



L'Europe en formation

Revue d'études sur la construction européenne et le fédéralisme

Journal of Studies on European Integration and Federalism

DOSSIER

Towards a European Defence

Vers une défense européenne

Editors – Coordinateurs: *Mathias Jopp & George N. Tzogopoulos*

Challenges

Susann Heinecke **Challenges in the East – Root Causes and Prospects**

Matteo Bressan **NATO's Challenges in the South Flank**

Bastian Giegerich **The Implications of Brexit for Defence**

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Mythe et réalité de la défense européenne

DOSSIER

Towards a European Defence
Vers une défense Européenne

Introduction

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European Defence has become again an important field of European integration, after years of stagnation. It was only in 2017, when for the first time the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty on Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) within the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) were used. Since then, PESCO has been developing quite rapidly with 47 projects on which Member States work together for strengthening European defence capabilities.

The reasons for the new dynamics are manifold. In June 2016, EU Member States agreed on an EU Global Strategy requiring steps for its implementation also in the defence field. In early 2017, NATO had been put into question for the first time in its history by an American president. Later, Trump wanted to link security guarantees to the individual fulfilment of NATO's budgetary goal of 2% of the GDP for defence spending. Hence, he made clear that the Europeans would have to do more for their own security. The arrival of Macron as French president in May 2017 led to new initiatives at European level. He was pushing towards closer defence cooperation within the EU and better preparation for out-of-area operations through the European Intervention Initiative (E2I). Finally, there is Brexit with two implications. On the one hand, the strongest military power in Europe is leaving the EU, which leads to a weakening of CSDP. On the

other hand, after years of British blocking policies, the new steps in closer defence cooperation have been facilitated, including PESCO, the setting up of a nucleus of a future military headquarters at EU level (the Military Planning and Conduct Capability/MPCC) and the provisional agreement on a European Defence Fund (EDF) for co-financing European armaments cooperation over the next seven EU budget years. On top of that, better inter-institutional relations between NATO and the EU, a long-standing victim of the Turkey-Cyprus conflict, could be achieved. In 2016 and 2018, the highest representatives of both organisations agreed on two declarations for closer EU-NATO cooperation implemented by a number of joint projects such as countering hybrid threats, improving cyber security, coordinating maritime operations and strengthening resilience in the Western Balkans.

A major question about European defence is its perspective. Where should it lead to? Is it about achieving Europe's sovereignty and strategic autonomy as the French may see it, or about strengthening NATO's European pillar as the Germans, Poles and Baltics wish it to emerge? As long as defence cooperation is moving in a direction that can be accepted by all, there is no need to make any clear-cut decision about the finality of CSDP and, therefore, progress can be made and felt to be beneficial by nearly all parties and interest groups in Europe. The Americans, however, are sceptical about it, less for political but rather for economic reasons. The overriding concern of the Trump administration is not that European defence cooperation could undermine or duplicate NATO, but that European cooperation could result in buying more European and less American.

Our special issue of *L'Europe en formation* tries to provide an insight into these various aspects of the current developments of European defence. It first takes stock of external challenges confronting the EU. In the East, there is the revanchist Russia not hesitating to use military means for achieving foreign policy goals and to undermine the European peace system of the Paris Charter after the end of the Cold War. This displays, at the same time, the "vulnerability" of the EU (Heinecke) at its Eastern borders and the difficulty of finding some sort of a functioning relationship between the EU and Russia as the strongest military power on the European continent. Turning to the South, the challenges emanate from the problems of civil war and failed states in Syria and Libya, the refugee crisis, migration dramas in the Mediterranean and the spread of terrorism. These all require NATO and EU Member States taking more coordinated and conceptually better structured action for contributing to the security in the Mediterranean (Bresson). Inside Europe, the UK-leave raises a number of critical questions. What are the implications for the United Kingdom (UK) as a future

middle power and how could defence cooperation with the EU look like as a non-member? What are the implications for the EU in terms of its future weight in world affairs and its strive for strategic autonomy (Giegerich)?

We then move on to the responses for matching the challenges and start with Macron's European Intervention Initiative (EII) through which he is going beyond de Gaulle's national ambitions and also beyond the EU's PESCO initiative by including Denmark, the UK and Norway (Maulny). The compatibility of EII with NATO and PESCO is also discussed. The following two articles focus on EU-NATO relations which have remarkably improved since 2016 at institutional level (Laïci). It is argued that the build-up of the CSDP and the EU's strive for strategic autonomy is healthy for both, the EU and NATO, because it will lead to better European capabilities for out of area operations and missions and, at the same time, to a strengthening of the European pillar of the Transatlantic Alliance (Howorth).

PESCO, the European intervention initiative, the strengthening of EU-NATO relations are all elements of European responses to becoming better able for matching the new threats and challenges. Another element is differentiated integration in the EU. This method is more closely looked at and mapped as "part and parcel" (Groenendijk) of CSDP developments. The system of PESCO as it has been set up since 2017—including National Implementation Plans (NIP) on defence planning and spending and the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD)—is analysed as a new method of intergovernmental integration for making EU Member States more committed to CSDP objectives (Jopp & Schubert).

What drives and hampers CSDP developments? One driver is certainly the pressure exercised by Trump on European allies to do more for defence. The other one is linked to the European ambitions of France, partially shared by Germany as far as the strengthening of defence cooperation in the EU is concerned. Outside of the EU framework Macron's Intervention Initiative is important. However, it needs a certain synergy of strategic cultures which are still widely differing between France and the UK on the one side, and post-WW-II-Germany on the other. By using the strategic culture approach for analysing the German defence posture (Göler) some of the preconditions for such a synergy are analysed. Another issue is related to non-alignment. Is it an impediment to deeper EU defence integration? This question is discussed in the cases of Finland and Sweden which both joined PESCO projects in spite of opposing views domestically, stressing the risks of undermining the special security status or fearing steps towards a federal European system by stealth (Heinikoski). Also the reasons for

the “moderate engagement” (Seselgyte) of the Baltic states in deepening CSDP are explored against the backdrop of their feeling of being highly threatened by Russia’s partially aggressive foreign policy—a reason for them to rely as far as possible on NATO for the guarantee of their security. Some conditions are outlined for the Baltic states reversing their PESCO engagement. To these belong either an increase in transatlantic tensions or a new cooperative policy of the EU towards Russia.

Finally, we have included a “Tribune” article that deals with the myths and realities of European defence by drawing conclusions from the failure of the European Defence Community (EDC) up to the present day where many Europeans still feel that they are reliant on NATO. The EU’s defence initiatives, and thus one of the conclusions, depend on “a hypothetical political union” without which Europeans could, at best, become the supporters of their protector and, at worst, the “victims of their powerlessness” (Nigoul).

Challenges

POLITIQUE ÉDITORIALE

L'Europe en formation examine avec intérêt toute proposition d'article original en langue française ou anglaise, portant sur la construction européenne, les relations internationales et le fédéralisme. Seront traités avec une attention particulière les articles en lien avec les thématiques spécifiques aux numéros à venir. Les thèmes et le calendrier de publication sont présentés sur le site Internet de la revue.

Les propositions d'articles doivent être envoyées à l'adresse courriel de la revue sous forme de fichier électronique (de 4 000 à 10 000 mots), accompagnées d'un résumé (100 mots) et d'une brève présentation de l'auteur.

Les articles seront soumis anonymement à un comité de lecture, qui recommandera ou non sa publication, ou proposera des modifications. Les textes proposés dans les rubriques *Tribune*, *Chronique* ou *Lectures*, seront soumis uniquement au comité de rédaction.

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