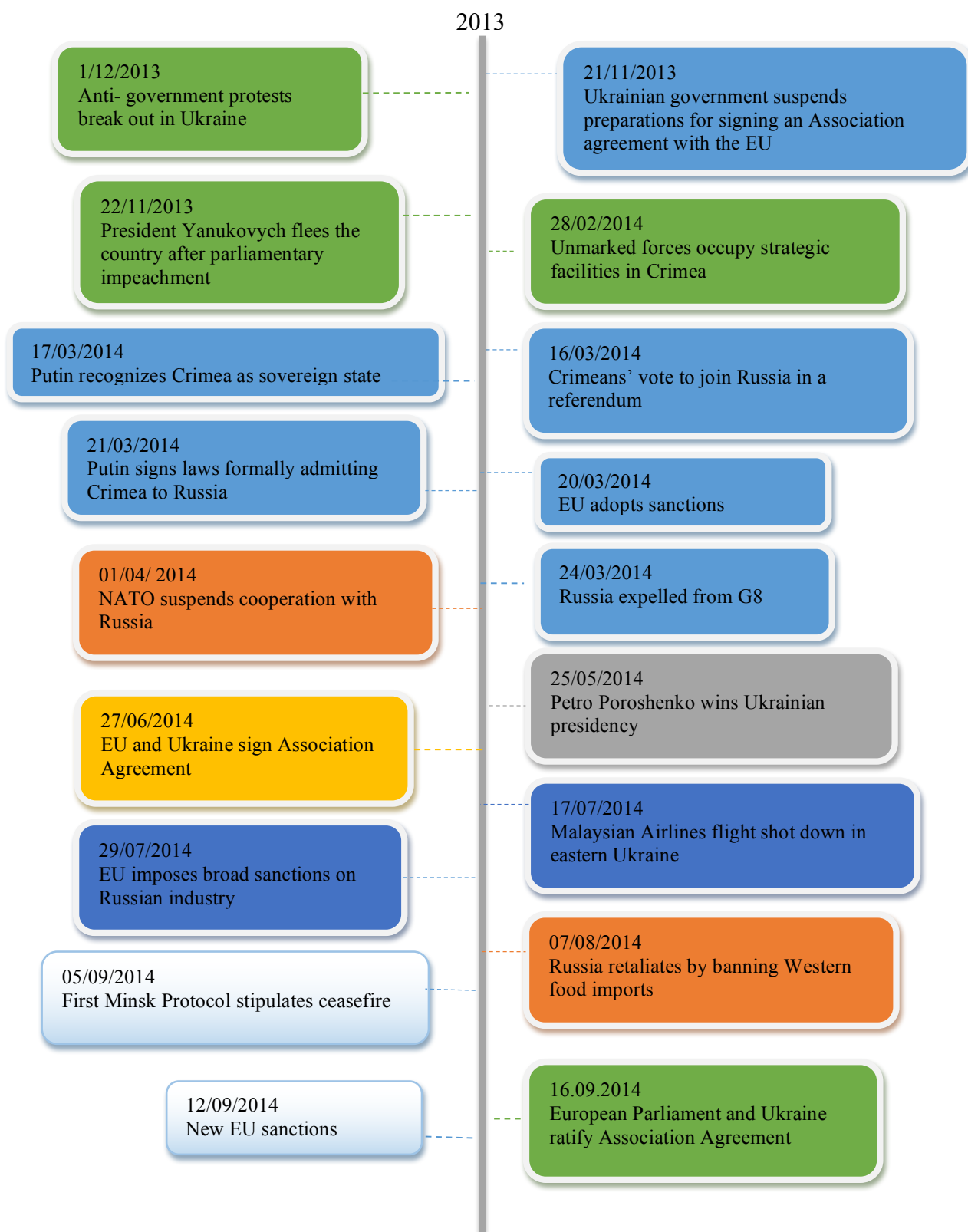


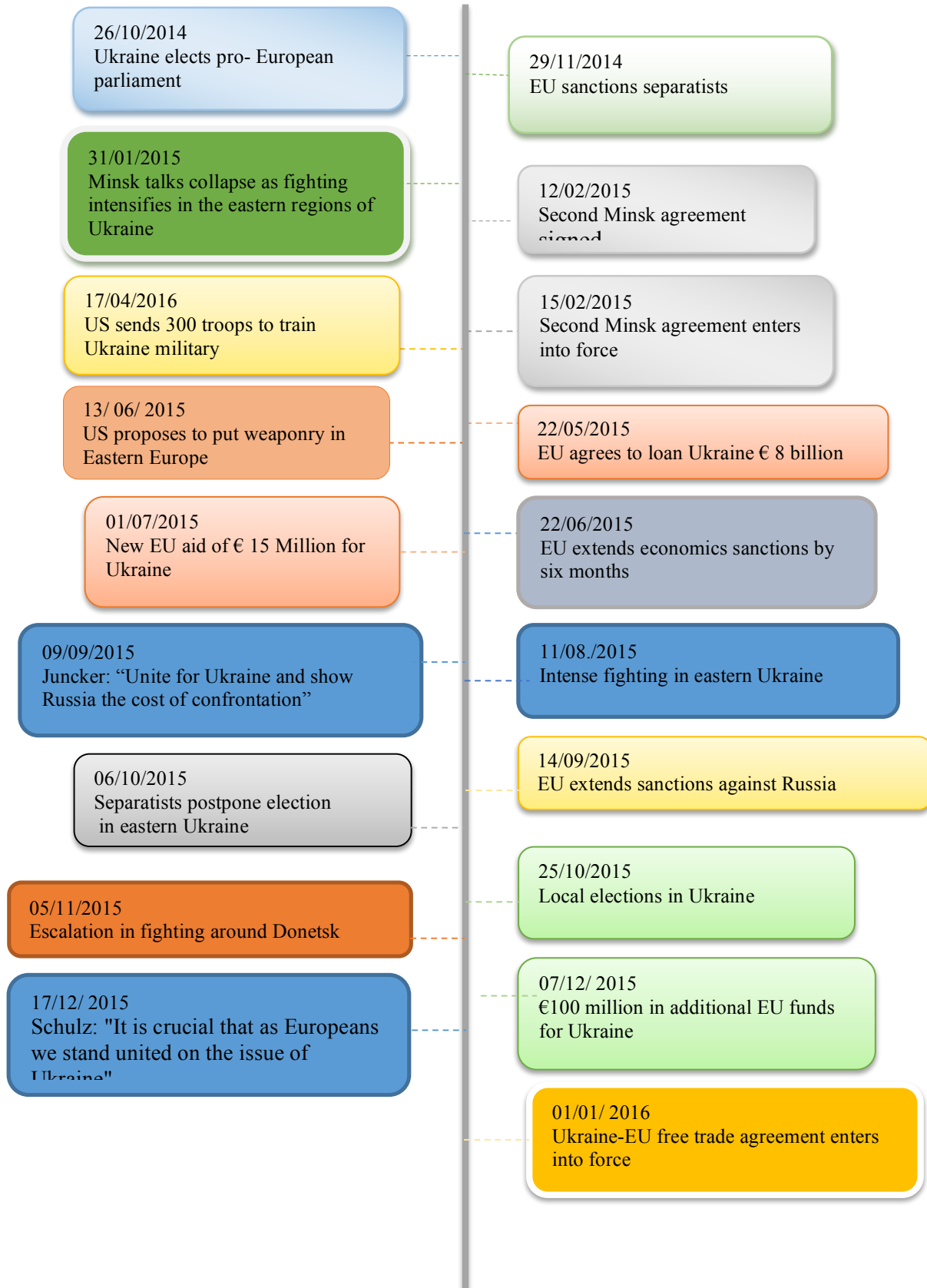
On the 5<sup>th</sup> of September 2014 the Ukrainian government signed a truce – the Minsk Agreement, with Russia and separatists (BBC, 2014). The parties agreed to ensure ceasefire and a dialogue, to withdraw of heavy weaponry from east Ukraine and to provide safety and humanitarian assistance to the people in the conflict region (Presidency of the French Republic, 2015). The agreement collapsed shortly after, due to intense fights in the region. A second Minsk Agreement was signed on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2015 and resulted in a major withdraw of Russian troops from Ukraine and the Ukrainian border (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2016).

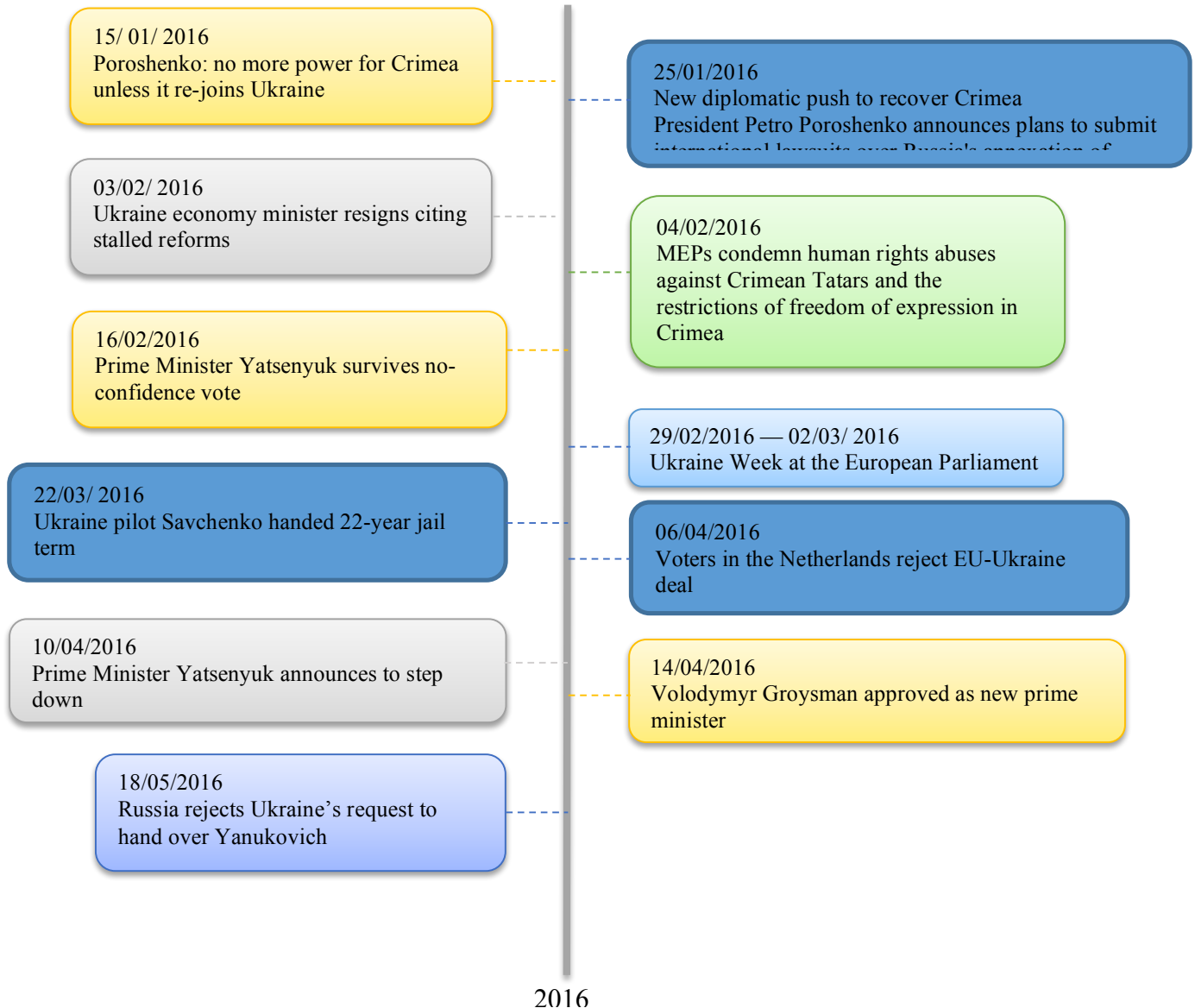
The measures, which were supposed to be implemented by the agreement included the immediate ceasefire in Donetsk and Luhansk; the withdraw of heavy weaponry (by both sides - Ukrainian and pro-Russian separatists) as well as the withdraw of foreign armed forces; launch of a dialogue; ensure of humanitarian assistance and exchange of hostages; control of the Ukrainian state borders; enforcement of the new Ukrainian constitution and legislation of the specified status of DPR and LPR; holding of elections in DPR and LPR in accordance to framework of the Trilateral Contact Group; establishment of working groups to ensure the implementation of the Minsk agreement (Financial Times, 2015). The full and detailed agreement, in the Russian language can be found in the appendix.

To this point there are military confrontations between the pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian military in the east of Ukraine. According to the UN over 9000 people were killed since mid-April of 2014 (UN, 2015). Even though the situation has de-escalated into a ‘frozen conflict’, the West and Russia continue their blame game (Interview 1). In *Figure 11* the timeline of the crisis, after the eruption of the first protests in Ukraine, are described. Those are the main events, which happened after November 21<sup>st</sup> 2013 when Yanukovich declined the Association Agreement (AA). The middle line marks the development of events

Figure 11 Ukraine Crisis Timeline November 2013 – May 2016







1.Source: European Parliamentary Research Service Blog (13. February, 2015). *Ukraine Crisis: Timeline, November 2013 – February 2015*. Retrieved on 31. May 2016 from: <https://libraryeuroparl.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/eprs-briefing-548991-minsk-peace-summit-fig1-timeline.png>

2.Source: European Parliament Ukraine: *Timeline of events Article– Enlargement/Delegation/ External relation* (01. March, 2016). Retrieved from: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20140203STO34645/Ukraine-timeline-of-events>

#### 4.1. Stages of the Crisis

To understand the reasons for the actors' actions, the actions, responses and events during the crisis must be reconstructed. *Table 3* shows the events and the actions of the actors, sorted into Fink's model of stages in the life of the Ukrainian and Crimean crisis. The actions of the actors are categorized by letters and numerated (Russia = A, Ukraine = B, EU = C, U.S.= D).

**Table 4 Actions of Russia, Ukraine, EU, and U.S. during the Stages of the Crimean Crisis**

	Stage 1 (Prodromal)	Stage 2 (Acute)	Stage 3 (Chronic)	Stage 4 (Resolution)
Russia	A1: Pressures Yanukovych to sign Custom Union A2: offers to buy \$15 Billion in Ukrainian debt A3: accusation of EU and US to have fumed the protests A4: pro -Russian gunman surround government building in Simferopol A5: accepts Crimean independence A6: claims to protect 'Russians' in Crimea	A7: offered military assistance to the pro-Russian separatists A8: denies military actions in Crimea A9: invades and annexes Crimea A10: pro- Russian rebels stormed government buildings in Donbas A11: Invoices counter-sanctions A12: mobilization of military forces to Ukrainian border	A13: denies to have supported and provided military assistance to the separatists A14: signs Minsk I Agreement with Ukraine and separatist leader	A15: signs Minsk II Agreement with France, Ukraine, Germany, A16: withdraw of some military forces A17: Anti-Americanization propaganda (blame game) A18: Rejects to hand over Yanukovych
Ukraine	B1: Declines last minute to sign planned AA with EU B2: (anti-protest laws) Berkut violently breaks up of the student protest B3: Major protests on Maidan B4: Yanukovych signs compromise deal with opposition	B5: Yanukovych flees the country B6: violent street fights between the protesters and Berkut B7: MH17 is shoot on separatist -occupied territory	B8: elects new president and parliament B9: signs Association Agreement with EU B10: accuses Russia to have violated the Budapest Memorandum B11: signs Minsk I Agreement	B12: signs Minsk II with Russia, France, Germany B13: Poroshenko plans to submit international lawsuits over Russia's B14: Internal fights and postponing of elections in DPR and LPR
EU	C1: treaty negotiation C2: demands to release Yulia Tymoshenko	C3: invoices economic sanctions on Russia C4: financial assistance for Ukraine	C5: signs AA with Ukraine to promote European values C6: provides loans and aids for Ukraine C7: demanding the fulfillment of the Minsk Agreement	C8: Germany & France sign Minsk II Agreement with Ukraine & Russia C9: Extends sanctions against Russia C10: Offers financial aid and loan to Ukraine
U.S.	D1: accusation of Russian aggression	D2: Military activities in Baltic region D3: signs the Ukraine Freedom Support Act D4: sanctions on Russian defense, energy, certain firms and persons;	D5: Provides \$69 million in human support D6: U.S. economic and technical experts advise certain Ukrainian ministries and localities	D7: Sends troops to train Ukraine D8: Proposes to put weaponry in Eastern European

Source: Morelli, V. L. (27. April 2016). *Section Research Manager Congressional Research Service: Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*. Retrieved 16. May. 2016 from: <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33460.pdf>

## 4.2. Protocols & Treaties

As mentioned previously, the treaties are part of the situational management of this crisis. In this section the main treaties, which played a major role in this crisis are described. It is important, since the violation of the treaties is what justified in the eyes of some actors the implementation of the sanctions.

According to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC), Russia has violated many international treaties through its illegal invasion and annexation of the Crimea. The *UN Charter* was one of the much discussed treaties, which were discussed in this relation. After World War II (WWII) on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 1945 fifty countries have signed the UN Charter in San Francisco, after this on the 24<sup>th</sup> October the United Nations came into existence (UN, 2015). The Charter has the purpose to prevent another world war and to protect the basic human rights. After the horrible events of WWII, the Charter was supposed to establish an international law, with a sense of obligation to justice and freedom for all nation (UN, 2015). Article 2 and 33 were said to be violated. Those Articles call for a peaceful settlement of disputes, without the use of force and without causing threat to the international security. The Articles presuppose, that the parties first seek a peaceful negotiation and juridical settlement (UCC, 2014 UN Charter, Article 2, 33). The next to mention treaty would be the *Helsinki Final Act* of 1975, which was signed during the Cold War in order to regulate the peace in Europe (OSCE, 1975). In accordance to the UCC Russia has violated the second article of the Helsinki Agreement, which obligates the parties to avoid the use of force against the territorial integrity in the mutual relationship (UCC, 2014). As another violation the UCC states the *Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership between the Russian Federation and Ukraine* of 1997. The Articles 2 and 3 are said to be violated, as those work with in accordance with the UN Charter. Those articles order to respect the European integrity and to build international relationships based on respect for sovereign equality, integrity and settle disputes in a peaceful manner (UCC, 2014). The last treaty to mention is the *Budapest Memorandum* of 1994, in which Ukraine gave up its nuclear weapons for a guaranteed protection of Russia. The UCC states as Russia has violated the Ukrainian independency, sovereignty and using economic pressure to influence the political situation, as well as the borders by using military force (UCC, 2014). So Ukraine feels like, that the protection promised in the Budapest Memorandum was not complied (Goncharenko, 2014).

## 5. Analysis

In this section the previous mentioned sub-questions will be analyzed through the application of the different models and mechanisms. After the analysis a reflection on the research design, framework and validity of the crisis is provided. At last, a final conclusion will summarize the main results of this research study. In *Table 9* the stages are analyzed in the escalation level.

### 5.1. CRS and Escalation

The analysis focused on causal process tracing of the outcomes of the CRS. Many factors could have led to a similar outcome, since many actions by different actors' historic relationship, which influence the CRS, have add to this outcome. At the same time, it is not surprising, that the particular CRS under the given circumstances of the situational crisis communication have led to such an escalation of the crisis.

In the first and prodromal stage of the development of the Ukrainian Crisis there were several CRS imposed by the actors. When Ukraine was close to signing the AA with the EU, Russia put pressure on Ukraine's government in form of pushing for the ECU instead of the AA with the EU. The EU was negotiating in an open dialogue an AA with Ukraine, under the condition for Yulia Tymoshenko to be released from prison (C1, C2).

By pressuring Yanukovich, Russia took the freedom to interfere with the right of sovereignty (A1). Hence, Russia's recognition of Ukraine's legitimacy and sovereignty is limited. When the AA was aboded (B1), a peaceful student protest erupted at the Maidan. This protest was broken up forcefully by the government (B2). This fumed the protest even further, leading to violent confrontation between the Berkut and the protestors (B3). So, in the first stage of the crisis violent coercions are already present. As a measure of appeasement, Yanukovich signs compromise deal with opposition in order to de-escalate the crisis (B4). The agreement did not hold. Hence, in the first stage of the crisis, there was a limitation to the channel of communication between the actors. The attempts to find solution were insufficient, as the dissatisfaction with the circumstances was too strong. At the same time, the EU and Russia both expressed accusation of Russian aggression, but sanctions were not implemented yet, as no international treaties were violated so far. There was no acknowledgement of any responsibility for the crisis from the actor.

For the first stage the CRS in relation to the indicators of escalation and de-escalation can be described as following in Table 5:

**Table 5 CRS in the first stage of the Ukrainian and Crimean Crisis**

<b>Escalation</b>	<b>Indicators (tactics)</b>	<b>De-escalation</b>
Closed	<b>Channel of communication</b>	-
	<b>Sanctions</b>	Suspended
-	<b>Removal of (extremist) leadership</b>	-
Not acknowledged	<b>Public acknowledgement of some responsibility for the conflict</b>	-
Not recognized	<b>Recognition of adversary's existence and legitimacy</b>	-
Present	<b>Violent coercion</b>	-
Mostly no participation	<b>Participation in informal discussions about solutions/ formal agreements on solution</b>	-

The the actors' CRS were mixed measures of attack, appeasement and justification, but overall those actions have led to an inevitable escalation of the crisis.

The second stage of the crisis marks the acute phase is marked by escalation. As the protests in Ukraine grew more violent (B6), Yanukovych has fled the country, leaving it ungoverned (B5). This event cannot be characterized as de-escalation measurement as such. The country was left ungoverned causing more chaos.

Fights between pro- Russian separatists and Ukrainian military forces split the Country in the East (A10). Shortly after, unmarked military forces, which were said to be Russian occupied strategic points such as the airport in Crimea and Sevastopol (A7). Russia denied military actions and disclaims any responsibility. (A8). There was no communication of the actions or concerns between Russia and the other partners.

Shortly after, the referendum in Crimea voted to join Russia and President Putin signed the law admitting Crimea to Russia (A9). To show its disagreement with Russia's action, the West introduced sanctions (C3, D4) on Russia and expelled it from the G8, while assisting Ukraine financially (C4, D3). The U.S. even send military troops to train the Ukrainian forces. Hence, the Western countries have engaged in a dialogue with Crimea, but at the same time it closed the communication tunnel with Russia.



In a tit for tat manner Russia responded to the sanctions with counter-sanctions (A12). The CRS, applied in the first stage were mixed between measures attack, denial and justification.

**Table 6 CRS in the second stage of the Ukrainian and Crimean Crisis**

<b>Escalation</b>	<b>Indicators (tactics)</b>	<b>De-escalation</b>
Rather closed in relation to Russia	<b>Channel of communication</b>	Somewhat open in relation to the EU/U.S.
Introduced	<b>Sanctions</b>	
-	<b>Removal of (extremist) leadership</b>	-
Not acknowledged	<b>Public acknowledgement of some responsibility for the conflict</b>	
Not recognized	<b>Recognition of adversary's existence and legitimacy</b>	
Present	<b>violent coercion</b>	
No participation between Russia and the EU/U.S./Ukraine	<b>Participation in informal discussions about solutions/ formal agreements on solution</b>	Some Participation between EU/ U.S. and Ukraine

In the third stage of the crisis, the matters started to de-escalate.

Although, Russia denied to have fumed the separatists fights by providing military assistance (A13), it still engaged in appeasement measurement. Signing the first Minsk Agreement (A14, B11) the first cooperative communication in find a solution. Unfortunately, the agreed on ceasefire, was violated by new fights between the separatists and Ukrainian military.

The EU and the U.S. are still criticizing Russia and demand the fulfillment of the Minks agreement. Ukraine blames Russia not just of the violation of the international treaties, but also of all bilateral agreements between Ukraine and Russia.

At the same time Ukraine tries to reestablish its legality and stability by electing a new government and by signing a AA with the EU (B8, B9).

The negotiations for the Minsk Agreement, have opened to possibility to participate in an open communication channel, so that the involved actors could find a solution for the crisis. The legality and sovereignty of Ukraine is recognized by the actors.

The only difficulty is the acknowledgement of some responsibility for the conflict, as no parties have admitted to having fumed the conflict. Nevertheless, the crisis deescalated in comparison to the previous stage.

Table 7 CRS in the third stage of the Ukrainian and Crimean Crisis

Escalation	Indicators (tactics)	De-escalation
	<b>Channel of communication</b>	Open
Introduced	<b>Sanctions</b>	
-	<b>Removal of (extremist) leadership</b>	-
Not acknowledged	<b>Public acknowledgement of some responsibility for the conflict</b>	
	<b>Recognition of adversary's existence and legitimacy</b>	Recognized
Present	<b>violent coercion</b>	
	<b>Participation in informal discussions about solutions/ formal agreements on solution</b>	Participation

In the fourth and last stage, the actors signed a new Minsk Agreement as a measure of appeasement (A15, B12). Russia has withdrawn some of the military troops, giving a sign of willingness to cooperation. Nevertheless, there are still internal fights and postponing of elections in DPR and LPR. Ukraine, the EU and U.S. apply measures of attack on Russia. Poroshenko plans to submit international lawsuits over Russia's (B13), while the EU extended its sanctions (C9). The U.S. even proposes to send troops to the Russian border (D8).

In the last stage, there is still no resolution to the crisis as, there were still measures of attack and applied. The indicators make it clear, that there is still some level of escalation in the crisis, since there is still tension between Russia and the other actors.

Table 8 CRS in the fourth stage of the Ukrainian and Crimean Crisis

Escalation	Indicators (tactics)	De-escalation
	<b>Channel of communication</b>	Mostly open
Introduce	<b>Sanctions</b>	
-	<b>Removal of (extremist) leadership</b>	-
Not acknowledged	<b>Public acknowledgement of some responsibility for the conflict</b>	
	<b>Recognition of adversary's existence and legitimacy</b>	Recognized
Present	<b>violent coercion</b>	
	<b>Participation in informal discussions about solutions/ formal agreements on solution</b>	Participation

*Table 9* summarizes the analyzed actions in the CRS and the stages in a life of a crisis. It becomes apparent that different mixes of CRS were used throughout the stages of the crisis.

**Table 9 CRS in the Stages in the Life of the Crimean Crisis**

	Stage 1 (Prodromal)	Stage 2 (Acute)	Stage 3 (Chronic)	Stage 4 (Resolution)
Russia	- Attack (A1, A3, A4, A5) - Mix of appeasement & justification (A2) - Justification (A6)	- Attack (A7, A8, A10,) - Denial (A9) - Justification(A11) - Mix of Attack & Justification (A12)	- Denial (A13) - Appeasement (A14)	- Appeasement (A15, A16) - Mix of attack & Justification (A17) - Attack (A18)
Ukraine	- Attack (B1, B2,): - Mix of attack and justification (B3): - Mix of denial & Justification(B4)	- Denial (B5) - Attack (B6) - Mix attack & justification (B7)	- Appeasement (B8, B9, B11) - Attack (B10)	- Appeasement (B12) - Attack (B13) - Mix of attack and justification (B14)
EU	- Appeasement (C1) - Attack (C2)	- Attack (C3) - Appeasement (C4)	- Appeasement (C5, C6) - Attack (C7)	- Appeasement (C8, C10) - Mix of Attack & justification (C9)
U.S.	- Attack (D1)	- Mix of attack & justification (D2) - Mix attack & appeasement (D3)	- Mix of appeasement and attack (D4, D5)	- Mix of Attack and justification (D6, D7)
adequacy of international crisis management	Escalation	Escalation	Mix of escalation and de-escalation	De-escalation

Throughout the crisis the CRS ranged from attack, denial, justification and appeasement. Most of the CRS a mixture of different measurements, as the crisis develops and shifts from stage to stage. Overall, it can be said, that the Russian strategic crisis communication had a negative influence on the adequacy of the international crisis communication of the other actors. Economic and diplomatic relationships are afflicted by the political circumstances. The incapability to find a solution for the crisis in an open dialogue for the benefit of the civilians is a big issue in the escalation level.

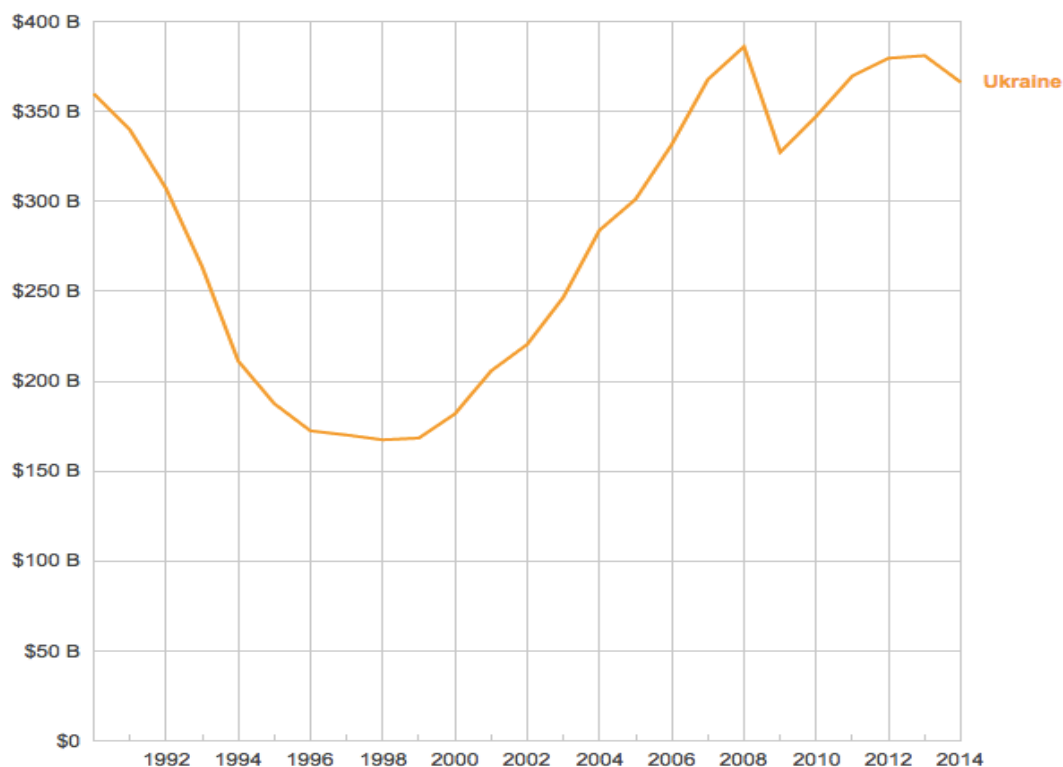
The combination of the CRS of the different leader have influenced the further development of the crisis. Russia bears without a doubt a high amount of responsibility for this crisis, as its actions were mostly measures of attack. Nevertheless, it must be considered that

Russia would have not risked the violation of all the treaties without hoping to gain more from the involvement. The situational mechanisms, would have implied to follow the treaties, hence to follow the legal conditions. Russia's role in the resolution of the crisis was curtail, due its cultural, economic and diplomatic alliance. The outcomes of this CRS, which Russia seems to follow when its national interests are threatened, imply the destabilization of Ukraine and thus, the escalation of the crisis.

## 5.2. Trade indicators

The economic relations and statuses of the involved actors were also affected by events in relation to the Ukrainian and Crimean crisis. Ukraine's economic situation was very difficult since the breakup of the Soviet Union. As seen in the graphic (*Figure 12*) the economic situation improved in the years before the Maidan protests and the civil war.

Figure 12 Ukraine's Gross National Income in PPP dollars



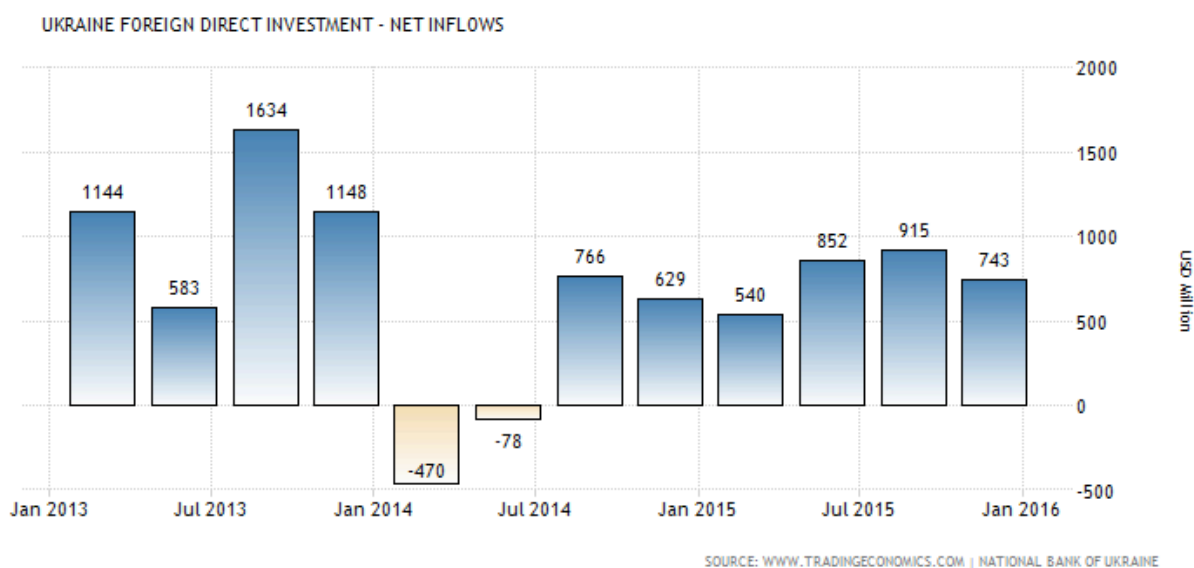
Source: World Bank (02. June 2016): *Gross National Income in PPP dollars*. Retrieved on 19. June 2016 from: [https://www.google.de/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9\\_&met\\_y=ny\\_gnp\\_mktpp\\_cd&idim=country:UKR:BLR:ROM&hl=en&dl=en#!ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nselm=h&met\\_y=ny\\_gnp\\_mktpp\\_cd&scale\\_y=lin&ind\\_y=false&rdim=region&idim=country:UKR&ifdim=region&hl=en\\_US&dl=en&ind=false](https://www.google.de/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9_&met_y=ny_gnp_mktpp_cd&idim=country:UKR:BLR:ROM&hl=en&dl=en#!ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nselm=h&met_y=ny_gnp_mktpp_cd&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=region&idim=country:UKR&ifdim=region&hl=en_US&dl=en&ind=false)

The violent confrontations between the separatists and Ukrainian military, the economic situation worsened. Especially since the heavy industrialized region in the East is being destroyed, potential investors are scared away. In this relation reputation is a very important aspect, as it can help to attract investors, influence cooperation and thus the financial situation of the country (Coombs, 2007, p. 164).

Through its military involvement and the annexation of Crimea, Russia split Ukraine and encouraged the internal civil fights. In that sense, Russia made Ukraine due to the security issue unattractive for foreign investors, hence minimizing the value of Ukraine for the EU and the West in general (Interview 1).

Hence, the income into the country shrunk immensely after the beginning of the conflicts. As the interviewee stated, Russia's actions have led to a reduction of the economic cooperation on between Ukraine and foreign investors (Interview I). This is true- as seen in *Figure 13* especially for the year 2014, when the escalations had their peak. Thus, the economic interdependency between Russia and Ukraine is high.

**Figure 13 Ukraine Foreign Direct Investment- Net Inflows**

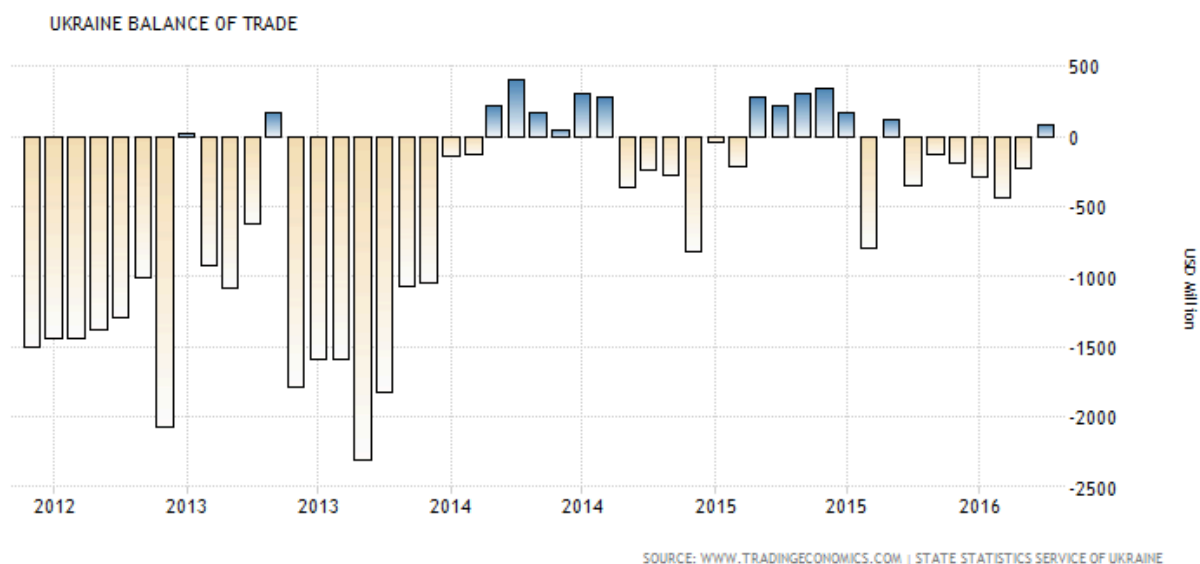


Source: Trading Economics (2016). *Ukraine Foreign Direct Investment- Net Inflows*. Retrieved on 22. June 2016 from: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/ukraine/foreign-direct-investment>

The civil war in Ukraine keeps Ukraine's internal security low. The conflict also withdraws a lot of financial resources to finance the military in order to sustain the war (Interview I).

As seen in *Figure 14*, the Ukrainian trade suffered immensely over the last few years. The surplus shrank in the beginning of 2016 to \$80.6 million. Thus, the current crisis had a major impact on the economic interdependency of both Russia and Ukraine. Russia was always Ukraine's main trade partner (Trading Economics, 2016). In 2012 Ukraine's total import/export value of the trade with Russia was at \$17, 632 million (25, 67% partner share), whereas in 2016 the export to Russia were at 8.5 % of the total exports and 11.7 % of total imports (World Bank, 2014; Trading Economics, 2016).

**Figure 14 Ukraine's Balance of Trade**

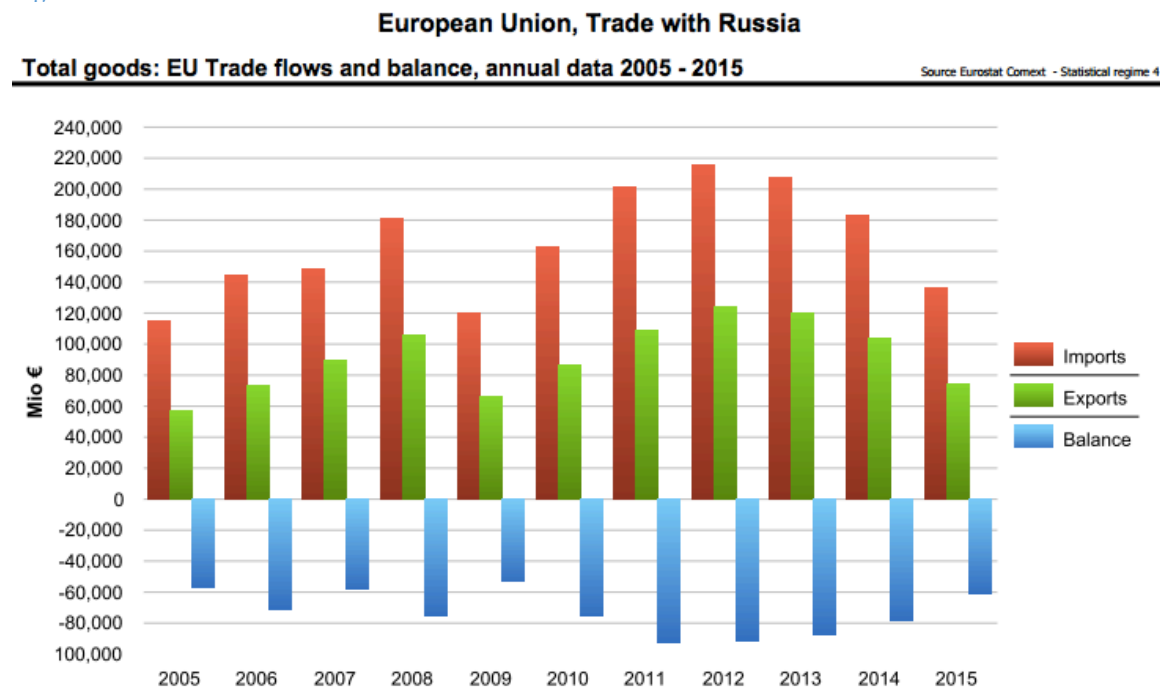


Source: Trading Economics (2016). *Ukraine Balance of Trade*. Retrieved on 23. June from: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/ukraine/balance-of-trade#>

The western countries have voiced their support for Ukraine to a big extend and introduced sanctions on Russia. In order to demonstrate its disagreement with Russia's authoritarian decisions in this crisis the EU and U.S. introduced the previously described sanctions. The sanctions make it difficult for Russia to access the European and American market. The EU has a stronger business relationship with Russia than the U.S., hence the sanctions have more effect on the relationship of the EU- Russia market. The U.S. have strongly advised the EU, but especially Germany as Russia's main trade partner, to introduce strict economic and diplomatic sanctions on Russia. Other sectors, such as the cultural and educations cooperation are excluded from the

sanctions. EU- Russian trade has reduced since 2013 - the beginning of the crisis. The trade balance becomes smaller and smaller over the years, since the sanctions are still invoiced at the moment.

Figure 15 EU's trade with Russia 2005-2015



Source: European Commission (21. June 2016). *European Union, Trade in goods with Russia*. Retrieved on 23. June 2016 from: [http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc\\_113440.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113440.pdf)

The total trade value in 2012 was at €338,566 Mio, while in 2014 - when the sanctions were introduced, the trade value was at €285,632 Mio with falling tendencies.

The U.S. on the other hand, have a relatively small trade balance with Russia. The trade balance shrunk with the application of financial and economic sanctions as seen in *Figure 16*.

Figure 16 U.S. - Russia Trade Balance

Year	Total Trade Balance (Millions U.S. Dollar)
2012	-18,669.5
2013	-15,940.9
2014	-12,907.6
2015	-9,279.1
2016 (January- April)	-2,061.4

Source: United States Census Bureau, Foreign Trade (2015). *Trade in Goods with Russia*. Retrieved on 23. June 2016 from: <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c4621.html>

So the economic interdependency between the EU (more precisely Germany) and Russia is higher than between the U.S. and Russia.

The low trade balance between U.S. and Russia can be partly explained by the diplomatic tensions between the two countries, which have existed for a while. After the end of the Cold War and the breakup of the USSR, the cooperation between the U.S. and Russia has developed immensely. Nevertheless, the two former Cold War enemies could not quite see eye to eye.

When considering, that economic trade is essential for an economy to grow and be successful, it becomes more apparent that the sanctions have its effect on Russia's trade relation. Below *Figure 17* shows that the Russian trade balance has overall fallen in the last few years after the Ukrainian crisis and the accession of the Crimea.

**Figure 17 Russia's Balance of Trade**



Source: Trading Economics, (2016). *Russia Balance of Trade*. Retrieved on 22. June 2016 from: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/russia/balance-of-trade>

In terms of the independency the interviewee stated, that Russia depends economically more on the world then vise-versa, especially concerning the gas trade. Russia mostly exports raw materials such as oil and gas. Besides China, European countries import most of Russia's raw material. In the interviewees opinion, Russia's economy would collapse if the EU would stop buying Russian gas (Trading Economics, 2016).



### 5.3. Conclusion and Discussion

In this section is explained why Allison's models provide a good explanation to the main and sub-research questions and estimation of the hypothesis.

Allison's models give a good explanation on why Russia has chosen this particular CRS measures. Nevertheless, it needs to be considered that other, so called 'invisible' factors might have had an influence on the development of the crisis and its level of escalation and de-escalation.

*Figure 19* below shows how Allison's different models intervene with each other in relation to this crisis. The models give explanations to the research question, sub-questions and hypothesis, by considering possible factors for the motivation behind the action.

Starting with the historic and geopolitical context, it must be considered, that from the historic times of the Kievan Rus', Russia and Ukraine had a close relation with each other. The power parity of the both countries are unequal, as Russia has the bigger nuclear power and stronger military capabilities. Hence, Ukraine was under Russian influence. Also the fact that as Ukraine is home to 7.5 Million ethnic Russian, living mostly in the East Ukraine is important for this crisis (Bates, 2014).

Ukraine was always of political and economic importance to Russia. Russia depended on Ukraine for the gas transit, while Ukraine depended on Russia for a long time for gas provision (Moshes, 2013).

Especially, Crimea, as an important military base, is an important aspect of the Russia – Ukraine alliance. It is also the most crucial aspect for this crisis. Sevastopol always was a strategic military base, for the Russian Black Sea Fleet (BSF), which is why Crimea has been a Russo- Ukrainian 'duel zone' (Zaborksy, 1995, p.1). After the breakup of the USSR, Russia and Ukraine agreed on a lease for the Russian BSF. In 2010 the Kharkiv Accords, signed by Yanukovych and Medvedev extended this lease until 2042 in exchange for better gas prices. This agreement caused a wave of critique, since the signing was held away from the public eye (Kabanenko, 2014). The BSF shall protect economic production zones of illegal activities, provide safety of the navigation as well as fulfil the national foreign policy orders in the Black Sea region (Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, 2016). The base in Sevastopol is not just important for the security of Russia south borders, but also as a base with the capabilities to deploy to the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean (Global Security, 2015).

Ukraine and Russia have close alliance ties and the diplomatic relations. Overall is the interdependency between the two countries very intense.

The initiating condition was; that Ukraine would sign the AA with the EU. Russia was losing its influence and feared for its interest. To ensure its interest Russia hoped for Ukraine to sign the The Eurasian Custom Union (ECU) instead the AA with the EU, promising energy subsidies also economic benefits, while not excluding negative consequences for Ukraine in case of a decline (Moshes, 2013).

The ECU would have partly shifted Ukraine's sovereignty towards a regime, which the EU has no favorable relation to (Moshes, 2013). Knowing that, Russia decided to actively intervene in order to prevent the shift in Ukraine's economic sovereignty towards another power.

Russia had the possibility to react in different ways:

1. Do nothing and follow the situational mechanism- hence the appropriate treaties and protocols
2. Invade and use force to achieve the goals.
3. Approach Ukraine's leadership
4. Use diplomatic measures to pressure Ukraine into signing (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 59).

Similar possibilities were optional in the Cuban missile crisis. In this case, Russia decided to intervene, since there are more profits for Russia to have a closer relationship with Ukraine

Under consideration of the possible losses and profits, doing nothing would have been less beneficial for Russia in term of its influence over Ukraine. An invasion was yet a too drastic manner. The obvious possibility was to approach Yanukovych, since it was a method of the usual organizational patters, which have worked in the past (e.g. 2010).

Pressuring Yanukovych into signing the Custom Union agreement was a success (A1), but the Ukrainian population did not see the credibility of Russia's offer. Ukraine still does not see a good future in the development of Russia (Interview I). The dissatisfaction with the status quo was very clear at this moment. Russia was hoping to shift the status quo towards a closer relationship between Russia and Ukraine for purposes of closer economic relations with Ukraine.

Russia was facing a situation, where one of their closest allies was facing away from them. The population managed to overthrow not just the president's decision to side with Russia, but deprive him from his power and position. This might have caused concern in Russia, that the

new government would not have the will or power to keep the former agreements. The first option fired back and the protests grew, Russia needed to evaluate other options. To do nothing was not a lucrative possibility, as this would imply that Russia could not influence the outcome. Especially, when such an important matter as the military base in Sevastopol was at risk.

Sevastopol in Crimea is an essential strategic military base since the times of Ekaterina the Great. Losing such an important strategic point would mean also a loss in power and security. In the international system the actors (states) are forced to use power in order to maximize their relative power and with that the security of the country. Crimea is not only of military importance, but it also was due to its mild climate a popular tourist destination. Although, due to the current political circumstances the tourist business has declined, it can still be a profitable source of income.

So, when pro-Russian unmarked military forces occupied governmental buildings in Crimea (A4), the Ukrainian and Western actors assumed that those were Russian military. Russia denies until now, that those gunmen were sent by Russian government (A13). Also, when pro-Russian rebels occupied governmental buildings in Donetsk the civil war between Ukraine and separatists was caused (A10) (Gatehouse, 2015). The Western countries and Ukraine blames Russia to have encouraged and fueling the military uprising of the pro-Russian separatists (Oliphant, 2016).

Then on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March of 2014 the referendum vote in Crimea has positively voted to join Russia. The vote was disapproved by Ukraine and the Western countries, since it violated the agreed on treaties mentioned above. Shortly after, Putin accepted the indecency of Crimea and soon after signed the law admitting Crimea to Russia (A9). In the documentary Putin claims that considering the ethnic composition in Crimea, Russia needed to intervene in order to prevent the further negative developments and to maintain the peace in Crimea. In his opinion Russia could not abandon the territory and people in Crimea (Rossija 1, 2015). Regardless, there seems to be no prove that any direct or indirect threats were made towards any citizen of Crimea (Deeks, 2014) (Rossija 1, 2015). In the documentary Putin admits, that already on the night of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February, when Yanukovych escaped from Ukraine, he started planning the return of Crimea to the Russian Federation, if that is what the Crimean population wanted (It needs to be considered, that this research will not make assumptions about the legality of the Crimean

referendum vote as such). For the Western country, this CRS was a strategy of attack, while for Russia it was a CRS of justification. Hence, the willingness of Russia to engage in a conflict was very. The acceptance of Crimean independence was already a measurement of an attack (A5), but the actual accession of Crimea (A9) was the main event and peak of the escalation in the relation between Russia and Ukraine. This events marks the second stage of the crisis.

Putin claimed in his speeches on several occasion, that Russia is not looking for a conflict or military confrontation. Nevertheless, did the action of Russia have led to difficulties in the relationship of the crisis management between Russia and Ukraine.

Russia's attempts to influence the Ukraine's politics for its own benefits, so the measures we see throughout the first and second stage of the crisis are mostly measures of attack and hence escalation. Russia's willingness to engage in a conflict for the possible gained profit, complicating the crisis further as more actors got involved. Conclusively, Russia's strategic crisis communication has allowed Russia to destabilize Ukraine even keeping it week.

Russia on the other hand portraits the accession of the Crimea as the reunion to its rightful nation. The claim, that Russia was protecting the Russian ethnic citizens of Crimea was received positively by the Russian population. It was even seen as Putin's biggest achievement, which was Putin intentional goal (Interview I). Some Russian believe, that Russia is attacked by the Western powers. So the idea to unite against the Ukrainian fascists and the American dominance, is very present in the media (Matthews, 2016).

The CRS, which Russia chose was based on the profits it could gain from intervening. This is explained by the organizational model, which stated that organizations act on value maximization (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 67). The hopes that Russia had from using this CRS, was to maintain its dominance over Ukraine, hence to maintain the current balance of power or even to become the ultimate hegemon in the East. Most importantly it maintained its strategic military point in Sevastopol.

Through its military involvement and the annexation of Crimea, Russia split Ukraine and encouraged the internal civil fights. In that sense, Russia made Ukraine due to the security issue unattractive for foreign investors, hence minimizing the value of Ukraine for the EU and the West in general (Interview 1). Russia's power is threatened by the peace in Ukraine per se. The thread becomes apparent through the pro-western tending policies, which could have weakened Russia's economic and political influence on Ukraine.

Russia might have underestimated the consequences of the pressure it put on Yanukovych. Nevertheless, in the rational decision making process under pressure, Putin picked an option, which would gain Russia the most profit in the long run. This is the option, which guaranteed the maintenance of military power.

In the first stages there was a lot of blame game and accusation between Russia and the Western countries. The U.S. has accused Russian of aggression, while Russia accused the Western governments to have fumed the protests. Also Russia blamed the Ukrainian government to have been using force instead of seeking a dialogue (BBC, 2014).

Putin criticized the U.S. for its politics on several (BBC, 2014). Putin follows an Anti-Americanism approach, claiming that since the breakup of Soviet Union the power balance in the world became unequal (BBC, 2014). Putin claims also that many of the current problem in the worlds society exist due to the mistakes of the U.S. In his opinion America became a super power, which controls its world for its own benefits (BBC, 2014).

Putin blamed in the documentary “Crimea. The way back home.”, the U.S. directly, to be the main ‘puppeteer’ (Rossija 24, 2015). Putin claims that the U.S. trained the nationalists in the west of Ukraine. Indeed, the U.S. has send some troops to train the Ukrainian military and proposed to position weaponry in Eastern Europe (D7, D8). Putin claims, that the U.S., and the EU by supporting this position, have helped to organize a coupe in Ukraine. Furthermore, he criticizes, that this is not just a wrong CRS in regard to international relations as such, but especially in relation to the fragile post- soviet states it is a violation of their sovereignty (Rossija 24, 2015). Due to this actions Ukraine is now a split country, as some tend towards the Western and some towards Russia.

The EU, the U.S. and Ukraine have reacted to Russia’s actions with economic and diplomatic sanctions. In the same tit for tat manner Russia answered to the western sanctions with counter sanctions. Russia has proclaimed an embargo on EU’s agricultural products, with rather limited affect (European Parliamentary Research Service, 2015).

The international demand to solve the Ukraine crisis provide pressured to find a solution. So on the 5<sup>th</sup> of September 2014 in Minsk, Belarus the representatives of Russia, Ukraine as well as LPR and DPR signed the so called Minsk protocol. It was supposed to enforce ceasefire in the East of Ukraine (A14, B11). Unfortunately, new fights erupted between the separatist and Ukraine military, violating the agreement. A follow-up agreement was necessary. The EU has

acquired measures of appeasement, by France and Germany functioning as mediators and signing the second Minsk Agreement with Russia and Ukraine on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2015. Germany demands the fulfillment of all terms in order to revoke the sanctions on Russia. Until this day, there are still occasional violent confrontations in the east of Ukraine, which aggravate the relations with Russia. So, even when the crisis deescalated at this point in time, the situation remains as a frozen conflict. The sanctions on Russia were recently extended, as the Minsk Agreement is still not fulfilled to a satisfying level.

If we just take this particular crisis and the actors in the analysis of this study, Russia might come across as the main actor to escalate the crisis and have a negative effect on the adequacy of international crisis management. But it needs to be considered, that other factors, actions and actors have played a curtail role in this crisis as well.

The Western countries have criticized Russian politics especially the democratic circumstances within the countries, for a very a very long time. Russia gained a quite negative reputation in the international diplomatic relations. Also, in the opinion of the interviewee Russia tries to reestablish its old power of the soviet times, while ruling with authoritarian rule. Hence, there is little trust in Russia's credibility (Interview I).

The Western countries portray Russia as the aggressor, whose actions show Russia's willingness to use military and political force against neighboring countries and possibly other countries of Europe (Hurt, 2016, p. 37). So on the basis of Russia's violations of the agreed on treaties the EU and the U.S. have introduced economic and democratic sanctions against Russia. At the same time the EU and U.S. have sided with Ukraine, by supporting Ukraine financially and politically.

The U.S. has often criticized Russia for its authoritarian rule and the violation. Acts such as the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act were imposed. This particular act includes visa bans and the freezing of assets of several Russian officials, which were believed to be involved in the death of the anti-corruption lawyer Magnitsky, who has died imprisoned (Justice for Sergei Magnitsky Inter Parliamentary Group, 2013). On the other hand, Russia responded with a strong anti-Americanism policy, portraying the relationship with the U.S. negatively. According to the independent polling group Levada Center, there were four major anti- American outbursts in among the Russian population: 1998, 2003, 2008, and 2014/2015. In those periods Russia and the U.S. have been conflicting in the topics of Kosovo, Iraq, Georgia,

and at last Ukraine. Manly the frustration is rooted in the idea that from being a former world power Russia become inferior to the U.S., which remain the dominant world power (Volkov, 2015). The fundamentals of Putin's claims, that the U.S. act in their own self-interest are based on such event as the Iraq war. The fact, that the U.S. acts without consulting Russia's interests and opinions caused a political frustration. During the war with Georgia, Russia used for the first time the argument that the U.S. was trying to extend their influence on Russia's neighboring countries in order to undermine Russian influence (Volkov, 2015). Interesting enough, this argument works vise-versa, since the U.S. have claimed that Russia is trying to dominate the neighboring states. On the basis of this claim, the U.S. has shown political resistance to allow Russia to get a hold on Europe and its security.

The crisis led to a tit for tat sanction game. Ukraine enacted an economic embargo on Russian imports (alcoholic beverages, sweets, beef etc.) after Russia banned certain Ukrainian good. Besides that, the Putin banded the transition of Ukrainian good to Asia trough Russia. So Ukraine would not just lose business in Russia, but also in the Asian counties, since it has now to derail its good through Belarus and Kazakhstan (Ermorkhin, 2016). Russia has announced those measures as a consequence of Ukraine's decision to sign the AA with the EU (Oliphant, 2016). The argumentation was, that Russia needed to protect its own national interests. several occasions, Putin explains that Russian interest must be acknowledged and respected in the international community (BBC, 2014). Putin rejects the claims of the revival of Soviet power, instead he attacks the U.S. by saying that it imposes its will on this world and thus destabilizing it. The U.S. have supposedly created a villain out of Russia through mediocre propaganda. Also, the role of the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) is essential in the reasons for Russia's decisions.

In the beginning of June 2016 NATO reinforce the troops, which were already stationed in Poland, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia states among the Russian border, by sending several battalions. The reason, behind this action was, that Russia has shown to be willing to violate international and bilateral treaties, for interests to be acknowledged. This is a major issue for the West and NATO, as it undermined the security in Europe.. In return, the U.S. proposes to send troupes and weaponry to the Russian border. This show a certain level of willingness to engage in military actions.

Additionally, the NATO plans to station troops in Rumania. This caused nervousness in Russia, leading to an increase of Russian military towards the border (Panorama, 2016).

NATO wanted to send a message, that it is ready to defend its borders, when necessary. Historically, it was appointed that, NATO would extend their borders among the borders of the former GDR (German Democratic Republic). This was agreed on after the fall of the Berlin Wall, under the condition that there would be no more expansion towards the East. As the parties failed to sign a legal agreement, a dozen Eastern countries, including former soviet states have gradually joined the NATO (Panorama, 2016). On several occasions in the past Putin expressed his concern in regard to Russia's safety from the expansion of the NATO. His concerns were not addressed. The events in Georgia and Ukraine, could have been counter reaction to NATO's action. Also such actions such as the placement of a missile defense system in Turkey, Poland and Rumania provokes Russia's fear of being surrounded by NATO troops. The NATO justified the installment of the system with the fear of a nuclear attack from Iran, but even after the Iran and West came to an agreement the installation continued. In a conference on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2016, Putin claims that those defense systems are part of the American army (Panorama, 2016). Hence, the risk of an escalation on a global scale is high.

Conclusively, it can be said that between the main involved partners – Ukraine and Russia, the interdependence in the political and economic sphere is very high. At the same time, both are not satisfied with the status quo (*Table 10*). While Russia is hoping for a closer relationship, with a focus towards the East, Ukraine hoped for a closer relationship with the EU. For the achievement of their goals both parties are willing to engage in a conflict and endure the consequences of the now, frozen conflict.

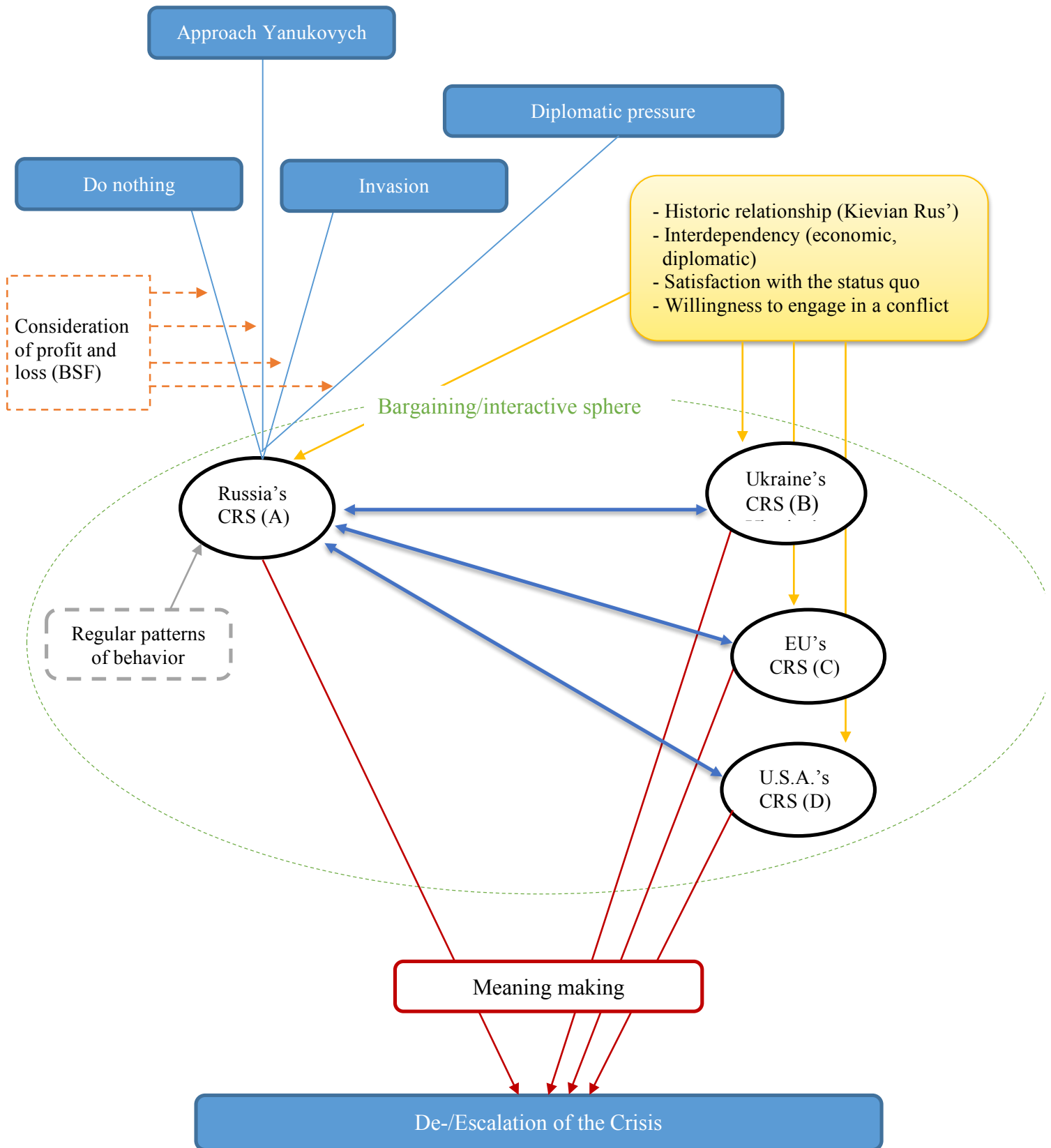
**Table 10 Indicators in Russian - Ukrainian Relation**

	<b>Russia/ Ukraine</b>
<b>Interdependency</b>	High
<b>Satisfaction to Status Quo</b>	No satisfaction
<b>Willingness to engage in the Conflict</b>	High

The factors which had an influence on the CRS in combination with Allison's model are displayed in *Figure 19* below



Figure 18 Combined Model



As concerning the parallels between the Cuban Missile crisis and the Ukrainian and Crimean crisis, there are certain such as the aggressive patterns of behavior and CRS of attack. In both situations the USSR/Russia was determined to achieve its goals and have its interests acknowledged by measures of attack. But as the interviewee stated, the leap between the the two crises is quite big. In the Cuban Missile crisis, the circumstances of the operation were very different. The U.S. was the main counter-partner, which felt threatened by Russia's action. Those actions were implemented on foreign territory. The Cold War between the U.S. and USSR, had an undeniable influence of the actions, hence the escalation of the crisis. Nuclear powers were used as a deescalating measurement (Interview I).

In this particular crisis, there was no such a particular tension threatening the lives of so many civilians. Also, the main counter-partner was Ukraine, while the U.S. played an important role in the blame games. Another important aspect was the unequal power parity between the states, as well as the dominant influence of Russia over Ukraine by the beginning of the crisis. At last it is the violation of the sovereignty of a country, what makes this crisis so intense.

#### **5.4. Limitation of the Study and Reflection on the Research Design and Validity**

There are certain limitations to this research study, due to the qualitative research design and due to the complexity of the crisis. Through the CPT it is possible to conduct an in-depth study on the individual causes of a causal relationship between the variables. Due to that it becomes difficult to use the CPT approach to generalize the outcomes of an analysis. So the duplication of this qualitative study and the generalization of its results will be difficult. Thus the study is subject to a weak external validity.

It needs to be considered that the information provided, especially in the politicized and social sphere as well the mediatization, is biased. This and the non-availability of information, especially concerning state affairs, can affect the validity of the research. The development of a crisis is also influenced by many other unobserved variables. Thus, many actors get involved in conflicts with limited information e.g. of the willingness of the other party to engage in a conflict (Reed, 2000, pp. 85-86).

As an additional source an interview was conducted. The interview was an important contribution to this research, giving more insights on the crisis. Nevertheless, it needs to be considered, that interviews are always biased, as they are based on the personal experiences of the interviewee (Opdenakker, 2006). The participation is of course voluntarily, which is why

some people refused on their own will the participation. Due to that there were not enough participants for a detailed and objective insight of the crisis.

At the same time this research is in need of a wider theoretical framework, as many more factors need to be included. Allison's model is a good approach to explain the decisions of the actors, but in order to explain adequacy of international crisis management there is a need for a more adequate theory, which considers a wider range of factors. The political system shifts in its capabilities to act and react, so there is the need to find additional explanations in the political game.

## **6. Final Conclusion**

In conclusion, it can be said that Allison's models are a great approach to analyze the reasons and factors, which influence the actions of governmental organizations in a global crisis setting. The models are still applicable on a modern day crisis such as the Ukrainian/ Crimean crisis. Nevertheless, those models are a simplified and allow an only very limited view on the crisis. There are many other action, circumstances and factors, which effected the crisis development. Not all factors could be considered in this analysis. This research study only elaborated a small dimension this crisis, Allison's models are not the only possibility to analyze the crisis.

The actions of the international actors are determined by so many goals and factors, which could not all be addressed in this study. A lot of how actors and civilians withdraw the meaning from actions of others as well as from the circumstances depends on the portrait of the organizational reputation. Within international bargaining sphere, the actors are influencing the decision of other actors through different factors and methods. The tit for tat approach, which dominated the actions in this crisis, especially in the Russo-American relation, is an example how the previous relationship influences the decision making in a crisis situation. Hence, the historic relationship between Ukraine and Russia, as well as between Russia and U.S. influenced the severity of this crisis.

The specific theoretical framework of the study has led to the analytical assumption, that Russia's CRS, had a quite negative effect on the adequacy of international crisis management of the actors. All actors were using different mixes of CRS, in all stages of the crisis. The EU and U.S. used CRS of appeasement with Ukraine, but at the same time using measures of attack

against Russia. Russia has used measures of attack against Ukraine, but at the same time measures of justification in the international context. The Hypotheses two and three were verified, while the first hypothesis was only partly verified. Generally, it can be said, that the strategic crisis communication of Russia had a negative effect on the adequacy of international crisis management of Ukraine, EU, U.S. and Russia itself. Economic and diplomatic relationships suffered under the events. The still ongoing confrontations between the east and west of Ukraine cause destabilization and destruction of infrastructure. The conditions of the Minsk Agreement are not yet fulfilled and the return of Crimea to Ukraine is very unlikely. There are still demands from the Western actors and Ukraine towards Russia, before considering to go back to having diplomatic relationships with Russia (Interview I). The diplomatic relationship between the Russia and the EU, but especially the U.S. was already marked. The Ukraine crisis brought the diplomatic relation between Russia and the West to an all-time low. The Ukrainian crisis has not reached the stage of resolution, but fell into a frozen conflict. There is a need for more de-escalating measures, especially in terms of a more open diplomatic dialogue.

## 7. Scientific References

- Allison, G. T., & Zelikow, P. (1999). *Essence of decision: Explaining the Cuban missile crisis* (Vol. 2): Longman New York.
- Allison, R. (2014). Russian 'deniable' intervention in Ukraine: how and why Russia broke the rules. *International Affairs*, 90(6), 1255-1297.
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The qualitative report*, 13(4), 544-559.
- Boin, A. (2005). *The politics of crisis management: Public leadership under pressure*: Cambridge University Press.
- Boin, A., & Hart, P. t. (2003). Public leadership in times of crisis: mission impossible? *Public Administration Review*, 63(5), 544-553.
- Buba, T. (2010). Russo-Ukrainian Relations: Sevastopol and the Black Sea Fleet (Vol. 19, pp. 1).
- Blatter, J., & Haverland, M. (2012). *Designing case studies: explanatory approaches in small-N Research*: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Coombs, W. T. (2007). Attribution theory as a guide for post-crisis communication research. *Public Relations Review*, 33(2), 135-139.
- Coombs, W. T. (2007). Protecting organization reputations during a crisis: The development and application of situational crisis communication theory. *Corporate reputation review*, 10(3), 163-176.
- Drummond, H. (1995). De-escalation in Decision Making: A Case of a Disastrous Partnership. *Journal of Management Studies*, 32(3), 265-281. doi:10.1111/j.1467-6486.1995.tb00776.x
- Haverland, M., & Yanow, D. (2012). A Hitchhiker's Guide to the Public Administration Research Universe: Surviving Conversations on Methodologies and Methods. *Public Administration Review*, 72(3), 401-408. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6210.2011.02524.x
- Hein, G. (1999). Is meaning making constructivism? Is constructivism meaning making. *The Exhibitionist*, 18(2), 15-18.
- Kapstein, E. B. (1995). Is Realism Dead? The Domestic Sources of International Politics. [War and Reason: Domestic and International Imperatives., Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, David Lalman; The Domestic Bases of Grand Strategy., Richard Rosecrance, Arthur A. Stein; Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition., Jack Snyder]. *International Organization*, 49(4), 751-774.
- Mitchell, C. R. (1999). The anatomy of de-escalation. *Conflict resolution: Dynamics, process and structure*, 37-58.
- Opdenakker, R. (2006). *Advantages and disadvantages of four interview techniques in qualitative research*. Paper presented at the Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research.
- Reed, W. (2000). A Unified Statistical Model of Conflict Onset and Escalation. *American Journal of Political Science*, 44(1), 84-93. doi:10.2307/2669294
- Ritchie, B. W. (2004). Chaos, crises and disasters: a strategic approach to crisis management in the tourism industry. *Tourism Management*, 25(6), 669-683.
- Seeger, M. W. (2006). Best Practices in Crisis Communication: An Expert Panel Process. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 34(3), 232-244. doi:10.1080/00909880600769944

- Sheet, F. (2013). *Wicked problems and public policy*, 1-5.
- Smith, B., & Harari, D. (2014). Ukraine, Crimea and Russia. *Research Paper*, 14, 16.
- Volkov, D. (2015). *The Evolution of Anti-Americanism in Russia*. Carnegie Moscow Center.  
Retrieved on 25. June 2016 from: <http://carnegie.ru/publications/?fa=60457>
- Zaborksy, V. (1995). *Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet in Russian- Ukrainian Relations*.  
*Discussion Paper*, 95-11, Center for Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy  
School of Government, Harvard University

## 8. Annexes

### A. Information and Data Sources

1. Official Sources
2. News Sources
3. Statistical Data

### B. ECU Elaboration

### C. Full Documents

1. Full Minsk Agreement
2. United Nations Charter: Preamble, Purposes and Principles

### D. Research Protocol

1. Informed Consent Form
2. Interview Request
3. Interview Questions for Interview I
4. Summary of Interview I

## A. Information and Data Sources

### 1. DOCUMENT SOURCES

Dreyer, I., & Popescu, N. (2014). *The Eurasian Customs Union: The economics and the politics*. Retrieved on 20. June 2016 from:

[http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Brief\\_11\\_Eurasian\\_Union.pdf](http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Brief_11_Eurasian_Union.pdf)

European Commission - Newsroom (2016). *EU sanctions against Russia over Ukraine crisis*.

Retrieved on 15. May 2016 from: [http://europa.eu/newsroom/highlights/special-coverage/eu\\_sanctions\\_en](http://europa.eu/newsroom/highlights/special-coverage/eu_sanctions_en)

European Council on Foreign Relations (30. March 2016). *Beyond the Minsk Agreement*.

Retrieved on 23. May 2016 from:

[http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary\\_beyond\\_the\\_minsk\\_agreements](http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_beyond_the_minsk_agreements)

European Council on Foreign Relations (2015) What Does Ukraine Think? Retrieved on 20.

June 2016 from [http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/WHAT\\_DOES\\_UKRAINE\\_THINK\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/WHAT_DOES_UKRAINE_THINK_pdf.pdf)

European Parliamentary Research Service, (2015). *Economic impact on the EU of sanctions over Ukraine conflict*. Retrieved on 25. June from:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/569020/EPRS\\_BRI\(2015\)569020\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/569020/EPRS_BRI(2015)569020_EN.pdf)

European Parliamentary Research Service Blog (February 13, 2015). *Ukraine Crisis: Timeline, November 2013 – February 2015*. Retrieved on 31. May 2016 from:

<https://libraryeuroparl.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/eprs-briefing-548991-minsk-peace-summit-fig1-timeline.png>

Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, (2016). *Black Sea Fleet*. Retrieved on the 24. June 2016 from:

- [http://eng.mil.ru/en/structure/forces/navy/associations/structure/forces/type/navy/black\\_sea/about.htm](http://eng.mil.ru/en/structure/forces/navy/associations/structure/forces/type/navy/black_sea/about.htm)
- Morelli, V. L. (27. April 2016). *Section Research Manager Congressional Research Service: Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*. Retrieved 16. May. 2016 from: <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33460.pdf>
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (01. August. 1975). Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe Final Act, Helsinki 1975. Retrieved 25. Mai. 2016 from: <http://www.osce.org/mc/39501?download=true>
- Ukrainian Canadian Congress (01. April 2014). *Primer on Illegal Invasion and Annexation of Crimea by Russian Federation: Violation of International Treaties*. Retrieved on 27. May 2016 from: <http://www.ucc.ca/2014/04/01/primer-on-illegal-invasion-and-annexation-of-crimea-by-russian-federation-violation-of-international-treaties/>
- United Nations (2016), *History of the United Nation*. Retrieved 07. May 2016 from: <http://www.un.org/en/sections/history/history-united-nations/>
- United Nations (09. December 2015). *Despite less fighting, eastern Ukraine still 'highly flammable,' UN reports, as death toll tops 9,000*. Retrieved 30. April 2016 from: [http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52771#.V1cLWJN97\\_R](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52771#.V1cLWJN97_R)
- U.S. Department of State (2016). *Ukraine and Russian Sanctions, Department of Treasury*. Retrieved 15. May 2016 from: <http://www.state.gov/e/eb/tfs/spi/ukrainerussia/>
- U.S. Department of State (2016). *Russia's Continuing Support for Armed Separatists in Ukraine and Ukraine's Efforts Toward Peace, Unity, and Stability*. Retrieved 27. May 2016 from: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/07/229270.htm>

## 2. NEWS SOURCES

- Ahmed S., Botelho G., Gumuchian M. (20. February 2014). 20 questions: *What's behind Ukraine's Political Crisis?* Retrieved on 02. May 2016 from: <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/02/18/world/europe/ukraine-protests-explainer>
- Banakh, M. (27. February 2014). Analyse: Die Orange Revolution 2004 und der Euromaidan 2013/2014, *Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede*. Retrieved on the 31. May. 2015 from: <http://www.bpb.de/internationales/europa/ukraine/179753/analyse-die-orange-revolution-2004-und-der-euromaidan-2013-2014>
- Bates, T. (08. March 2014). *Ukraine's fraught relationship with Russia: A brief history* <http://theweek.com/articles/449691/ukraines-fraught-relationship-russia-brief-history>
- BBC, (13. November 2014). *Ukraine crisis: Timeline*. Retrieved 04. May 2016 from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-26248275>
- BBC, (24 October 2014). *Putin: Russia helped Yanukovych to flee Ukraine*. Retrieved on 16. June 2016 from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29761799>
- Chossudovsky, M. (2014). *Profile: Ukraine's ultra-national Right Sector. Global Research*. Retrieved on 27. June 2016 from: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-bbc-supports-ukraines-neo-nazis/5383112>
- Council on Foreign Relations (05. December 1994). *Budapest Memorandums on Security Assurances, 1994*. Retrieved 16. May 2016 from: <http://www.cfr.org/nonproliferation-arms-control-and-disarmament/budapest-memorandums-security-assurances-1994/p32484>



- Deeks, A. (02. March 2014). *Here's What International Law Says About Russia's Intervention in Ukraine*. Retrieved on 18. June 2016 from: <https://newrepublic.com/article/116819/international-law-russias-ukraine-intervention>
- Ermokhin, S. (15. January 2016). *Trade war with Moscow reveals another unpleasant surprise for Kiev*. Retrieved on 24. June 2016 from: <https://www.rt.com/business/328943-ukraine-russia-transit-ban/>
- Financial Times, (02. February 2015). *Full test of the Minsk Agreement*. Retrieved on 13. June. 2016 from: <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/21b8f98e-b2a5-11e4-b234-00144feab7de.html#axzz4BPFQgIhs>
- Gatehouse, G. (22 June 2015). *Ukraine crisis: Yanukovych regrets bloodshed in Kiev*. Retrieved on 16. June 2016 from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33224138>
- Global Security, (2015). *Black Sea Fleet (BSF)*. Retrieved on 24. June 2016 from: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/russia/mf-black.htm>
- Goncharenko, R. (05. December 2014) *Ukraine's forgotten security guarantee: The Budapest Memorandum*. Retrieved 23. May 2016 from: <http://www.dw.com/en/ukraines-forgotten-security-guarantee-the-budapest-memorandum/a-18111097>
- Hurt, M. (2016). *Preempting Further Russian Aggression Against Europe*. Retrieved on 20. June 2016 from: <http://index.heritage.org/military/2016/essays/preempting-further-russian-aggression/>
- Kabanenko, I. (07. April 2014). *Kharkiv Accords, Background, Menaces, and Lessons*. Retrieved on 23. June 2016 from: <http://day.kyiv.ua/en/article/society/kharkiv-accords>
- Matthews, O. (25. June 2016). Stupid attacks on Russia only help Vladimir Putin Lazy and conspiracy-minded writing in the western media helps him maintain a siege mentality. Retrieved on 25. June. 2016 from: <http://www.spectator.co.uk/2016/06/stupid-attacks-on-russia-only-help-vladimir-putin/>
- Moshes, A. (2013). Will Ukraine Join (and Save) the Eurasian Customs Union? Retrieved on 02. June 2016 from: <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/will-ukraine-join-and-save-eurasian-customs-union>
- Oliphant, R. (03. January 2016). *Ukraine bans Russian foods as trade war escalates*. Retrieved on 23. June 2016 from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/12078921/Ukraine-bans-Russian-foods-as-trade-war-escalates.html>
- Panorama, (23.06.2016). *Themen: We want money back, Säbelrasseln: NATO rückt an russische Grenze vor, Wohnungsnot: Rettung durch Großinvestoren? Volksparteien: Ende einer Illusion? Das Erste*. Retrieved on 27. June 2016 from: <http://mediathek.daserste.de/Panorama/Panorama-die-ganze-Sendung/Video?bcastId=310918&documentId=36171710>
- Rossija 1, (2015). *Крым. путь на родину. (Crimea. The way back home)*. Retrieved on 22. June 2016 from: [https://russia.tv/brand/show/brand\\_id/59195/](https://russia.tv/brand/show/brand_id/59195/)
- The New Cold War, (2016). *Ukraine and beyond. Survey on attitudes on the Crimean people on the events of 2014*. Retrieved on 26. June 2016 from: <https://newcoldwar.org/survey-on-attitudes-of-the-crimea-people-to-the-events-of-2014/>
- The Telegraph, (05. March 2015). *Ukraine crisis: Timeline of major events, Timeline of the key events in Ukraine following protests in December 2013*, Retrieved on 04. May 2016 from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/11449122/Ukraine-crisis-timelineof-major-events.html>

### 3. STATISTICAL DATA

- European Commission (21. June 2016). *European Union, Trade in goods with Russia*. Retrieved on 23. June 2016 from:  
[http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc\\_113440.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113440.pdf)
- Justice for Sergei Magnitsky Inter Parliamentary Group, (2013). *United States: Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act*. Retrieved on 24. June 2016 from: <http://ipg-magnitsky.org/United-States-Magnitsky-Act>
- Statdata, (27. March 2016). *Население Крыма и Севастополя: численность, национальный состав (Population of Crimea and Sevastopol: population, ethnicity, composition)*. Retrieved on 19. May 2016 from: <http://www.statdata.ru/naselenie-krima-i-sevastopolya>
- Trading Economics, (2016). *Russia Balance of Trade*. Retrieved on 22. June 2016 from:  
<http://www.tradingeconomics.com/russia/balance-of-trade>
- Trading Economics (2016). *Russia Exports*. Retrieved on 22. June 2016 from:  
<http://www.tradingeconomics.com/russia/exports>
- Trading Economics (2016). *Ukraine Balance of Trade*. Retrieved on 23. June from:  
<http://www.tradingeconomics.com/ukraine/balance-of-trade#>
- Trading Economics (2016). *Ukraine Foreign Direct Investment- Net Inflows*. Retrieved on 22. June 2016 from: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/ukraine/foreign-direct-investment>
- United States Census Bureau, Foreign Trade (2015). *Trade in Goods with Russia*. Retrieved on 23. June 2016 from: <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c4621.html>
- World Bank (02. June 2016): *Gross National Income in PPP dollars*. Retrieved on 19. June 2016 from: [https://www.google.de/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9\\_&met\\_y=ny\\_gnp\\_mktpp\\_cd&idim=country:UKR:BLR:ROM&hl=en&dl=en#!ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nselm=h&met\\_y=ny\\_gnp\\_mktpp\\_cd&scale\\_y=lin&ind\\_y=false&rdim=region&idim=country:UKR&ifdim=region&hl=en\\_US&dl=en&ind=false](https://www.google.de/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9_&met_y=ny_gnp_mktpp_cd&idim=country:UKR:BLR:ROM&hl=en&dl=en#!ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nselm=h&met_y=ny_gnp_mktpp_cd&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=region&idim=country:UKR&ifdim=region&hl=en_US&dl=en&ind=false)
- World Bank (2014). *Ukraine Trade Summary 2012 Data*. Retrieved on 23. June 2016 from:  
<http://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/UKR/Year/2012/Summary>

## B. ECU and the former Soviet States

The ideal case scenario for Ukraine would have been to have the economic privileges of an agreement with Russia while having a free trade agreement with the EU. The Eurasian Custom Union (ECU) between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan – a by the Kremlin initiated project, was an attempted to attract Eurasian countries into an economic partnership (Dreyer and Popescu, 2014). The Custom Union aimed to form an economic union based on a Russia focused partnership (Moshes, 2013). Although this is not supposed to be a political union, but it nevertheless strengthening the bonds in terms of economical interdependency in the geographical context of Eurasia. Ukraine borders a great power, which seeks to extend its influence over Ukraine's territory, identity and statehood (Interview I). Also other former soviet countries such as Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan and Tajikistan etc. depend on Russia and are under its influence and experience, as most former states some economic difficulties.

Russia attempted to convince Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine to join the Union while abandoning the negotiations for an AA with the EU. Armenia eventually has joint the ECU, but not Ukraine (Dreyer and Popescu, 2014).

Not just the economic ties are of importance in this crisis, but also the alliances ties are of great importance. Close diplomatic relations between Russia and Ukraine was established directly after the breakup of the USSR. This was of especial importance since the East of Ukraine is mostly populated with Russian ethnic people. Under the governance of the pro-Russian Yanukovych, the relationship between the two countries was close. Nevertheless, all throughout the history, Russia's dominant influence on Ukraine's governmental affairs was criticized. Conclusively, the interdependence of Ukraine and Russia in this specific crisis is high.

The violation of several international treaties and Russian - Ukrainian bilateral agreements, the violation of Ukraine sovereignty and territory, as well as the military support if the repels have led to the assumption, that Russia aimed with its destabilizing actions to revive the power and influence of the Soviet Union (Interview I). On the other hand, Russia claims that there was no violation of the international treaties, as Russia was fulfilling the sovereign will of Crimea.

Until this day Russia refuses to follow the Ukrainian demand to hand over Yanukovych. This causes additional tensions, since Yanukovych cannot be held responsible for his actions during the violent protest.