

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

The common security and defence policy (CSDP) is an integral part of the EU's common foreign and security policy (CFSP). The CSDP is the main policy framework through which Member States can develop a European strategic culture of security and defence, address conflicts and crises together, protect the Union and its citizens, and strengthen international peace and security. As a result of the tense geopolitical context, the CSDP has been one of the fastest developing policies over the last 10 years. Since 24 February 2022, the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has acted as a geopolitical reset for Europe and created further impetus for what should become an EU Defence Union.

LEGAL BASIS

The CSDP is described in the Treaty of Lisbon, also known as the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which entered into force in 2009.

More specifically, the workings of the CSDP are explained in Title V (General provisions on the Union's external action and specific provisions on the common foreign and security policy), Chapter 2 (Specific provisions on the common foreign and security policy) and Section 2 (Provisions on the common security and defence policy) of the Treaty of Lisbon. Section 2 comprises five articles: Articles 42 to 46.

The role of the European Parliament in the CFSP and the CSDP is defined in Title V, Chapter 2, Section 1 (Common provisions) and Article 36, and the funding arrangements for both policies are set out in Article 41.

The CSDP is further described in annexes to the Treaty of Lisbon, mainly Protocols No 1 (on the role of national parliaments in the European Union), 10 (on Permanent Structured Cooperation established by Article 42 TEU) and 11 (on Article 42 TEU), as well in Declarations 13 and 14 (Declarations concerning the common foreign and security policy).

ORGANISATION

The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who also acts as the Vice-President of the European Commission (VP/HR), occupies the central institutional role. Since December 2019, Josep Borrell has been the VP/HR. He chairs the Foreign Affairs Council in its Defence Ministers configuration, which is the decision-making body for the CSDP. He is in charge of presenting CSDP proposals to Member States. The VP/HR is the head of the European External Action Service and the director of the European Defence Agency (EDA).

The European Council and the Council of the European Union take decisions relating to the CSDP by unanimity (Article 42 of the TEU). Some notable exceptions are decisions relating to the EDA (Article 45 of the TEU) and Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO, Article 46 of the TEU), for which qualified majority voting applies.

The Treaty of Lisbon introduced a European capabilities and armaments policy (Article 42(3) of the TEU) and established that the EDA and the Commission work in liaison when necessary (Article 45(2) of the TEU), most notably when it comes to the EU's research, industrial and space policies.

In addition, Article 21 of the TEU recalled that multilateralism is at the core of the EU's external action. Accordingly, EU partners can participate in CSDP missions and operations. The EU is committed to deeper coordination and cooperation within various multilateral frameworks, in particular with the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), but also with other regional bodies such as the African Union.

EVOLUTION

Since the Treaty of Lisbon, the CSDP has evolved significantly, both politically and institutionally.

In June 2016, VP/HR Federica Mogherini presented the 'EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy' (EUGS) to the European Council, a document setting out the CSDP strategy. Five priorities were identified: 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.

In November 2016, the VP/HR also presented to the Council an 'Implementation Plan on Security and Defence' to operationalise the EUGS's vision. The plan set out 13 proposals, including a coordinated annual review on defence (CARD) and a new arrangement for Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) for Member States willing to commit further on security and defence.

In parallel, Ms Mogherini presented a European defence action plan to the Member States, with key proposals relating to the creation of a European Defence Fund (EDF) that focuses on defence research and capability development. These have been implemented over the last few years.

In June 2021, the EU launched a reflection on the future of European security and defence. This process led to the creation of the Strategic Compass on Security and Defence, a policy document which lays down the EU's security and defence strategy for the next 5-10 years. The Strategic Compass provides a framework of action for the development of a shared vision in the field of security and defence. The document was developed in three steps: a threat analysis, a structured strategic dialogue, and further development and revision before adoption. Its main objective is to provide political guidance for implementing the EU's 'strategic autonomy' in four key areas: crisis management, resilience, capabilities and partnerships. The process is designed to address the growing need for the EU to be able to act as a security provider. In November 2021, VP/HR Borrell presented the initial version of the document to a joint session of EU Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministers.

In the context of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine (which began on 24 February 2022), the paper had to be significantly altered to take into account the destabilisation of the European security order and the subsequent change in the EU's

stance, ambitions and tools in the realm of defence. On 24 and 25 March 2022, during the French Presidency of the Council, the European Council endorsed the final version of the Strategic Compass.

As a consequence of the war, Denmark abolished its opt-out with regard to the EU's defence policy, which it obtained in 1992. The Danes agreed to join the CSDP via a referendum organised on 1 June 2022 (with 66.9% voting in favour). All 27 Member States therefore now contribute to the CSDP.

Crisis management missions and operations are the most visible and tangible expressions of the CSDP. The Strategic Compass addresses the EUGS's gaps in crisis management tools and institutions, for example by creating a new EU Rapid Deployment Capacity. In the 2021 report on the implementation of the CSDP, Parliament expressed support for the proposed 'rapid entry force'. The Strategic Compass also aims to provide coherent goals and objectives for other initiatives and relevant processes (such as PESCO, the EDF and CARD).

While Parliament did not have a direct role in the establishment of the Strategic Compass, it must be kept regularly informed of the level of implementation and given opportunities to express its opinions on the process, in particular during briefings to the Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE). Through its own annual reports on the CSDP, the SEDE subcommittee assumes a de facto advisory role on the CSDP.

THE CSDP TOOLBOX

Since 2016, the CSDP has achieved a number of successes, including the launch of PESCO; a permanent command and control structure for planning and conducting non-executive military missions; the EDF; the Civilian CSDP Compact; a strategic review of the civilian dimension of the CSDP; and an off-budget European Peace Facility (EPF). In addition, the Commission and the VP/HR presented the European Defence Industrial Strategy (EDIS) on 5 March 2024, aimed at strengthening the competitiveness and readiness of the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB).

The first CARD report was presented to EU Defence Ministers in November 2020, with the EDA acting as the penholder. It identified 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 for 2021-2027. The allocated budget for seven years is EUR 8 billion. The EDF will stimulate European defence industry cooperation. The 2024 EDF Work Programme includes 32 different topics on which projects can be proposed.

Through the European Peace Facility (EPF), an off-budget instrument, the EU funds the common costs of the military CSDP missions and operations, thereby enhancing burden sharing between the Member States. The EPF can also be used to finance the provision of training and military equipment (including lethal equipment) for EU partner countries' security and defence sectors. By reinforcing the capacities of peace support operations and the capacities of non-EU countries and partner organisations

in military and defence matters, the EU will increase the effectiveness of its external action. Between 2022 and 2024, the EU mobilised EUR 11.1 billion under the EPF to support the Ukrainian armed forces.

On 19 July 2022, the Commission put forward a proposal for a regulation on establishing the European Defence Industry Reinforcement through common Procurement Act (EDIRPA) after being given a mandate for this at the Versailles Summit in March 2022. The EDIRPA is a short-term joint defence procurement instrument worth EUR 500 million. It seeks to address the most urgent and critical defence capability gaps and to incentivise Member States to procure defence products jointly. Following interinstitutional negotiations, Parliament adopted the regulation in plenary on 12 September 2023. Similarly, on 3 May 2023, the Commission put forward a proposal for an act in support of ammunition production, which aims to provide Ukraine with ammunition, increase common procurement and augment production capacity. Following brief interinstitutional negotiations, Parliament adopted the act on 13 July 2023.

On 5 March 2024 by way of follow-up to the more short-term emergency measures (the Act in Support of Ammunition Production, or ASAP, and EDIRPA) ending in 2025, the Commission proposed a draft regulation on the European Defence Industrial Programme (EDIP) to provide financial support of EUR 1.5 billion from the EU budget over the period 2025–2027. The EDIP will seek to be a more structural and longer-term regime based on collaborative EU-based investment and production, ensuring the availability and supply of defence products on a steady basis.

Aiming to increase the competitiveness and readiness of the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) and incentivise Member States' cooperation on joint procurement, the goal is to procure at least 40% of defence equipment collaboratively and 50% from within the EU by 2030, rising to 60% by 2035.

To this end, in its draft regulation the Commission proposes a Fund to Accelerate defence Supply chains Transformation (FAST) to support small and medium-sized enterprises, the establishment of a modular and gradual EU Security of Supply regime, a Structure for European Armament Programme (SEAP) to enhance cooperation through a VAT waiver; and a European Military Sales Mechanism focused on the availability of EU equipment.

CSDP MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS

Since 2003 and the first intervention in the Western Balkans, the EU has launched and run 40 operations and missions on three continents. As of October 2023, there are 24 ongoing CSDP missions and operations. About 4 000 EU military and civilian staff are currently deployed abroad. EU decisions to deploy missions or operations are normally taken at the request of the partner country and/or based on a UN Security Council resolution. The most recent mission, the European Union's Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) operation ASPIDES was launched to protect the freedom of navigation and safeguard maritime security in the Red Sea, the North-West Indian Ocean and the Gulf. With a defensive mandate, ASPIDES escorts vessels and increases maritime situational awareness against sea or air attacks.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The European Parliament is supportive of EU defence integration and cooperation. Parliament scrutinises the CSDP and can take the initiative of addressing the VP/HR and the Council (Article 36 TEU). It also exercises scrutiny over the CSDP's budget (Article 41 TEU). Twice a year, Parliament holds debates on the implementation of the CFSP and the CSDP and adopts reports: one on the progress of the CFSP, drawn up by the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and one on the progress of the CSDP, written by the SEDE subcommittee.

The [2023 annual report on the implementation of the CSDP](#) was adopted in Parliament's plenary session on 28 February 2024. The report focuses on enhancing the EU's support for Ukraine; the reinforcement of partnership with like-minded partners and allies to ensure the successful implementation of the CSDP; boosting the EU's security and defence capabilities, in particular through the EPF; the importance of complementing EU security and defence policy with other civilian tools; enhancing complementarity with NATO while ensuring European strategic autonomy; and sets out the ambition to render the EU a strategic international security provider by boosting EU defence integration.

In particular, it calls for 'the joint procurement of defence products' and to 'ramp up the European defence industry's production capacity, replenish depleted stocks and reduce fragmentation in the defence-procurement sector'. Emphasising EU-NATO cooperation in coordinating weapon deliveries to Ukraine, the reports underlines further that 'the 2% spending goal should represent a minimum for EU-NATO countries and not a ceiling for defence spending'.

Since 2012, on the basis of Protocol 1 to the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Parliament and the Member States' national parliaments have also organised two interparliamentary conferences per year to debate matters relating to the CFSP.

In general, the Treaty enables Parliament to play a full role in the development of the CSDP, thereby making it a partner in shaping the EU's external relations and addressing security challenges. In order to fulfil this role, Parliament holds regular deliberations, hearings and workshops devoted to topics such as civilian and military CSDP deployments, international crises with security and defence implications, multilateral frameworks for security, arms control and non-proliferation issues, counter-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 has participated in joint consultation meetings organised on a regular basis to exchange information with the Council, the European External Action Service and the Commission.

Parliament also asks questions and makes oral suggestions to the European External Action Service on the CSDP, in particular during SEDE subcommittee meetings.

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