

The European Council's 'rolling agenda' on European defence cooperation

SUMMARY

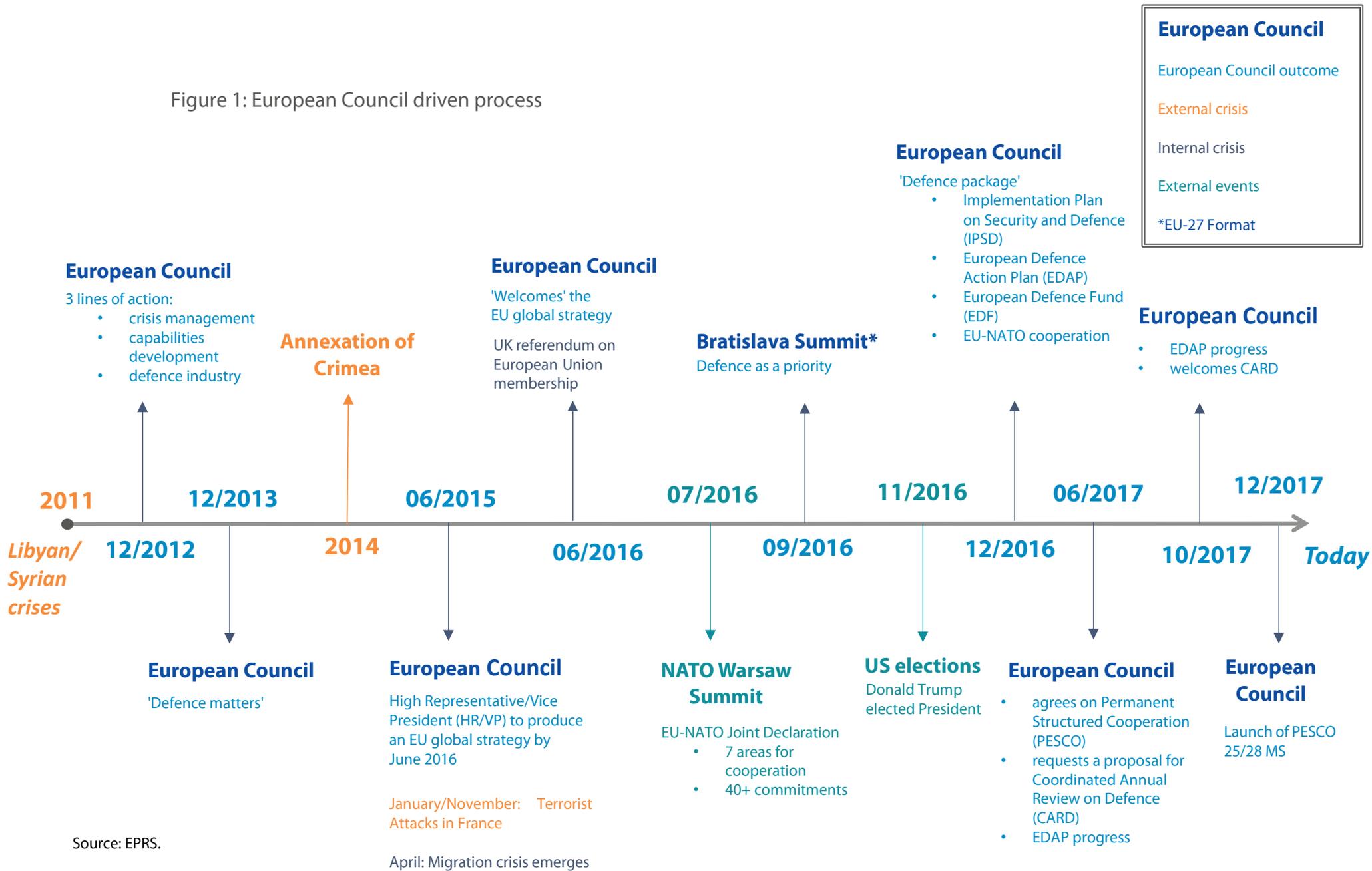
European defence cooperation will be on the agenda of EU Heads of State or Government for the ninth time since December 2012, when they meet on 28-29 June 2018. This paper identifies the emergence of a 'rolling agenda' on defence in the European Council and the commitments made by the Heads of State or Government to pursue cooperation in this area. The analysis shows that when the 'rolling agenda' was first introduced, EU leaders were more declaratory in their conclusions and less willing to commit to practical defence cooperation. However, in December 2016, this trend was reversed. Although the process of cooperation began more than half a decade ago, it has accelerated markedly in the past two years. This Briefing presents a comprehensive analysis of progress on the 'rolling agenda', that shows continuity in the European Council's commitment to European defence cooperation between summits.

1. Introduction

European defence cooperation is a rolling item on the European Council agenda and the upcoming European Council meeting of 28-29 June will once again discuss this issue. This Briefing examines work on European defence cooperation at eight European Council meetings dedicated to defence since 2012. Initially, between 2012 and 2015, the European Council discussed defence on average once annually. This rhythm has been accelerated to two or three formal meetings per year since June 2016 when the EU global strategy was presented (see figure 1). The Heads of State or Government have discussed defence informally only once, in the EU-27 format, in Bratislava in September 2016. The Bratislava debate was part of the 'Future of Europe' discussion that was initiated in the aftermath of the June 2016 UK referendum on European Union membership. Recent statements by various Heads of State or Government, including German Chancellor [Angela Merkel](#), following the June 2018 [44th G7 Summit](#) in Charlevoix, Canada, and French President [Emmanuel Macron](#) at the Paris-Sorbonne University in September 2017, indicate an express willingness to pursue common foreign policy and align defence priorities among European States.

A close examination of the statements produced and commitments made by the European Council during the period examined demonstrates that the wording used in the European Council conclusions since 2012 was initially more declaratory and has progressively evolved to being more committal, as argued below in section 2. Two milestone summits should be highlighted. Firstly, at the strategic level, the December 2013 European Council gave a strong political message: 'defence matters'. Heads of States or Government made a political commitment to pursue European defence cooperation. Secondly, at the implementation level, the December 2017 European Council welcomed the launch of permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) with the aim of deepening European defence cooperation through targeted projects developed by the 25 EU Member States participating in the mechanism and open to third countries under certain conditions, which are still [to be defined](#). An initial set of 17 projects was [agreed](#) by the March 2018 Foreign Affairs Council (defence), with more [to follow](#) in the coming months.

Figure 1: European Council driven process

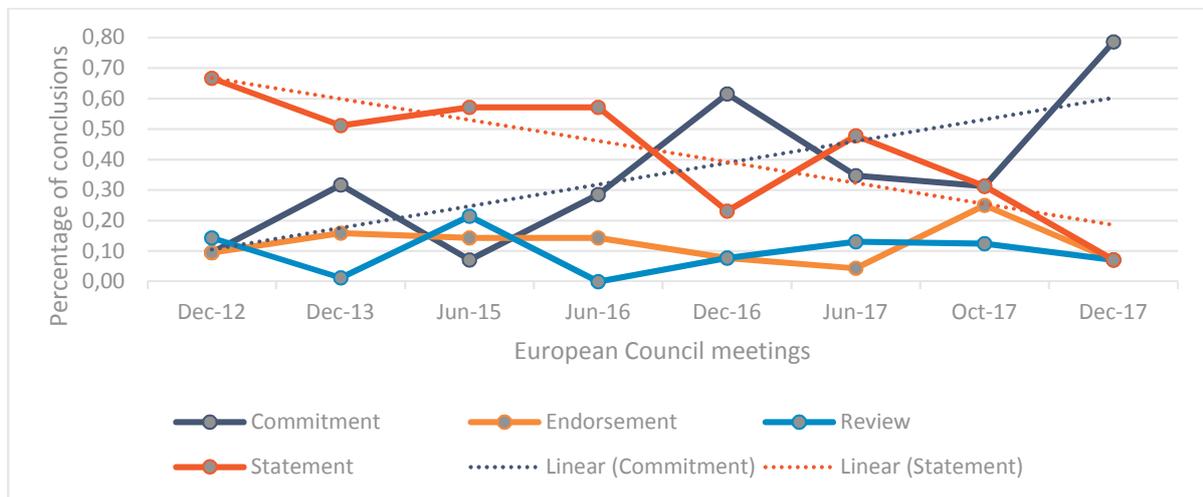


Source: EPRS.

2. European Council conclusions on defence

Since December 2012, the European Council has adopted conclusions at each of its regular meetings where it has discussed European defence cooperation. Through its conclusions, the European Council may undertake commitments and call upon one or more EU institution and/or EU Member State(s) to take a particular action within a specific timeframe (e.g. in December 2013, it called for the adoption by June 2014 of an [EU Maritime Security Strategy](#)). The European Council may also endorse an action taken by either the EU institutions and/or EU Member State(s) (e.g. in June 2017, it 'welcom[ed] the Commission's [communication](#) on a European Defence Fund') or review progress made in a specific policy area.¹ It may also make general statements linked to those policy areas. Figure 2 shows the progression of the different types of European Council conclusions, by meeting, since 2012. It demonstrates that the share of statements on European defence cooperation in European Council conclusions decreased progressively while the share of commitments increased. The inversion of the statements and commitments curves in December 2016 confirms that the European Council became less declaratory and more committal in its conclusions on defence over time (see also section 3.2 in this paper).

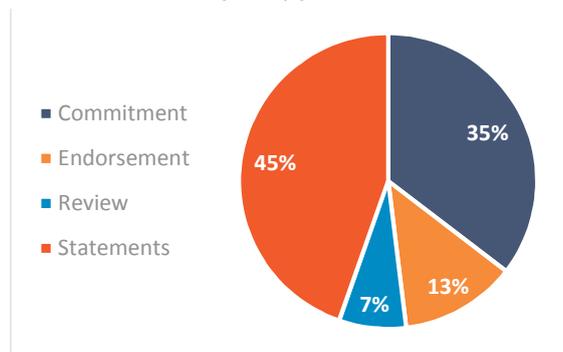
Figure 2: European Council conclusions on defence by meeting since 2012



Source: EPRS.

Figure 3 shows that statements and commitments represent the highest share (80 %) of the European Council conclusions. It substantiates the Heads of State or Governments' strong political support for European defence cooperation and a readiness to pursue development in this policy area through concrete commitments. The reviews and the endorsements represent 20 % of the European Council conclusions and indicate the Heads of State or Governments' willingness to monitor progress between European Council summits and, if needed, call for renewed action.

Figure 3: European Council conclusions per type of conclusions since 2012



Source: EPRS.

3. European Council's defence agenda: meetings and lines of action

The European Council's defence agenda refers to both meetings on matters of defence and to the policy issues discussed as part of these meetings. Since December 2012, the European Council has maintained a 'rolling agenda' of meetings and themes on defence, as explained below in sections 3.1 and 3.2.² As shown in figure 1, defence was discussed at eight regular European Council meetings to date. The addition to this pattern was the informal meeting of the EU-27 Heads of State or Government in Bratislava when the EU leaders adopted a [Declaration and Roadmap](#) on the 'Future of Europe' and included clear defence objectives. Defence has been a [rather consensual item](#) on the European Council's agenda and, so far, has been kept outside of the Leaders' Agenda and Leaders' Meetings which were introduced in October 2017 to allow the Heads of State of Government to focus on rather sensitive policy issues such as migration.

3.1 Introducing and maintaining defence on the European Council agenda

In December 2012, European defence cooperation was put on the agenda of the European Council for the first time since December 2008. At that time, the Heads of State or Government stated their intention to keep defence as a rolling item on their agenda and, with the exception of June 2016, all European Council conclusions on defence have either clearly specified the date when they would discuss defence again (e.g., the [December 2013](#) European Council indicated that it will take stock of progress made on defence cooperation at its June 2015 meeting) or introduced a general commitment to keep defence on the agenda (this is the case, for example, with the [June 2015](#) and the [December 2016](#) European Councils).

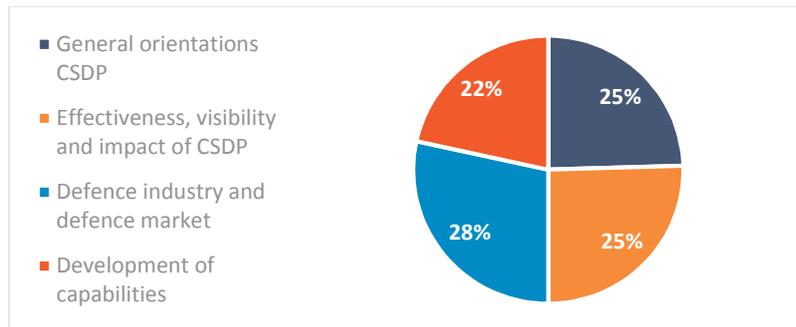
The absence of defence issues from, and their return to, the forefront of the European Council agenda is due to a series of interrelated factors. Firstly, from 2008 onwards, the EU was confronted with the '[sovereign debt crisis](#)', which required the full attention of the Heads of State or Government. The first mandate (December 2009-May 2012) of the first permanent President of the European Council, Herman van Rompuy, was marked by the need to address and find sustainable solutions to the crisis, and little time was left for debates in other policy areas, including defence. Secondly, there was a dramatic drop in defence spending after 2005, leading [experts](#), who estimated a 9% drop in military spending between 2005 and 2014, to warn of a growing risk of military equipment obsolescence unless collective action was taken to overcome this trend. Thirdly, the international security landscape changed fundamentally in the four-year period when defence was absent from the European Council agenda. The crises spawned by the outbreak of the civil wars in Libya and Syria in 2011 confronted the EU with increasing instability in its neighbourhood. These two external crises had a major domestic effect on the Union with the emergence of the migration crisis in 2015.

A second series of push factors hastened the process of European defence cooperation and highlighted the 'rolling agenda' as a working path. The first push factor for the EU was the 2014 Russian annexation of Crimea. The second push factor, illustrating the internal-external nexus, was the January and November 2015 terrorist attacks in France, which demonstrated the continued threat from groups such as [Al-Qaeda](#) and [ISIL/Da'esh](#). The third push factor was the June 2016 UK referendum on European Union membership that contributed to triggering the 'Future of Europe' debate, in which security and defence feature prominently. The fourth and final push factor was the November 2016 election of US President Donald Trump, who had notably questioned his commitment to Article V of the NATO charter and publicly criticised EU allies and institutions. In turn, the European Council rededicated itself to NATO and to the EU pursuit for 'strategic autonomy' through three lines of action in their rolling agenda on defence first established in 2012.

3.2 The European Council's 'rolling' lines of action on defence

The European Council defines the EU's [strategic interests](#) and sets the general orientations and guidelines in Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) (Articles 15 and 26 TEU). In its conclusions, the European Council has set general policy orientations and has requested progress on individual policy items clustered under three main lines of action. These lines of action were defined by the European Council in December 2012. They include: 1) the 'effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP', which comprises, inter alia, crisis management, including civilian and military CSDP missions and operations funding; response to hybrid threats; cyber defence; and EU-NATO cooperation; 2) the development of the defence industry and defence market; and 3) the development of capabilities. Figure 4 shows that CSDP general orientations and the three lines of action received relatively equal attention from the European Council in its conclusions.

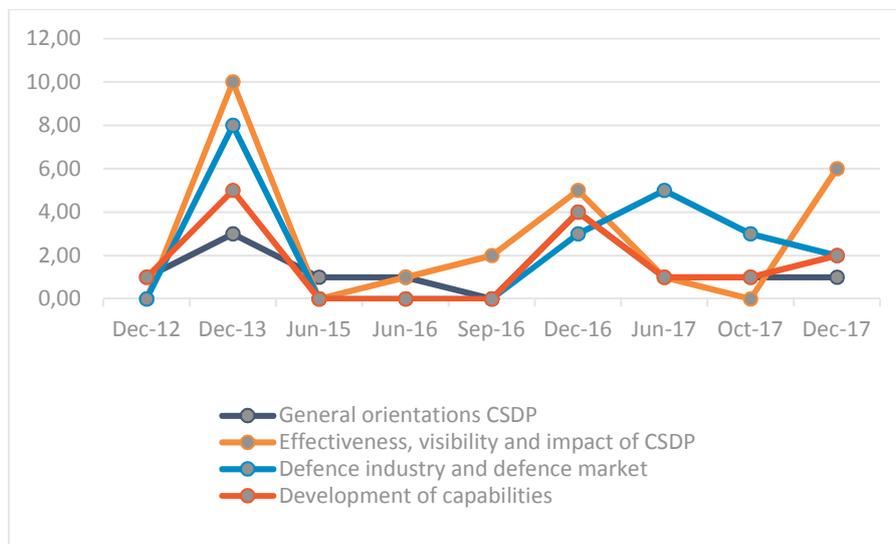
Figure 4: European Council conclusions by line of action since 2012



Source: EPRS.

Both the December 2013 and the June 2015 European Councils recalled these initial lines of action. Starting with the June 2016 summit when the European Council 'welcomed the presentation' of the EU global strategy, these lines of action were no longer explicitly mentioned in the European Council conclusions, but continued to be followed in practice. At that summit, the Heads of State or Government focused more on general CSDP orientations and less on concrete commitments. This is reflected in the low number of commitments (2) that were adopted. From December 2016 onwards, as the EU global strategy implementation process advanced, the number of concrete commitments increased, although it has not yet equalled the peak of 26 commitments reached in December 2013 (see figure 5).

Figure 5: Commitments undertaken by line of action in defence since 2012

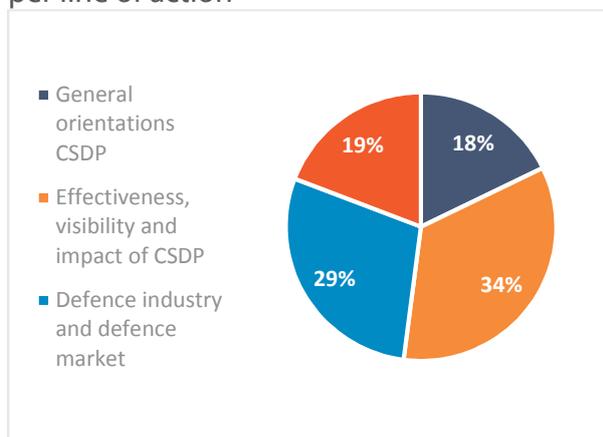


Source: EPRS.

Out of the 73 commitments undertaken by the European Council at its meetings dedicated to defence since 2012, only 19 (listed in annex 1), have a clear deadline or timetable for completion. Of these 19 commitments, 13 were completed by the deadline or shortly after, five remain works in progress, and one was not fulfilled within the deadline. This is the case of the review of the [Athena mechanism](#) (common costs of military CSDP operations) which was expected to be completed by the end of 2017 and is still ongoing. In the past, the Athena mechanism proved to be a sensitive issue for Member States and its previous review, dating back to 2015, was [regarded](#) as 'disappointing'.

The largest share (34 %) of European Council commitments falls into the 'effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP', as shown in figure 6. To a large extent, this is due to the fact that the 'effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP' line of action grew from the traditional remit of CSDP, namely crisis management.

Figure 6: European Council commitments per line of action



Source: EPRS.

A total of 29 % of the European Council's defence commitments were dedicated to the development of a defence industry and defence market, whilst 19 % of commitments pertained to the development of capabilities. The European Council made most of the defence commitments during three European Council summits: December 2013, December 2016, and December 2017 (see figure 5). The December 2013 European Council introduced a roadmap with concrete objectives to attain under each line of action, including occasionally clear-cut deadlines for the completion of commitments (e.g., the European Council asked that an 'EU Cyber Defence Policy Framework' should be adopted by the end of 2014) (see annex 1). At that European Council, the Heads of States or Government requested a strategic review by 2015, which led to the development and **presentation in June 2016 of the EU global strategy**. The European Councils that have followed since June 2016, and especially the December 2016

Box 1: What does 'effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP' mean?

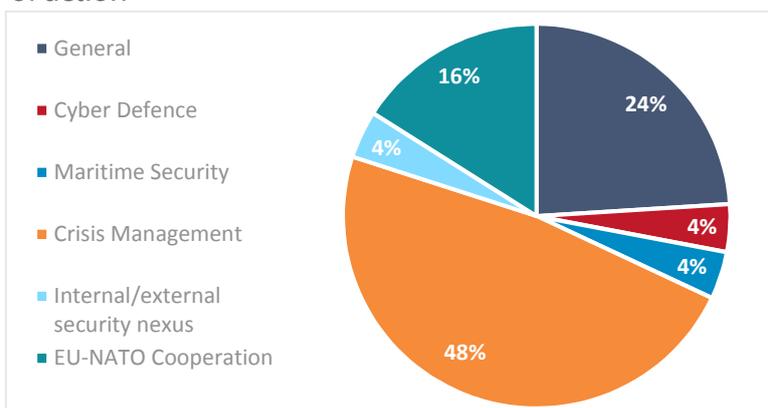
The December 2013 European Council was the first attended by a NATO Secretary-General, when Anders Fogh Rasmussen (2009-2014) addressed the body and called for Europe to invest more in defence and 'develop real capabilities ... that our nations really need'.

In response, the European Council delivered an unequivocally strong political message: 'defence matters'. The first line of action in the European Council's conclusions advocated 'increasing the effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP'. In order to meet this objective and 'to enable the EU and its Member States to respond, in coherence with NATO efforts' to challenges emerging in the internal-external security nexus, the European Council called for:

- 'an EU Cyber Defence Policy Framework in 2014';
- 'an EU Maritime Security Strategy by June 2014';
- 'increased synergies between CSDP and freedom/security/justice actors';
- 'progress in developing CSDP support for third states and regions';
- and 'strengthening cooperation to tackle energy security challenges'.

Source: [European Council conclusions](#), December 2013.

Figure 7: European Council commitments undertaken under the 'effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP' line of action

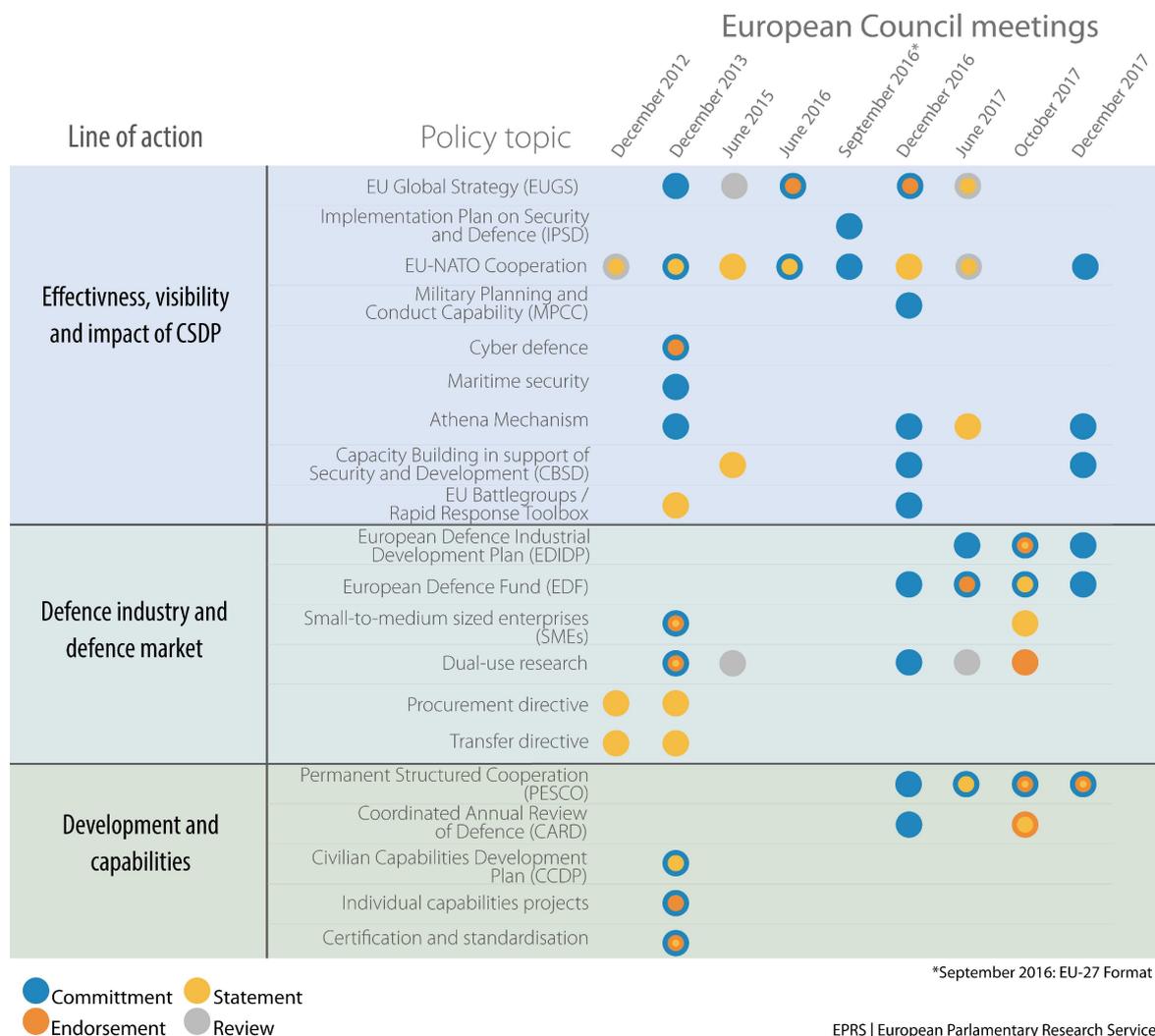


Source: EPRS.

and December 2017 summits, gave new impetus to CSDP through a series of commitments undertaken in all three lines of action as part of the implementation of the EU global strategy.

Crisis management represents the highest share of commitments (48 %) adopted under **'effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP'** (see figure 7). A concrete example of a commitment pertaining to crisis management is the 'permanent operational planning and conduct capability'. The European Council called for this institutional development at its December 2016 meeting and, later on, in June 2017, a [Military Planning and Conduct Capability](#) (MPCC) was established within the European External Action Service (EEAS) with the aim of allowing more consistency in the planning and conduct of 'non-executive' military CSDP missions, three of which ([EUTM Somalia](#), [EUTM Mali](#) and [EUTM RCA](#)) are currently ongoing. The second largest share of commitments (16 %) adopted under this category relate to EU-NATO cooperation. For example, the July 2016 [Warsaw Joint Declaration with NATO](#) stems from a June 2016 European Council commitment. At that time, Heads of States or Government asked the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, and the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, to adopt a common declaration on EU-NATO cooperation jointly with NATO Secretary-General, Jens Stoltenberg.

Table 1: Frequency of appearance on the European Council agenda of selected issues



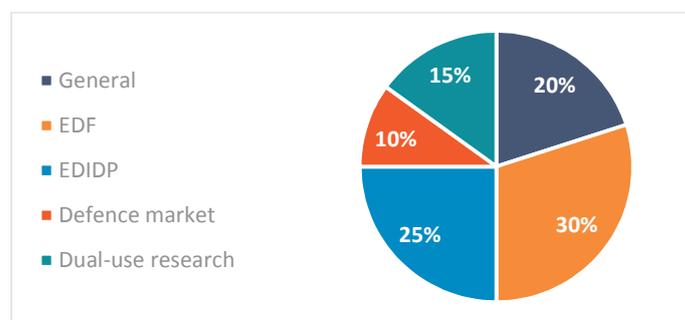
Source: EPRS; Graphic by Nadejda Kresnichka-Nikolchova.

The relatively high share of EU-NATO commitments, as well as the regularity with which this topic appears on the European Council agenda shows the robust political commitment of the Heads of State or Government to transatlantic security, including the reinforcement of the eastern flank. Furthermore, at their informal meeting held in Bratislava in September 2016 in the EU-27 format,

the Heads of State or Government [called](#) for an immediate start to 'implementing the joint declaration with NATO'. By the December 2016 European Council, the [seven areas of cooperation](#) identified in the Warsaw Joint Declaration with NATO began to be implemented, thus fulfilling the [objective](#) first set in Bratislava. Cooperation with NATO has been mentioned in the conclusions of each European Council where defence was discussed since 2012, with the exception of the October 2017 European Council (see table 1). Political level cooperation between the two organisations was strengthened through the past years, leading the NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, to attend the European Council regularly for an exchange of views with the Heads of State or Government on EU-NATO cooperation.

The European Council made an initial set of commitments pertaining to the **defence industry and the defence market** at the [December 2013 summit](#), with the aim, among other things, of fostering dual-use research and strengthening small and medium-sized enterprises' (SMEs) access to 'supply chains' across Member States. No further commitments were made under this line of action until December 2016 when the European Council 'welcomed' the European Commission's European Development Action Plan (EDAP). The EDAP [introduced](#) a holistic approach to the defence industry and defence market by calling for the development of a 'research window', the development of a 'capabilities window', the fostering of defence market competitiveness, and the development of 'dual-use activities' for SMEs. It triggered the presentation by the European Commission in June 2017 of a communication on the [European Defence Fund](#) (EDF) and of a legislative proposal on the [European Development Industrial Program](#) (EDIDP). From December 2016 onwards, the EDF and EDIDP captured the attention of Heads of State or Government under this line of action, and therefore represent 55 % of the share of commitments illustrated in Figure 8. In December 2017, the European Council [called](#) on the European Parliament and the Council, as co-legislators, to conclude the EDIDP legislative process by 2018, to allow for funding for a first series of capability projects starting in 2019. Steps to comply with the European Council's demand were undertaken in May 2018 when the co-legislators reached a [provisional agreement](#) on the EDIDP.

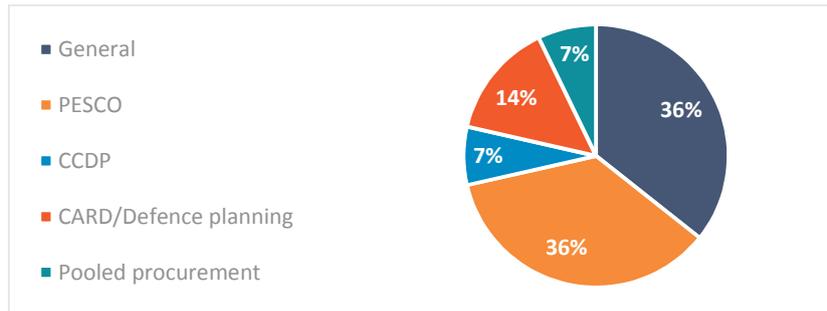
Figure 8: European Council commitments undertaken under the defence industry and defence market line of action



Source: EPRS.

The European Council committed to the **development of capabilities** as early as December 2012 and this trend continued in December 2013 (see figure 5 above). No commitments were made on the development of capabilities between the December 2013 and the December 2016 European Councils. Nonetheless, during this period, the Heads of State or Government continued to express their political support for the development of capabilities. For example, in June 2015, the European Council [recalled](#) its December 2013 conclusions and specified that 'work will continue' on 'the further development of both civilian and military capabilities'. Beginning in December 2016, when the European Council [endorsed](#) the Council's conclusions on the EU global strategy and on the [Implementation Plan on Security and Defence \(IPSD\)](#), attention under this line of action was mostly dedicated to two mechanisms, PESCO and the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), as shown in figure 9 and table 1.

Figure 9: European Council commitments on the development of capabilities



Source: EPRS.

PESCO is a [Treaty-based](#) mechanism (Articles 42(6) and 46 TEU and Protocol No 10), which allows Member States to go further and make 'more binding commitments' in the area of defence. Since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the European Parliament has repeatedly [called](#) upon the Member States to activate PESCO. Due to a lack of political consensus, early [attempts](#) were unsuccessful. In December 2017, the Council [launched](#) PESCO with 25 EU Member States participating in the mechanism, a move '[welcomed](#)' by the European Council. Out of the initial list of [17 PESCO projects](#), 'military mobility' is the only one, which has, so far, attracted the European Council's attention. The Heads of State or Government invited the High Representative/Vice President of the European Commission (HR/VP), Federica Mogherini, the European Commission, and the Member States 'to bring work forward on military mobility', both through PESCO and as part of the EU-NATO cooperation, to ensure synergies between the EU-led and the NATO-led initiatives.

The EU global strategy and the IPSP requested an annual review to assess EU Member States' military capabilities. This exercise, entitled [CARD](#), is aimed at identifying shortfalls that could eventually be addressed through targeted projects developed, inter alia, in a PESCO format and funded by the EDF and/or Member States. The European Council first referred to CARD in December 2016, when it requested the HR/VP to make suggestions on the set of rules applicable to the annual review. This request was fulfilled in May 2017 when the Council, based on the work of HR/VP, [adopted](#) the rules applicable to CARD and designated the European Defence Agency (EDA) as responsible for the yearly report. The first CARD report is expected by November 2018. The ultimate objective of the CARD exercise is to ensure that Member States dispose of, or develop, the capabilities required under the Capability Development Plan (CDP) for specific military tasks. The CDP, which is currently under review and needs to reflect the 'level of ambition' set in the EU global strategy, has so far not been mentioned in any of the European Council conclusions. The Civilian Capabilities Development Plan (CCDDP) which is also about to be reviewed, was mentioned only once in the December 2013 European Council conclusions. Heads of State or Government have subsequently stressed 'the importance of fully implementing' the CCDDP.

4. Conclusion

The analysis demonstrates that, in time, the political commitment to European defence cooperation made by the Heads of State or Government has been supported by action. The European Council has displayed continuity in its action on security and defence, from the beginning of this process in 2012 until today. It has thus created a 'rolling agenda' on security and defence, including mechanisms such as PESCO, CARD, EDF, and EDIDP, on which it is likely to continue to focus at its upcoming meetings. The introduction in 2016 of the EU global strategy coincided with a number of push factors, including the deterioration of the security situation in the East, the migration crisis, the UK referendum on European Union membership, and the election of a new US President, that have accelerated the desire for European defence cooperation. The constant presence on the agenda of EU-NATO cooperation demonstrates the commitment to shared transatlantic security and defence of EU Heads of State or Government.

Annex 1: Status of completion of European Council commitments having a specific deadline (2012-2018)

Line of action	Topic	Commitment	European Council	Deadline	Status
Effectiveness, visibility and impact of CSDP	Cyber defence	'...calls for an EU Cyber Defence Policy Framework in 2014, on the basis of a proposal by the High Representative, in cooperation with the Commission and the European Defence Agency.'	Dec-13	2014	Fulfilled by deadline
	Maritime security	'... calls for an EU Maritime Security Strategy by June 2014, on the basis of a joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative, taking into account the opinions of the Member States, and the subsequent elaboration of action plans to respond to maritime challenges.'	Dec-13	Jun-14	Fulfilled by deadline
	EUGS	'...invites the High Representative, in close cooperation with the Commission, to assess the impact of changes in the global environment, and to report to the Council in the course of 2015 on the challenges and opportunities arising for the Union, following consultations with the Member States.'	Dec-13	'course of 2015'	Fulfilled by deadline
		'...the High Representative will continue the process of strategic reflection with a view to preparing an EU global strategy on foreign and security policy in close cooperation with Member States, to be submitted to the European Council by June 2016.'	Jun-15	Jun-16	Fulfilled by deadline
	EU-NATO	'...The President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission will issue a declaration together with the NATO Secretary General in Warsaw in July.'	Jun-16	Jul-16	Fulfilled by deadline
	Athena mechanism	'...looks forward to a comprehensive revision of the Athena mechanism, by the end of 2017.'	Dec-16	'end of 2017'	Still under review
	Battlegroups	'...the High Representative will present proposals in the coming months as regards [...] the strengthening of the relevance, usability and deployability of the EU's rapid response toolbox.'	Dec-16	'coming months'	In progress
	CBSD	'...the High Representative will present proposals in the coming months as regards [...] the covering of all requirements under the Capacity Building in Security and Development (CBSD).'	Dec-16	'coming months'	Discussed, Mar-2017, May-2017, Nov-2017 Councils
		'...calls on the co-legislators to work speedily on the Commission proposal on CBSD with a view to reaching agreement in the first half of 2017.'	Dec-16	'first half of 2017'	Fulfilled by November 2017
		'...requests the Council adopt, in spring 2018, a recommendation on a new dedicated instrument covering all requirements for Capacity Building in support of Security and Development after 2020.'	Dec-17	'Spring 2018'	In progress

Line of action	Topic	Commitment	European Council	Deadline	Status
	Hybrid threats ³	'invites the European Commission and the High Representative to take [...] work forward [on resilience to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear-related risks] and report on progress by the June European Council'	Mar-18	June 2018	Discussed Apr -2018
Development of capabilities	Satellite communication	'...a users' group [on satellite communication] should be set up in 2014.'	Dec-13	2014	Fulfilled by deadline
	CARD	'... the High Representative will present proposals in the coming months as regards [...] the parameters of a Member State-driven Coordinated Annual Review on Defence.'	Dec-16	'coming months'	Fulfilled by May 2017
	PESCO	'...to launch permanent structured cooperation (PESCO).'	Dec-16	'coming months'	Fulfilled by December 2017
		'...A common list of criteria and binding commitments, fully in line with Articles 42(6) and 46 TEU and Protocol 10 to the Treaty – including with a view to the most demanding missions – will be drawn up by Member States within three months, with a precise timetable and specific assessment mechanisms, in order to enable Member States which are in a position to do so to notify their intentions to participate without delay.'	Jun-17	Sep-17	Fulfilled by November 2017
Development of the defence industry and defence market	Certification and standardisation	'...The EDA and the Commission will prepare a roadmap for the development of defence industrial standards by mid-2014, without duplicating existing standards, in particular NATO standards.'	Dec-13	'mid-2014'	Fulfilled by deadline
		'...Together with the Commission and Member States, the EDA will also develop options for lowering the costs of military certification, including by increasing mutual recognition between EU Member States. It should report to the Council on both issues by mid-2014.'	Dec-13	'mid-2014'	Fulfilled by November 2014
	EDIDP	'...calls for an agreement within the Council by the end of [2017 on EDIDP]'	Oct-17	End of 2017	Fulfilled by deadline
		'...with a view to concluding negotiations with the European Parliament [on the EDIDP] as soon as possible.'	Oct-17	'as soon as possible'	In progress Provisional agreement reached by co-legislators in May 2018
		'...calls for [...] the swift adoption in 2018 of the European Defence Industrial Development Programme, in time to finance the first capability projects in 2019.'	Dec-17	2018	In progress

Source: EPRS, based on the European Council conclusions.

FURTHER READING

Biscop, S., '[European Defence: What's in the CARDS for PESCO?](#)', Egmont – The Royal Institute for International Relations, October 2017.

Blockmans, S., '[Europe's defence train has left the station – speed and destination unknown](#)', Center for European Policy Studies, December 2017.

Hall, A., Black, J., Kepe, M., and Bekkers, F., '[A constant eye on the future: Identifying Europe's Capability Requirements for 2035](#)', European Defence Matters 14, pages 11-13, December 2017.

Lazarou, E., and Friede, A., '[Permanent structured cooperation \(PESCO\): Beyond establishment](#)', EPRS, European Parliament, March 2018.

Scheinert, C., '[European defence industrial development programme \(EDIDP\)](#)', EPRS, European Parliament, June 2018.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ The methodology used to cluster European Council conclusions as commitments, endorsements, reviews and statements is currently being developed by the European Council Oversight Unit as part of a larger project to establish a database based on the EPRS publication, '[European Council Conclusions: A Rolling check-list of commitments to date](#)'.
- ² The term 'rolling agenda' was initially used in the EPRS study '[From Bratislava to Rome: The European Council's role in shaping a common future for EU-27](#)'.
- ³ The March 2018 European Council meeting did not focus on security and defence. The EU leaders discussed the poisoning of Serghei and Iulia Skripal which has occurred in Salisbury on 4 March 2018 and recalled the international ban on [chemical weapons](#), including the 'nerve agent' [used](#) in the attack. At the express [request](#) of the European Council President, Donald Tusk, the Heads of State or Government [expressed the view](#) that 'the European Union must strengthen its resilience to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear-related risk' and that a progress report should be presented by June 2018. As a follow up, the Foreign Affairs Council [adopted](#) conclusions on chemical disarmament in April 2018, then in June 2018, the European Commission and High Representative issued a [Joint communication on hybrid threats](#).

DISCLAIMER AND COPYRIGHT

This document is prepared for, and addressed to, the Members and staff of the European Parliament as background material to assist them in their parliamentary work. The content of the document is the sole responsibility of its author(s) and any opinions expressed herein should not be taken to represent an official position of the Parliament.

Reproduction and translation for non-commercial purposes are authorised, provided the source is acknowledged and the European Parliament is given prior notice and sent a copy.

© European Union, 2018.

eprs@ep.europa.eu (contact)

www.eprs.ep.parl.union.eu (intranet)

www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank (internet)

<http://epthinktank.eu> (blog)

