



COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

The common security and defence policy (CSDP) sets the framework for EU political and military structures, and military and civilian missions and operations abroad. The 2016 EU Global Strategy lays out the strategy for the CSDP, while the Lisbon Treaty clarifies the institutional aspects and strengthens the role of the European Parliament. The CSDP has recently undergone major strategic and operational changes to meet security challenges and popular demand for increased EU responses.

LEGAL BASIS

The common security and defence policy (CSDP) is an integral part of the Union's common foreign and security policy (CFSP)^[1]. The CSDP is framed by the Treaty on European Union (TEU). Article 41 outlines the funding of the CFSP and CSDP, and the policy is further described in Articles 42 to 46, in Chapter 2, Section 2 of Title V ('Provisions on the Common Security and Defence Policy'), and in Protocols 1, 10 and 11 and Declarations 13 and 14. The particular role of the European Parliament in the CFSP and CSDP is described in Article 36 of the TEU.

TREATY PROVISIONS FOR THE CSDP

Decisions relating to the CSDP are taken by the European Council and the Council of the European Union (Article 42 TEU). They are taken by unanimity, with some notable exceptions relating to the European Defence Agency (EDA, Article 45 TEU) and permanent structured cooperation (PESCO, Article 46 TEU), to which majority voting applies. Proposals for decisions are normally made by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who also acts as Vice-President of the European Commission (the VP/HR, currently Federica Mogherini).

The Lisbon Treaty introduced the notion of a European capabilities and armaments policy (Article 42(3) TEU), and established a link between the CSDP and other Union policies by requiring that the EDA and the Commission work in liaison when necessary (Article 45(2) TEU). This concerns in particular the Union's research, industrial and space policies, for which Parliament was empowered to seek to develop a much stronger role regarding the CSDP than it had in the past.

[1]See Title V ('General Provisions on the Union's External Action and Specific Provisions on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)') of the Treaty on European Union (TEU); see also [5.1.1](#) on the EU's foreign policy.



ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Parliament has the right to scrutinise the CSDP and to take the initiative of addressing the VP/HR and the Council on it (Article 36 TEU). It also exercises authority over the policy's budget (Article 41 TEU). Twice a year, Parliament holds debates on progress in implementing the CFSP and the CSDP, and adopts reports: one on the CFSP, drafted by the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) and including elements relating to the CSDP where necessary; and one on the CSDP, drafted by the Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE).

Since 2012, the European Parliament and the Member States' national parliaments have organised two interparliamentary conferences each year to debate matters relating to the CFSP. Interparliamentary cooperation in these areas is provided for by Protocol 1 to the Lisbon Treaty, which describes the role of the national parliaments in the EU.

Innovations in the Lisbon Treaty have provided an opportunity to improve the political coherence of the CSDP. The VP/HR occupies the central institutional role, chairing the Foreign Affairs Council in its 'Defence Ministers configuration' (the EU's CSDP decision-making body) and directing the EDA. The political framework for consultation and dialogue with Parliament is evolving in order to allow Parliament to play a full role in developing the CSDP. Under the Lisbon Treaty, Parliament is a partner in shaping the Union's external relations and addressing the challenge described in the 2008 Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy: 'In modern democracies, where media and public opinion are crucial to shaping policy, popular commitment is essential to sustaining our commitments abroad. We deploy police, judicial experts and soldiers in unstable zones around the world. There is an onus on governments, parliaments and EU institutions to communicate how this contributes to security at home.'

ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Parliament holds regular deliberations, hearings and workshops, devoted to topics including: civilian and military CSDP missions, international crises with security and defence implications, multilateral frameworks for security, arms control and non-proliferation issues, the fight against terrorism and organised crime, good practices to improve the effectiveness of security and defence, and EU legal and institutional developments in these fields.

Following the VP/HR's 2010 declaration on political accountability, Parliament participates in Joint Consultation Meetings (JCMs) held on a regular basis to exchange information with the Council, the EEAS and the Commission. Given the key role that the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) plays in underwriting European security, Parliament participates in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly with a view to developing the EU-NATO relationship while respecting the independent nature of both organisations.



CSDP: A RAPIDLY EVOLVING POLICY

While the CSDP did not change substantially in the first few years following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, it had great potential to evolve, both politically and institutionally.

Recognising the need to provide a strategic impetus for Heads of State or Government, the European Council set a number of initial targets in December 2013 to advance the CSDP: increasing the effectiveness and impact of the CSDP; enhancing the development of defence capabilities; and strengthening Europe's defence industry. It also tasked the VP/HR and the Commission with making an assessment of the impact of changes in the global environment of the EU. On the basis of this assessment, in June 2015 the VP/HR was tasked with drafting an 'EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy' (EUGS) for 2016. The EUGS was presented to the European Council by VP/HR Mogherini in June 2016. The strategy identifies five priorities for EU foreign policy: the security of the Union; state and societal resilience to the East and South of the EU; the development of an integrated approach to conflicts; cooperative regional orders; and global governance for the 21st century. Member States welcomed the EUGS in July and agreed to move to its implementation phase, implementation to be reviewed annually in consultation with the Council, the Commission and Parliament.

On 16 September 2016 in Bratislava, the EU Member States reiterated their intention to strengthen EU cooperation on external security and defence. The events of the following 12 months were testimony to the capacity of all relevant EU institutions to deliver rapidly and coherently on Member States' requests, as well as the expression of the Member States' political will to move ahead with the process.

In November 2016, the Council was presented with an '[Implementation Plan on Security and Defence](#)', intended to operationalise the vision set out in the EUGS on defence and security issues. To match the new level of ambition, the plan sets out 13 proposals, including: a coordinated annual review on defence (CARD), with stress on spending; a better EU rapid response, including through the use of EU Battlegroups; and a new single PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) for those Member States willing to take on greater commitments on security and defence. VP/HR Mogherini also presented a [European Defence Action Plan](#) (EDAP) to the Member States on 30 November 2016, with key proposals relating to a European Defence Fund (EDF) focusing on defence research and capability development. The Council also adopted conclusions endorsing a plan to enforce the decisions on EU-NATO cooperation taken in Warsaw (42 proposals). Together these three plans (which some call the 'winter package on defence') represent a major step towards implementing the Treaty of Lisbon in the fields of security and defence.

Parliament has, for its part, demonstrated its constant will to act and to pursue political initiatives in this field. It proposed funding a pilot project on CSDP research from the EU's 2015 budget, implying that, for the first time, EU funds would be transferred to the EDA to conduct research on military requirements. This is now being continued via a Preparatory Action on Defence Research, with a EUR 90 million budget for 2017-2019, and the latest Commission proposals on funding a research and technology support



initiative for defence for the post-2020 period indicate that the Parliament initiative did matter and was in the vanguard of an important process.

2017: A CRUCIAL YEAR FOR CSDP IMPLEMENTATION

The European Council reviewed progress in March 2017 and highlighted the establishment of the [military planning and conduct capability](#) (MPCC), a new structure to improve the EU's capacity to react in a faster, more effective and more seamless manner for the planning and conduct of non-executive military missions. It also took note of progress in other areas, including: the possibility of PESCO as an inclusive, modular system allowing Member States to collaborate further in the area of security and defence on a voluntary basis; the possibility of a Member State-driven coordinated annual review on defence (CARD), which would establish a process for obtaining a better overview at EU level of issues such as defence spending and national investment as well as defence research efforts, thus better identifying and addressing shortfalls; and ongoing work in other areas, such as strengthening the EU's rapid response toolbox, including the EU Battlegroups and civilian capabilities, capacity-building in support of security and development (CBSD), situational awareness, and defence capability development.

On 7 June 2017, the Commission presented a communication entitled '[Launching the European Defence Fund](#)', detailing its proposals to stimulate and structure investment in defence in the EU. It proposes direct support for research, the co-financing of development and support for the acquisition of defence products by EU Member States. Support to the industry is expressed via a draft regulation on a [European Defence Industrial Development Programme](#) (EDIDP). For the first anniversary of the EUGS, VP/HR Mogherini published a [report on its implementation](#) praising the rapid progress made, including on cooperation with NATO, and the launch of the Commission's [European Defence Fund](#). As far as EU-NATO relations are concerned, the VP/HR reported progress in the following areas: the fight against hybrid threats; human trafficking; defence capabilities; defence industry and research; and partnerships.

On 11 December 2017, the Council adopted a decision to establish PESCO and its list of 25 participants. On 6 March 2018, Member States adopted a Council decision on a list of 17 PESCO projects, covering areas such as training, capability development and operational readiness in the field of defence. The individual projects will be run by different groups of participating Member States. A roadmap for the implementation of PESCO was also adopted on the same day, aiming to provide strategic direction and guidance on how to structure further work on both processes and governance. The Council will adopt a common set of governance rules for the projects by the end of June.

As an avid supporter and initiator of these issues, Parliament, in its Annual Report on the implementation of the CSDP (December 2017), welcomed 'the newly demonstrated political will to make CSDP more effective' and, in particular, the willingness to commit to PESCO, the establishment of the CARD process, the launching of an EDF, the proposed scaling-up of the Preparatory Action on Defence Research, and the legislative proposal for the EDIDP. It also requested sufficient funding and coordinated investments in the areas of security and defence.



In the same report, Parliament further called on the VP/HR and the Commission to 'act on Parliament's calls for an EU Security and Defence White Book in the context of preparing the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), as requested in Parliament's resolutions of [22 November 2016](#), [23 November 2016](#) and [16 March 2017](#)'. Parliament also proposed that the Subcommittee on Security and Defence be made into a fully-fledged parliamentary committee, to ensure that decision-making on CSDP issues is 'more democratic and transparent'.

On the capability development part of the EDF, EDIDP, the proposal for a regulation put forward by the Commission in June 2017, was reviewed by Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE), with AFET and SEDE 'associated'. Having reached agreement with the Council in May, a vote in plenary should take place before summer 2018.

Parliament continues to act at its level and within its competences to prompt and help achieve the EU's objectives as a security provider in an effective and visible manner, as requested by EU citizens.

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