

After the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, declared the European Union's geopolitical awakening. Unwilling to stop there, Borrell wanted to turn the EU's geopolitical awakening into a permanent strategic posture. The HR/VP had argued that the EU needed to learn the language of power to maximise its geopolitical impact since he came to office in late 2019 as part of von der Leyen's 'geopolitical commission'. He also started writing a blog early on to offer his perspective on world affairs and contribute to cementing a common EU strategic culture. Those blog posts, together with speeches and op-eds published in various media, have been put together by Borrell and his team into four annual books, which condense the HR/VP's discourse on EU foreign policy throughout his tenure. This research aims to understand better the role geopolitics played in the HR/VP's efforts to build a common EU strategic culture by analysing Borrell's four books from a constructivist theoretical standpoint built upon the literature on critical geopolitics and strategic culture. To do so, I will examine the HR/VP's discourse through computer-assisted qualitative content analysis, working deductively with codebooks derived from the literature as well as inductively with the material. I will produce a cartography of Borrell's books and examine the presence of geostrategic discourse and a geopolitical lexicon within them. The findings suggest that Borrell displays a lexicon characteristic of practical geopolitics in his descriptions of world events. Also, Borrell draws increasingly from geostrategic discourse in his efforts to construct a common EU strategic culture. Notably, however, the HR/VP's geostrategic discourse seems to be affected by the Member States' position on a given foreign policy crisis.