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immigration crisis one between east and west. This has also been clear in relation to the Ukraine crisis where, in broad terms, views on the Russian threat are conditioned by geographical proximity and by the historical experience of the Cold War.

coordination and leadership from key Member States. Historically, foreign policy decision making at the EU level has been preceded by informal discussions among the big three France, Germany and the United Kingdom

The Upside

But not all is grim. While the actions of Russia have once again exposed the fact that EU foreign policy and security cooperation significantly lags behind that in other fields, some positives may yet be identified. In the absence of EU-level cooperation, discussions among Member States have occurred elsewhere. Germany, France and Poland have made use of the so-called Normandy Format (which also includes Russia) established in 2014 to address the Donbas conflict in eastern Ukraine. And 21 EU Member States are also members of NATO. In this respect, even if not taking place in the Union context, coordination and cooperation among these states is greatly facilitated by their experience of ongoing and broad engagement within the EU. If not a sense of bonhomie, this has at least enabled them to develop an understanding of each other, and a recognition that they are, in many ways, in the same boat. This is a benefit of European integration that is not to be underestimated. And this sense also extends to the broader public: while the ECFR poll mentioned at the outset demonstrated a trust in NATO to defend Europe, this trust did not extend to the United States. This raises the possibility that it is European cooperation within NATO that generates the trust factor among domestic publics, not the US presence.

Finally, while the European Union is seemingly only able to observe the Ukraine crisis from the margins, the Russian action is potentially a trigger for deeper European cooperation. The crisis has put European security firmly on the agenda, and brought home the absence of Europeans from the conversation to date, one in which key decisions concerning the continent have been taken in the context of US Russia engagement. Coming off the back of the Trump presidency in which US commitment to Europe was brought into question, the need for a greater European role in its own security architecture is becoming clear. The European Union is an obvious arena within which cooperation in this sphere may be strengthened.