

The EU's new bilateral security and defence partnerships

SUMMARY

The Strategic Compass, adopted by the 27 EU Member States in March 2022 – only weeks after the onset of Russia's unjustified and unprovoked aggression on Ukraine – emphasised the need for robust partnerships, for the EU to be able to achieve its objectives in the area of security and defence. Alongside 'acting' (operations), 'securing' (resilience) and 'investing', 'partnering' is one of the four main pillars of the Compass. The document itself outlines specific targets and deadlines to measure progress in this area.

While the EU has partnered with other security and defence actors (essentially states and international organisations) in the past, a new model of tailored security and defence partnership was launched shortly after the adoption of the Compass, as a reinforced framework for enhanced partnership. To date, the EU has signed six such partnerships – with (by date of signature) Norway, Moldova, South Korea, Japan, Albania and North Macedonia, and more are envisaged. While the partnerships vary in content, depending on the assessed mutual interests of the EU and each individual partner, some ten areas of cooperation are common to all six.

The European Parliament has highlighted the significance of the Strategic Compass's partnership dimension and, in particular, the value of security and defence dialogues with partners from the Western Balkans, the Eastern Partnership, as well as with key partners in strategic maritime areas such as the Southern Neighbourhood and the Indo-Pacific. Parliament has underlined that cooperation with countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Norway, Ukraine, Georgia, the Western Balkans, Japan, Australia and certain African countries serves as a key element of the common security and defence policy. In 2023, it called for deeper military and defence cooperation with Japan and South Korea, and for closer cooperation with partners in Latin America and the Caribbean.



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Author: Elena Lazarou with Panagiotis Politis Lamprou

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Strategic Compass: Reinforced emphasis on partners

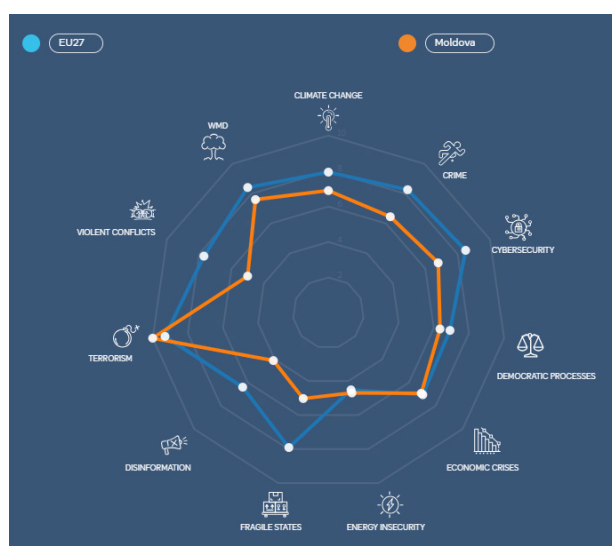
Following the adoption, in 2022, of the [Strategic Compass](#) – a jointly agreed action plan for the EU to achieve its goals in security and defence – the EU launched a new set of tailored [security and defence partnerships](#) (SDPs). SDPs constitute a relatively new framework for cooperation aimed at further strengthening bilateral relations with like-minded partners in the fields of peace, security and defence; this is envisaged in the Compass, in which the EU commits to engaging 'more coherently, consistently and comprehensively' with its bilateral partners and to building '**tailored partnerships**' based on shared values and interests. In that vein, SDPs are (legally non-binding) instruments that provide tailor-made and mutually beneficial frameworks for boosting the EU's political and practical cooperation with its partners.¹ So far, **six such partnerships** have been launched and signed. An analysis of their content illustrates that, while several areas of cooperation span all six agreements, the focus largely depends on each partner's needs and particularities. For example, within the SDP with Moldova, there is a clear interest in hybrid threats and on countering foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI), as well as in integrated border management – all of which constitute significant policy areas of mutual interest.

All SDPs contain a review clause of the content 'as appropriate', allowing for adjustments possibly depending on the progress made and on potential developments or new priorities. The European External Action Service (EEAS) is responsible for negotiating and concluding the provisions of the SDPs after being authorised by the [Political and Security Committee](#). The SDPs are signed by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP) and the respective partner country's minister for foreign affairs and/or minister for defence.

Moldova

The [EU–Moldova Security and Defence Partnership](#) was signed on 21 May 2024 during the Eighth Moldova–EU Association Council. The bilateral partnership underlines that both parties 'face an

Figure 1 – Threats to peace and democracy: Moldova vs EU-27



Source: E. Lazarou and B. Stanicek, [Normandy Index](#), European Parliament, 2024. Higher levels of the indicator(s) indicate better performance and reduced threat levels.

increasingly challenging security environment inter alia due to ongoing Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine', and look for ways to 'seize the momentum to further intensify cooperation to better address shared challenges and strengthen Moldova's resilience'. Subsequently, the SDP upgrades the EU–Moldova security and defence consultations to an annual EU–Moldova Security and Defence Dialogue (at the level of head of directorate/managing director), and will assist Moldova in 'transposing and implementing the EU standards and building capacities related to [the] protection of classified information'.

The 11 areas of cooperation are closely related to the country's efforts to increase its **resilience against conventional, cyber and hybrid threats**. In particular, the EU and Moldova will continue to enhance the latter's military forces and capabilities, thus consolidating its participation in EU

CSDP military missions and operations (see Table 1). Additionally, reference is made to Moldova's potential contribution to the EU [rapid deployment capacity](#) and the EU's (live) military exercises. On the civilian aspect, the parties will explore possibilities for developing the country's **civilian capacities**, to enable its experts' participation in EU CSDP civilian missions.

In addition, cooperation on **countering hybrid threats** will be fostered by sharing analysis and best practice, and by participating in exercises. At the same time, the [EU partnership mission in Moldova](#) (EUPM) will support the strengthening of Moldova's crisis management structures. Concerning **cyber issues**, apart from deepening the existing cooperation and having exchanges on tools for preventing, detecting and countering malicious cyber activities, the EU will support cyber capacity building and rapid response assistance, while the EUPM will offer strategic advice and operational support to the country's National Cyber Security Agency. The cooperation under the European peace facility (EPF) will be further advanced in order to strengthen Moldova's national security, stability and resilience in the defence sector. With respect to strategic communications and countering FIMI, the parties agreed to share information on threat assessments in the field of disinformation proactively, and explore opportunities for operational cooperation. At the same time, the EU will support Moldova's efforts to build its institutions' capacities.

The partnership includes provisions for potential cooperation and/or consultations on (i) non-proliferation, disarmament and conventional weapons; (ii) counterterrorism and violent extremism; and (iii) integrated border management (e.g. irregular migration/human trafficking, organised crime and arms trafficking). With regard to **defence industrial initiatives**, the EU and Moldova will explore the latter's potential participation in permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) projects and other initiatives, including joint procurement. The possibility of conducting technical consultation between the European Defence Agency (EDA) and Moldova's Ministry of Defence will also be considered. Furthermore, the cooperation in CSDP training and education, including participation in the European Security and Defence College (ESDC), will continue. Finally, gender equality will be ensured by exchanging good practice.

Norway

As one of the closest European partners, the EU and Norway signed a [security and defence partnership](#) on 28 May 2024. The partnership includes 17 different areas of cooperation, which both parties intend to expand. The EU and Norway commit to providing and strengthening long-term support for **Ukraine**, including through the EPF, to which [Norway](#) already contributes (so far with two contributions totalling an estimated €36.5 million). The parties agree to expand further their cooperation in international peace and crisis management.

More specifically, Norway will continue participating in EU CSDP civilian missions and crisis management exercises (e.g. [Integrated Resolve](#) and [MILEX](#)), and consider potential participation in military operations. Norway has **participated in three military and nine civilian missions and operations**. Most recently, in 2024, it was invited to offer contributions to the [EU mission in Armenia](#) (EUMA) and the [EU partnership mission in the Republic of Moldova](#) (EUPM). Other actions include intensifying interaction and exchange of information, including in the context of Norway's intention to contribute to a CSDP mission or operation, and deepening exchanges on consular matters regarding the protection of their citizens in third countries.

The partnership also refers to maritime security, and to the objective of promoting a free and rules-based **maritime security environment** by organising joint activities and port calls, as well as by improved dialogue on the EU's maritime initiatives, including through the EU's [coordinated maritime presences](#). In a 2023 [paper](#), experts had highlighted that, as a non-EU member, Norway needs bilateral agreements to join many of the EU maritime security initiatives, which they considered of particular importance to Norwegian security and defence interests.

Moreover, the EU and Norway will examine opportunities to enhance Norway's participation in European defence industrial initiatives. The text explicitly references the **European defence industry programme (EDIP) and PESCO**.

The two partners will also boost their cooperation regarding **space** security and defence through Norway's participation in EU space-related programmes, and work towards enhancing their coordination in relevant multilateral forums, such as the United Nations (UN). Strengthened cooperation and regular exchanges are also envisaged on cyber issues, hybrid threats and strategic communications (including countering FIMI).

Cooperation on **counterterrorism** and the prevention of violent extremism, as well as on conflict prevention, will also be explored. Moreover, the EU and Norway will intensify consultations to improve the **resilience of critical infrastructure** in the continent, including **underwater infrastructure**.² Furthermore, the parties will deepen their consultations and coordination on non-proliferation and disarmament treaties and instruments and export control regimes, while promoting a dialogue among nuclear-weapon states to establish a potential future framework for nuclear arms control. Further opportunities in the field of capacity building will be explored, while training and education cooperation with the ESDC will be developed.

Regarding cooperation in third countries, EU delegations and offices will seek to exchange information with Norwegian missions and embassies. In **multilateral forums**, the EU and Norway will **strengthen their consultations** on issues relating to the UN, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe, while increasing their regular exchanges on EU–NATO cooperation and contributions to and support for UN peacekeeping operations. Lastly, both parties will aim to address shared risks concerning the external aspects of economic security, and ensure that gender equality is incorporated into the cooperation on security and defence.

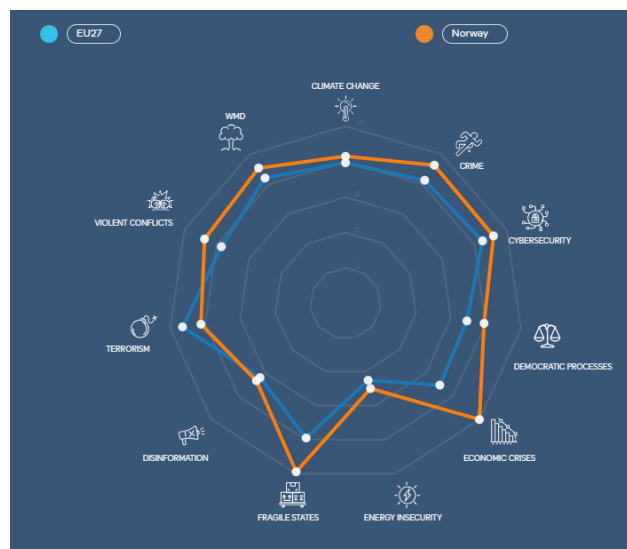
Japan

On 1 November 2024, the EU and Japan signed an [SDP](#). In the preamble, the parties highlight the interconnectivity and interdependence between Europe and the Indo-Pacific, underlining an 'increasingly challenging and interlinked security environment as demonstrated by unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force'.

Building on existing cooperation and dialogue frameworks, such as the [Japan–EU Strategic Partnership Agreement](#) (2018), it is agreed that both parties will further strengthen their cooperation, including by exploring the possibility of a Japan–EU agreement on the security of information and of coordination of capacity building and support for other partners. In 2022, Japan was the first country with which the EU [launched](#) a digital partnership.

The areas of cooperation and target dialogue are structured along nine thematic topics. First, **maritime security exchanges** will be deepened, while concrete **naval cooperation** will be promoted

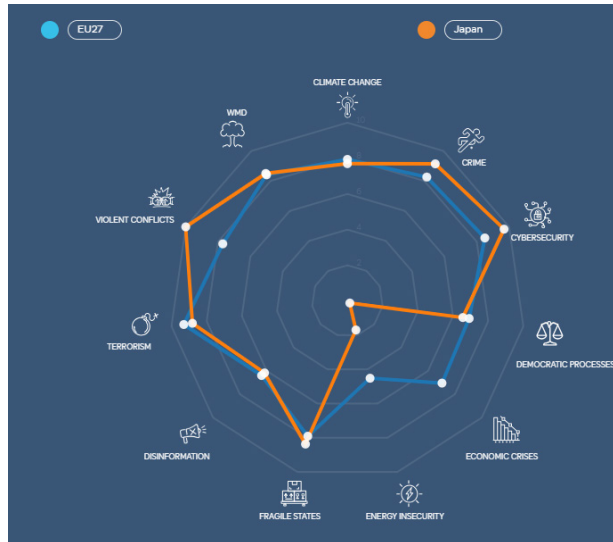
Figure 2 – Threats to peace and democracy: Norway vs EU-27



Source: E. Lazarou and B. Stanicek, [Normandy Index](#), European Parliament, 2024. Higher levels of the indicator(s) indicate better performance and reduced threat levels.

through the 2023 [administrative arrangement](#) (AA) between [EUNAVFOR Atalanta](#) and the Japanese Self Defence Forces. Cooperation will be further strengthened through (i) activities, such as joint exercises, which may also allow for the participation of mutually designated third countries;

Figure 3 – Threats to peace and democracy: Japan vs EU-27



Source: E. Lazarou and B. Stanicek, [Normandy Index](#), European Parliament, 2024. Higher levels of the indicator(s) indicate better performance and reduced threat levels.

(ii) exploring cooperation in the framework of the EU's CMP initiative; and (iii) exploring possible cooperation on maritime capacity building of third countries in the Indo-Pacific region. Concerning **space security** and defence, the parties will look into the possibility of expanding the EU–Japan Space Policy Dialogue to include topics pertaining to space security. At the same time, they will promote coordination of external engagement in multilateral,³ plurilateral and bilateral forums, to promote responsible behaviour in outer space. Practical cooperation will also be enhanced in the cyber domain by promoting the [UN framework for responsible state behaviour in cyberspace](#), establishing the relevant UN programme of action, and developing and implementing cyber confidence-building measures in the ASEAN Regional Forum.

On FIMI, the partnership emphasises the need to deepen research and study on hybrid threats, share best practice in developing relevant strategies and policies,

and share information on threat assessment proactively. Concerning non-proliferation and disarmament, the EU and Japan will strengthen their bilateral consultations and jointly promote their coordination in the framework of multilateral treaties and export control regimes, as well as the relevant dialogue among nuclear-weapon states. Moreover, the partnership envisages consultations on the development of respective defence initiatives and the possibility of mutual involvement in them. Regarding peace, conflict prevention and crisis management, further cooperation will be explored in various fields, including the CSDP and joint support for third states, and coordination will be enhanced vis-a-vis relevant multilateral forums.

On counter-terrorism and preventing/countering violent extremism, strengthened interaction between the different entities in these fields will be explored, and the parties will coordinate in multilateral and regional forums. On Women Peace and Security (WPS), the EU and Japan, being committed to the WPS agenda, will exchange good practice, and ensure gender equality in their cooperation on security and defence.

Republic of Korea (RoK)

The EU and the Republic of Korea (RoK) – South Korea – signed their [SDP](#) on 4 November 2024. Before that, the 2023 [EU–RoK Summit joint statement](#) had reaffirmed that the bilateral partnership 'is grounded in common interests' and in shared global threat perceptions, 'notably Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) nuclear and missile programmes, as well as multi-dimensional challenges'.

The parties have already been cooperating in a number of fields, as demonstrated by the EU–RoK [Framework Agreement](#), which covers most area of mutual interest, including **political dialogue, development, education, justice and security**; the 2011 [Free Trade Agreement](#); and the 2016 [Framework Participation Agreement](#) (FPA) in EU crisis management operations – the first between

the EU and a country in Asia. In 2022, the EU and South Korea launched a [digital partnership](#), one of only four the EU currently has.

Building on the existing cooperation formats, and because of the strong strategic convergence of the two parties, the SDP aims to 'develop and strengthen dialogue and cooperation across the whole range of security and defence topics'.

At the political level, the annual ministerial-level EU–RoK Strategic Dialogue will provide oversight of and guidance for the SDP. At the technical level, the existing Security and Defence Consultations will be upgraded to an annual RoK–EU Security and Defence Dialogue at the director-general/EU managing director level. Specific thematic structured dialogues, including possible annual Indo–Pacific consultations to coordinate approaches to the region, will report to and inform the annual Security and Defence Dialogue. Additionally, the signing parties will explore the possibility of concluding an EU–RoK agreement on the security of information, as well as establishing a secure communications connection.

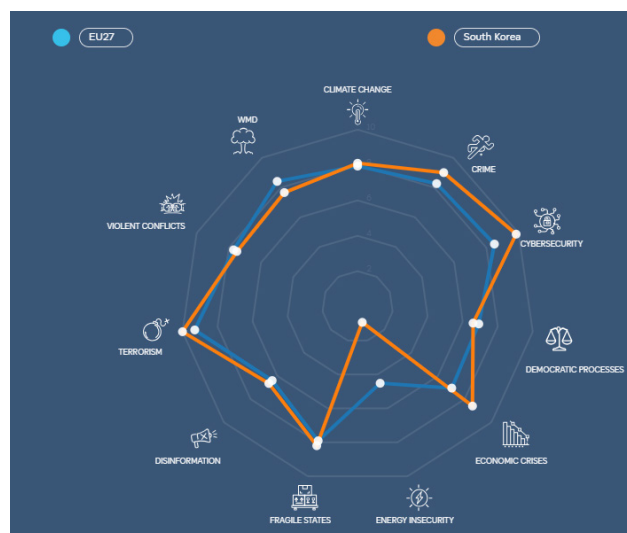
Concerning specific areas of cooperation envisaged in the SDP, South Korea will expand its participation in the EU CSDP civilian and military missions and operations, building on the existing FPA.

On **maritime security**, the parties acknowledge their common values (including respect for international law, and in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, UNCLOS), and agree to (i) strengthen their exchanges, and (ii) establish a regular maritime security dialogue to foster mutual understanding, strengthen operational cooperation, develop joint activities, explore cooperation under the EU's Coordinated Maritime Presence initiative and on maritime capacity building of third states in the broader region of the Indian Ocean, Southeast Asia and the Pacific (South Korea is a [contributing nation](#) to EUNAVFOR Atalanta). Regarding cyber issues, the EU–RoK Cyber Policy Consultation will be deepened, and they will continue to coordinate and cooperate at multilateral, regional and bilateral levels.⁴

The parties agree that hybrid threats constitute a major common challenge, and commit to deepening their cooperation on research and analysis, sharing best practice in developing strategies and policies, and coordinating possible diplomatic responses. The annual EU–RoK Security and Defence Dialogue will be used to discuss hybrid threats, including other relevant topics such as cybersecurity, FIMI and economic security. In particular, on FIMI, the EU and South Korea will expand their ongoing bilateral exchanges towards more structured, operational cooperation, and proactively share information on disinformation-related threat assessments.

On non-proliferation, disarmament and international transfer of conventional weapons, as well as in the field of responsible artificial intelligence in the military domain, the parties will deepen their consultations while promoting coordination vis-à-vis multilateral treaties and export control regimes, and encouraging enhanced dialogue among nuclear-weapon states towards future possible nuclear arms control framework. Concerning space, a dialogue on space security will be established, and coordination of external engagement in multilateral and bilateral forums will be further pursued.

Figure 4 – Threats to peace and democracy: South Korea vs EU-27



Source: E. Lazarou and B. Stanicek, [Normandy Index](#), European Parliament, 2024. Higher levels of the indicator(s) indicate better performance and reduced threat levels.

Exchanging information on defence industry-related matters and exploring cooperation on CSDP-related training, education, peace mediation, and conflict prevention (including joint support for third states) has also been agreed. Cooperation on the external aspects of economic security, human trafficking, and transnational organised crime will be explored, as well. Finally, both parties have declared their commitment fully to implement the women, peace and security agenda enshrined in [UN Resolution 1325](#), and to ensure gender equality 'as a political and security related priority'.

Table 1 – SDP countries' existing participation in CSDP missions and operations

CSDP missions and operations/partners	NATO allies				NATO global partners	
	EFTA state Norway	EU candidate countries			Japan	South Korea
		Moldova	Albania	North Macedonia		
EUFOR Althea	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
EULEX Kosovo	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
EUNAVFOR Atalanta	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
EUTM Somalia	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗

North Macedonia and Albania

On 19 November and 18 December 2024 respectively, the EU signed SDPs with [North Macedonia](#) and [Albania](#), with almost identical content. Both partnerships establish a Security and Defence Dialogue between the two parties and explore the possibility of establishing further thematic consultations on fields of mutual interest.⁵ Both texts underline that the basis of the partnerships

Figure 5 – Threats to peace and democracy: Albania vs EU-27



Source: E. Lazarou and B. Stanicek, [Normandy Index](#), European Parliament, 2024. Higher levels of the indicator(s) indicate better performance and reduced threat levels.

stems from the respective stabilisation and association agreements, and underscore that the parties have adopted strategic documents (notably the EU's Strategic Compass, Albania's 2024 [National Security Strategy](#) and North Macedonia's [Defence Strategy](#)), which focus on the cooperation with allies and partners. Both countries are already **established contributors to the CSDP**, with a notable participation in the military operation [Althea](#) in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2006 for both [Tirana](#) and [Skopje](#), among [other operations](#). Concerning the collaboration envisaged, there are 13 similar areas of cooperation in both documents. Initially, the EU and its two partners will boost their cooperation in the field of CSDP, aiming to consolidate the two candidate countries' participation in EU military CSDP missions and operations, including a **potential future contribution to the EU rapid deployment capacity** and participation in EU (live) military exercises. Accordingly, they will

explore options for reinforcing Albania's and North Macedonia's civilian capacities to achieve greater participation in EU civilian CSDP missions. Regarding the war in Ukraine, all parties are committed to continuing to provide support to Kyiv for 'as long as necessary'. All parties will bolster their cooperation and exchange best practice on hybrid threats. At the same time, the EU and Albania will

additionally seek ways to foster collaboration on relevant research and analysis. Apart from exchanging tools to 'prevent, deter and respond' to cyber issues, the EU will support Albania's and North Macedonia's cyber resilience capabilities.

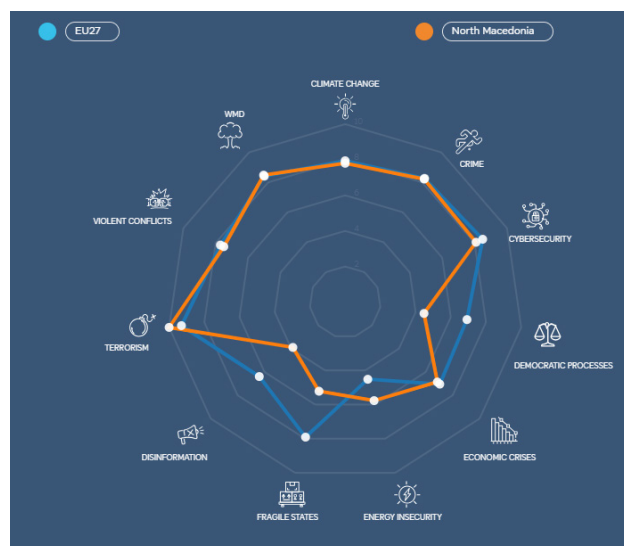
Furthermore, with regard to capacity building, the EU will continue support both countries' Armed Forces in order to strengthen their operational effectiveness and interoperability. The partnerships also refer to the EPF's role in boosting the countries' national security. Similar capacity-building assistance will also be provided for STRATCOM and FIMI. Moreover, in non-proliferation and disarmament, both partnerships highlight the roadmap on small arms and light weapons (SALW) control in the Western Balkans, and the EU action plan on firearms trafficking. Additionally, cooperation in the field of counterterrorism and the prevention/countering of violent extremism will take a whole-of-society approach. This is in line with the approach embodied in the [report](#) 'Safer together: Strengthening Europe's civil and military preparedness and readiness' by former Finnish President Sauli Niinistö, in his capacity as Special Advisor to Commission President von der Leyen.

Regarding consultations on defence initiatives, tools and instruments, the partnership texts state that the possibility of participating in PESCO projects and adopting mutually beneficial cooperation with the EDA will be explored in both cases. In the case of North Macedonia, in particular, there is a clear focus on boosting cooperation in military mobility to facilitate the movement of military goods and staff, including through potential participation in the EU's actions for harmonisation and reduction of administrative processes and procedures. In addition, the ESDC will play a significant role in training and education between the EU and the two partners. At the same time, cooperation in the external aspects of integrated border management will also entail irregular migration, organised crime and international trafficking. On women, peace and security, all parties will continue to cooperate closely in order to ensure gender equality as a political and security priority. A unique area of cooperation not included in other partnerships is the [protection of cultural heritage in conflict and crises](#). As described in both documents, 'crimes related to cultural heritage, especially trafficking in cultural property, represent a threat'. Finally, the EU and its partners will exchange good practice on the external dimension of economic security.

Outlook

Although some 10 areas of cooperation are common to all SDPs, they also include several **tailor-made elements** that largely depend on the EU's and the respective partner's needs and interests (see Table 2). For example, while all the SDPs refer to consultations on 'defence initiatives' and on 'defence tools and instruments', those with Japan and South Korea do not include the latter; this highlights the EU's willingness to promote closer **defence (industrial) links with partners in its geographical proximity**. Similarly, the SDPs with Albania and North Macedonia entail an area of cooperation relating to **protecting cultural heritage in conflict and crises**, something that is not

Figure 6 – Threats to peace and democracy: North Macedonia vs EU-27



Source: E. Lazarou and B. Stanicek, [Normandy Index](#), European Parliament, 2024. Higher levels of the indicator(s) indicate better performance and reduced threat levels.

present in other partnerships. Additionally, because of the unique collaboration that exists between the **EU and NATO member Norway**, their tailored partnership agreement is the only one that includes a provision for more profound exchanges on **consular matters**.

A global environment for partnering?

Beyond the EU, the proliferation of bilateral and multilateral security and defence partnerships – often with a tailored focus – is on the rise across the world. The **United States**, for example, has established a [network](#) of some **18 bilateral Security of Supply Agreements (SOSA)** in order to facilitate priority delivery of defence-related materials and services to meet a country's security policy requirements.

Another example is that of **Australia and the Philippines**, which, in February 2024, [signed](#) new memoranda of understanding to strengthen their cooperation in the maritime domain and in the cyber and critical technologies sectors. The two countries [committed](#) to fostering collaboration in civil maritime security and maritime awareness, and to continue to conduct cooperative maritime activities to ensure regional peace and stability. Earlier, in August 2023, Australia and the Philippines conducted [Exercise Alon](#), a joint amphibious activity, which is part of the Indo-Pacific Endeavour. On cyberspace and critical technologies, they will jointly 'promote the open and secure use of cyberspace'.

Experts have had **mixed reactions to the level of ambition of the new partnerships**. An earlier [paper](#) by the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) argued that any form of new partnership, which it referred to as a 'Strategic Partnership Plus format', should not remain another statement of intent but should 'reflect the importance the EU attributes to the respective partnerships in contrast to others'. The new 'tailored' approach could be conceptualised as aiming to accomplish that, although the proof will be in the **implementation**. The same paper also proposed that few selected partners could be invited to participate regularly in the Political and Security Committee and the Foreign Affairs Council, but without voting rights. Additionally, it argued in favour of new administrative arrangements (AAs) with the EDA, with close partners that do not already have one. An [analysis](#) by the Wilfred Martens Centre, focusing specifically on the partnership with Japan, notes that the partnership's success hinges both on the political limitations present in each partner country and on the relevance and priority attached to other allies, notably – for Japan – the United States.

Beyond the new SDP format, the EU maintains various types of security and defence arrangements with partners that include **NATO, the United States, the African Union** and a host of other countries. These include AAs with the EDA, framework participation agreements, and bilateral single- or multi-focus dialogues. In the wider space of European security, the above-mentioned EUISS paper identifies **around 200 defence partnerships**; they also include bilateral agreements between EU Member States, and between individual EU Member States and third countries. Nevertheless, as the focus of this briefing is on the new tailored SDP instrument, the analysis has been limited to the six countries with which the EU has engaged and reached such an agreement.

Table 2 – Comparison of the content of the EU's tailored security and defence partnerships

	Areas of cooperation and relevant activities	NATO allies				NATO global partners	
		EFTA state	EU candidate countries			Japan	South Korea
		Partner	Norway	Moldova	Albania		
			28.5.24	21.5.24	19.11.24	19.11.24	1.11.24
1	EU CSDP missions and operations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Hybrid threats	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Cyber issues	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Coordination/cooperation on (cyber) capacity building	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Coordination/cooperation on capacity building for partners	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
6	STRATCOM and/or FIMI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	Non-proliferation and disarmament, conventional weapons, including SALW*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Counterterrorism and preventing/countering violent extremism	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Consultations on relevant defence initiatives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	Consultations on relevant defence tools and instruments	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
11	Training and/or education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12	Integrated border management	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
13	Women, peace and security	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14	(Continued long-term) support for Ukraine	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
15	Maritime security	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
16	Space security and defence	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
17	Resilience of critical infrastructure	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
18	International peace/peace mediation/conflict prevention/crisis management	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
19	Deepening exchanges on consular matters	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
20	Coordination in international forums	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
21	(External aspects of) economic security	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
22	Possibility to conclude security of information agreement	Already exists	Already exists	Already exists	Already exists	✓	✓
23	Possibility to establish secure communications connection	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
24	(External aspects of) human trafficking and transnational organised crime	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
25	Protection of cultural heritage in conflict and crises	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗

Sources: Security and defence partnerships between the EU and the [Republic of Moldova](#) (5.2024); [Norway](#) (5.2024); [Japan](#) (11.2024); the [Republic of Korea](#) (11.2024); [North Macedonia](#) (11.2024); and [Albania](#) (11.2024).

Note: This list non-exhaustive; it assesses the presence or absence of areas of cooperation in the agreements; similar areas of cooperation implicitly or more vaguely present in the agreements may not be listed.

European Parliament position

The European Parliament's [2023 annual report](#) on the implementation of the CSDP refers to the significance of the Strategic Compass's partnership dimension. It highlights the **security and defence dialogues' added value**, especially with partners from 'the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership, but also with key partners in strategic maritime areas such as those stretching from the Southern Neighbourhood and the Indo-Pacific, from the east coast of Africa to the South Pacific and from the Arctic to the Far East'. Similarly, the [2022 annual report](#) considered the security and defence partnerships as a necessary tool to meet the EU's ambition to be a global actor. It underlined that cooperation with countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Norway, Ukraine, Georgia, Western Balkan countries, Japan, Australia and certain African countries serves as a key element of the CSDP. Additionally, in the same report, the European Parliament called for **deepening military and defence cooperation with Japan and South Korea, and closer cooperation with partners in Latin America and the Caribbean**.

MAIN REFERENCE

Lazarou, E. and Stanicek, B., [Mapping threats to peace and democracy worldwide: Normandy Index 2024](#), EPRS, European Parliament, September 2024.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ European External Action Service, '[The EU's Expanding Toolkit for Partnerships in Peace and Security](#)', May 2024.
- ² Norway has expressed keen interest in protecting underwater (e.g. energy and telecommunications) infrastructure in the North Sea. For instance, in April 2024, Norway signed a [Joint Declaration on cooperation to secure critical subsea infrastructure](#) with Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Moreover, a Norwegian–German initiative to strengthen NATO's role in the protection of undersea infrastructure has recently been [signed](#).
- ³ Japan and the EU will contribute to a joint panel discussion of the First and the Fourth UN Committee, to discuss about challenges relating to space security and sustainability.
- ⁴ Special reference is made to the DPRK's illicit cyber activities, which are used to fund its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles.
- ⁵ For Albania, the Security and Defence Dialogue will take place annually. For North Macedonia, the document makes no such reference.

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eprs@ep.europa.eu (contact)

<https://eprs.in.ep.europa.eu> (intranet)

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