

The EU strategic autonomy debate

An increasing number of politicians and analysts argue that the European Union should boost its 'strategic autonomy' and/or develop a higher degree of 'European sovereignty'. These concepts encompass a greater potential for independence, self-reliance and resilience in a wide range of fields – such as defence, trade, industrial policy, digital policy, economic and monetary policy, and health policy – following a series of events in recent years that have exposed Europe's vulnerability to external shocks.

The debate emerged in the late 2010s, after the French President, Emmanuel Macron, called for a conscious 'European sovereignty' and the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, said that Europe would have to take its destiny into its own hands, as it could no longer necessarily rely on the United States to protect it. This latter statement followed President Donald Trump's withdrawal from the landmark nuclear deal with Iran, in which the EU had invested significant political capital. In parallel, there is growing concern about the implications for Europe of the progressive hardening of positions between the US and China, on both economic and political fronts.

This note offers links to recent **commentaries, studies and reports from international think tanks** on the European issues related to European strategic autonomy and sovereignty.

[The Conference on the Future of Europe: Comparing the Joint Declaration to institutions' expectations](#)

European Policy Centre, March 2021

[Steady as she goes: Key takeaways from the Commission's new fiscal guidance](#)

European Policy Centre, March 2021

[Money talks: EU strategic autonomy requires a strong euro](#)

European Policy Centre, March 2021

[Lessons from the battleground: EU strategic autonomy after the 'vaccine wars'](#)

European Policy Centre, February 2021

[Stepping into the driver's seat: The EU should double down on US-Iran diplomacy](#)

European Policy Centre, February 2021

[Fostering Europe's strategic autonomy - Security and defence policy: Time to deliver](#)

European Policy Centre, October 2020

[How Brussels sees the future of Europe after Covid-19](#)

European Policy Centre, September 2020

[Differentiated cooperation in European Foreign Policy: The challenge of coherence](#)

European Policy Centre, August 2020

[Breaking the law of opposite effects: Europe's strategic autonomy and the revived transatlantic Partnership](#)

Egmont, March 2021

[For a new NATO-EU bargain](#)

Egmont, February 2021

[The EU-MENA partnership: Time for a reset](#)

Egmont, February 2021

[No peace from corona: Defining EU strategy for the 2020s](#)

Egmont, January 2021

[Ten reflections on a sovereignty-first Brexit](#)

Centre for European Reform, December 2020

[The EU can't separate climate policy from foreign policy](#)

Bruegel, March 2021

[Strategic autonomy or strategic alliance?](#)

Bruegel, February 2021

[The geopolitics of the European Green Deal](#)

Bruegel, February 2021

[US separates climate concerns from financial oversight in contrast to EU activism](#)

Bruegel, February 2021

[Résilience : La nouvelle boussole](#)

Bruegel, January 2021

[Getting America back in the game: A multilateral perspective](#)

Bruegel, January 2021

[From self-doubt to self-assurance: The European External Action Service as the indispensable support for a geopolitical EU](#)

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung; Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies; Centre for European Policy Studies, January 2021

[From scale to purpose? The EU's support for start-ups in the global race for tech dominance](#)

Bertelsmann Stiftung, January 2021

[European strategic autonomy and third countries: The defence industrial dimension](#)

Globsec, January 2021

[Europe and Biden: Towards a new transatlantic pact?](#)

Wilfried Martens Centre, January 2021

[The strategic compass charting a new course for the EU's Security and Defence Policy](#)

Wilfried Martens Centre, December 2020

[Deglobalisation in the context of United States-China decoupling](#)

Bruegel, December 2020

[Europe is losing competitiveness in global value chains while China surges](#)

Bruegel, November 2020

[What if... not? The cost of inaction](#)

European Union Institute for Security Studies, January 2021

[Fostering Europe's strategic autonomy: A question of purpose and action](#)

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, European Policy Centre, December 2020

[Time to go beyond the meta-debate on EU strategic autonomy in defence](#)

Jacques Delors Centre, December 2020

[Sovereignty over supply? The EU's ability to manage critical dependences while engaging with the world](#)

European Union Institute for Security Studies, December 2020

[Climate superpowers: How the EU and china can compete and cooperate for a green future](#)

European Council on Foreign Relations, December 2020

[A new transatlantic bargain: An action plan for transformation, not restoration](#)

European Council on Foreign Relations, November 2020

[Protect, constrain, contest: Approaches for coordinated transatlantic economic and technological competition with China](#)

LSE Ideas, January 2021

[Unlocking European defence: In search of the long overdue paradigm shift](#)

Istituto Affari Internazionali, January 2021

[The quest for European strategic autonomy: A collective reflection](#)

Istituto Affari Internazionali, January 2021

[Space as a key element of Europe's digital sovereignty](#)

Istituto Affari Internazionali, December 2020

[Europe of defence in the new world \(dis\)order: Choices for Italy](#)

Istituto Affari Internazionali, November 2020

[Going transatlantic: The EU's lean walk towards strategic relevance](#)

Istituto Affari Internazionali, November 2020

[Pourquoi l'Europe doit-elle être stratégiquement autonome?](#)

IFRI, December 2020

[Are Europe's leaders ready for a Biden presidency?](#)

Clingendael, November 2020

[Rebuilding the transatlantic relationship: Transatlantic policy forum in review](#)

Europeum, November 2020

[The EU's strategic compass and its four baskets: Recommendations to make the most of it](#)
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik, November 2020

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