



## COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

The common security and defence policy (CSDP) is a policy setting the EU's framework in the field of defence and crisis management, including defence cooperation and coordination between Member States. An integral part of the Union's common foreign and security policy (CFSP)<sup>[1]</sup>, the CSDP has given birth to internal EU political and military structures, allowing for military and civilian missions and operations abroad.

### LEGAL BASIS

The Treaty of Lisbon (also known as the Treaty on European Union (TEU)), which entered into force in 2009, sets the overall framework for today's CSDP, clarifies its institutional aspects and strengthens the role of the European Parliament with regard to the policy.

Article 41 of the TEU outlines the funding of the CFSP and CSDP. 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 specific role of the European Parliament in the CFSP and CSDP is set out in Article 36 of the TEU.

Innovations in the Treaty of Lisbon have provided an opportunity to improve the political coherence of the CSDP. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who also acts as Vice-President of the European Commission (VP/HR), occupies the central institutional role, heading the European External Action Service (EEAS), chairing the Foreign Affairs Council in its 'Defence Ministers configuration' (the EU's CSDP decision-making body) and directing the European Defence Agency (EDA). The VP/HR – currently Josep Borrell – usually issues proposals for decisions on the CSDP to Member States.

### TREATY PROVISIONS FOR THE CSDP

The European Council and the Council of the European Union (Article 42 of the TEU) make the decisions relating to the CSDP. These decisions are taken by unanimity, with some notable exceptions relating to the EDA (Article 45 of the TEU) and permanent structured cooperation (PESCO, Article 46 of the TEU), to which majority voting applies.

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[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.



The Treaty of Lisbon introduced the notion of a European capabilities and armaments policy (Article 42(3) of the 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) of the TEU). This concerns in particular the Union's research, industrial and space policies, for which Parliament was given a stronger role regarding the CSDP.

In addition, Article 21 of the TEU recalls that multilateralism is at the core of the EU's external action. This includes partners' participation in CSDP missions and operations, as well as working together on a variety of security and defence issues. The EU is committed to various frameworks for deeper coordination and cooperation, in particular with the UN and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), as well as – among others – the African Union, the G5 Sahel, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

## **CSDP: A RAPIDLY EVOLVING POLICY**

The CSDP has greatly evolved since the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, both politically and institutionally.

In June 2016, VP/HR Federica Mogherini presented to the European Council an 'EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy' (EUGS), which lays out the strategy for the CSDP. The EUGS 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. The implementation of the EUGS should be reviewed annually in consultation with the Council, the Commission and Parliament.

In November 2016, the VP/HR also presented to the Council an '[Implementation Plan on Security and Defence](#)', which aimed to operationalise the vision set out in the EUGS on defence and security issues. The plan set out 13 proposals, including a coordinated annual review on defence (CARD); a better EU rapid response; and a new single permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) arrangement for those Member States willing to take on greater commitments to security and defence. In parallel, Ms Mogherini presented a [European Defence Action Plan](#) (EDAP) to Member States, with key proposals relating to a [European Defence Fund](#) (EDF) focusing on defence research and capability development. This plan was a major step towards implementing the internal EU political and military structures set out in the CSDP.

Since the start of his mandate in December 2019, VP/HR Josep Borrell has placed the strengthening of the CSDP at the very heart of the EU's work, and pursues and reinforces the initiatives launched by Ms Mogherini.

To give new impetus to the its security and defence agenda, the EU is now working on a Strategic Compass, which seeks to provide an enhanced politico-strategic direction for EU security and defence and set the level of ambition in this area. The first step, which drew to a close in November 2020, was a comprehensive analysis of threats and challenges. The second step, currently underway, consists of informal discussions among Member States about the threat analysis and its main implications, a capability gap analysis and Member States' priorities. This dialogue phase should enable Member



States to reinforce their common understanding of the security threats they collectively face, and enhance European security and defence culture. This process is designed to address the growing need for the EU to be able to act as a security provider.

Crisis management missions and operations are the most visible and tangible expression of the CSDP. According to VP/HR Josep Borrell, enhanced engagement through CSDP missions and operations, with more robust but also flexible mandates, is key. The Strategic Compass aims to remedy the EUGS gaps when it comes to EU crisis management tools and institutions, and provide coherent guidance for other initiatives and relevant processes (including PESCO, EDF and CARD), by setting clear goals and objectives.

While the European Parliament does not have a direct role in the establishment of the Strategic Compass, it is expected to be regularly informed and given opportunities to express its opinions on the process, in particular during briefings to the Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE). During the April 2021 SEDE session, MEPs and experts discussed the threat assessment process, the protection of the global commons, and a clear pathway in terms of objectives, means and capabilities.

## **DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CSDP TOOLBOX**

With regard to developing and harmonising defence cooperation between Member States, the CSDP has had a number of successes since 2016. These include: the launch of PESCO; a permanent command and control structure for planning and conducting non-executive military missions; a mechanism for mapping defence capabilities; a European Defence Fund and its two precursor programmes; improved military mobility; a strategic review of the civilian dimension of the CSDP which took the form of a Civilian CSDP Compact; an off-budget European Peace Facility; a more robust cyber policy; and stronger cooperation with NATO.

In 2019-2020, the first full CARD cycle took place, with the EDA acting as the penholder. The final CARD report was presented to defence ministers in November 2020. It identifies 55 collaborative opportunities across the entire capability spectrum.

In December 2020, the Council reached a provisional political agreement with Parliament representatives on a regulation establishing the EDF, in the context of the multiannual financial framework (MFF) for 2021-2027. With an EDF budget of EUR 8 billion for 7 years, the EU will become one of the top three defence research investors in Europe.

The European Peace Facility is one of the latest CSDP tools. Through this instrument, the EU will fund the common costs of the military CSDP missions and operations, thus enhancing solidarity and burden sharing between Member States. By strengthening the capacities of peace support operations and of third countries and partner organisations in military and defence matters, it will help to increase the effectiveness of the EU's external action.



## CSDP MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS FROM 2003 TO 2021

Since 2003 and the first interventions in the Western Balkans, the EU has launched and run 36 operations and missions on three continents. As of May 2021, there are 17 ongoing CSDP missions and operations, 11 of which are civilian and 6 military, involving around 5 000 EU military and civilian staff deployed abroad. The most recent missions and operations have supported security in the Central African Republic (EUAM RCA) and enforce the UN arms embargo on Libya (EUNAVFOR MED IRINI). EU decisions to deploy missions or operations are normally taken at the request of the partner country to which assistance is provided and/or based on a UN Security Council resolution.

## ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The European Parliament has traditionally supported EU defence integration and cooperation. It scrutinises the CSDP and can take the initiative of addressing the VP/HR and the Council about it (Article 36 of the TEU). It also exercises scrutiny over the policy's budget (Article 41 of the TEU). Twice a year, Parliament holds debates on progress in implementing the CFSP and the CSDP, and adopts reports: one on the CFSP, drawn up by the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET); and one on the CSDP, drawn up by the Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE).

In December 2020, the European Parliament adopted its [annual report on the implementation of the CSDP](#). Parliament reiterated its support for PESCO, CARD and the EDF, as they can contribute to greater coherence, coordination and interoperability in implementing the CSDP, and consolidate solidarity, cohesion, and the resilience and strategic autonomy of the Union. It welcomed the EU's commitment to increasing 'its global presence and ability to act', while calling on the VP/HR and the Council to 'provide a common formal definition of strategic autonomy'. It called for more effective CSDP missions by increasing the force contribution of Member States and through gender mainstreaming, among other things. It further welcomed the capability development initiatives, noting the need to ensure their coherence. The report also addressed issues related to new technologies, hybrid threats, arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation regimes, as well as cooperation with strategic partners such as NATO, the UN and the United Kingdom. Since 2012, the European Parliament and the Member States' national parliaments have organised two interparliamentary conferences per 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. The Treaty of Lisbon enables Parliament to play a full role in developing the CSDP, thus making it a partner in shaping the Union's external relations and addressing challenges such as those described in the [2008 Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy](#).

In order to fulfil this role, Parliament holds regular deliberations, hearings and workshops devoted to such topics as 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 European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission.

The European Parliament also asks questions and makes oral suggestions to the EEAS on the CSDP, notably during SEDE meetings. For instance in January 2021, some Members of SEDE suggested that the Commission create an ad hoc team to compensate for the lack of personnel made available by Member States in civilian missions.

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