



Trans European Policy Studies Association

TEPSA BRIEFS

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The future of EU's security and defence policies

Participants of the TEPSA Academy 2022*

Abstract

The TEPSA Academy 2022 on the European Union's (EU) Security and Defence Policies gathered participants from all over Europe with the goal of mapping and discussing the challenges faced by the Union in these fields. Presented with the key findings from expert lectures and meetings with EU practitioners, participants wrote a set of recommendations for the future of the European Security and Defence Agenda, from increasing its capacities and coordination capabilities, to strengthening its position on the global stage.

Introduction

Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine started on 24 February 2022, deeply impacting the European Union's (EU) security policies and starting a process which will change the role

and vision of the Union for years to come. In that sense, we find ourselves now in a key moment to address past shortcomings and imagine new solutions to ensure the security of European States, the respect of the international legal order, and the preservation of the European peace project. The EU's role can thus take many directions and shapes, with a March 2022 roadmap – the Strategic Compass – already leaving unanswered some questions key to the EU security and defence positioning. These include, for instance, the relationship between the Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the potential reform of enlargement policies towards more securitisation, the proper inclusion of different analytical frames such as gender and climate to ensure a beneficial and long-lasting impact for EU policies, the relevance of Strategic Autonomy, or the development of EU defence capabilities, among others.

The TEPSA Academy offers each year around 20 students and young graduates the opportunity to gain first-hand insights from researchers, EU practitioners, policy-makers

* This TEPSA Brief has been coordinated by Sónia Sénica (Assistant Professor, Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa & Research Fellow, IPRI-NOVA) with the contribution of the TEPSA Academy participants: Cian FitzGerald, Dimitris Tsaknis, Emma Papait-Bonnefoy, Erekle Iantbelidze, Francesca Bodini, Franco Luciano, Franc Shkemi, Frederic Krull, Gábor András Papp, Helen Kurvits, Irene Rusconi, Klara Ahčin, Lucia Rivas García, Mahmoud Javadi, Maria Elena Tsitsiloni, Marián Stankovič, Miguel Reyes Castro, Naomi Moreno Cosgrove. All the opinions expressed in this briefing are the sole view of the authors, and do not represent the position of the Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa nor of the Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA).

and officials on topics central to the future of Europe. This edition, focusing on EU security and defence policies, covered a variety of topics in an effort to provide a comprehensive mapping of past and current challenges. These included lectures and presentations on (i) understanding the Strategic Compass; (ii) mapping EU security policies in the Neighbourhood; (iii) rethinking conflict resolution through reflexive approaches; (iv) developing the enablers for defence cooperation; (v) presenting advantages and gaps of EU coordination within foreign policy; (vi) thinking about the implications of Russia's war in Ukraine for the future of European security. Under the academic lead of Sónia Sénica (Assistant Professor, Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa & Research Fellow, IPRI-NOVA), participants were encouraged to actively participate in the lectures, and to critically assess their conclusions. This led to the formulation of a set of recommendations for the future of EU's Security and Defence policies.

Recommendations

First, the Strategic Compass should be developed in the direction of a comprehensive, proactive and ambitious European Security and Defence Strategy, adjusted to both present and future threats across all domains, including conventional and hybrid. To make that strategy possible, it is necessary to enhance the cooperative dialogue at the supranational level, so as to give the Union more agency in reaching common decisions in the field of European security and capabilities.

Second, European security should not entirely fall under 'NATO's umbrella'. A complete dependence on the Atlantic alliance would undermine the possibilities to see materialising effective cooperation and efficient EU-NATO coordination. The EU should also diversify and reinforce its security cooperation both bilaterally and through inter-regional arrangements (e.g. with the

International Organisation of Southeast Asian Nations or the African Union).

Third, it is important for the EU to balance security policies with its fundamental values. In that sense, the Union should ensure that EU citizens are informed about military and civilian missions as well as involved in the decision-making processes surrounding them, especially for transparency and democratic legitimacy purposes.

Fourth, there is a need for the EU to continue developing tailored approaches to promoting and providing security issues, thanks to flexible methods such as qualified majority voting or differentiated integration.

Fifth, the Green Deal and other environmental mainstreaming should be included in a broader human security conception, since climate change is an accelerator of conflict specially affecting the most vulnerable categories of the population.

Sixth, it is of utmost importance to ensure an inclusive approach that brings more people to the table in finding long-lasting solutions to conflicts. In fact, the EU should pave the way for including traditionally isolated groups in peace negotiations. The EU should also work towards establishing a more coordinated and cohesive use of environmental and gender concepts as analytical tools.

Lastly, the EU should continue diversifying and strengthening its supply chains to guarantee strategic resources vital in ensuring its strategic autonomy in defence while respecting the green transition.



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