

# The European Union's Foreign, Security, and Defence Policies

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## Reader's Guide

EU cooperation in foreign, security, and defence policy has developed rapidly since the launch of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in the early 1990s. Section 19.1 charts the first steps towards a common policy in this area, including the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and the gradual militarization of the EU. Section 19.2 then reviews the key theoretical debates on the EU's role as a foreign and security actor. Sections 19.3 and 19.4 analyse the main actors involved in the CFSP, focusing in particular on the role of the member states and EU institutions in the development of the policy. Section 19.5 evaluates the range of military and civilian CSDP operations and missions that the EU has undertaken to date, before examining the key challenges that the EU faces in this area in Section 19.6.

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## 19.1 Introduction

The Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union (EU) covers all aspects relating to foreign policy, security, and defence cooperation among EU member states, including diplomatic cooperation with other third countries and international organizations, the use of sanctions as a foreign policy tool, and the promotion of peace and security around the world. A constituent part of the CFSP, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) focuses specifically on enabling EU member states to deploy military and civilian missions in conflict areas and to cooperate on the development of their defence capabilities. The CFSP is one of the most popular EU policies with European electorates. Since its inception in 1993, popular support for the CFSP has ranged from 68 to 79 per cent, and in the last decade it has never fallen below 70 per cent (Eurobarometer, 2019: 96). Despite this overwhelming public support, the CFSP has also been a controversial and contentious policy area, fraught with tensions.

First, there exists a tension between intergovernmentalist and integrationist perspectives. Traditionally, the former view international relations as a system of independent sovereign states, with foreign, security, and defence policy linked to state sovereignty. Close security and defence cooperation is often seen as undermining state independence and vital national interests. Thus, permanent and institutionalized EU cooperation through the CFSP and CSDP is seen as anathema to EU member states' national interests. By contrast, the more integrationist view understands the development and institutionalization of the CFSP and CSDP as a natural extension of the EU's function as an international actor, combining its economic soft power with military means in order to shoulder its responsibilities on the international stage.

Second, a further source of tension is the split between Atlanticist and Europeanist states. On the one side are EU states committed to a strong NATO and US presence in European security, such as the Central and Eastern European states, who fear that the development of the CSDP might undermine NATO. On the other side are states like France that promote an independent European security and defence structure as an alternative to NATO, and as a way of balancing US international influence (Keukeleire and Delreux, 2014).

Finally, there is a tension between more interventionist states, such as France, and those member states that have a tradition of non-intervention, such as Germany. With the development of the CSDP and the launch of

CSDP missions in 2003, this has become a key issue. It has become clear that a minority of member states have shouldered the responsibility and cost for the majority of the operations undertaken under the EU flag. Moreover, the EU member states differ in the importance they attach to military instruments. In particular, the post-neutral states, such as Sweden and Finland, have traditionally supported a civilian dimension and a tradition of strong attachment to UN primacy in peacekeeping as a counterbalance to the militarization of the EU. Despite these underlying tensions, the EU has rapidly developed agency in the area of foreign, security, and defence policy since the early 1990s. The following section will look more closely at this development.

## 19.2 The emergence of the EU as a foreign and security actor

At the end of the Cold War, calls for the EU to play a leading role in the new world order increased. The forerunner to the CFSP, the so-called **European Political Cooperation (EPC)**, a loose coordinating network of European foreign ministries, had proved unable to deliver a proactive European foreign policy. Moreover, previous attempts at establishing cooperation in security and defence in Europe, including a failed initiative to establish a **European Defence Community**, had been unsuccessful. The **Western European Union (WEU)**, established in the 1950s outside of Community structures, had also had a very limited impact on European security. The collapse of the Soviet Union removed the need for a security 'buffer zone' between Russia and 'the West', which allowed neutral states Sweden, Finland, and Austria to join the EU. With the fall of communism, and the gradual US withdrawal from the European theatre, questions arose over NATO's future role in the European security architecture.

In this context, the Maastricht Treaty would provide the basis for developing the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). It stated that the CFSP should cover 'all areas of foreign and security policy' and that, in time, the EU should work towards creating a common defence policy and eventually a common defence, if the member states so wish (Article J.4.1, title V, TEU). The main CFSP objectives, outlined in the Treaty, included: to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests, independence, and integrity of the Union; to strengthen the security of the Union; to promote international co-operation and strengthen international security; and,

finally, to develop and consolidate democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. The Treaty also established the **three-pillar structure** of the EU to accommodate and safeguard the intergovernmental character of the CFSP. The second intergovernmental pillar placed the CFSP under the control of the Council (and hence the member states) and involved minimal input from the Commission and the European Parliament. Moreover, the CFSP's decision-making was based on member state **unanimity**, giving each government the ability to veto any policy initiative or operation.

During its early years, the CFSP seemed to achieve little. **Common positions** agreed among the member states were often weak, reflecting lowest-common-denominator politics. Therefore, further institutional change was deemed necessary to improve coherence and effectiveness. The Amsterdam Treaty (1997) introduced two significant changes to the CFSP. First, it created a new institution, the **High Representative (HR)** for the CFSP, which was to represent the EU on the international stage and to act as the Secretary-General of the Council. Second, the Treaty incorporated the Western European Union's '**Petersberg tasks**' into the Treaty, namely humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping, and crisis management, including peacemaking, raising expectations about an operational role for the EU. These tasks were further expanded in the **Lisbon Treaty (LT)** (2009) to include conflict prevention, joint disarmament operations, military advice and assistance tasks, and post-conflict stabilization tasks (see Box 19.1).

The activities of the early years of the CFSP did not include a defence dimension. However, against the backdrop of the Yugoslav civil wars in the 1990s and the EU's inability to respond effectively to conflicts in its neighborhood, the need for further policy development became clear. The Yugoslav experience provided the political will necessary to increase the ambitions and capacities of EU foreign policy, leading to a slow militarization of the Union. In the context of the Kosovo crisis, a window of opportunity opened at a summit between France and the UK in St Malo in December 1998. Over the years, disagreements between France and the UK had made progress on a security and defence policy at the EU level impossible. However, in 1998, Tony Blair's Labour government saw EU defence cooperation as a means and symbol of British EU leadership after years of outsider status. Moreover, it represented a possibility to shape military and security policy in line with British interests (Dover, 2007). For the French government and Jacques Chirac, St Malo was an unexpected

opportunity, fitting well with its traditional position of support for a European security architecture independent from NATO (Howorth, 2014). The St Malo summit resulted in a joint declaration that stated that 'the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises'.

In subsequent European Council meetings in Cologne (1999) and Helsinki (1999), these proposals were developed and a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was established. The member states also agreed on the establishment of a Political and Security Committee (PSC), which was to be assisted by a committee for civilian aspects of crisis management, as well as the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) and the European Union Military Staff (EUMS) and which were institutionalized in the Nice Treaty (see Section 19.3, 'CFSP institutions and actors'). Of particular significance was the adoption of a '**headline goal**' at the Helsinki Council, foreseeing that by 2003, the EU would be able to deploy 60,000 troops, in 60 days, sustainable for up to a year (Merlingen, 2012). This and other capability-development initiatives sought to make the ESDP operational, and not just a 'paper policy'. Moreover, to enable the EU to undertake military operations, it was necessary to ensure that the EU had access to NATO assets, such as planning and surveillance. The '**Berlin Plus**' arrangements securing this access were agreed between the EU and NATO in 2002, allowing the Union to launch certain operations in the Balkans. However, the EU was also able to undertake autonomous military missions without recourse to 'Berlin Plus', such as Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). While St Malo resulted in the emergence of a military dimension, Sweden and Finland were keen to broaden this framework to include non-military security instruments and civilian crisis management missions, including policing, rule of law, civil protection, and civilian administration (the so-called Feira priorities). As with the military headline goals discussed earlier, a civilian capability catalogue was assembled to allow civilian personnel to be deployed rapidly.

With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty (LT) in 2009, the European Security and Defence Policy was renamed as the **Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)**. This change might seem a minor issue of semantics; however, it has great symbolic value as it demonstrates an ambition for closer cooperation and potential integration. Furthermore, the Treaty



## BOX 19.1 BACKGROUND: A CHRONOLOGY OF THE CFSP

- 1949 NATO is founded by the USA, Britain, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Italy, and Luxembourg.
- 1954 Rejection of the proposal for a European Defence Community by the French National Assembly. The Western European Union (WEU) is created outside of European Community structures as an attempt to encourage European security cooperation.
- 1970 European Political Cooperation (EPC) is instituted and members agree to cooperate more fully on foreign policy matters.
- 1993 The Maastricht Treaty establishes the CFSP as the successor to the EPC and the second pillar of the EU.
- 1998 The December St Malo summit between France and Britain sets in motion the establishment of a European Security and Defence Policy.
- 1999 The Amsterdam Treaty institutes the post of High Representative for the CFSP and incorporates the Petersberg tasks. In December, the Helsinki Headline Goal is adopted.
- 2002 EU and NATO formalize the 'Berlin-plus' arrangement, providing the EU with access to NATO assets.
- 2003 In January, the ESDP launches its first civilian police mission to Bosnia Herzegovina. In February, the Nice Treaty formally establishes the ESDP and its politico-military structures. In December, the European Security Strategy is published.
- 2007 EU battlegroups become fully operational. These are 1,500 standby rapid-reaction forces rotating every six months between EU framework states.
- 2009 In December, the Treaty of Lisbon takes full effect: the CFSP is no longer a separate pillar. The role of High Representative is extended. The ESDP is renamed Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).
- 2011 In January, the European External Action Service (EEAS) becomes fully operational. In June, the WEU is formally dissolved.
- 2016 In June, the EU Global Strategy is presented by the High Representative. In November, the Council adopts the Implementation Plan on Security and Defence.
- 2017 In December, the Council establishes Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) with 25 participating member states.
- 2020 The Council and the European Parliament agree on the launch of a European Defence Fund.

abolished the EU's pillar system. The CFSP is still formally intergovernmental and Council decisions continue to be taken by unanimity. However, coupled with institutional developments introduced in the Treaty, such as the new position of the Permanent President of the European Council, the extended powers of the High Representative, and the establishment of the European External Action Service (see Section 19.3, 'CFSP institutions and actors'), the LT signals a further 'Brusselization' of the CFSP. Moreover, the Lisbon Treaty incorporates two related and significant clauses guiding the CSDP. It includes the Solidarity clause, which confirms that EU states are obliged to act together when another member state is the victim of a terrorist attack or a natural or man-made disaster (Article 222 TFEU); and

it also includes the mutual assistance clause that states that if an EU state is a victim of armed aggression, other EU states have an 'obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power'. This clause is binding for all EU states, but does not affect the neutrality of member states where relevant, nor member states' membership of NATO (Article 42.7 TEU). While these clauses seem to take the EU into a new mutual defence agreement, military capacities remain in the hands of the individual member states, leaving obligations voluntary and intergovernmental.

Despite these institutional improvements, important challenges remain. In particular, EU civilian and military capabilities are still weak. The financial crisis of 2008 and the austerity policies that followed reduced what were



already very small defence budgets (for instance, in 2016 only three EU member states met the NATO target of 2 per cent of defence expenditure as a percentage of GDP). The problem is not only the level of spending on defence, but also the quality of European armed forces. Of a total of around 1.5 million troops, fewer than 20 per cent are deployable abroad. Other capability shortfalls relate to intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) systems, strategic air-lift and air-refuelling capabilities, and remotely piloted aircraft systems. Moreover, the increase in geopolitical competition, tensions during the Donald Trump Presidency, and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted the need for the EU to become strategically autonomous, including in the areas of security and defence. Over the past few years, further initiatives, such as the Implementation Plan on Security and Defence (2016) and the establishment of Permanent Structured Cooperation (2017)—with over 46 joint defence cooperation projects launched until the end of 2020—have sought to remedy some of these shortfalls (EEAS, 2020).

#### KEY POINTS

- At the end of the Cold War, the Maastricht Treaty established the intergovernmental Common Foreign and Security Policy.
- Following repeated failures to deal with conflicts in the EU's neighbourhood, the St Malo summit created momentum towards a European Security and Defence Policy.
- In 2003, the EU undertook its first civilian and military ESDP missions. Throughout the 2000s, the EU attempted to increase its military capabilities.
- With the Lisbon Treaty, the European Security and Defence Policy became the Common Security and Defence Policy.

### 19.3 CFSP institutions and actors

Since the inception of the CFSP, intense institutional development or 'Brusselization' has taken place (Allen, 1998). That said, the CFSP is still formally an intergovernmental policy area where EU member states continue to be the key actors and drivers through their right of initiative, their veto power, and the high profile of security and defence policy. To a large extent, this

influence is exerted through the European Council and the Foreign Affairs Council.

#### 19.3.1 The European Council and the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC)

The Lisbon Treaty considerably enhanced the European Council's and thus the member states' role in shaping the EU's international agency. The European Council defines the strategic outlook for the EU, adopts common strategies, and provides guidelines for the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) on how to translate CFSP treaty provisions and strategies into policies and practice.

The FAC is the Council formation concerned with the CFSP/CSDP. The FAC is the principal decision-maker in this policy area, and the national foreign ministers meet at least monthly. Prior to the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty (2009), this Council formation was chaired by the rotating Presidency (see Chapter 11). Since 2009, this has been replaced with a permanent chair held by the High Representative, thus limiting the agenda-setting and implementation powers of member states. The FAC makes formal decisions on external action including on sanctions and the launch of civilian and military operations. So far, the attempted militarization of the EU has not meant the establishment of a Council of defence ministers, though defence ministers do participate in the FAC when needed. The responsibility for the implementation of Council decisions falls mainly on the HR. In recent years, there has been an increase in informal FAC meetings, especially in the aftermath of international crises. These tend to facilitate frank discussions and consensus-building between ministers.

#### 19.3.2 The Political and Security Committee and its sub-committees

The Political and Security Committee (PSC) occupies a central position in the CFSP and the CSDP, and is one of the main channels for the member states to control the CFSP. The Committee consists of high-ranking national representatives at the ambassador level. It manages and directs a network of committees and working groups responsible for preparing foreign policy decisions relating to particular countries, regions, or issues of interest to the EU. Moreover, the PSC is the main advisor to the Foreign Affairs Council on CFSP. The Committee monitors and analyses the security context in which the EU operates, drafting common policies; and, once these have been adopted by the FAC, the Committee also

oversees policy implementation (Merlingen, 2012). The EU Military Committee (EUMC) is the main military body of the EU and is composed of the national chiefs of staff, supported by the EU Military Staff (EUMS). On the civilian side, the Committee for Civilian Crisis Management (CivCom) provides information and drafts recommendations to the PSC on civilian aspects of crisis management.

### 19.3.3 The High Representative and the European External Action Service

With the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the office of the High Representative (HR) was extended and renamed the 'High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy'. The Lisbon Treaty established the HR as both chair of the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) and vice-president of the Commission, with responsibility for EU external action. The job was to be 'double-hatted' in order to improve consistency in the EU's external policies between the Council and the Commission. Furthermore, the extended role of the HR was intended to improve the visibility of the CFSP and the EU around the world. The HR has a particularly important role in agenda-setting as he or she has the right to submit joint proposals in all areas of external action.

The job of the HR is complex and the different responsibilities difficult to merge. It is a potentially

powerful job, with three functions merged into one: the continuing job of the HR; the performance of the duties of the External Affairs Commissioner; and, finally, fulfilling the role previously undertaken by the rotating Presidency in the CFSP area. On top of this, the HR is also the Head of the **European Defence Agency**, in charge of supporting the development of member state defence capabilities. This pivotal position brings with it opportunities to influence the future of the CFSP and CSDP. However, the office also harbours inherent difficulties. There are tensions between the need to exert leadership and the need to mediate between member states. EU states tend to be suspicious about HR leadership and often strive to limit the influence of the HR in shaping EU foreign policy (see Box 19.2). Furthermore, there are conflicts between the Council and the Commission over the ownership of the CFSP, although the double-hat of the HR as Vice-President of the Commission has helped eased tensions.

The 'Brusselization' of the CFSP is further deepened by the creation under Article 27 TEU of the **European External Action Service (EEAS)**, which assists the HR. The EEAS became fully functional in 2011. It manages the EU's diplomatic relations and responses to crises, much like a national foreign service. The workforce of the EEAS consists of seconded staff from the member states, the Commission, and the Council Secretariat. Moreover, the EEAS acts as the diplomatic corps of the EU. It has 140 Union



#### BOX 19.2 BACKGROUND: THE POLITICS OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE

When the office of HR was first established in 1999, the European Council appointed a well-connected, experienced, and high-profile figure to the post: the former NATO General-Secretary, Javier Solana. Solana and his small office were a driving force in the development and institutionalization of the ESDP in the 2000s, and in mediating in international crises, such as Ukraine's Orange Revolution in 2004 and the Georgian war in 2008. The Lisbon Treaty gave the office of the HR extensive powers over the CFSP. However, the member states were reluctant to allow the new HR the means to use these powers. Considerations such as political affiliation, geographic origin, and lack of foreign policy experience and influence seemed important in appointing a new HR. As a result, the first post-Lisbon HR was a little-known British Labour politician and civil servant, Catherine Ashton. Her most important task was to negotiate the European External Action Service (EEAS) mandate and remit, and to get the EEAS fully functional as quickly as possible. This was a huge

task, and gave Ashton an introverted focus, resulting in a lack of visibility, which raised criticism (Howorth, 2014). However, she was widely commended for her role in the negotiations that led to the deal with Iran regarding its nuclear energy programme and a historic agreement between Serbia and Kosovo, the so-called Brussels Agreement. At the end of 2014, when the EEAS was up and running, the European Council appointed a new HR, the former Italian Foreign Minister, Federica Mogherini. Mogherini was actively involved in shaping the EU's foreign policy, including the drafting and implementation of the new EU Global Strategy. She raised the profile and visibility of EU foreign, security, and defence policy considerably during her years in office. In November 2019, she was replaced by the Spaniard, also former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, who has expressed his commitment to strengthening the international role of the EU, ensuring the EU embraces the 'language of power' in a more geopolitical world (Borrell, 2020).

Delegations or embassies around the world. These represent both the EU and its member states in third countries, and in international organizations. While it is possible for member states to merge their national representations with that of the EU, this possibility has not yet materialized in practice as most EU member states want to keep their own embassies and international presence (Howorth, 2014).

The EEAS has a rather challenging mandate; to coordinate the diplomatic and foreign policies of the member states and, at the same time, to produce new and common positions and policies. Moreover, the EEAS needs to do this without infringing on the members' national interests and sensitivities. Against this backdrop, it was initially hard for the newly established EEAS and the HR to live up to expectations, but over the past decade both the HR and the EEAS have become more active in leading and producing EU foreign and security policy such as in the case of the implementation of the EU Global Strategy (see also Box 19.6).

### 19.3.4 The Commission and the European Parliament

The Commission lives in the shadow of the Council in the CFSP area and has very limited powers and influence over the CFSP/CSDP, despite its broader role in the area of external relations, trade, and development. The implications of the Lisbon Treaty on the Commission in this regard are ambivalent. The Commission used to have the right to put forward CFSP policy proposals. However, this right has now been transferred to the HR, who is also a Commission Vice-President. Moreover, the EEAS has taken over the Union Delegations that used to be under the Commission's responsibility. The Commission has also limited influence regarding the military dimension of CSDP. However, when it comes to civilian CSDP missions, the Commission has more input, as these are included in the EU budget over which the Commission has a say. This being said, in recent years, the Commission has played a more proactive role in security and defence with the launch of a European Defence Fund, a multiannual financial programme to support defence industrial cooperation among EU member states (Haroche, 2019). Moreover, the engagement of the Commission in conflict prevention and its role in the provision of development and humanitarian aid is important for the EU to be able to deliver its integrated approach to security (see Box 19.3), drawing on the many instruments available to it.

The European Parliament (EP) has even more limited influence on the CFSP than the Commission. However, the Parliament is kept informed and consulted on CFSP issues. Furthermore, through its role in the EU budget process, the EP has a say in the budget allocated to civilian CSDP missions and policies. Since the Lisbon Treaty, the EP has had indirect influence over the appointment of the High Representative, as the EP must consent to the appointment of the Commission, including its Vice-President (the HR). MEPs have also been very keen to engage in foreign policy issues, continually pushing their case for an enhanced parliamentary role in external relations.

#### KEY POINTS

- Over the years, the CFSP has undergone an increasing 'Brusselization' with the establishment of new policy structures in Brussels.
- As an intergovernmental policy area, EU member states remain the key drivers in CFSP through their right of initiative, their veto power, and the implementation of EU security and defence policies.
- The key institutional actors in CFSP/CSDP are the European Council, which sets the main policy guidelines, and the Foreign Affairs Council, which acts as the main decision-making body, supported by the Political Security Committee and its working groups.
- The Lisbon Treaty extended the remit of the High Representative and established the European External Action Service (EEAS), the foreign and diplomatic service of the EU.
- Traditional supranational actors like the Commission and the European Parliament play a more limited role in the CFSP area.

## 19.4 Explaining the EU as an international actor

The emergence of the EU as an actor with security and defence ambitions on the international arena has presented EU and International Relations (IR) scholars alike with a theoretical puzzle and challenge. Traditional IR and EU theories have struggled to both define the EU as an international actor and explain why the EU ventured into the field of security and defence policy. This is particularly so for mainstream rationalist IR theories, such as (neo)realism and (neo)liberalism. Other theoretical approaches, such as social constructivism, have been



### BOX 19.3 KEY DEBATES: THE EU'S INTEGRATED APPROACH

The EU embraces an integrated approach to external conflicts and crises. This entails a coherent and strategic use of all the EU's available tools and instruments in order to increase security and stability for the EU and the wider world. The EU's integrated approach is based on a holistic view of peace and security that takes into account the root causes of insecurity, such as poverty, state failure, and lack of development and good governance, as well as the more immediate security issues and crises. The EU is particularly well placed to deal with both

long-term root causes of insecurity and their immediate effects as it has a wide range of policies, tools, and instruments at its disposal covering diplomatic efforts, security, trade policies, development cooperation, and humanitarian aid. The EU's integrated approach also refers to the need to coordinate policy instruments throughout the conflict cycle (from conflict prevention to crisis management to peace-building), at different levels (local, national, regional, and international) and with the member states and other international actors.

better placed to embrace the emergence of the CSFP/ CSDP. This is because they focus on the development of common foreign, security, and defence norms, practices, and identity at the European level as a result of increased cooperation and integration.

During the early years of the CFSP, (neo)realists tended to ignore the development of this policy area, seeing it as a policy of rhetoric rather than substance, without any major impact on the ground (Hoffmann, 2000). Both (neo)realism and (neo)liberalism understand the CSFP as a formally and substantially intergovernmental policy, thus resting firmly in the hands of sovereign member states. The two theories do vary in how much value they attach to EU level cooperation in the realm of security and defence. (Neo)realism privileges the state as the only actor on the anarchical international arena, characterized as a zero-sum self-help system where each state's main obligation, and interest, is to secure its own survival in competition with other states. In such a system, the potential for trust and cooperation between actors is low. Inasmuch as there is a common EU security and defence policy, (neo)realists would see this as a temporary and precarious alliance that will only last as long as the member states' own security benefits from it, and which does not impinge on their own security situation (Mearsheimer, 2010). Neo-realists would expect to see two forms of intergovernmental cooperation in this area: balancing or bandwagoning the USA, the only remaining superpower after the end of the Cold War (Cladi and Locatelli, 2012). On the one hand, CSDP can be seen as balancing; that is, an attempt by EU member states to enhance their military capacities through cooperation in order to balance US hegemony and power. On the other hand, CSDP can be understood in (neo) realist terms as bandwagoning; that is, as an attempt by EU member states to contribute more substantially

to European security thus complementing the US and NATO and strengthening the transatlantic link.

(Neo)liberals and liberal intergovernmentalists share realist assumptions that EU foreign, security, and defence policy is a fundamentally intergovernmental policy area, where the member states are the key actors. However, both neo-liberals and liberal intergovernmentalists see much more potential for positive cooperation at the EU level (Pohl, 2013). For liberal scholars, the international arena, while anarchic, is understood as a positive-sum system, where actors can better their security and increase their prosperity without threatening other actors. Furthermore, they posit economic cooperation as key, alongside defence capacity, to international security. Rather than a form of deeper integration, the liberal intergovernmental approach understands CFSP as an arena for interstate bargaining where EU member states can upload their preferences to shape the policy outcome. Cooperation at this level adds value: bargaining between states produces better security and prosperity outcomes for all (Moravcsik, 2009).

In contrast, constructivism, which focuses on actors' social construction of shared and common values, norms, practices, and identity (Christiansen et al., 2001), does not posit or privilege any particular actor on the international arena. Constructivism instead seeks to identify the values and norms embraced at the EU level, and how processes of socialization impact on member states' norms and identities. Social constructivists have, therefore, been well placed to study the emergent foreign, security, and defence policy of the EU, and the possible birth of a new, and even unique, form of international security agent. For instance, constructivist studies have focused on the concept and development of a potentially shared, common strategic culture across the member states, through, for example, the production



of common strategic documents, such as the European Security Strategy (2003) and the deployment of EU missions on the ground (Meyer, 2006).

Similarly, constructivists have also made a contribution to the debate about the EU's international identity. According to Ian Manners (2002), the EU can be understood as a **Normative Power Europe** (NPE) which promotes its core values of peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights in its foreign, security, and defence policy, thus presenting itself as a model for other actors to follow. The NPE concept and idea has been very influential in European foreign policy studies. The NPE school of thought not only emphasizes the normative-driven content and practice of the CFSP/CSDP, but also understands the EU as normative and unique in another way. It is normative by virtue of its hybrid character, as a new kind of international actor, comprising both common institutions and policy at the EU level and, as such, sets new standards for how an international actor can and should be understood (Manners and Whitman, 2003). One often-cited successful example of a promotion of normative values by the EU is the advancement of the abolition of the death penalty within and beyond Europe. However, the NPE concept has been criticized from a realist perspective as hypocritical, as the EU applies its normative principles selectively if and when they clash with other economic or military concerns (Hyde-Price, 2008). The next section moves from theory to practice, by examining the implementation of this policy and specifically CSDP missions and operations.

## 19.5 CSDP operations and missions: policy in action

The first ever CSDP missions were launched in 2003, only four years after the establishment of the then ESDP (see Box 19.4). The first two missions were deployed in the Western Balkans: a civilian police mission—EUPM—to Bosnia Herzegovina; and a military operation—Operation Concordia—in the form of a peacekeeping force deployed in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). When the CSDP became operational it was thought that the focus was going to be on the EU's close neighbourhood, on conflict management and state-building in the Western Balkans. However, that same year, the second military operation took place outside Europe, on the African continent: the autonomous Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Moreover, there was an expectation that

these overseas deployments would be first and foremost military in character, as the EU quickly demonstrated a willingness and some autonomous capacity to undertake military operations. However, the majority of the CSDP missions to date have been civilian (see Box 19.4), with a particular focus on security sector reform (SSR), and police and rule of law missions (Juncos, 2020).

Approximately one-third of the CSDP missions so far have been either military, or have had a military component. The EU has thus demonstrated that it can deploy a wide range of military missions from low-key operations involving military training in Mali, to high-intensity combat against military insurgents in DR Congo, to maritime operations such as Operation Atalanta (see Box 19.5). Eight of these have seen the deployment of military troops on the ground in a peacekeeping or crisis management capacity in the Balkans and on the African continent. A further five missions to Africa have included military training and advisory missions to Somalia, Mali, and the Central African Republic (CAR).

The size and scope of EU missions and operations vary widely, from very small-scale civilian and training missions employing a dozen personnel, to larger-scale military missions such as EUFOR Althea in Bosnia Herzegovina that in 2004 included 7,000 peacekeeping troops. However, by and large, the size and the scope of their mandates have been rather modest. The length of a mission can vary substantially from missions covering a few months, to decade long missions such as the ongoing border assistance mission—EUBAM—to Ukraine and Moldova, which was launched in 2005. Decisions on the scope, length, and size of a mission are provided for in the mission mandate decided by the Foreign Affairs Council, but a mission's mandate can be amended. For example, the mandate of EUNAVFOR was extended several times between 2008 and July 2018.

While the geographical focus of the CSDP missions has been on Europe, including the Caucasus, and on the African continent, the EU has also undertaken missions outside these areas: for example, in the form of a police mission in Afghanistan. Moreover, the EU has sent civilian missions to the Middle East, including to Iraq and the Palestine territories.

The early years of the CSDP were surprisingly hectic, with the EU launching more than 20 missions during the period 2003–09. This rather intense activity was followed by a period of 'mission fatigue' especially with regard to military missions and coincided with the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. Since 2011, however, there has been a re-ignition of the EU's enthusiasm



## BOX 19.4 BACKGROUND: CSDP MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS

<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Nature</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Duration</i>
EUPM	Bosnia	Civilian	Police	2003–12
Concordia	FYROM	Military	Military	2003
Artemis	RD Congo	Military	Military	2003
EUPOL Proxima	FYROM	Civilian	Police	2004–05
EUJUST Themis	Georgia	Civilian	Rule of law	2004–05
EUFOR Althea	Bosnia	Military	Military	Since 2004
EUPOL Kinshasa	RD Congo	Civilian	Police	2005–07
EUSEC RD	RD Congo	Civil-Military	Security sector reform	2005–16
EUJUST LEX	Iraq/Brussels	Civilian	Rule of law	2005–13
AMM	Aceh/Indonesia	Civilian	Monitoring	2005–06
EUBAM Rafah	Palestinian Territories	Civilian	Border	Since 2005
EUBAM	Ukraine-Moldova	Civilian	Border	Since 2005
EUPOL COPPS	Palestinian Territories	Civilian	Police	Since 2006
EUPAT	FYROM	Civilian	Police	2006
EUPT	Kosovo	Civilian	Planning	2006–08
EUFOR	RD Congo	Military	Military	2006
EUPOL	RD Congo	Civilian	Police	2007–14
EUPOL	Afghanistan	Civilian	Police	2007–17
EUFOR	Tchad/RCA	Military	Military	2008–09
EU SSR	Guinea-Bissau	Civil-Military	Security sector reform	2008–10
EULEX	Kosovo	Civilian	Rule of law	Since 2008
EUMM	Georgia	Civilian	Monitoring	Since 2008
EUNAVFOR	Somalia	Military	Maritime	Since 2008
EUTM	Somalia	Military	Capacity-building	Since 2010
EUAVSEC	South Sudan	Civilian	Security sector reform	2012–14
EUCAP NESTOR/ Somalia	Horn of Africa	Civilian	Capacity-building	Since 2012
EUCAP Sahel Niger	Niger	Civilian	Capacity-building	Since 2012
EUBAM Libya	Libya	Civilian	Border	Since 2013
EUTM Mali	Mali	Military	Capacity-building	Since 2013

(continued)

**BOX 19.4 BACKGROUND: CSDP MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS (continued)**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Nature</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Duration</i>
EUCAP Sahel Mali	Mali	Civilian	Capacity-building	Since 2014
EUAM	Ukraine	Civilian	Security sector reform	Since 2016
EUFOR RCA	CAR	Military	Military	2014–15
EUMAM RCA	CAR	Military	Security sector reform	2015–16
EUNAVFOR MED	Mediterranean	Military	Maritime	2015–2020
EUTM RCA	CAR	Military	Capacity-building	Since 2016
EUAM Iraq	Iraq	Civilian	Security Sector reform	Since 2017
EUAM RCA	CAR	Civilian	Security Sector Reform	2020
EUNAVFOR MED IRINI	Mediterranean	Military	Maritime	2020

Source: the EEAS, available at: [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/430/military-and-civilian-missions-and-operations\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/430/military-and-civilian-missions-and-operations_en).

for CSDP operations, in particular with regard to Africa, with several missions and operations being deployed in the Sahel region, in the CAR, and in the Horn of Africa (see Box 19.5).

The EU's military missions have often acquired the role of a rapid-reaction force that is sent into a crisis, and that will then be relieved by a larger UN

or African Union force. This was the case with the CSDP mission to Chad/RAC in 2008, where 3,700 troops were sent to protect refugee camps until a larger UN force took over in 2009. The pattern was repeated in 2014 in the same area when the EU sent a military mission to the CAR to stabilize the crisis until an African Union force could take over. It is

**BOX 19.5 CASE STUDY: OPERATION ATALANTA: FIGHTING PIRACY OFF THE HORN OF AFRICA**

Operation Atalanta, or EUNAVFOR Somalia, is an ongoing (as of April 2021), autonomous, military, anti-piracy operation in the Gulf of Aden off the coast of Somalia. It was launched in December 2008 and forms part of a comprehensive EU security strategy for the Horn of Africa (HoA). The EU's strategy for the HoA aims to tackle both current symptoms and root causes of the insecurity, instability, and piracy in the region. Operation Atalanta is one of three CSDP missions in the HoA. The other two are EUCAP Somalia (formerly known as EUCAP Nestor), a mission that works to support maritime capacity building in Somalia, and EUTM Somalia, a military training mission.

EUNAVFOR Atalanta was the first naval CSDP operation outside of Europe, deploying up to 2,000 personnel; since then the EU has deployed two more maritime operations: EUNAVFOR Med and its successor, EUNAVFOR MED Irini. The aim of Atalanta's vessels is to secure the strategically important

trade routes from Europe to the Asia-Pacific area; 20 per cent of the world's trade passes through the area covered by Operation Atalanta, an area one-and-a-half times the size of the European continent. It aims in particular to protect the World Food Programme's (WFP) shipments of food aid to Somali refugees, and similar transports for the African Union.

The EU has proclaimed its mission a great success and gives it a 100 per cent success rate in the protection of WFP shipments. Moreover, the number of piracy incidents has dropped massively, from 736 hostages and 32 ships being held by pirates in 2011 to no hostages and ships being held by April 2021 (EUNAVFOR, 2021). Despite being hailed as a success by the EU, there have also been criticisms of Atalanta, including the EU's inability to stabilize Somalia, its failure to end piracy for good, and its lack of CSDP protection for the most vulnerable vessels (Howorth, 2014).



worth noting that despite the development of EU Battlegroups in 2007, all military CSDP missions have consisted of ad hoc assembled troops volunteered by EU member states; so far the battlegroups have not been called into use.

There are some important differences between civilian and military CSDP missions with regard to how they are financed and staffed. Civilian missions are covered by the EU budget, rather than by the member states themselves. However, this often means delays in deployment as a mission request passes through the EU's procurement system. By contrast, in military operations, most of the financial burden for military assets and personnel falls on the participating member states on the basis of the principle 'costs lie where they fall'. There is only a small budget for shared costs (Headquarters, IT, and communication). The financial cost of participating in military missions can thus be prohibitive for some member states and influences their decision to make troops available. Furthermore, in civilian missions further delays can be caused by staffing problems. This is because civilian personnel, such as police officers and judges, do not remain on standby to be deployed like their military counterparts, but they need to be seconded (i.e. nominated) by their national authorities in order to participate in EU missions.

How can we judge the success or failure of the CSDP missions and operations? The EU works in very complex theatres, often with multiple actors involved. It is therefore difficult to discern and isolate EU influence and achievement. As all EU operations are by invitation from the host country, and/or with the backing of a UN mandate, they tend to be uncontroversial. It could also be said that the EU avoids the most difficult conflict situations. However, the demand for EU CSDP missions vastly exceeds the EU's capacity and the number of missions launched. This demonstrates that there is a perception that the EU can and should do something to help. According to the EU's own assessment, and judged on the mission mandates, CSDP missions have been successful in achieving their goals. However, the EU missions and operations have been criticized for their often narrow mandates and limited ambitions (Menon, 2009; Juncos, 2020). Moreover, they are said to have 'built-in success' in their mandate. By contrast, if we instead look at the need to deal with the root causes of insecurity and instability, the EU's activities have fallen short of their ambitions (Juncos, 2013; Rodt, 2014).

## KEY POINTS

- In 2003, the EU undertook its first civilian and military CSDP missions.
- Two-thirds of CSDP missions have been civilian and one-third have been military.
- The EU has focused geographically on Europe and Africa, but has also undertaken missions in Asia and the Middle East.
- The EU embraces a comprehensive approach to security which involves the use of all available instruments.
- CSDP missions have been relatively successful, although they have also been criticized for their modest and limited mandates.

## 19.6 The future of EU foreign and security policy: challenges and opportunities

The European Security Strategy, the first strategic reflection at the EU level adopted in 2003, opened with the sentence 'Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free' (European Council, 2003). The optimism contained in this statement contrasts starkly with the opening remarks of the EU Global Strategy adopted in 2016 (see Box 19.6), which states: 'We live in times of existential crisis, within and beyond the European Union. Our Union is under threat. Our European project, which has brought unprecedented peace, prosperity and democracy, is being questioned' (High Representative, 2016). This shift in strategic thinking was linked, among other things, to the problems encountered by the EU in its neighbourhood.

Externally, the EU's foreign policies have been thwarted by the emergence of an 'arc of instability' from the East to the South (EEAS, 2015). The deterioration of the situation in Libya and Yemen, the civil war in Syria, and the refugee crisis all point to the inability of the EU's foreign policy to shape developments in the Southern neighbourhood. In the East, the deterioration of the political situation in Ukraine, ultimately leading to Russia's annexation of the Crimean peninsula in March 2014 and the ongoing conflict in the Donbass region, have also challenged EU foreign policy.

In many cases, this undesirable state of affairs reflects the absolute and relative decline in the power of



### BOX 19.6 KEY DEBATES: THE EU GLOBAL STRATEGY

In 2003, the EU, under the auspices of Javier Solana, the then High Representative for the CFSP, published its first ever European Security Strategy (ESS), entitled 'A secure Europe in a better world'. The ESS was drafted against the backdrop of the events of 9/11, the subsequent war on terror, and the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003. The occupation of Iraq divided the EU member states along the traditional lines of Atlanticists–Europeanists and gave rise to intense speculation over the future of and potential demise of the EU's security and defence policy. However, the European Security Strategy, approved unanimously by the member states in December 2003, was intended to demonstrate that the EU, despite disagreement over Iraq, was an international actor with a coherent strategic vision and common ambitions on the world stage (Biscop and Andersson, 2008). The ESS called on the EU to be a more active, more coherent, and more capable international actor and to develop a 'strategic culture that fosters early, rapid, and when necessary, robust intervention'.

Since the adoption of the ESS, the EU's international context has changed drastically. In the aftermath of the wars in Afghanistan

and Iraq, Russia is emerging as a security concern in the East, the rise of China has continued, the effects of the global economic crisis have been felt, and the power transition from US unipolarity towards a potentially more unstable multipolar world has been witnessed. These new circumstances led to calls for a new EU Global Strategy, which was presented by High Representative Federica Mogherini to the member states in June 2016. The EU Global Strategy identified the following key priorities for the EU's external action: to protect the security of the Union; to foster state and societal resilience in the Eastern and Southern neighbourhood; to implement an integrated approach to conflicts and crises; to promote cooperative regional orders; and to advance a rules-based global order. The EUGS has firmly put the need to achieve 'strategic autonomy' at the centre of the policy agenda. Moreover, by proclaiming the notion of 'principled pragmatism', the EU Global Strategy of 2016 emphasized the fact that EU foreign policy should be not only about the promotion of values, but also about protecting the security and the interests to the Union in a world where geopolitics still matter.

Europe. In other cases, the problems are self-inflicted, as a result of a failure to invest in security and defence capabilities, or of the continuing disagreements among the EU member states, which prevent it from speaking with one voice. The exit of the UK from the EU in January 2020 is likely to exacerbate some of these problems; for instance, by reducing the total resources available for EU foreign policy initiatives. This is particularly true in matters of security and defence, since the UK's defence budget was the largest among the EU member states. Moreover, it is still unclear what institutional shape EU–UK foreign policy cooperation will take in the years to come. Despite the signing of a Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and the UK at the end of 2020, matters relating to foreign and security cooperation were left outside the agreement, with most initiatives currently relying on ad hoc cooperation, including on issues relating to sanctions against Russia or China.

Yet, current challenges can also be seen in a more positive light as providing momentum for further integration in the area of foreign and security policies. Renewed concerns among some EU member states about territorial defence linked to external crises (Ukraine, Syria), a more assertive Russia, the refugee

crises, and mixed signals from the Trump Presidency accelerated calls for strategic autonomy and the development of an autonomous defence capability at the EU level. Cooperation has also been propelled by growing security challenges in the EU's neighbourhood and the outcome of the Brexit referendum. Hence, with the exit of the UK and the removal of a major veto player in defence, the EU has been able to agree on some steps for further security integration. These include the implementation of the EU Global Strategy (see Box 19.6), and plans to move forward in the area of defence with a Commission initiative to support a European Defence Fund, the establishment of a Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC), the implementation of Permanent Structure Cooperation (PESCO) initiatives, the adoption of a Civilian CSDP Compact, and ways to make better use of the EU battlegroups. Although the economic downturn resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to put more strain on the resources available to EU member states for security and defence purposes, the crisis has also demonstrated the importance of ensuring strategic autonomy (e.g., regarding critical supplies and infrastructures) and to be able to act alone when necessary.

## 19.7 Conclusion

Opinions on the impact and importance of the CFSP and CSDP differ, and there are uncertainties over the future development of the policy, especially in the aftermath of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic. In the face of current geopolitical challenges, will it return to lowest-common-denomination (intergovernmentalist) politics or even to European inter-state security competition, as some neo-realist observers predict; or will the coordination and integration of the member states' foreign, security, and defence policies continue to deepen as

exemplified by recent initiatives such as the EU Global Strategy? Despite its shortcomings, the CFSP represents an impressive institutional, normative, and identity-building policy, which has turned the EU into a veritable international security actor able to deploy crisis management operations on the ground. However, as this chapter has made clear, the member states continue to be the key actors in this policy area, and as such, future progress will be inextricably linked to the willingness and ability of the member states to sustain this cooperation.



### QUESTIONS

1. How can we explain the emergence of the EU as a security and defence actor?
2. Is the EU a fully fledged foreign policy and security actor on the world stage? If so, why and how?
3. Is the CFSP still intergovernmental or has 'Brusselization' introduced supranational elements?
4. How helpful are mainstream IR theories in explaining the development of EU security and defence policies?
5. How do CSDP missions and operations contribute to international security?
6. How should we measure the success of CSDP missions and operations?
7. Does the EU Global Strategy provide the EU with a comprehensive and up-to-date strategic document?
8. What will be the likely impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the EU's foreign and security policy?



### GUIDE TO FURTHER READING

Hill, C., Smith, M., and Vanhoonacker, S. (2017) *International Relations and the European Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). A comprehensive collection on the main aspects of the EU as an international actor.

Howorth, J. (2014) *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan). An interesting and informative book on the CSDP, its development, key actors, and implementation. It provides useful information on the political games behind the policies.

Fiott, D. (ed.) (2020) *The CSDP in 2020. The EU's legacy and ambition in security and defence*, Paris: EU-ISS, available at [https://www.wiss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/CSDP%20in%202020\\_0.pdf](https://www.wiss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/CSDP%20in%202020_0.pdf). An up-to-date discussion of the historical evolution and current challenges faced by the CSDP.

Keukeleire, S. and Delreux, T. (2014) *The Foreign Policy of the European Union* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan). A useful introduction to the topic of European foreign policy.

Wong, R. and Hill, C. (eds) (2011) *National and European Foreign Policy: Towards Europeanization* (London: Routledge). A strong edited collection that is particularly useful for its comparative perspective.



Access the online resources to take your learning and understanding further; including extra multiple-choice questions with instant feedback, web links, answer guidance to end-of-chapter questions, and updates on new developments in EU politics.

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