

“Forging a stronger and United Europe”
Navigating the Historical, Financial, Political
and Cohesive Challenges in building a
powerful defense”

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BUILDING A POWERFUL DEFENSE"**

*Alla mia mamma e a Lello, che mi hanno supportato e sopportato,
in questo percorso universitario*

*A mio papà Marco, che mi è sempre stato vicino in tutti i modi possibili e
mi ha dato la forza di andare avanti*

*A mio fratello Giovanni, che in questi anni sta diventando sempre di più
una figura d'esempio e di amicizia*

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Introduction

In a dynamic era marked by shifting geopolitical dynamics and a persistent evolution of security threats, the establishment of a military force for the European Union (EU) resonates as a significant and relevant proposal. This study embarks on a journey into the intricate concept of forming what is commonly referred to as an "EU army." To provide a more complete understanding, let us elucidate on what this term encapsulates and how it aligns with the broader context of EU common defense.

The term "EU army" serves as a comprehensive shorthand, encapsulating a spectrum of collaborative defense initiatives under the broader umbrella of EU common defense, echoing the sentiments of "Stronger Together," as elucidated by Bruegel's analysis¹ of public preferences, in different European defense cooperation designs.

This umbrella term, symbolizes the synergy required across EU member states, unifying their efforts for the collective defense of the continent. It resonates with the idea of collective strength, emphasizing unity among EU member states to address shared security challenges effectively.

This collaborative approach is not confined to traditional military structures but expands to encompass common policies and activities, such as joint procurement of weapons, shared investments in defense industries and technology, and a cohesive strategy to address a diverse array of security threats across the European continent.

Francesco Nicoli on Bruegel² serves as a compelling guidepost, directing our attention to the pressing need for closer European defense cooperation. His article highlights the growing focus on Europe's defense capability in light of Russian aggression, worsening international security, and the potential change in U.S. leadership.

He analyzes the European Commission's upcoming proposals for a new defense industrial strategy and defense investment program, which reflect the urgency of enhancing Europe's defense capabilities. He continues showing how public support for increased defense cooperation at the EU level is high, as evidenced by Eurobarometer polls showing strong support for increased defense spending within the EU. However, the specific form of EU defense cooperation that garners the most public support was less clear.

A poll conducted in France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Spain in November 2022 provides more detailed insights into public attitudes toward defense cooperation in the EU. The poll assessed various aspects of defense cooperation, including the type and scope of cooperation, funding sources,

¹ Bruegel is the European think tank that specializes in economics. Bruegel's membership includes EU Member State governments, international corporations and institutions.

² Francesco Nicoli is the author of the article on Bruegel. He serves as professor of political economy at Gent University, and he is affiliate fellow at the department of economics of the University of Amsterdam as well as visiting fellow at Bruegel.

decision-making mechanisms, and the presence of joint procurement and national opt-outs. The survey results reveal that support for EU defense cooperation increases as the level of ambition increases. While initially about one-third of respondents favored a minimalist approach to cooperation, support grew when additional elements were introduced. The majority of respondents finally expressed preference for a maximalist defense cooperation package, characterized by high levels of integration, joint decision-making, joint procurement, and no national opt-outs.

Support for this maximalist option was highest in Germany and lowest in the Netherlands but remained above 50 percent in all countries surveyed. The survey suggests that ambitious European defense projects garner significant public support, indicating European citizens' willingness to embrace deeper military cooperation at the EU level.

The findings imply that the European Commission can pursue ambitious defense strategies without undue caution, as public support for military cooperation continues to grow with greater integration and collaboration within the EU.

This underscores the importance of aligning future defense initiatives with citizens' preferences and aspirations for a more secure and integrated Europe.

Moving toward the first chapter of our research, which aims at deepening our understanding of the historical context, guiding our navigation through the intricate complexities of European defense integration. The historical context underscores the resilience required for a more unified European defense, emphasizing the challenges faced and opportunities seized in pursuit of collective security. Using an historical lens, will allows us to critically assess the effectiveness of past initiatives starting from the creation of NATO in 1949 to the latest European Defense Fund established in 2021, following step by step the various events that brought EU defense as it is today.

This chapters aims to navigate the historical landscape, by analyzing how different institutions, treaties or even choices influenced our idea today on the creation of a European Army and considering the diverse nature of security threats faced by the continent. Our final goal is to seek to inform our strategic plan for the future.

Then it provides us with a critical distinction between NATO and what would be a European Union Army. It starts with an explanation regarding role, functions, and importance of NATO in Europe as today, then it continues emphasizing the importance also of Europe and its defenses by analyzing how these two could complement each other. When I say complement, I don't just mean finding a common strategy to maximize the effectiveness and capabilities of the two armies, but also trying to curb all those rivalries that were present in the past and how they could be curbed today. In fact, the research takes into consideration all the possible concerns that arise from the collaboration of these 2

entities showing how their joining in forces and in a common defense would function and would be efficient.

Finally, the chapter will conclude with a brief interview to Paolo Magri, to give the reader the opportunity for an expert's point of view, for a greater perspective.

The following chapter of this thesis will examine the various financial strategies for financing the European Army project, exploring in the first subchapter the concept of collective defense budgeting. In particular, it evaluates various funding avenues, including collective defense budgets, member state contributions based on economic capabilities, public-private partnerships, and innovative financing mechanisms. Through expert insights and scholarly research, the feasibility, benefits, and challenges associated with each approach are analyzed. Despite the potential advantages, establishing a collective defense budget requires navigating political, economic, and institutional complexities. The discussion underscores the importance of reaching consensus, promoting transparency, and addressing concerns about national sovereignty to foster stronger European defense cooperation. Ultimately, the section highlights the need for careful consideration and strategic planning to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of a unified European defense strategy.

In the second subchapter, we will analyze the dynamics of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in the context of financing the European Army project, outlining their potential benefits and challenges. PPPs offer advantages such as access to expertise, innovation, and private sector funding, accelerating development and sharing financial burdens. However, challenges include concerns about accountability, transparency, market volatility, and regulatory uncertainties. Past examples like Boeing's collaboration with the U.S. Department of Defense and controversies surrounding private military contractors like Blackwater provide insights into the complexities of PPPs in defense initiatives. Legal and contractual complexities, transparency issues, and market dynamics must be carefully navigated to ensure the success and effectiveness of PPPs in financing EU defense projects. By addressing these challenges through rigorous risk assessment, stakeholder engagement, and robust governance mechanisms, the EU can maximize the potential of PPPs to enhance its security capabilities and strategic autonomy.

Then we will delve into the intricate process of assessing the economic capabilities of EU member states to determine their potential contributions to a collective defense budget. It examines factors such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), military spending, and fiscal policies, which collectively influence each country's financial commitment to European defense initiatives. Despite GDP being a primary indicator of economic strength, other factors like regional disparities and national security priorities complicate the assessment. Military spending reflects a nation's commitment to defense and is influenced by security threats and alliance obligations. Fiscal policies, including budget allocation

and taxation, play a crucial role in determining a country's ability to sustainably finance defense projects. Regional economic disparities, political dynamics, and historical alliances further contribute to the complexity of assessing economic capability. Flexible frameworks and dialogue among member states are essential for fair burden-sharing and promoting collective security within the EU. Reports from think tanks like the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) and the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) offer valuable insights into economic factors shaping European defense policy and cooperation, aiding policymakers and analysts in developing informed strategies.

The fourth sub-chapter delves into a comprehensive statistical analysis of military expenditures across European nations, aiming to provide insights into the financial commitments made towards defense. Trends in defense spending over the past decade are scrutinized, alongside a comparative assessment of defense spending as a percentage of GDP. The analysis highlights a significant increase in military expenditures, particularly in response to perceived threats and strategic objectives. Notably, a report commissioned by Greenpeace's national offices in Italy, Germany, and Spain reveals a substantial rise in military spending among NATO countries of the European Union, with a focus on the economic and employment impacts. Despite this, the expert opinion suggests that the increase in defense spending may not necessarily signify a path towards the creation of a European army due to existing political dynamics and national priorities. The emphasis is placed on the need for strategic spending and fostering a common European defense ethos to maximize the effectiveness of defense investments.

Finally, we will explore the notable increases in military expenditure observed in Greece and Poland in recent years. Both countries have ramped up their defense spending in response to perceived security threats and regional instabilities. Greece, facing tensions with Turkey and navigating disputes in the Eastern Mediterranean, has prioritized modernizing and strengthening its armed forces. Meanwhile, Poland, situated in Eastern Europe near Russia, has escalated its defense spending to address concerns about potential aggression and instability in the region. Despite their individual efforts, both countries share common objectives of enhancing their defense capabilities and ensuring national security.

The analysis further underscores the potential benefits of establishing a European Union Army, which could streamline defense expenditure, foster greater solidarity among EU member states, and enhance collective security. By pooling resources and coordinating defense efforts within the EU framework, Greece and Poland, along with other member states, could achieve greater efficiency in defense spending and better address common security challenges. This chapter sheds light on the motivations

driving the increase in military expenditures in Greece and Poland and highlights the importance of collective defense initiatives within the European Union.

In the third and final chapter, the discussion delves into the complexities surrounding the creation of a common European defense, with insights provided by Professor Margeletti. The discussion begins with an exploration of the fundamental role of the armed forces, law enforcement and security services as instruments of national sovereignty. Professor Margeletti stresses the need for strong governance structures before considering the creation of a European military. He stresses the difficulties of achieving unanimity among EU member states for military deployment, citing examples of EU battle groups and NATO Article 5. The discussion stresses the importance of synchronization within the defense industry and the need for a European defense commissioner to facilitate coordination.

In addition, the speech analyzes the underlying trends and attitudes of European citizens toward the creation of a European Union military. It explores the role of public opinion in shaping defense policies, emphasizing the importance of widespread acceptance and democratic legitimacy. The speech considers factors such as sovereignty, national identity and perceptions of security threats, noting their influence on public sentiment. It also stresses the importance of alignment among member states and the sustainability of policies with broad public support.

The chapter concludes by presenting the main results of the Standard Eurobarometer 101 - Spring 2024 survey, which illustrates the level of public support for a common European defense. The discussion then shifts to the perspectives of influential European leaders, including Emmanuel Macron, Olaf Scholz, Pedro Sánchez, Mark Rutte, Charles Michel, and Ursula von der Leyen. Each leader's position on European defense integration is examined, reflecting a spectrum of views ranging from strong support to cautious skepticism.

Overall, the chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the complexities surrounding the creation of a common European defense, incorporating insights from both academic discourse and political leadership. It emphasizes the importance of balancing national interests with collective security objectives within the European Union.

First chapter

From Past to Present: Navigating European Defense Integration and Shaping the Future of Collective Security

Europe's quest for collective defense has been a journey marked by historical complexities and strategic considerations. As we embark on this exploration, we delve into the annals of European defense history to unravel the intricacies of past integration attempts and glean insights for shaping a robust future defense strategy. By understanding the historical context, we lay the groundwork for a comprehensive examination of the present landscape and chart a strategic vision for the future. Drawing from authoritative sources, including scholarly works, official European Union (EU) documents, and insightful analyses from experts, we aim to dissect the evolution of European defense integration and identify key lessons to inform the path forward.

1.1 Foundation of Strength: "NATO's Genesis and the Seeds of European Unity"

Historically, Europe has been marked by centuries of conflict, from the devastating wars of the 20th century to the constant geopolitical tensions of the Cold War era. In the aftermath of World War II, the devastation and trauma inflicted by the conflict, which prompted European leaders to seek mechanisms to prevent future conflicts and promote peace and stability on the continent.

The first pivotal moment in European defense history was the establishment of NATO in 1949.

As outlined by authors such as Christopher Hill³ and Jolyon Howorth⁴, the formation of NATO represented a significant milestone in European defense integration.

We will also analyze the complicated relationship between NATO and a possible European Union Army in the second part of this chapter, but firstly it's essential to dedicate a part to the explanation of NATO and the evolution of European common defense.

NATO was founded on the principle of collective security, whereby an attack on one member is considered an attack on all members. This collective defense commitment, enshrined in Article 5 of the NATO treaty, acts as a powerful deterrent against potential adversaries and ensures a unified response to threats. It embodies a strong transatlantic partnership between North America and Europe, based on shared values, interests and commitments to democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. The alliance promotes close political, military, and economic cooperation, strengthening stability and prosperity on both sides of the Atlantic. It also serves as a platform to improve military capabilities and interoperability among its member states. Through joint exercises, training

³ Hill, Christopher. "The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualizing Europe's International Role." *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 31, no. 3, 1993, pp. 305-328.

⁴ Howorth, Jolyon. "Security and Defence Policy in the European Union." Routledge, 2004.

programmes and defense planning processes, NATO facilitates the development of standardized procedures, interoperable equipment, and integrated command structures.

NATO plays a vital role in crisis management and peacekeeping operations, both inside and outside the territories of its member states. From Kosovo to Afghanistan, NATO-led missions have helped stabilize conflict zones, promote reconciliation and support post-conflict reconstruction efforts.

In parallel to NATO, European leaders embarked on efforts towards European integration, recognizing the need for closer cooperation on defense matters. It is from this moment on that we can start our analysis in the various steps that brought Europe's defense as it is today.

Starting in 1954, the Western European Union (WEU) was created as a security and defense organization comprising several Western European countries. Its main purpose was to promote mutual defense and cooperation among member states and had its focus on security and defense cooperation. The WEU was established in the aftermath of World War II and during the early years of the Cold War, between concerns about Soviet expansionism and the need for a unified defense posture among Western European nations.

WEU member states engaged in joint military exercises, exchanged information on defense issues and coordinated their defense policies. Working together, member states sought to strengthen their collective security and respond effectively to emerging security threats.

The WEU maintained close ties with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and many of its member states also belonged to NATO. While NATO focused primarily on collective defense against external threats, the WEU provided a platform for European nations to pursue defense cooperation independent of NATO in some areas. This allowed member states to address regional security problems and contribute to European security in a more flexible way.

In addition, the WEU played a role in crisis management and conflict resolution, particularly in the context of conflicts in the Balkans during the 1990s. With Peacekeeping Operations, WEU has participated in peacekeeping operations in the Balkans with the goal of stabilizing the region and preventing further conflict escalation. Practically, the WEU deployed forces as part of Operation Sharp Guard in the Adriatic Sea to enforce the UN arms embargo against the former Yugoslavia.

The WEU has also engaged in diplomatic efforts to facilitate conflict resolution and peace negotiations in the Balkans. It has supported diplomatic initiatives led by the European Union, NATO, and other international organizations to broker peace agreements and promote reconciliation between warring factions. The WEU also contributed to humanitarian assistance efforts in the Balkans by providing aid to conflict-affected civilians. This involved coordinating relief operations, delivering essential supplies, and supporting humanitarian organizations on the ground.

In addition, the WEU played a supporting role in security sector reform efforts in post-conflict Balkan countries. It has provided assistance in rebuilding and restructuring security institutions, promoting democratic governance, and fostering the rule of law to prevent future conflicts.

WEU member states have supported peacekeeping efforts and contributed to regional stability through involvement in peacekeeping missions and humanitarian operations during time.

Another major factor concerning the WEU happened when in 1965, the Treaty of Brussels merged the Western European Union (WEU) with the European Economic Community (EEC), aiming at the creation of closer links between economic and defense issues, laying the foundation for a more comprehensive integration of European defense policies.

A main significance of the Brussels Treaty was its role in integrating economic and defense policies within the European community. By bringing together the WEU and the EEC, European nations signaled their commitment to promote cooperation not only in economic endeavors but also in security and defense matters. This integration reflected the broader aspiration to create a more united and cohesive European community capable of collectively addressing different challenges.

In addition, the treaty sought to streamline decision-making processes related to defense policies, by consolidating defense-related activities within the EEC, member states aimed to promote more efficient defense coordination and decision-making. This consolidation was conceived as a step toward achieving greater coherence and unity in European security efforts.

Symbolically, the Brussels Treaty had immense significance, as it underscored the growing ambition of European nations to cooperate not only economically, but also in the field of defense and security. It represented a clear commitment toward building a stronger and more integrated European community that could effectively meet internal and external challenges.

Despite its importance, the Brussels Treaty did not prevent the dissolution of the WEU in 2011. Indeed, several factors contributed to this outcome. Starting with a very significant one, that was the overlap with NATO, as NATO expanded its role and scope of activities, including taking on peacekeeping and crisis management roles in Europe, the need for a separate defense organization like the WEU diminished.

Finally, the process of European integration played a crucial role in the WEU's marginalization. This process consolidates the EU's position as a central actor in European defense cooperation, accelerating the dissolution of the WEU. When in 2011 the WEU officially ceased its activities, its remaining functions were transferred to the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). This consolidation of defense responsibilities within the EU framework marked the end of the WEU's role as an independent defense organization and highlighted the EU's growing role in shaping European security and defense policies

1.2 From the 1990s forward:

“Navigating European Defense from Institutional Establishment to Treaty Formalization”

Continuing our analysis of the historical context, we come to the late 1990s and early 2000s where there are many changes in European defense such as the establishment of institutions such as the European Defense Agency (EDA) in 2004 and the European External Action Service (EEAS) in 2010, led to a stronger EU and so to a duplication of efforts between the WEU and EU in areas such as defense policy and crisis management.

Moreover, the signing of the Lisbon Treaty in 2007 formalized the integration of defense policies into the EU framework, incorporating key elements of the WEU's mutual defense clause.

Since I'm following the timeline of events, I will analyze in chronological order the factors concerning the history of the common European defense returning later on, both to the creation of the EDA, EEAS and the Treaty of Lisbon.

As years pass by, another treaty in our case study that's very important is the Maastricht Treaty, signed in Maastricht on 7 February 1992, entered into force on 1 November 1993. It establishes European citizenship, strengthens the powers of the European Parliament and launches the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the European Security Defense Identity (ESDI) which role was fundamental, and we are going to explain why.

Firstly, ESDI has enabled the European Union (EU) to conduct military operations independently of NATO, providing the EU with the ability to address security challenges and crises without depending solely on NATO resources or approval. This independence has enabled the EU to respond promptly and effectively to emerging security threats in Europe and around the world.

Secondly, ESDI has been a key step toward strengthening European autonomy in defense and security matters. By developing its capabilities to plan and execute military operations, the EU aimed to assert its role as a credible security actor on the world stage. This increased autonomy strengthened Europe's ability to effectively address a wide range of security challenges.

In addition, ESDI was designed to complement NATO's collective defense framework. While NATO remained the primary entity responsible for ensuring the defense of its member states against external aggression, ESDI provided the EU with the flexibility to act independently in areas where NATO engagement was not required. We can analyze different historical events here firstly the Balkan Conflict; during the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s, NATO was heavily involved in peacekeeping operations, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina and later Kosovo. However, the EU also played a

significant role through initiatives such as the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM)⁵ and later the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX). These missions have enabled the EU to address specific security and stability challenges in the region without depending solely on NATO resources or decision-making processes.

Secondly Piracy off the coast of Somalia, that happened between the late 2000s and early 2010, where piracy off the coast of Somalia became a significant threat to international maritime commerce. While NATO conducted Operation Ocean Shield⁶ to counter piracy in the region, the EU launched its own mission, Operation Atalanta, focused on protecting humanitarian aid shipments and deterring pirate attacks. This demonstrated the EU's ability to independently address maritime security challenges through its own security and defense mechanisms.

Lastly it was fundamental in counterterrorism operations. Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and subsequent events, such as the Madrid train bombings in 2004 and the London train bombings in 2005, counterterrorism operations have become a priority for both NATO and the EU. While NATO focused on collective defense measures and cooperation with non-EU partners, the EU developed its own initiatives, such as the European Counterterrorism Center (ECTC)⁷ within Europol, to improve information sharing, law enforcement cooperation, and counter-radicalization efforts among EU member states.

These historical examples illustrate how ESDI has provided the EU with the flexibility to engage in security and defense activities complementary to NATO efforts but tailored to the specific needs and priorities of the EU. This complementary relationship allowed for a more nuanced and multifaceted approach to European security.

Moreover, ESDI has facilitated crisis management and conflict resolution efforts, particularly in regions plagued by instability and conflict. It has enabled the EU to deploy military forces for peacekeeping, humanitarian interventions, and other crisis response operations, thus contributing to regional stability and security. The 1998 St. Malo declaration⁸ signaled that the traditionally hesitant United Kingdom was prepared to provide the EU with autonomous defense structures. This facilitated the transformation of the ESDI into the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in 1999, when

⁵ The European Union, starting Sept. 15, 2008 as a result of EU Council Joint Action No. 736, had arranged for the deployment in Georgia, in the areas adjacent to South Ossetia and Abkhazia, of a mission called the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) with Headquarters in Tbilisi, aimed at ensuring the monitoring of what is provided for in the EU-Russia agreements of Aug. 12 and Sept. 8, 2008.

⁶ NATO Operation Ocean Shield was NATO's contribution to international efforts to combat piracy off the Horn of Africa, that ran between Aug. 17, 2009 and Dec. 15, 2016.

⁷ It was established in 2016 with the aim of maximising operational, technical and overall information exchange capabilities in the area of counterterrorism.

⁸ The Saint-Malo declaration was a document signed in December 1998 by British prime minister Tony Blair and French President Jacques Chirac, who met to advance the creation of a European security and defense policy, including a European military force capable of autonomous action.

it was transferred to the EU. As today, the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI), firstly has undergone into the (ESDP) and finally it was integrated with its functions into the EU's broader Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). While the specific term "ESDI" may not be prevalent today, its principles and objectives persist, guiding European defense cooperation within the EU framework.

Starting with the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) established in 1999 thanks to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is both the institutional framework which gave birth to the (ESDP) and the political framework which justifies its development.

Its main purpose was to strengthen the European Union's (EU) capabilities in crisis management and conflict prevention, filling a crucial gap in the EU's security architecture. It aimed to promote greater cohesion and coordination among EU member states in addressing security challenges.

By establishing common European defense structures, the policy sought to harmonize military capabilities and streamline decision-making processes, enabling more effective collective action in times of crisis.

Another department was also created within the organization: the European Rapid Reaction Force (ERRF) and it was a central component of the ESDP. This force, composed of military units provided by EU member states, was designed to be rapidly deployed for various types of crises, including humanitarian emergencies, peacekeeping operations, and conflict resolution efforts. The ERRF has provided the EU with a flexible and credible military capability, improving its ability to respond rapidly to emerging security threats.

Besides, ESDP aimed to strengthen the EU's role as a security provider, both in Europe and on the world stage. By developing autonomous military capabilities, the EU sought to complement the efforts of traditional security organizations such as NATO and assert its strategic autonomy in addressing security challenges.

ESDP has also emphasized the integration of civilian and military instruments for comprehensive crisis management. It recognizes that effective responses to security threats often require a multifaceted approach, involving the coordination of diplomatic, humanitarian and military efforts. Therefore, the policy has sought to strengthen cooperation among different EU institutions and agencies to ensure a holistic response to crises.

This policy laid the foundation for the subsequent development of the CSDP and is now what I could define as the "final evolution" of the (ESDI). It was also established in 1999, but entered into force in 2009, under the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty.

The CSDP encompasses a wide range of activities, including civilian missions, military operations, and capability development efforts, aimed at addressing security challenges and promoting peace and

stability. Through its civilian and military missions, CSDP helps promote international stability and peace in conflict-affected regions. Whether through peacekeeping operations, capacity building initiatives, or crisis response missions, the EU's engagement in CSDP helps prevent conflict escalation and promote sustainable peace and development. One of the main goals of CSDP is to develop and strengthen European defense capabilities. By investing in defense research, technology development, and interoperability among member states, the EU aims to build a credible and effective defense posture capable of dealing with evolving security threats. It also reflects the EU's commitment to uphold its core values and norms, including democracy, human rights and the rule of law, in its external action. By pooling resources and capabilities, EU member states can collectively respond to security threats, both within and beyond Europe's borders, thereby enhancing the continent's overall security. While NATO remains the cornerstone of collective defense for many European countries, CSDP complements NATO by focusing on the non-military aspects of security, such as conflict prevention, crisis management, and civilian-led missions. Working in tandem with NATO, CSDP contributes to a more comprehensive and integrated approach to European security.

Thus, although the institutional framework may have evolved, the objectives and functions initially outlined by the ESDP remain fundamental to European defense policy.

Approaching the 2000s, we resume our historical reconstruction from the European Security Strategy adopted in December 2003, and that has become a landmark in the development of the EU's foreign and security policy. For the first time, the EU agreed on a joint threat assessment and set clear objectives for advancing its security interests, based on our core values. As Javier Solana⁹: "Nothing describes our aspirations better than the title of the Strategy: 'A Secure Europe in a Better World' - that is the ultimate aim of our actions".

Although the strategy is no longer used in its original form today, it is mandatory to take it into consideration because still today, its principles remain relevant and influential in shaping our European defense policy discussions, including those related to the potential creation of an EU military.

At its core, the strategy articulated the EU's approach to address security challenges in a rapidly changing global landscape. It emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach to security, integrating military and civilian instruments to respond to multiple threats. This holistic approach is in line with the concept of the European Union Army, which is seen as part of a broader framework of coordinated defense efforts.

The concept is to provide key strategic guidance for EU defense and security policy, outlining objectives, priorities, and overarching principles to guide decision-making and action. This strategic

⁹ Secretary-General of the Council of the EU / High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy

framework shapes the development and execution of defense initiatives, including the potential creation and operation of an EU Army. It ensures coherence and consistency in the enhancement of European defense capabilities.

In addition, the strategy stressed the importance of coordination and cooperation among EU member states and international partners in addressing security threats. Collaboration is critical to the effective functioning of the European Union Army, which relies on collective action and interoperability among member state's armed forces. The emphasis on promoting partnerships and alliances underscores the importance of collective defense efforts.

Besides, the framework recognized the imperative for the EU to adapt to evolving security challenges and maintain resilience in the face of emerging threats. This flexibility and adaptability are critical for the EU Army, enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to various security scenarios, including conventional warfare, hybrid threats, and non-traditional security challenges.

Although the European Security Strategy is not legally binding per se, its principles and objectives continue to shape EU defense and security policy. Consequently, policy documents and initiatives reflect elements of the strategy, guiding the current development of the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) and related defense cooperation initiatives.

1.3 Exploring the early 2000s: “The Role of EDA, EEAS, and the Lisbon Treaty”

Getting closer and closer to the present day, let's delve into 2 institutions I already mentioned before, both are key institutions within the European Union (EU) framework, with distinct but complementary roles in the realm of defense and foreign policy, specifically I mean about the European Defense Agency (EDA) established in 2004 and the European External Action Service (EEAS) established in 2009.

As Jolyon Howorth¹⁰ analyzed, EDA was established with the primary objective of enhancing EU defense capabilities and promoting defense cooperation among EU member states. Its main functions include facilitating defense research and technology development, fostering collaboration with the defense industry, and promoting defense capability development. The EDA serves as a forum for member states to coordinate their defense policies, identify capability gaps and undertake collaborative projects to address common security challenges.

It plays a crucial role in advancing the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) by promoting interoperability among member states' armed forces and improving the EU's ability to manage crises.

On the other hand, EEAS was established following the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, which we will analyze later on, with the aim of rationalizing the EU's external action and ensuring the coherence of its foreign policy.

It serves as the EU's diplomatic service and provides support to the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR/VP), who represents the EU in foreign affairs.

It coordinates the EU's diplomatic efforts, conducts diplomatic relations with third countries and international organizations, and oversees the implementation of the EU's foreign policy objectives.

In the area of defense, the EEAS works closely with the European Defense Agency and member states to ensure that the EU's defense and security initiatives are in line with its broader foreign policy objectives. Both the EDA and the EEAS continue to play crucial roles in shaping the EU's defense and foreign policy landscape.

The need for an intense defense cooperation and coordinated foreign policy responses remains pertinent, particularly in light of evolving security challenges and geopolitical developments.

As today, there has been ongoing discussion and efforts to further strengthen their mandates and effectiveness. Especially regarding that, it's essential to note that the functioning and effectiveness of these institutions may evolve over time in response to changing geopolitical dynamics, and it's exactly

¹⁰ In his book: "The European Defence Agency: Arming Europe" published in 2008

here that a common defense including an Army would incorporate more institutions and consequently be stronger. Additionally, joining forces would also help Europe's security to be prepared for any possible changes in member states' priorities and institutional reforms within the EU framework.

As I mentioned before, the EEAS was established building on the principles of the Lisbon Treaty, that was signed in the presence of the President of the European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pöttering, on 13 December 2007 and that entered into force on the first of January 2009.

One of the main point of the treaty was the introduction of the mutual defense clause, outlined in Article 42.7, that enhanced cooperation mechanisms such as Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), that we will analyze later. This mutual defense clause in the project of a European Union common defense and a possible creation of an army can be analyze in different perspectives.

First of all, it provided a clearer legal basis for the further integration of European defense policies. It emphasized the development of a Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) within the framework of the EU. The mutual defense clause states that if a member state is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, other member states have an obligation to come to its aid. The mutual defense clause emphasizes the principle of solidarity among EU member states in the face of external threats. It reflects a commitment to collective security and defense, promoting unity and cohesion among member states.

Regarding the concept of the EU military, the Lisbon Treaty lays the foundation for greater cooperation and integration of national military forces under a common framework, by opening the possibility of joint military operations and shared defense capabilities.

Additionally, The Lisbon Treaty reaffirms the EU's commitment in achieving strategic autonomy in security and defense. It recognizes the need for the EU to have the capacity to act autonomously in crisis management and conflict resolution. A European Union Army, built on the principles outlined in the Lisbon Treaty, could help strengthen the EU's strategic autonomy by reducing dependence on external actors for defense capabilities and decision-making.

Finally, I believe that in today's security landscape of diverse and complex threats, including terrorism, cyber-attacks, and hybrid warfare, a European Union Army could provide a more coordinated and effective response. It could enable rapid deployment of forces, better coordination of resources, and enhanced crisis management capabilities.

The Lisbon Treaty provisions for defense integration and the mutual defense clause are essential foundations for addressing contemporary security challenges through collective action and cooperation.

In order to better understand the change in the theme of collective defense in Europe in recent years and the importance of the Treaty of Lisbon, I would like to take into consideration the article written

by Elie Perot¹¹, intitled: “The European Union’s nascent role in the field of collective defense: between deliberate and emergent strategy”, published by Taylor and Francis¹².

This article explores the evolution of the European Union's (EU) involvement in collective defense over the past 15 years, examining its progression through three distinct phases.

Initial Phase: This phase began with the pre-Lisbon Treaty phases, which integrated collective defense into the EU's mandate through Article 42.7 TEU. The first activation of this provision occurred after the Paris attacks in November 2015, marking a significant development in the EU's defense posture.

Indirect Development Phase: The second phase saw an indirect development of collective defense policies, including initiatives on military mobility and hybrid threats. While tangentially related to collective defense, these policies contributed to the broader evolution of EU defense capabilities.

Direct but incomplete affirmation phase: The final phase saw a direct but incomplete affirmation of the EU's role in collective defense. Calls for operationalizing Article 42.7 TEU emerged, especially during the crises involving Turkey and Russia. Despite the signaling of the EU's potential as a collective defense framework, these efforts remain partial and ongoing.

The article highlights the EU's modest but conscious forays into collective defense, the result of both deliberate strategy and emerging dynamics. These developments have become increasingly difficult to ignore over time, reflecting a growing awareness of the EU's role in collective security.

The author acknowledges the terminological discrepancy between "collective defense clause" and "mutual assistance clause" and discusses the legal and historical context of collective defense within the EU framework. In addition, the article highlights key events, such as the European Defense Community (EDC) project and the role of the Western European Union (WEU), in shaping the EU's approach to collective defense.

It's important to focus now a bit on the EDC as it is a critical touchstone in the evolution of European defense cooperation for various reasons.

Firstly, the CED represents a pivotal moment in European history as one of the first attempts at military integration among European nations. Its birth in the early 1950s reflects the aspirations of European countries to create a unified defense front in the aftermath of World War II.

The failure of the European Defense Community (EDC) offers several crucial lessons that are highly relevant to current efforts to strengthen European defense cooperation and the potential creation of a

¹¹ He is programme director and PhD researcher at the Brussels School of Governance (BSoG) of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). His research focuses on European security and more specifically on the implications of the return of collective defense as the main strategic challenge facing the European security architecture.

¹² Taylor & Francis Group is an international company originating in England that publishes books and academic journals. Its parts include Taylor & Francis, CRC Press, Routledge, F1000 Research and Dovepress. It is a division of Informa plc, a United Kingdom-based publisher and conference company.

European Union military. One of the main reasons for the failure of the CED was the lack of unanimous support from member states, especially from key countries such as France. This underscores the need for strong political will and consensus among all member states for any defense initiative to succeed. Today, reaching broad agreement among EU members is critical to moving forward with common defense projects.

The CED failed in part because of concerns about national sovereignty and reluctance to cede control of national military forces to a supranational entity. This lesson highlights the need to carefully balance national sovereignty with the benefits of collective security. Any modern European defense initiative must address these concerns, ensuring that member states retain sufficient control while contributing to a collective force. Moreover, the EDC lacked a fully developed institutional and legal framework to effectively manage and oversee its operations. Contemporary efforts to create a European Army or improve defense cooperation must be supported by sound institutional structures and clear legal frameworks to ensure effective governance, accountability, and operational efficiency. The CED was proposed at a time when NATO had already been established, resulting in concerns about redundancy and the relationship between the two organizations. Modern initiatives must consider how a European army would integrate with existing defense structures, particularly NATO, to avoid duplication and ensure complementary roles. A clear definition of roles and responsibilities is essential to harmonize efforts. The failure of the CED was also caused by insufficient public and parliamentary support, especially in France. Gaining broad public and national parliamentary support is critical to the success of any new defense initiative. Transparent communication, demonstration of benefits, and response to public concerns are key steps in gaining this support.

Finally, the CED's ambitious and somewhat abrupt proposal has met with resistance. A more adaptive and gradual approach to defense integration, allowing incremental steps and adjustments based on member state feedback and changing geopolitical circumstances, is likely to be more successful. It could start with enhanced cooperation and joint initiatives, progressively moving to deeper integration.

By examining the reasons for its failure, policymakers can draw insights into the challenges and complexities inherent in such initiatives. These insights can inform more robust strategies aimed at achieving common defense objectives in the present.

Today the legacy of the CED goes beyond its own demise, laying the foundation for subsequent initiatives such as the European Union's Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). Although the CED was not realized, it catalyzed discussions and actions for greater defense integration within the EU, underscoring the persistent desire of European nations to improve their security and defense capabilities through collective action.

Moreover, the rejection of the EDC by some member states, notably France, highlights the continuing tension between national sovereignty and collective security interests. Understanding the nuances of this dynamic in the context of the CED can shed light on contemporary debates regarding the role of member states in a European Union military and the extent of their commitments to shared defense objectives.

Finally, the article discusses recent developments, including tabletop exercises addressing various security scenarios and efforts to improve military mobility after Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The EU's response to crises, such as Greece's invocation of Article 42.7 TEU and Finland's accession to NATO, highlights the changing dynamics of collective defense within the EU.

The author perspective give us a comprehensive analysis of the EU's path to collective defense, examining its historical roots, institutional frameworks, and contemporary challenges and opportunities.

1.4 Navigating recent years of EU Defense: “PESCO, EDF, and EPF - historical creation and context”

Almost at the end of our journey through the history of European defence, we cannot fail to mention the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), established in 2017 strengthened by the Lisbon treaty. PESCO provides a structured framework for EU member states to deepen their defense integration. It enables participating countries to engage in common objectives and projects aimed at strengthening their collective defense capabilities.

Through PESCO, member states can align their defense policies, harmonize military standards and procedures, and work toward greater interoperability among their armed forces. This greater integration contributes to the overall coherence and effectiveness of the EU's defense architecture.

It also facilitates the pooling and sharing of defense resources among participating member states. By coordinating defense investment and capability development, aiming at closing capability gaps, improving military effectiveness, and optimizing defense spending.

Along with joint projects and collaborative initiatives, PESCO promotes innovation, research and development of defense technologies. This enables member states to acquire advanced capabilities and maintain a competitive edge in a changing security environment.

It provides a platform for member states to undertake joint defense projects in areas of common interest. These projects can range from developing military equipment and infrastructure to conducting joint exercises and operations.

By pooling resources and expertise, PESCO projects exploit economies of scale and promote cost-effective solutions to shared security challenges. They also strengthen the EU's capacity in crisis management, peacekeeping and humanitarian interventions.

While PESCO itself does not constitute a European Union Army, it represents a significant step towards closer defense integration and the eventual realization of such a concept. It creates a framework for coordination and collaboration that could support the development of a more unified and capable European defense force in the future.

To summarize it PESCO is important for the European Union's defense efforts as it promotes deeper integration, enhances military capabilities, fosters joint defense projects, and contributes to the long-term vision of a European Union Army or a more cohesive European defense framework.

Continuing, we arrive at the really recent years, on 7 June 2017, the European Commission adopted a Communication launching the European Defense Fund (EDF) consisting of 'dimensions' for defense research and for capability development. The Communication was accompanied by a legislative

proposal for a Regulation establishing the European Defense Industrial Development Program (EDIDP) under the capability dimension.

The final decision on the setting up of the EDF was taken by the Council and the European Parliament in 2019/2020. The Fund started functioning on 1 January 2021 with a total agreed budget of €7.953 billion (in current prices) for the 2021-2027 period. It aims at fostering the competitiveness and innovativeness of the European defense technological and industrial base thereby contributing to the EU's strategic autonomy. It also aims to trigger cooperative programs that would not happen without an EU contribution and, by supporting research and development activities, to provide the necessary incentives to boost cooperation at each stage of the industrial cycle.

Using the funding provided by the EDF, EU member states can invest in projects to improve Europe's defense capabilities in various areas, including cybersecurity, strategic transport, military logistics and emerging technologies.

By supporting the development of advanced defense capabilities, the EDF contributes to the modernization and interoperability of Europe's armed forces. It helps fill capability gaps, improve defense readiness, and strengthen Europe's ability to respond effectively to evolving security threats, both conventional and asymmetric.

It also plays a crucial role in promoting strategic autonomy and technological sovereignty in the EU's defense sector. By investing in indigenous defense technologies and reducing dependence on external suppliers, the EDF strengthens Europe's defense resilience and independence.

Through EDF-funded collaborative R&D projects, EU member states can develop domestic defense capabilities, reducing dependence on sources outside the EU for critical defense equipment and technologies. This strengthens Europe's ability to assert its strategic interests and maintain sovereignty in defense decision-making. The EDF contributes to the broader goal of progressing toward a European Union military or a more integrated European defense framework. By supporting joint defense initiatives and promoting closer cooperation among member states, the EDF lays the foundation for greater defense integration and interoperability. Collaborative projects under the EDF contribute to the convergence of EU member states' defense policies, standards, and capabilities.

Finally, we must talk about European Peace Facility

The European Peace Facility (EPF) ²⁷ was established by the Council in 2021 to finance external actions with military or defense implications and to provide assistance to partner countries in peace-keeping operations under the common foreign and security policy. It is an off-budget instrument²⁸ funded by Member States through yearly contributions proportionate to their GNI.

Since the outbreak of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, the Council has mobilized seven tranches of EUR 500 million each for the Ukrainian Armed Forces under the EPF,

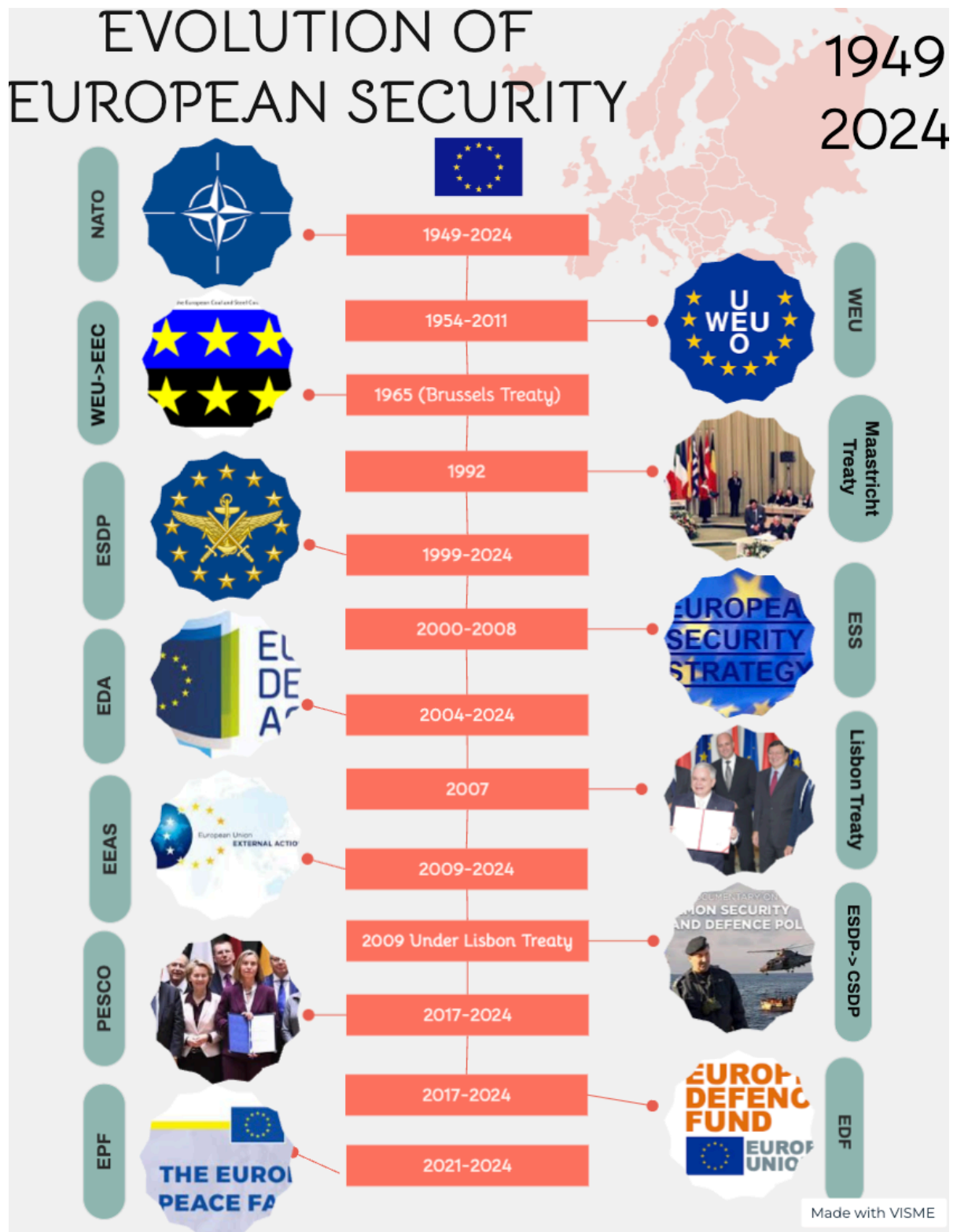
the first of which representing the first time in history that the EU has provided assistance for lethal weapons. In addition, in response to Ukraine's urgent request for assistance, the Council agreed on the following additional funding under the EPF with a view to the implementation of the three-track approach¹³:

- on 13 April 2023, EUR 1 billion to partially reimburse Member States for deliveries of ammunition (and missiles if requested) to Ukraine from their existing stocks or from the reprioritization of existing orders during the period 9 February to 31 May 2023 (Track 1)
- on 5 May 2023, EUR 1 billion for the joint procurement of ammunition (and missiles if requested) from the EU and Norwegian defense industries (Track 2)

Since more than half its initial ceiling of EUR 5 billion for 2021-2027 had been mobilized for Ukraine in 2022 alone, the Council increased the EPF ceiling to EUR 7 billion in December 2022, and then again to EUR 10.5 billion (EUR 12 billion in current prices) in June 2023³¹, in order to enable the EU to continue its support to Ukraine at a critical stage of the conflict, while maintaining engagement in other regions. The total EU contribution for Ukraine to support the delivery of military equipment under the EPF amounts to EUR 5.6 billion to date. As an off-budget instrument, the EPF is not subject to discharge by the European Parliament; in its resolution of 18 January 2023, Parliament welcomed the increase in the EPF budget and its use to provide support to Ukraine, but called for strengthened parliamentary oversight of EU external action and for Parliament to be involved in the implementation and scrutiny of the EPF³³.

To conclude the sub-chapter I have create an image showing all the events and institution we mentioned before, to impact visually to show how many projects, failed and not, have been made until today. This image, created to visually represent the development of the European security framework from 1949 to 2024, traces the major milestones and organizations that have shaped the European defense landscape. Beginning with the formation of NATO in 1949, the timeline includes key entities such as the Western European Union (WEU), the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), and the European Defense Agency (EDA). Each milestone is linked to significant treaties and initiatives, such as the Brussels Treaty, the Maastricht Treaty, the Lisbon Treaty, and the establishment of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and the European Peace Facility (EPF). The image aims to provide a comprehensive overview of how European security has evolved through cooperation, treaties and the creation of dedicated defense agencies.

¹³ The three track approach are: Track 1 – Urgent delivery of ammunition and, if requested, missiles by Member States to Ukraine, whether from existing stocks or through the reprioritization of existing orders (financed through the European Peace Facility); Track 2 – Joint procurement of ammunition and, if requested, missiles, from the European defense industry and Norway in order to refill stocks while continuing to support Ukraine (financed through the European Peace Facility and EDIRPA); Track 3 – Increased production capacity in the European defense industry and secure supply chains (financed through ASAP).



Throughout this timeline, the EU has sought to develop its defense capabilities and strengthen its role as a security provider, both inside and outside Europe.

The creation of an EU military is a significant step toward achieving greater strategic autonomy and strengthening Europe's ability to effectively deal with emerging security threats.

1.5 Harmonizing NATO-EU Cooperation in Common Defense: “Striking a Balance Between Complementarity and Autonomy”

In this final part of the chapter this research will focus on the relationship between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) Common Defense constitutes a crucial axis in the pursuit of common security objectives.

When discussing the relationship between NATO and the EU common defense, it's essential to consider how these two organizations can complement each other while avoiding rivalry or duplication of efforts.

The strategic partnership between NATO and the EU, articulated in the 2002 Berlin Plus agreement¹⁴, emphasizes the potential for collaboration in areas of mutual interest. This agreement grants the EU access to NATO assets and capabilities for EU-led operations, facilitating interoperability and improving the effectiveness of joint missions.

NATO's core mission of collective defense, enshrined in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty¹⁵, and its robust military capabilities are the cornerstone of transatlantic security. As political scientist Benjamin Pohl¹⁶ in his book has noted: "*NATO and the EU have different but complementary strengths in terms of crisis management.*" NATO, as the preeminent military alliance, boasts a robust framework for collective defense, deterrence, and crisis management. Its history is replete with examples of successful military interventions, such as the Kosovo War in 1999 and the Afghanistan War from 2001 to 2021, where NATO forces played a central role in stabilizing conflict zones and restoring peace.

According to Julian Lindley-French¹⁷, in "NATO: A Guide to the Issues," NATO's military capabilities and command structures can support the EU's efforts in crisis response, while the EU's civilian capabilities and crisis management tools can complement NATO's military operations.

Also NATO's broader geographic reach, encompassing North America and Europe, and its extensive network of partnerships provide a valuable framework for collective defense.

On the other hand, the EU's CSDP framework provides a platform for coordinating civilian and military missions, as evidenced by initiatives such as Operation Atalanta, aimed at combating piracy

¹⁴ Following the political decision of December 2002, "Berlin Plus" arrangements, adopted on 17 March 2003, provide the basis for NATO-EU cooperation in crisis management by allowing EU access to NATO's collective assets and capabilities for EU-led operations.

¹⁵ Article 5 provides that if a NATO Ally is the victim of an armed attack, each and every other member of the Alliance will consider this act of violence as an armed attack against all members and will take the actions it deems necessary to assist the Ally attacked.

¹⁶ Benjamin Pohl is the author of the book: "EU Foreign Policy and Crisis Management Operations: Power, Purpose and Domestic Politics" published in March, 2014

¹⁷ In "NATO: A Guide to the Issues published in 2011

off the coast of Somalia, and the European Union Training Mission in Mali, focused on building the capacity of Malian security forces. In recent years, the concept of a European army has gained traction as a means of further enhancing EU defense capabilities and fostering greater strategic autonomy. The notion of a European army encompasses a range of initiatives, including the establishment of a permanent multinational force, increased defense spending among EU member states, and the development of common defense capabilities. The EU has institutional mechanisms for conflict prevention, crisis management and peacebuilding, as highlighted by researcher Joachim A. Koops¹⁸, who says: *"The EU's contribution to security is complementary to NATO's military capabilities, focusing on crisis management, civilian missions and capacity building."*

To avoid rivalry, NATO and the EU should delineate clear roles and responsibilities in common defense efforts. As articulated by former NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, *"It is important to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity between NATO and the EU."*

In particular, Christopher J. Bickerton¹⁹ suggested: *"From Nation-States to Member States,"* NATO could retain its primary role in collective defense, while the EU focuses on crisis management, conflict prevention, and capacity-building in regions where NATO is not engaged.

To achieve this, NATO should retain its primary role in collective defense, while the EU focuses on crisis management, conflict prevention, and capacity-building initiatives.

Another main factor would be regular consultation mechanisms, such as the NATO-EU Joint Declaration, can facilitate dialogue and coordination between the two organizations. As Sten Rynning, suggested²⁰: *"The Power and Purpose of Transatlantic Security Cooperation,"* emphasize the importance of institutionalizing cooperation through joint planning exercises, information-sharing mechanisms, and structured dialogue forums can facilitate cooperation and enhance mutual understanding of strategic objectives.

Finally, both NATO and the EU should respect each other's autonomy and sovereignty in decision-making processes related to defense and security. Mutual respect for each organization's prerogatives, as highlighted by Karen E. Smith in *"The Making of EU Foreign Policy,"* is essential for fostering trust and cooperation.

So in this project, NATO retains primary responsibility for collective defense, including territorial defense of its member states and the maintenance of robust military capabilities for deterrence and defense. This includes conducting collective defense operations, crisis management, and cooperative security initiatives. While The EU focuses on crisis management, conflict prevention, and civilian-

¹⁸ Joachim Koops (BA, LPC Oxon, MSc Turku, PhD Kiel) is a Board Member of the Global Governance Institute and a Senior Expert in the Peace and Security and Global Education section. He is also Professor of Security Studies and Scientific Director of the Institute of Security and Global Affairs (ISGA) at Leiden University.

¹⁹ in *"European Integration"* 2013 Oxford, university press

²⁰ in *"NATO Renewed"* published in 2016

military cooperation, as outlined in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Its competences include humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping operations, civilian missions, and capacity-building in areas affected by conflict or instability. By strategically coordinating their activities, delineating clear roles and responsibilities, and respecting each other's autonomy and sovereignty, NATO and the EU can enhance their cooperation and contribute effectively to collective security in Europe and beyond.

To conclude the chapter, I will use Professor Paolo Magri²¹ answer to my question: How could NATO and a Possible New European Union Army work together, improving each other, considering the past clashes and rivalry between NATO and European Common Defense?

He replied: “Mostly, it would be about division of labor. On the one hand, NATO would still constantly be required to “keep the US in Europe”, especially as:

- a. the US is the only credible Western country to provide nuclear deterrence for the whole continent as of today. While France appears to be willing to develop its own nuclear deterrence capabilities to cover the continent, its doctrine does not provide for a EU-wide nuclear umbrella, citing only “extreme circumstances of legitimate self-defense”;
- b. the US is the only credible Western country that could provide high-intensity conventional warfare capabilities, spending 3x its European allies cumulatively, and as the current capacity of national armies is evaluated at around 10% as the US’.

On the other hand, a nascent EU army could focus on building up rapid reaction forces that could be deployed in case of regional crises, and of course for deterrence purposes. This would allow this “EU army” to develop a common security and defense culture, as well as share strategic and tactical doctrines, together with coordinating with NATO. Such a nimble European force could then be upscaled – but let’s face it, it seems highly unlikely that this could be the case, absent a more generalized state of war on the European continent that, I’m sure, almost no one wishes to see in the near future.

²¹ Executive Vice President of ISPI and professor of International Relations at Bocconi University. He is a member of the Strategic Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; member of the Europe Policy Group of the World Economic Forum (Davos); member of the Advisory Board of Asilomar and of the Board of Directors of the Italy-China Foundation.

Second Chapter

Financial Strategies to support the European Army: Toward a Shared Commitment to Unified Defense."

This chapter delves into the multifaceted aspects of financing and assessing the economic capabilities of a potential European Army, along with analyzing military expenditures in Greece and Poland. The first subchapter explores the concept of collective defense budgeting, evaluating funding avenues such as collective defense budgets, member state contributions, public-private partnerships, and innovative financing mechanisms. It emphasizes the importance of consensus-building and transparency in navigating political, economic, and institutional complexities.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) are analyzed within the context of financing the European Army project, outlining their potential benefits and challenges. Despite offering access to expertise and private sector funding, PPPs entail complexities such as accountability and regulatory uncertainties. The economic capabilities of EU member states are assessed, considering factors like GDP, military spending, and fiscal policies. It underscores the need for fair burden-sharing and flexible frameworks to promote collective security within the EU.

A comprehensive statistical analysis of military expenditures across European nations is conducted, highlighting trends over the past decade and their economic impacts. Expert opinions suggest strategic spending is crucial for maximizing defense investments.

Finally, the chapter explores the notable increases in military expenditure observed in Greece and Poland, attributing them to perceived security threats and regional instabilities. The potential benefits of establishing a European Union Army in streamlining defense expenditure and enhancing collective security are underscored.

2.1. Collective Defense Budget:

“Exploring Concepts and Implementation with Insights from Professor Paolo Magri

In the effort to create a European Army, one of the key considerations is the financing of defense initiatives. This section explores the concept of collective defense budgeting and its implications for financing the European Army project. By examining the feasibility, benefits and challenges associated with pooling the resources of EU member states, we aim to understand the financial mechanisms needed to support a unified European defense strategy.

Financing a European Union Army demands a meticulous examination of various funding avenues to identify the optimal approach. One option is the establishment of collective defense budgets, wherein member states pool their resources to finance joint defense initiatives. This approach promotes solidarity among EU nations and allows for the equitable distribution of financial burdens. However, implementing collective defense budgets requires significant political consensus and coordination among member states, posing a potential challenge.

Alternatively, contributions from member states based on their economic capabilities could be considered. This strategy ensures that each country contributes according to its financial capacity, thereby promoting proportional burden-sharing. However, it may lead to disparities in funding levels among member states, potentially undermining the cohesion of the European Union Army.

Public-private partnerships present another avenue for financing the European Union Army. By leveraging private sector investments, such partnerships can supplement state funding and introduce innovative financing mechanisms. This approach enhances financial flexibility and fosters collaboration between government entities and private enterprises. Nonetheless, it raises concerns about privatization of military functions and the influence of corporate interests on defense priorities. In addition to traditional funding methods, innovative financing mechanisms such as bonds or levies could be explored to generate additional revenue streams for the European Union Army. These mechanisms offer opportunities for diversifying funding sources and reducing reliance on traditional government budgets. However, they require careful design and oversight to ensure transparency, accountability, and public trust. Each financing strategy presents its own set of advantages and challenges, necessitating careful evaluation and consideration of the broader geopolitical context. Ultimately, the most suitable approach would be one that fosters equitable burden-sharing among member states, promotes strategic cooperation, and ensures the long-term sustainability of the European Union Army project. Striking a balance between financial efficiency, political feasibility, and strategic effectiveness will be essential in shaping the future of European defense integration.

So, as we said, the feasibility of establishing a collective defense budget depends on several factors, including political commitment, economic capacity, and the presence of sound institutional mechanisms. As Smith²² in his report sheds light on the potential benefits of adopting a collective defense budget as a pragmatic solution to mitigate the financial challenges faced by individual member states in independently financing defense initiatives. This research emphasizes the imperative for European nations to work together in pooling resources to ensure the sustainability of defense capabilities in the region. He emphasizes the importance of political will, highlighting the need for member states to align their strategic goals and commit to a collective defense framework. In addition, Jones²³ argues that a collective defense budget can lead to significant cost efficiencies by exploiting economies of scale and promoting greater interoperability among European armed forces. By centralizing financial resources, member states can potentially optimize defense spending, thereby maximizing the effectiveness of defense initiatives while ensuring prudent fiscal management. Moreover, the EU Parliament's report on defense cooperation in 2020 underscores the importance of collective defense mechanisms in strengthening Europe's defense capabilities and promoting interoperability among member states' armed forces. This report highlights the need for enhanced collaboration and coordination in defense planning and investment to ensure the EU's capacity to address evolving security dynamics effectively.

Moving to another prospective, Brown²⁴ believe pooling resources through a collective defense budget offers several potential benefits for EU member states. Firstly, it enables a more equitable distribution of defense burdens, ensuring that all countries contribute according to their economic capacities (Brown, 2018). This fosters a sense of solidarity and shared responsibility among member states, strengthening the cohesion of the European Union. Instead, Wilson²⁵ believe that a collective defense budget can facilitate strategic planning and resource allocation, allowing for the prioritization of common defense objectives and the development of joint military capabilities.

Expanding on Brown's insights, his research emphasizes the importance of fairness in burden-sharing within the EU, highlighting how a collective defense budget helps mitigate disparities in defense spending among member states. This approach fosters trust and cooperation, essential elements for effective defense collaboration in the EU context. Wilson's recent work complements this perspective by underlining the strategic advantages of collective defense mechanisms. His analysis underscores

²² Smith, J. (2020). "Towards a Common European Defence Policy: Issues, Challenges, and Prospects". *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 58(2), 365-383.

²³ Jones, R. (2019). "The Political Economy of European Defence Integration: Implications for Europe's Strategic Future". *European Security*

²⁴ Brown, A. (2018). "Pooling Defence Resources: Prospects for a European Defence Union". *European Security*, 27(1), 21-41.

²⁵ Wilson, C. (2021). "Collective Defence Spending in Europe: Trends and Challenges". *Defence Studies*

how a coordinated budgeting approach enhances the EU's ability to respond cohesively to evolving security threats, ultimately reinforcing Europe's strategic autonomy and resilience.

So as we analyzed different financial possibilities for the funding of a European Union Army and different authors, we can state that a collective defense budget would be the best financial solution.

To better explore this strategy, let us analyze together the question posed to Professor Magri²⁶ about these various possibilities. The question is as follows: Supposing we have finalized the project of a European Union Army, what financial strategies, such as: collective defense budget, contributions from member states based on their economic capabilities, or potential public-private partnerships to share the expenses, would be more efficient from your point of view?

He answered: “I would definitely discard common EU bonds or any issuance of common debts. That would conflate two issues in one (mutualizing debt is a highly divisive issue) and risk postponing common defence plans indefinitely. Also, remember that financing for a common EU army, in whatever form possible, could only come after we amend the current EU treaties.

At the time, while presenting several big challenges, the most practically viable option in my opinion is to rely solely on member states' contributions. To do so, any financing of the EU army should probably include two elements: a core budget, and instruments to fund actions that are capability-specific. Here, some of the work has already been done: consider the PESCO, and the way that since Brexit we have articulated such important common defense projects. Those projects are eligible for co-funding from the EU budget, through the European Defence Fund. There is a secretariat that includes the EEAS and the European Defence Agency, and member states share a core budget for PESCO capabilities and can then interact to identify, assess, and consolidate possible common projects. Along these lines, a European army could build on this, but always with the express goal to find the capabilities that are most needed.

At the same time, I also believe that no EU army could ever be possible without significant consolidation in the defense sector. This will certainly create winners and losers across national borders, with defence contractors from bigger countries being more likely to come out on top. Given national jealousies as well as concerns for both national security and the economic prospects of the national defense industry at domestic level, it will be imperative to negotiate politically for an intra-EU specialization. Most smaller EU countries' defence sector would need to find its own specialization, and a non-economic compromise should be found so that specific weapons systems, equipment, etc. always come from industries from different EU countries, and

²⁶ From 1992 to 2005 he was Director of International Relations at Bocconi University in Milan and previously an official at the United Nations Secretariat in New York. He has been a consultant for several International Bodies and Companies - Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Albania), European Union (Poland), Italcementi (Egypt) - and Director of the Italian-Egyptian Business Council (2006-2007).

no one or close to no one is excluded. Any other equilibrium would be more economically efficient but politically unfeasible."

Despite the potential benefits, the establishment of a collective defense budget faces significant challenges and considerations. Delving deeper it becomes clear that navigating between the different defense priorities and strategic interests of EU member states is a complex task. Reaching consensus on the allocation of defense spending and the distribution of resources amid these divergences requires skillful diplomacy and a willingness to negotiate compromises. In addition, the issue of national sovereignty looms large, with concerns about relinquishing control over defense resources likely to hinder progress toward a collective budgetary framework. Transparency and accountability in the management of collective defense funds emerge as critical factors in maintaining trust and cooperation among member states. Therefore, addressing these multifaceted challenges is essential to realize the potential benefits of a collective defense budget and promote stronger European defense cooperation in the long run.

2.2 Public-Private Partnerships:

“Sharing Financial Burdens leveraging resources from both governmental and private sectors”

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) represent a collaborative approach to financing the European Army project, leveraging resources from both governmental and private sectors. This section explores the dynamics of PPPs in the context of defense initiatives, examining their potential benefits and challenges.

PPPs offer several advantages, including access to expertise, innovation, and private sector funding. By partnering with private entities, the EU can tap into specialized knowledge and technologies that may not be available in government agencies alone. In addition, PPPs can accelerate the development and implementation of defense projects by leveraging the efficiency and agility of private sector processes. In addition, sharing the financial burden with private investors can relieve pressure on government budgets and enable more sustainable long-term investments in defense capabilities.

Firstly, a key advantage of PPPs lies in their ability to ensure access to specialized expertise and foster innovation. By involving private sector partners, such as defense contractors and technology companies, the EU can tap into advanced technological capabilities and research facilities that are often beyond the reach of government agencies alone and that can contribute to the development of cutting-edge defense solutions. According to Michael E. Porter²⁷, a leading authority on competitive strategy and economic development, in his seminal work "The Competitive Advantage of Nations," collaborations between public and private entities can drive innovation by combining the strengths of different sectors. These partnerships can foster the development of cutting-edge defense solutions, improving the EU's strategic capabilities and competitiveness on the world stage.

Secondly, PPPs can expedite the process of developing and implementing defense projects.

For example, Boeing's collaboration with the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) exemplifies how such partnerships can accelerate the prototyping, testing, and deployment of military aircraft. By employing private sector expertise and resources, such as Boeing's advanced technological capabilities, the EU can ensure the operational readiness of its defense forces. The timely deployment of military aircraft and equipment is essential to maintain a credible deterrent and respond effectively to Europe's security challenges. In the case of Boeing's partnership with the DoD, the cost of aircraft development and procurement is distributed, reducing the financial strain on government budgets.

²⁷ is the Bishop William Lawrence University Professor at Harvard Business School. He has served as an adviser to governments and campaigns around the world on the advancement of social policy and economic policy, including Mitt Romney's presidential campaign.

Similarly, for the EU army project, PPPs can help alleviate budgetary constraints and optimize resource allocation for defense investments. Collaboration with private sector partners like Boeing fosters innovation and technological advancement in defense capabilities. By tapping into the expertise of leading defense contractors, the EU can access cutting-edge technologies and solutions that enhance its military effectiveness and strategic resilience. This innovation-driven approach is vital for maintaining a competitive edge in an evolving security landscape.

As also noted by Robert A. Buerlein in his book "Public-Private Partnerships: Principles of Policy and Finance"²⁸, "such collaborations can streamline project timelines and enhance overall efficiency, and these joint efforts streamline project timelines and improve overall efficiency, ensuring the timely delivery of critical defense capabilities.

In addition to accelerating development, PPPs allow financial burdens to be distributed among multiple stakeholders. By engaging private investors and companies, the EU can distribute the financial burden of defense projects more evenly, can relieve pressure on government budgets and can diversify funding sources for defense initiatives

David A. Hensher and John D. Stanley's in his study "The Role of Public-Private Partnerships in the Provision of Transportation Infrastructure"²⁹ underscores the importance of private sector investment in easing fiscal constraints and stimulating economic growth. Through PPPs, the EU can leverage private capital to support defense projects while promoting economic development and job creation. Finally, PPPs offer opportunities for sustainability of long-term investment in defense capabilities. By leveraging private sector funding and expertise, the EU can pursue innovative projects with greater financial stability. E.R. Yescombe and E. Farquharson highlight the role of PPPs in ensuring the sustainability of infrastructure development, by attracting private investment, mitigating fiscal risks and improving the resilience of defense infrastructure over time, in their article "Public-Private Partnerships: Policy and Experience."³⁰ "

These partnerships attract private investment, thereby reducing the burden on public finances and improving the resilience of defense infrastructure over time.

In conclusion, PPPs represent a strategic approach to financing defense projects within the EU, providing access to expertise, accelerating development, sharing financial burdens, and ensuring long-term investment sustainability. By leveraging the strengths of public-private collaboration, the EU can advance its security objectives while promoting innovation, economic growth and fiscal responsibility.

²⁸ (Buerlein, R. A. (2013). Public-Private Partnerships: Principles of Policy and Finance.

²⁹ Buerlein, R. A. (2013). Public-Private Partnerships: Principles of Policy and Finance.

³⁰ (Yescombe, E. R., & Farquharson, E. (2011). Public-Private Partnerships: Policy and Experience.

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) present a promising avenue for financing defense projects for the EU army, but they come with a set of challenges and considerations that must be carefully addressed, for a complete analysis on the issue. Scholars such as David D. Laitin and James D. Fearon³¹ have highlighted the potential risks of privatizing essential defense functions. In their paper "Explaining Interethnic Cooperation," they discuss how outsourcing military operations to private contractors can raise concerns about accountability and control, as private entities may prioritize profit motives over national security imperatives. For example, the case of Blackwater, a private military contractor, highlights the potential risks associated with privatization in Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) funding for a European Union (EU) Army.

Blackwater, now known as Academi, gained notoriety for its involvement in controversial incidents during the Iraq War, including the 2007 Nisour Square massacre where its employees were accused of killing unarmed civilians.

The Blackwater case raises concerns about accountability and oversight when private contractors are involved in defense operations. Privatization can lead to a lack of transparency and accountability mechanisms, making it difficult to hold private actors accountable for their actions, especially in sensitive military operations.

The use of private military contractors in conflict zones such as Iraq raises ethical and legal questions about the conduct of war and adherence to international humanitarian law. Privatization may incentivize profit-driven behavior among contractors, potentially compromising ethical standards and legal obligations in military operations.

Additionally, entrusting critical defense tasks to private contractors can pose security risks and undermine national sovereignty. Dependence on private actors for critical military functions can erode the state's ability to maintain control over its defense capabilities and decision-making processes, potentially jeopardizing national security interests. Controversies surrounding private military contractors such as Blackwater may damage public confidence in the government's ability to safeguard national security. Public perception of the privatization of defense funds may be affected by past incidents of misconduct or abuse by private contractors, raising concerns about the legitimacy and effectiveness of PPPs in military affairs.

Moreover, navigating the legal and contractual complexities inherent in PPPs can pose significant challenges. Legal experts like Steven L. Schooner and David J. Berteau, in their book "The Challenge of Military Reform in Postcommunist Europe," they discuss how navigating the intricate web of regulations, intellectual property rights, and liability provisions can pose significant challenges for governments and private firms involved in defense partnerships. For example, negotiating contracts

³¹ James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin are Professors, Department of Political Science, Stanford University, Stanford,

for joint development and procurement of defense equipment may require extensive legal expertise and resources.

The Airbus A400M program serves as a compelling case study highlighting the legal and contractual complexities associated with Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for a European Union (EU) Army. The Airbus A400M program involved the collaboration of several European NATO members, each with its own legal framework, procurement regulations, and national interests. The negotiation and coordination of agreements among these various stakeholders required careful legal analysis to ensure alignment and compliance with applicable laws and regulations in each participating country. The development and management of contracts for the joint development and procurement of a military transport aircraft such as the Airbus A400M posed significant challenges due to the scope and complexity of the project. Legal experts had to draft comprehensive contracts that addressed various aspects such as intellectual property rights, liability allocation, risk management, and performance guarantees to safeguard the interests of all parties involved.

The Airbus A400M program suffered delays, cost overruns, and technical problems that led to disputes and disagreements among stakeholders. Legal frameworks needed to define clear mechanisms for risk allocation and dispute resolution to mitigate potential conflicts and ensure accountability for project outcomes. Negotiating these issues required careful consideration of legal principles, industry standards and contractual obligations to balance the interests of governments, private contractors and other stakeholders.

In addition, legal professionals involved in the Airbus A400M program needed a deep understanding of technical specifications, engineering requirements, and industry standards to draft contracts that accurately reflected the scope and objectives of the project. The integration of legal and technical expertise was essential to develop contracts that met both legal requirements and technical specifications, ensuring the success and feasibility of the program.

This example demonstrates the need for robust legal frameworks, comprehensive contracts, and effective risk management strategies to facilitate successful collaboration among multiple stakeholders and achieve the objectives of defense projects on a European scale.

Another challenge to address is the Transparency and Accountability. Political scientists such as Christopher Hood and David Heald³² have examined the importance of transparency and accountability in PPP arrangements. In their article "Transparency: The Key to Better Governance?"³³ they argue that ensuring transparency and accountability is essential to maintain public trust and confidence in government decision-making processes. Without proper transparency measures,

³² Christopher Hood is Gladstone Professor of Government at Oxford University. David Heald is Professor of Financial Management at the University of Sheffield.

³³ OUP Oxford (7 settembre 2006)

controversies surrounding defense contracts awarded to private firms without competitive bidding processes can erode public trust and raise questions about the integrity of PPPs.

The UK Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Projects, including defense infrastructure such as military housing and barracks, faced scrutiny over transparency and accountability issues, and it serves as a pertinent case study highlighting the importance of transparency and accountability.

UK PFI projects have been criticized because of perceived shortcomings in procurement transparency. Allegations of favoritism toward private companies and lack of competitive bidding processes have raised concerns about the fairness and integrity of procurement practices. This example underscores the need for transparency in procurement procedures under PPPs for EU defense projects to ensure fair participation and mitigate the risks of corruption or undue influence.

PFI projects have also highlighted problems related to oversight mechanisms and accountability frameworks. Inadequate monitoring and evaluation processes, coupled with limited transparency in decision-making, have raised concerns about the effectiveness of supervision in safeguarding public interests and ensuring accountability for project outcomes. This underscores the importance of robust oversight mechanisms and accountability frameworks within PPPs for EU defense initiatives to promote transparency, accountability, and public trust.

Finally, transparency and accountability are key to ensuring value for money in defense procurement and infrastructure projects. Without adequate transparency and accountability measures, there is a risk of cost overruns, inefficiencies, and mismanagement of resources, ultimately undermining the effectiveness and sustainability of EU defense initiatives. UK PFI projects underscore the importance of transparent, accountable, and cost-effective procurement practices in PPPs for EU defense projects to maximize benefits and mitigate financial risks.

By learning from past experiences and implementing robust transparency and accountability measures, EU member states can enhance the integrity, efficiency, and effectiveness of defense procurement processes and infrastructure projects, ultimately strengthening Europe's collective defense capabilities.

Additionally, market volatility and regulatory uncertainties can affect the viability of PPP projects. Economists like Paul de Bijl and Bert Willems have explored the impact of market volatility and regulatory uncertainties on PPP viability. In their study "The Implications of Market Structure for Competition and Regulation in the Telecommunications Industry," they discuss how changes in market conditions and regulatory policies can affect the profitability and sustainability of PPP projects. For instance, fluctuations in defense budgets or shifts in geopolitical dynamics may influence private sector participation and investment decisions in EU army initiatives.

For example, the BAE Systems' involvement in the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program, a multinational effort to develop a fifth-generation fighter aircraft, was affected by market volatility, reflecting fluctuations in defense budgets and geopolitical tensions. Market volatility can disrupt long-term planning and investment decisions, affecting project timelines and financial sustainability. BAE Systems' experience with the JSF program underscores the need for PPPs for EU defense projects to take market dynamics into account and develop strategies to mitigate the risks associated with market volatility. By analyzing market trends, assessing risk factors, and implementing adaptation strategies, PPP stakeholders can improve project resilience and ensure continuity despite market uncertainties.

Regulatory uncertainties have also affected BAE Systems' involvement in the JSF program, reflecting changes in defense policies, technology requirements, and international agreements. Regulatory uncertainties can complicate project planning, procurement processes, and compliance requirements, posing challenges to PPP stakeholders. In the context of EU defense initiatives, regulatory uncertainties can arise from divergent national regulations, evolving EU defense policies, and international obligations. BAE Systems' experience highlights the importance of anticipating and addressing regulatory uncertainties in PPPs for EU defense projects through proactive engagement with regulators, alignment with regulatory frameworks, and contingency planning. By effectively navigating regulatory complexities, PPP actors can improve project stability, regulatory compliance, and overall success.

The challenges faced by BAE Systems in the JSF program illustrate the potential impact of market volatility and regulatory uncertainties on PPPs for EU defense projects. Market volatility can affect project financing, supply chain management, and stakeholder confidence, while regulatory uncertainties can introduce legal, compliance, and operational risks. To address these challenges, PPP actors must adopt flexible and adaptive approaches based on thorough risk assessments, scenario planning, and stakeholder consultation. By proactively managing market volatility and regulatory uncertainties, PPPs for EU defense projects can mitigate risks, increase resilience, and achieve long-term success in advancing Europe's defense capabilities.

Addressing these challenges requires rigorous risk assessment, stakeholder engagement, and robust governance mechanisms. By doing so, the EU can mitigate potential pitfalls and maximize the effectiveness of PPPs in financing its defense projects, ultimately enhancing its security capabilities and strategic autonomy.

2.3 Member States' Contributions for EU Defense: "Assessing Economic Capacities factors and considerations"

In this section, we delve into the intricate process of assessing the economic capabilities of EU member states to determine their potential contributions to the collective defense budget. Economic capability assessment involves the analysis of various factors, including Gross Domestic Product (GDP), military spending and fiscal policies, which collectively influence each country's financial commitment to European defense initiatives.

Gross Domestic Product serves as a primary indicator of a nation's economic strength and capacity to contribute to defense spending. Countries with higher GDPs typically have greater financial resources available for defense investments. However, GDP alone may not provide a comprehensive picture, as it does not account for variations in population size, economic structure, or regional disparities within a country. For example, let's talk about Germany and Belgium. Germany and Belgium are both EU member states with significant differences in GDP and population size. Germany, as the largest economy in the EU, has a substantially higher GDP compared to Belgium. This higher GDP affords Germany greater financial resources to allocate towards defense spending. However, Belgium, despite its smaller GDP, may still prioritize defense investments based on its strategic interests and security concerns. Therefore, while GDP provides an important initial indicator, other factors such as regional security threats and alliance commitments also influence defense spending decisions. Or if we think about Spain, as a diverse country with distinct regional economies, this illustrates the limitations of relying solely on national GDP figures. Regions like Catalonia and Madrid contribute significantly to Spain's overall GDP, while others, such as Extremadura and Andalusia, have lower economic output. When assessing Spain's economic capacity for defense contributions, policymakers must consider these regional disparities. Moreover, regional governments may have varying priorities and fiscal capacities, further complicating the allocation of defense resources.

Moving on with the military spending that reflects a nation's commitment to defense and perceived security threats. For example, countries facing immediate security challenges or geopolitical tensions may allocate a higher percentage of GDP to defense to strengthen their military capabilities and deter potential adversaries.

Higher military expenditures are often correlated with greater defense readiness and capacity building. Member states with robust defense budgets can invest in modernizing their armed forces, acquiring advanced weapons and technologies, and conducting regular exercises. These efforts help maintain a credible deterrence posture and ensure effective defense capabilities within the EU.

Military spending is also influenced by a country's alliance commitments, such as NATO obligations or participation in multinational defense initiatives. Member states can adjust their defense budgets to meet their commitments under collective defense agreements and contribute equitably to shared security efforts.

For instance let's consider the case of Estonia. Despite its smaller size and economy, Estonia demonstrates a strong commitment to defense spending, devoting a considerable portion of its GDP to military investment. In 2004, when Estonia joined NATO, it pledged to allocate at least 2% of its GDP to defense spending, a commitment reaffirmed in subsequent years.

Data from recent years highlights Estonia's sustained efforts to bolster its defense capabilities. For example, in 2024, Estonia's defense budget amounted to approximately 3.2% of its GDP, exceeding the NATO target and demonstrating the country's commitment to collective defense.

Furthermore, Estonia's geographic location along NATO's eastern flank places it at the forefront of regional security challenges, including concerns about Russian aggression and hybrid warfare tactics. As a result, Estonia has prioritized defense spending as a means to improve deterrence capabilities, strengthen military preparedness, and promote interoperability with NATO allies.

In addition to defense spending, Estonia has actively participated in NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) initiative, hosting multinational battle groups on its territory to strengthen deterrence and collective defense in the Baltic region. This engagement underscores Estonia's commitment to collective security and its willingness to contribute tangible resources and capabilities to NATO's collective defense.

Estonia's dedication to defense spending reflects its strategic imperative to safeguard national security, promote stability in the Baltic region, and contribute meaningfully to collective defense efforts within the EU and NATO frameworks. By investing in defense capabilities and actively participating in multinational defense initiatives, Estonia reaffirms its commitment to shared security objectives and underscores the importance of collective defense in safeguarding Euro-Atlantic stability.

Continuing talking about fiscal policies, including taxation, public spending, and budget allocation, are crucial to a nation's ability to effectively fund defense projects. By assessing the alignment of fiscal policies with defense goals, policymakers can gain insights into the feasibility of sustaining military capabilities and addressing security challenges.

For example, countries with robust economic growth and sound fiscal policies may have greater flexibility in allocating resources to defense spending. These nations can afford to invest in modernizing their armed forces, acquiring advanced weaponry, and improving military readiness. In contrast, countries facing economic constraints or fiscal deficits may have to prioritize defense

spending within a constrained budgetary framework, which requires careful resource allocation and strategic planning.

Further, integrating defense priorities into national budget processes is critical to ensure consistency between strategic goals and resource allocation. For example, countries that explicitly prioritize defense in their budget planning demonstrate a commitment to national security and preparedness. They allocate adequate funds to defense ministries, prioritize investments in critical defense capabilities, and implement long-term budget frameworks to support military readiness.

Let's think about Sweden that is an exemplary case of effective fiscal policies supporting defense priorities in the context of budget allocation. Despite fiscal constraints, Sweden has always prioritized defense spending to maintain a credible military deterrent and ensure national security.

A key aspect of Swedish fiscal policy is the commitment to maintain a stable defense budget as a percentage of GDP. Despite fluctuating economic conditions, Sweden has met its defense spending targets, demonstrating a long-term commitment to military readiness and preparedness. This stability provides predictability to defense planners and enables the Swedish Armed Forces to effectively plan and execute defense initiatives.

In addition, Swedish fiscal policies emphasize the importance of prudent financial management and resource allocation. The government allocates sufficient funds to modernize and maintain its military capabilities, investing in state-of-the-art technologies, equipment upgrades, and personnel training. This strategic approach ensures that Sweden's armed forces remain adaptable and able to meet evolving security challenges.

Sweden's fiscal policies prioritize defense investments in the broader context of national security and strategic interests. The government recognizes the interconnectedness of defense, diplomacy and deterrence in safeguarding Sweden's sovereignty and territorial integrity. For this reason, defense spending is integrated into overall national security strategies, ensuring coherence and alignment across government departments.

Overall, Sweden's example underscores the importance of effective fiscal policies to support defense priorities and maintain a strong national defense posture. By meeting fiscal targets, prioritizing defense investments, and aligning defense spending with strategic objectives, Sweden demonstrates an unwavering commitment to ensuring its security and sovereignty in an increasingly complex geopolitical environment.

Besides, fiscal policies play a crucial role in determining the affordability and sustainability of defense investments over time. Countries with stable economic growth and prudent fiscal management can sustainably allocate resources for defense without jeopardizing other essential public services or exacerbating fiscal imbalances. Conversely, countries facing fiscal constraints may

need to explore alternative financing mechanisms, such as public-private partnerships or international cooperation, to overcome budgetary constraints while maintaining defense capabilities.

In summary, fiscal policies and budget allocation are pivotal factors in assessing a country's capacity to finance defense projects and contribute to collective security within the EU.

Evaluating member states' economic capacities for defense contributions involves navigating various complexities and considerations. Firstly, disparities in GDP per capita among EU member states pose a significant challenge. While some countries may have robust economies and higher GDP per capita, others may struggle with economic constraints and lower levels of prosperity. This discrepancy complicates efforts to establish a fair and equitable burden-sharing mechanism, as countries with lower GDP per capita may struggle to contribute at the same level as their wealthier counterparts.

On top of that, regional economic disparities within the EU add another layer of complexity to the assessment of economic capacity. Eastern and Southern European countries, for example, may face different economic challenges than their Western counterparts. Factors such as infrastructure development, industrial capabilities, and access to resources can vary significantly between regions, affecting each country's ability to allocate resources to defense.

In addition, different national security priorities of member states contribute to the complexity of assessing economic capability. While some countries may prioritize conventional military capabilities and invest heavily in defense, others may focus more on nontraditional security threats, such as cybersecurity or counterterrorism. These different priorities may impact defense spending decisions and complicate efforts to establish a cohesive European defense strategy.

Political dynamics and historical alliances also play a crucial role in determining countries' willingness to commit financial resources to collective defense initiatives. Member states with strong historical ties or shared security interests may be more inclined to cooperate closely on defense matters and contribute proportionately to joint defense efforts. Conversely, countries with divergent political agendas or competing strategic interests may be less willing to devote resources to collective defense, leading to tensions and disagreements within the EU.

In addressing these complexities, it is essential to develop flexible and adaptable frameworks for assessing economic capability that take into account the different economic situations and security priorities of EU member states. This may involve customized approaches that take into account factors such as GDP per capita, regional disparities, and national security strategies to ensure fair and effective burden sharing. Fostering dialogue and cooperation among member states and promoting solidarity and mutual trust are essential to building consensus and promoting collective security within the EU.

Reports and publications from think tanks such as the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) and the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) provide valuable insights into the economic factors shaping European defense policy and cooperation.

The European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) regularly publishes reports and analyses on European defense policy and cooperation, offering valuable insights into economic factors affecting defense spending and burden-sharing among EU member states.

For example, the ECFR report titled "European Defense Spending: Trends and Challenges" provides a comprehensive analysis of defense expenditure trends across EU countries, highlighting disparities in defense budgets and the implications for collective defense efforts. Another noteworthy publication from the ECFR is "Towards a European Army: A European Union Defense Strategy," which explores the feasibility and implications of establishing a European army and the economic considerations involved in such an endeavor.

Similarly, the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) conducts research and produces reports on various aspects of European security and defense policy, offering valuable insights into economic factors shaping defense cooperation within the EU. One notable report from the EUISS is "Defense Budgets and Military Planning: A Comparative Analysis of European Defense Policies," which examines defense budgeting processes and military planning strategies across EU member states. Additionally, the EUISS publication "Towards a More United and Effective European Union Defense: A Five-Year Plan" outlines recommendations for enhancing EU defense cooperation, including proposals for improving economic burden-sharing mechanisms among member states.

These reports and publications from reputable think tanks like the ECFR and EUISS provide valuable data, analysis, and policy recommendations related to economic factors influencing European defense policy and cooperation. By leveraging insights from these sources, policymakers, analysts, and stakeholders can gain a deeper understanding of the economic complexities involved in defense spending and develop more informed strategies for promoting collective security within the EU.

2.4 Statistical Analysis of Military Expenditures:

“Understanding Military Spending Across Europe, special focus on Italy, Germany and Spain”


In this sub-chapter, we delve into a comprehensive statistical analysis of military expenditures across European nations, aiming to provide a deeper understanding of the financial commitments made by different countries towards defense. By scrutinizing trends in defense spending and the allocation of resources, we seek to uncover patterns and variations among European nations, shedding light on the complexities of funding defense initiatives within the region.

One notable aspect of our analysis is the examination of defense spending trends over the past decade³⁴, considering factors such as changes in geopolitical dynamics, security threats, and economic conditions. For example, we observe that certain countries have significantly increased their defense budgets in response to perceived threats or strategic objectives, while others have maintained relatively stable levels of military expenditure. Furthermore, our analysis includes a comparative assessment of defense spending as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) across European nations. By contextualizing military expenditures within the broader economic landscape of each country, we aim to identify disparities in resource allocation and assess the extent to which defense priorities align with national economic capabilities.

Overall, our statistical analysis of military expenditures offers valuable insights into the financial commitments and priorities of European nations concerning defense. By understanding these patterns and variations, policymakers and stakeholders can make informed decisions regarding resource allocation, strategic planning, and collective defense efforts within the region.

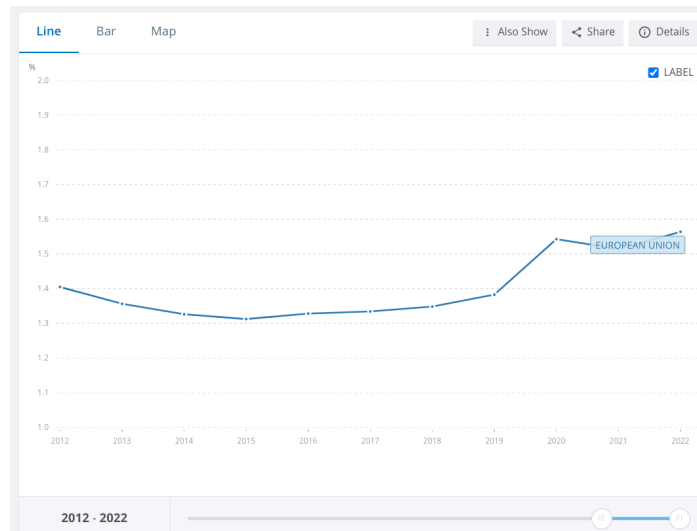
We will begin by analyzing the image taken from the world data bank website that illustrates Military expenditure (% of GDP) - in the European Union from 2012 to 2022.

Military expenditure (% of GDP) - European Union

Selected Countries and Economies			
Country		Most Recent Year	Most Recent Value
European Union		2022	1.6 

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Yearbook: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security. License: Use and distribution of these data are subject to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) terms and conditions.

³⁴ The focus is on the decade 2012 and 2022



The images show how there is an increase in Military expenditure (% of GDP) throughout the European Union, in particular an overall increase from 1.3 to 1.6.

In the last section of this chapter we will focus on Greece and Poland, now we will analyze the military expenditure in GDP in the last decades for various member of the European Union, which for different reasons and for the porpoise of this paper have increased their defense budget in the last decade.

In particular, I found interesting to take into consideration this report³⁵: “Arming Europe; Military expenditures and their economic impact in Germany, Italy, and Spain” commissioned by the Greenpeace's three national offices in Italy, Germany and Spain to a team of experts, using EU Union data. This report records the steady and significant increase in military expenditures in the NATO countries of the European Union, which have grown fourteen times more than their total GDP over the past decade, and it analyzes the overall increase in military spending in the EU, paying particular attention to these three countries.

Over the past ten years, the military expenditures of EU NATO countries have increased by nearly 50 percent, from 145 billion euros in 2014 to a projected budget of 215 billion euros in 2023. With the war in Ukraine, arms expenditures for 2023 will end with an increase of nearly 10 percent in real terms over the previous year. NATO EU countries as a whole now spend 1.8 percent of GDP on their armed forces, close to the 2% target demanded by the United States and adopted by NATO.

In a decade, Germany increased its real military spending by 42 percent, Italy by 30 percent, and Spain by 50 percent. In all three countries this expansion was entirely due to increased purchases of weapons and military equipment. EU arms imports (based on data from SIPRI, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) tripled between 2018 and 2022. Half of all imports come from the United States.

³⁵ Published online on greenpeace.org in November 2023

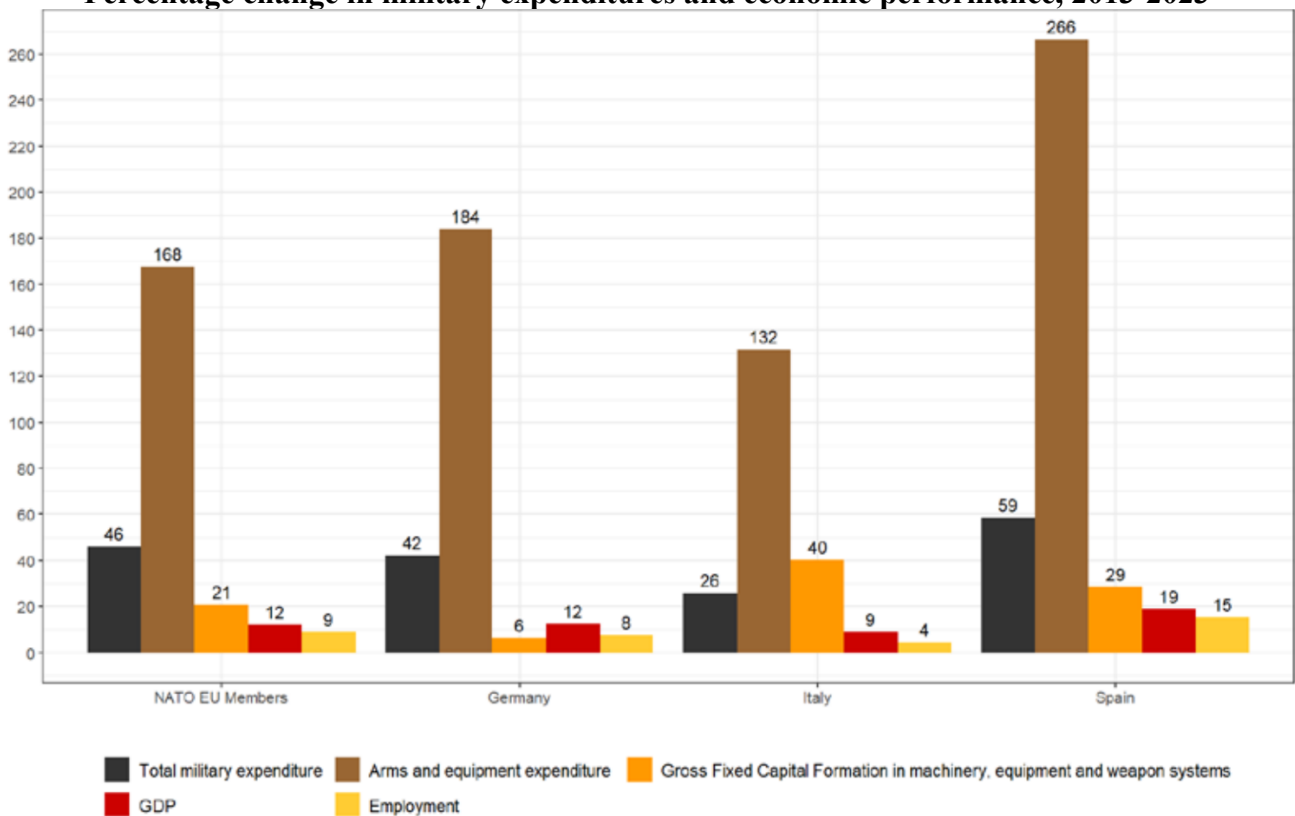
Let's make real example, using some numbers, an expenditure of 1,000 million euros creates a demand for intermediate goods and intermediate services by all productive sectors; a part of this demand goes to imports from abroad, which do not increase domestic production; the value of imports must therefore be excluded from the expenditure initial 1,000 million euros when we estimate the impacts expected economic impacts. These flows are documented by the tables input-output and allow us to estimate the changes in national output and employment set in motion by the initial expenditure. In Germany, an expenditure of 1,000 million euros for the purchase of weapons leads to an increase in domestic output of 1,230 million. In Italy, the resulting increase is only 741 million euros, since a larger share of the spending is allocated to imports. In Spain, the increase in production domestic is 1,284 million euros. The effect on employment would be 6,000 additional (full-time) jobs in Germany, 3,000 in Italy and 6,500 in Spain. In contrast, when the 1,000 million euros are spent on education, health and the environment, the economic and employment is greater. The highest results are recorded for environmental protection, with an increase in production of 1,752 million euros in Germany, 1,900 million euros in Italy and 1,827 million euros in Spain. For education and health, the additional output ranges 1,190 to 1,380 million euros. In terms of new jobs jobs, in Germany 1,000 million euros could create 11,000 new jobs in the environmental sector, nearly 18,000 jobs in education, 15,000 jobs jobs in health services. In Italy, the new jobs would range from 10,000 in environmental services to nearly 14,000 in education. In Spain, the employment effect would range from 12,000 new jobs in the environmental sector and 16,000 in education. The impact on employment is two to four times greater than that expected from an increase in arms spending. These results show how problematic the current increase in military spending in Europe. In terms of security, a more militarized Europe could hardly resolve current conflicts. On the contrary, a new arms race armaments risks further destabilizing the international order international order around Europe. In economic terms, militarization is a "bad deal."

Increased military spending is putting Europe on a trajectory of lower economic growth, lower job creation jobs and worse quality of development. The alternatives-increased spending on the environment, education and health - would have better effects on growth and employment and would bring great benefits to the quality of life and the environment.

The report "Arming Europe" analyzes military spending in Europe and explores its economic and employment impact, focusing on the three commissioning countries, in the context of the NATO countries that are members of the European Union. On average, each citizen of the EU NATO countries in 2023 will pay 508 euros for military spending compared to 330 euro in 2013: the bill for each Italian citizen will be 436 euros. In 2023, the EU NATO countries will spend a total of 215 billion euros (at constant prices 2015) compared to 145 billion euros in 2014: an increase 48 percent

in real terms. Despite the difficulties in public finances, spending military has also grown at an unprecedented rate in Italy, further reducing resources for social spending and environmental spending. Particularly striking is the increase in spending for weapons, whose share has doubled compared to spending for personnel and operations in all EU NATO countries over the past decade. The Italian budget for weapon systems has increased from 2.5 billion euros to 5.9 billion. Considering the percentage changes in real terms over the decade 2013-2023 in Italy, the contrast is evident between the record increase in military spending (+26 percent) and arms purchases (+132%) compared to the stagnation of GDP (+9) and employment (+4%) as shown in the graph below.

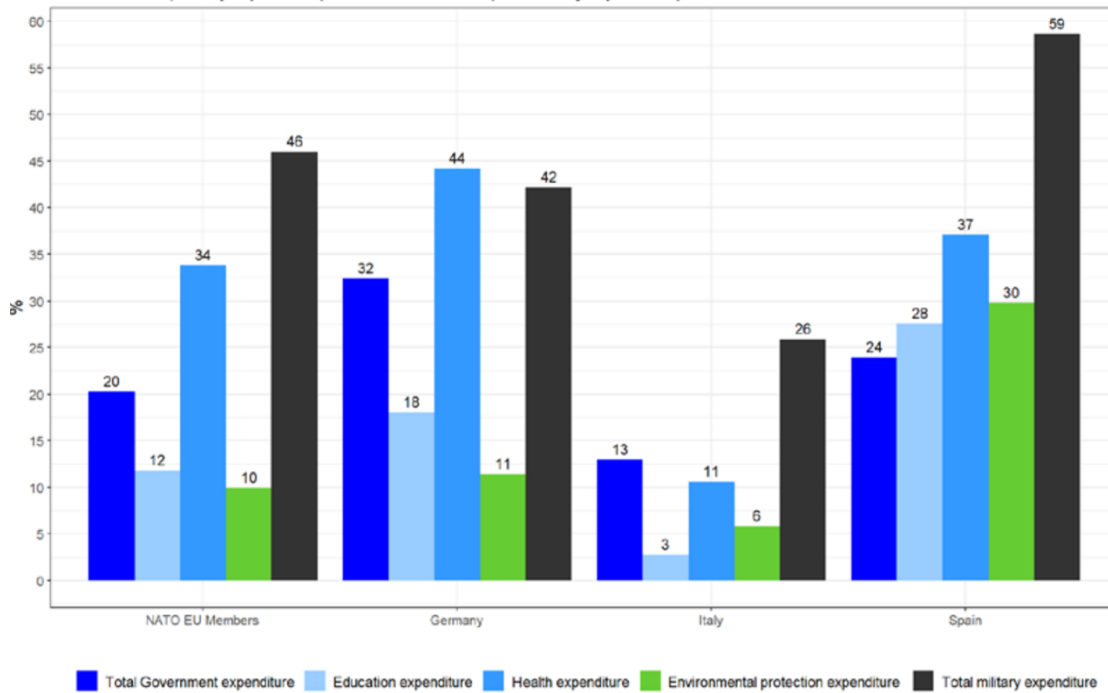
Percentage change in military expenditures and economic performance, 2013-2023



Sources: NATO (Military expenditure) and Eurostat (GDP, employment and GFCF); Note: for Eurostat variables the last available data is 2021. Values for 2023 are estimated by linearly projecting the trend 2013-2021.

In a context of stagnation, such a concentration of resources in the military sector comes at the expense of other items of public spending: spending on health increased by only 11 percent, spending for education by only 3 percent, spending on environmental protection environment by only 6 percent as illustrated in the graph below.

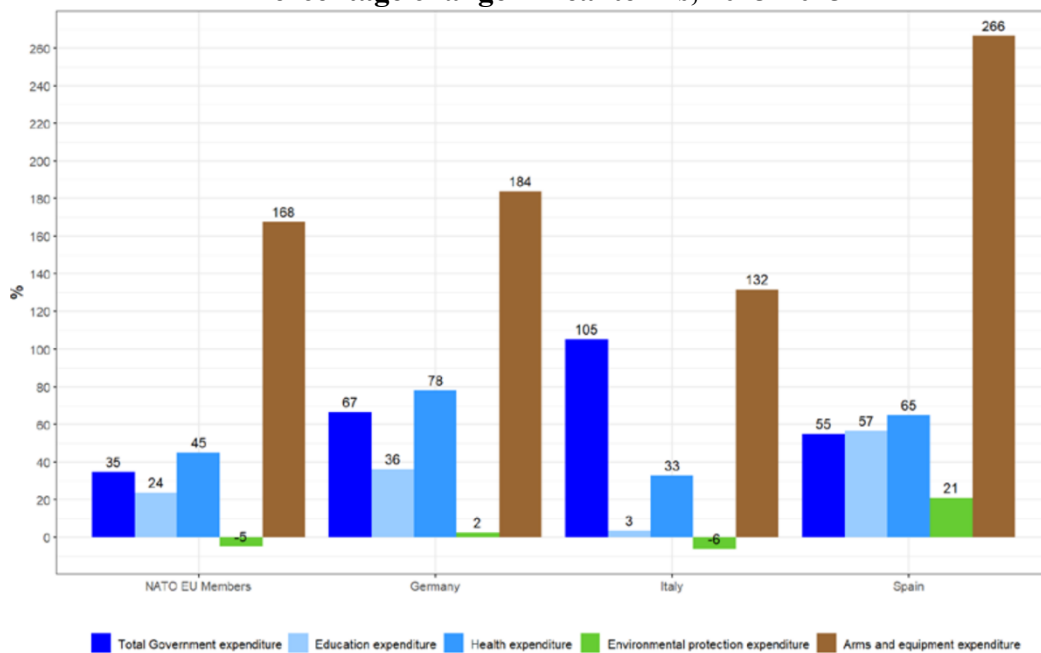
Military expenditures vs environmental and social expenditures Percentage change in real terms, 2013-2023



Sources: NATO (Military expenditure) and Eurostat (GDP, employment and COFOG); Note: for Eurostat variables the last available data is 2021. Values for 2023 are estimated by linearly projecting the trend 2013-2021

In Italy, the growth in arms spending (+132%) between 2013 and 2023 also exceeds that of public spending capital spending on the construction of schools (+3%), hospitals (+33%) or water treatment plants (which has even recorded a negative trend: -6%), as shown in the graph below.

Arms expenditures vs investment in the environment, education and health Percentage change in real terms, 2013-2023



Sources: NATO (Military expenditure) and Eurostat (GDP, employment and COFOG); Note: for Eurostat variables the last available data is 2021. Values for 2023 are estimated by linearly projecting the trend 2013-2021

The results of the "Arming Europe" study show that single militarization is a "bad deal" in purely economics' terms. Increased military spending in individual countries as separate entities is taking Europe on a trajectory of lower economic prosperity, lower job creation and worse quality of development. More spending on militarization if it were a shared European project, perhaps to fund a single common army, would decrease spending in the military and thus increase education and health would instead have better economic effects on production and employment and, most importantly, on quality of life and the environment.

A conscious and common choice in European military spending would help individual states in saving the overall GDP, bringing only benefits in the various nations.

Finally, after commeting and analyzing the let's conclude the chapter with a question to our expert: professor Magri³⁶.

The question is as follow: *Do you believe that the increase in military spending, especially in recent years, of many European countries, may be a sign of a real path toward the creation of a European army? And in what way?*

His answer was: "No, I don't. The current increase in defense spending can go either way, in the direction of the creation of a European army or away from it. In fact, given the current political climate and the longstanding and rising different perceptions on the war in Ukraine, its prospects, and the role Europe should play in it, I believe that an increase in defence expenditure will mostly serve to entrench the current position along national member states' lines. Of course, this could facilitate cross-country projects that are already in place, both longstanding or nascent ones, such as the Eurofighter, Eurosam, the Airbus Defence and Space division, the Future Combat Air System, and Occar.

In a nutshell, however: it's how you spend those money that will matter, not the amount that you commit to your defence expenditure. And currently most of the increase in military spending is going towards national budgets that will probably continue in funding systems that will remain fragmented and less interoperable than it would be desirable, as well as not fostering a common European army ethos or strategic culture."

³⁶ Professor mentioned in previous chapter

2.5 Strengthening Shields: “Greece and Poland's Escalating Military Expenditure”

Greece has experienced a notable increase in military expenditure over the past years, with a significant portion of its GDP allocated to defense. According to recent statistics, Greece's military spending has risen from 2.35% of GDP in 2014 to 3.86% in 2021 and as 2024 almost 3.5% of GDP.

Military expenditure (% of GDP) - Greece

Military expenditure (% of GDP) in Greece was reported at 3.6921 % in 2022, according to the World Bank collection of development indicators, compiled from officially recognized sources. Greece - Military expenditure (% of GDP) - actual values, historical data, forecasts and projections were sourced from the World Bank on May of 2024.



Greece is starting to become very militarized, as the US praised Greece for spending more than 3.5 % of its GDP on defense, well above the 2% guideline agreed to at a NATO’s Wales Summit in 2014. “The United States praised Greece for exceeding its Wales Summit commitment by spending more than 3.5% of its GDP on defense, with more than 45% of that amount used to buy major equipment and for modernization,” according to a joint statement released Friday following the Fifth Strategic Dialogue meeting held in Washington co-chaired by visiting Greek Foreign Minister George Gerapteritis and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

This increase reflects the country's strategic response to various geopolitical tensions, notably with neighboring Turkey as mentioned in the Article: "Greece's Defense Spending Surges Amid Tensions with Turkey". This article from a reputable news outlet could provide recent examples and analysis of Greece's defense spending trends in the context of tensions with Turkey.

Specifically, the current dispute escalated when Turkey sent seismic research vessel Oruc Reis³⁷, accompanied by warships, to prospect for oil-and-gas reserves in an area between Cyprus and the Greek island of Crete that Athens claims as its own continental shelf. European Union leaders say they will decide on an approach to Turkey when they meet on September 24-25, which could include sanctions against Ankara.

Cyprus is divided between the Greek Cypriot-run south – an EU member state – and the Turkish Cypriot north. Turkey has stationed tens of thousands of troops in the north of the island since its 1974 invasion, which followed a coup engineered by military rulers in Greece.

Greece sent its own warships to the area and put its armed forces on alert. It may highlight specific defense procurement projects or military modernization efforts undertaken by Greece to enhance its capabilities.

Another perspective on this conflict could be the book: "Greek-Turkish Relations: Entangled Histories, Complex Present"³⁸. This book delves into the intricate history and contemporary dynamics of Greek-Turkish relations. It starts from 1999 where the two countries opened a dialogue on non-sensitive issues such as trade, the environment and tourism. The causes of the current rapprochement progress are explored in this book in relation both to the international environment which is increasingly conducive to this progress, and the significant domestic changes that both Greece and Turkey have experienced since the end of the Cold War. This book confronts each of these important dimensions by addressing issues of continuity and change in Greek-Turkish relations.

Additionally, Greece is situated in a volatile region characterized by conflicts, civil wars, and geopolitical rivalries. Instabilities in neighboring countries, such as Syria and Libya, can have spillover effects and pose security challenges for Greece. Strengthening its armed forces allows Greece to better respond to potential threats arising from regional instability.

This explain the need to modernize and strengthen its armed forces for Greece in response to perceived threats.

Similarly, Poland has witnessed a considerable rise in military spending in recent years, reflecting a commitment to bolstering its defense capabilities.

³⁷ The Oruç Reis, a seismic vessel owned by Turkey's General Directorate of Mineral Research and Exploration, will resume its energy exploration efforts, sent in October 2021, according to a navigational warning issued by Ankara.

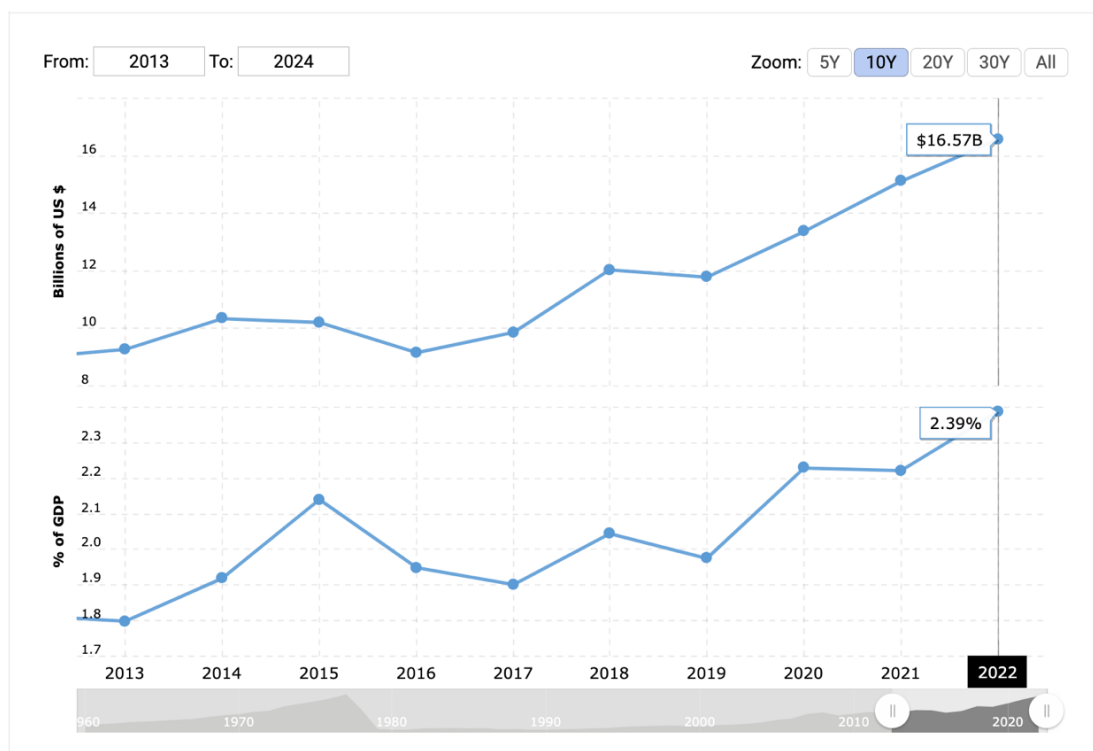
³⁸ by Dimitrios Triantaphyllou

Poland made Europe's largest proportional increase in its defence spending between 2022 and 2023, spending 3.8% of its GDP on defence in 2023 – still short of its declared goal of 4%.

From 2014 to 2024, Poland's military expenditure has increased from 1.92% to 4% as what the government said they will spend over 4% of gross domestic product (GDP) on defence in 2024.

Poland has long made increasing its defence spending a priority. Polish President Andrzej Duda called on NATO members to ramp up their spending earlier this month, citing concerns that Russian President Vladimir Putin was preparing to attack NATO in upcoming years. As illustrated in the graph below that is taken from military expenditures data from SIPRI are derived from the NATO definition, which includes all current and capital expenditures on the armed forces, including peacekeeping forces; defense ministries and other government agencies engaged in defense projects; paramilitary forces, if these are judged to be trained and equipped for military operations; and military space activities. Such expenditures include military and civil personnel, including retirement pensions of military personnel and social services for personnel; operation and maintenance; procurement; military research and development; and military aid (in the military expenditures of the donor country).

Poland Military Spending/Defense Budget 2013-2024



Military expenditures data from SIPRI are derived from the NATO definition, which includes all current and capital expenditures on the armed forces, including peacekeeping forces; defense ministries and other government agencies engaged in defense projects; paramilitary forces, if these are judged to be trained and equipped for military operations; and military space activities. Such expenditures include military and civil personnel, including retirement pensions of military personnel and social services for personnel; operation and maintenance; procurement; military research and development; and military aid (in the military expenditures of the donor country).

- Poland military spending/defense budget for 2022 was **\$16.57B**, a **9.67% increase** from 2021.
- Poland military spending/defense budget for 2021 was **\$15.11B**, a **13.05% increase** from 2020.
- Poland military spending/defense budget for 2020 was **\$13.37B**, a **13.42% increase** from 2019.

Poland has long made increasing its defence spending a priority. Polish President Andrzej Duda called on NATO members to ramp up their spending earlier this month, citing concerns that Russian President Vladimir Putin was preparing to attack NATO in upcoming years.

Poland perceives potential security threats from its eastern neighbor, Russia, especially after Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and its involvement in the conflict in eastern Ukraine from February 2022.

"There is a trend that highlights how countries bordering or close to Russia and Ukraine witnessed some of the acutest increases in the decade," says Scarazzato. "It would be safe to assume that this is due to their heightened threat perceptions vis-à-vis the annexation of Crimea and the full-scale invasion of Ukraine."

"Under our government, budget revenues have more than doubled," Mateusz Morawiecki told a news conference. "This would not have been possible without programmes to fix the public finances."

As a consequence, Poland's increased military expenditures may also reflect shifts in its strategic orientation and defense priorities. With growing concerns about security threats in the region, Poland has placed greater emphasis on defense and security as core components of its national strategy, leading to a corresponding increase in military spending.

It seeks to modernize its armed forces and upgrade its military equipment to enhance its capabilities and maintain a credible deterrence posture. This includes investments in advanced weaponry, surveillance systems, and military infrastructure to ensure readiness and effectiveness in responding to evolving security challenges.

To summarize it Poland's decision to increase its military expenditures reflects its efforts to address perceived security threats, fulfill its NATO commitments, modernize its armed forces, and adapt to evolving geopolitical challenges in Eastern Europe and the broader region.

In this analysis, these two countries are not different at all, firstly Both Greece and Poland face perceived security threats in their respective regions. Greece, located in a volatile geopolitical environment with tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean and historical rivalries, perceives threats from neighboring countries and regional instability. Similarly, Poland, situated in Eastern Europe near Russia, has concerns about potential aggression and instability in the region, especially after Russia's actions in Ukraine and Crimea. These perceived threats have led both countries to prioritize bolstering their defense capabilities to ensure national security and sovereignty.

Additionally they are located in regions characterized by geopolitical tensions and regional instabilities. Greece contends with disputes over territorial waters, energy resources, and migration flows in the Eastern Mediterranean, while Poland grapples with security challenges stemming from historical conflicts and power dynamics in Eastern Europe. These regional instabilities contribute to a sense of insecurity and drive both countries to increase their military expenditures as a means of deterrence and defense.

They have a common aim that is to enhance their defense capabilities to address emerging security challenges and modernize their armed forces. They seek to invest in advanced military equipment, technology, and infrastructure to improve readiness, interoperability, and effectiveness in responding to contemporary threats. By strengthening their defense capabilities, both countries aim to maintain a credible deterrent posture and ensure their ability to defend against potential adversaries.

Lastly, Ensuring national security and sovereignty is a common objective shared by both Greece and Poland. As sovereign nations, they prioritize safeguarding their territorial integrity, protecting their populations, and defending their interests against external threats. Increasing military expenditures allows them to reinforce their defense capabilities, assert their sovereignty, and uphold their national security interests in an uncertain geopolitical landscape.

By increasing defense spending, both countries demonstrate their commitment to improving defense capabilities, ensuring readiness and safeguarding their sovereignty in the face of evolving security challenges in their respective regions.

In conclusion, while Greece and Poland have independently sought to strengthen their defense capabilities in response to perceived security threats and regional instabilities, the creation of a European Union Army promises to significantly improve their collective security. By uniting in a common defense strategy within the EU, these nations will reap significant benefits.

Pooling resources and coordinating defense efforts through a European Union Army would enable Greece and Poland to achieve greater efficiency and cost-effectiveness in defense spending. Instead of independently bearing the burden of maintaining a robust army, a unified approach would optimize resource allocation and rationalize spending. This collaborative model not only ensures greater collective security, but also relieves the financial pressure on individual member states, enabling them to allocate resources more effectively to other pressing societal needs.

In addition, a European Union Army would foster greater solidarity and cohesion among EU member states, strengthening the bonds of cooperation and unity in addressing common security challenges. By working together in a shared defense framework, Greece and Poland, along with other EU nations, can better address emerging threats and safeguard the collective interests of the Union.

In light of the insights provided in this chapter on the growing military expenditures of Greece and Poland, it becomes clear that the creation of an EU military is a strategic imperative to promote collective defense and security within the European Union. As these nations continue to navigate complex geopolitical dynamics and changing security landscapes, the vision of a unified EU defense strategy offers a path toward greater resilience, efficiency, and solidarity in safeguarding the peace and stability of the Union and its citizens.

Third Chapter

"Fortifying Europe: Navigating Sovereignty, Governance, and Military Integration in Pursuit of a United European Defense- Insights from Public Opinion and Leadership Perspectives"

As we embark on the final leg of our journey, this chapter is the culmination of an in-depth discussion, drawing on the shared wisdom of Professor Margeletti. Focusing on the complexities surrounding the creation of a common European defense, we engage in a multifaceted exploration. Through rigorous empirical analysis and critical reflection, we move through the intricate landscape of national sovereignty, governance structures and the evolving dynamics of European military integration.

Moreover, our inquiry extends beyond academic discourse to include the perspectives of influential leaders within the European Union. By delving into their diverse views and strategic considerations, we gain a panoramic view of the multifaceted discourse on European security and defense. From Macron's vision of a strategically autonomous Europe to Rutte's cautious approach, we encounter a spectrum of viewpoints that enrich our understanding of the challenges and opportunities inherent in the pursuit of a united European defense.

In this context, we endeavor to decipher the nuances of public opinion and leadership positions, seeking to unravel the complexities and obstacles that lie ahead on the path toward a cohesive and resilient European defense architecture. Through meticulous analysis and thoughtful reflection, we strive to illuminate the path forward, navigating through the complexities and challenges inherent in the pursuit of a united European defense.

3.1 "From Vision to Reality: Profound Insights of Professor Margeletti, into Public Support for a European Union Army"

We begin this final chapter by premising that it will be a more discursive chapter than the previous one, given also the presence of the very important talk by Professor Margeletti³⁹, who having given me the opportunity to ask him a few questions, provided us with an insightful and interesting perspective on our topic of discussion: the creation of a common European defense.

The professor begins by saying that any analysis must be based on empirical data or data.

³⁹ Andrea Margelletti, is the Advisor, since 2012, for Security and Counter-Terrorism Policies to the Minister of Defense. He has been a speaker at the Fourth Committee on Special Policies and Decolonization of the United Nations General Assembly New York on several occasions to speak on the security situation in the Sahel region.

In this context, there are two data that are fundamental: the first is that the armed forces, law enforcement and the intelligence and security service are instruments of national sovereignty; we exercise the protection of the Italian community through these three instruments. The law enforcement agencies oversee public order and security, the armed forces manage from border defense missions to the defense of national interests, and finally the intelligence and security services for what concerns the control of internal threats and the prevention of any external threats.

These throughout the world depend on the government, then depending on the country it may depend on one minister or another, but this is a matter related to the internal organization of the state. But why do they depend on the government? And why are they a national instrument?

Take for example any of the four Italian law enforcement agencies, the state police. On whom does the state police depend? In Italy it depends on the interior minister, who is the Italian interior minister, so there is governance. Law enforcement has to depend on someone; and what is the European minister of the interior? There is not; what is the European minister of defense? There isn't. At this point we understand that it is essential to first create the state and then create the instruments of the state. On this creation of the state, I don't feel that the trends are toward the abolition of nation states for a unitary one. Why is this happening?

For example, because going back to the initial talk, I have to give you the empirical figure, I don't remember the exact number, I think it's about 20 (note), already today the European Union has a number of battlegroups. These battlegroups since the foundation of the same are, about 15 years ago, have never, never been deployed. But why? Because in order to be deployed all the countries of the European union must agree. Then it's irrelevant whether it's the Italian-Slovenian battlegroup, but if the Italian-Slovenian battlegroup operating within the military structure of the European Union has to be deployed, it's not Italy or Slovenia or France etc... But all the countries of the European Union has to agree in deploying them.

I point out to you absurdly that they could never even agree on sending these groups abroad for training, let alone combat.

But not even to send them to Africa for training, for some African country because the African country in which these were in maybe suited some European countries and not others; so as Europe we say no battlegroup is not used.

Here we can also take NATO as an example. When we talk about Article 5 of NATO ⁴⁰that if one NATO nation is hit by another there is intervention, it is not true. Or rather, it is not an automatic procedure, because if a NATO nation is hit or invaded, it has the right to invoke Article 5 which is

⁴⁰ Article 5 is the cornerstone of the Alliance. It means that an attack on one is an attack on all. This article has been invoked only once in the 70-year history of the Alliance: in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terror attacks on the United States.

equivalent; therefore, the nation being attacked says help you must all help me; at this point all NATO nations must say yes to intervene. It's not an absolute majority or a relative majority, but there has to be unanimity. So for example if a NATO country is attacked and invaded and all the NATO countries say let's go there and defend it, but, I'll quote you three "important" NATO countries like Portugal, Luxembourg or Iceland, if only one of them for example Iceland, which has no armed forces, and is part of NATO, says no NATO cannot move.

So when you say but if the Russians attack the Baltic republics Article 5 comes into play and yes Article 5 if everybody agrees because if they don't agree the article no longer applies, and one is enough. For that, this discussion goes on and so as you see then why is everybody talking about European armed forces, or as some mistakenly say the European army⁴¹ and why as of now they are unworkable? I point out to you how politicians are always talking about it-in fact in the following sections of this chapter we will also analyze the opinions of the various leaders on this topic-because politicians who do not want to take responsibility in saying we are not working to make the United States of EUROPE throw it on the technical and so they tell us that first we have to make the carabinieri and then it is decided to whom they answer and what state Italy will be whether monarchy republic dictatorship. This as I want to point out is absurd and impossible, so you have to have a solid governance structure.

But for example if the structure is communal, like the European structure to now, let's imagine we had a European armed force army, at some point any country attacks Italy, sending missiles that destroy Sicily. Italy being attacked goes to Europe to defend itself, and Lithuania is allied with the attacking country for economic, energy-related ways; as a result the armed forces don't leave.

So as you can see if you don't have the governance, you don't have the exercise what militarily is called operon, that is operation control control.

Going back to the discussion of the Italian armed forces, who is it that calls the chief of the carabinieri or the chief of police and to inform him about the new arrangements for fear that a 9/11 might happen in Italy, the minister of the interior, who is part of a solid governance.

So the problem will always remain governance, the only thing that can be worked on is the synchronization of the defense industry. That is, to make sure that the European defense industry is better organized and that we don't produce 20 kinds of weapons, 5 kinds of tanks 8 kinds of transports, four kinds of aircraft and so on...

It should be more organized in such a way that it produces less internal competition among member states and then it means that if instead of making 10 types of tanks we make two or just one, more are

⁴¹ As we said at the beginning the term "EU army" serves as a comprehensive shorthand, encapsulating a spectrum of collaborative defense initiatives under the broader umbrella of EU common defense.

sold and then let's say there is a critical mass that lowers the price of the single cost. But this can only be done if there is possibly a European defense commissioner who somehow synchronizes these efforts and even there to be the union to push on these things always one based on governance governance.

Because to continue in this way, besides impacting the various countries individually at the natural level, it also brings a lot of dysfunctionality at the market level.

In fact, even there there are several problems, the first one for example we decide that we make only two types of ships so for the whole NATO. So a frigate, that is combat ships, Italy, France, Poland, etc., produce them, but there is a serious problem there too, which is the cost. Because the same ship that is produced by different countries, then costs less in Poland. It depends on various factors, including cost of living, cost of labor, etc...

So, as you see there is a need to have to organize clearinghouses; but not only that. That's where another problem comes in, the know-how, which is the fruit of experimentation and work to then get to be particularly good at that project, and consequently when we build something, then we are also jealous of our trade secrets.

And each of the European countries has an interest in keeping their own industrial secrets and putting aside those of another nation. Otherwise, a state could be null and void, waiting for others to invent and everyone to spend on research and then when you need it they reveal everything to them, it's obvious that it works that way also because it would create an imbalance between nations.

And we must always remember, as I also always tell my students, that the four world pillars are: United States, China, Russia and Europe. Then I point out that I am actually telling a lie because the United States, Russia and China are three nations Europe is a continent. Precisely because there is no European state, so for each nation there is nothing more delicate than protecting themselves. If you think about it we have not agreed as Europeans on who gets a few thousand migrants let alone agree on who to make war on and how to organize to make war. The goal is to not only have a defense, it's really what implies that you can and should exercise that defense not only at the level of deterrence, but of actual use.

At this point, I ask Professor Margeletti: How would you describe today the trends of European citizens and also of various states on the creation of these common European defenses? Also the various opinions and criticisms of this project?

The professor replies, "There is underlying wishful thinking, I think we all agree or at least a number of people agree that the United States of EUROPE. But then you go around and you see election posters in Italy, for example, I saw a on Twitter a poster of the League with Salvini saying against Europe, I mentioned the League in Italy but I can quote you 25 in other all other countries and you

see that there is a very high segment, and the trend is that, of population that completely opposed to the United States of Europe but instead wants the stronger nation state. The case par excellence Great Britain, which with Brexit has left the union.

so for example let's do that tomorrow morning magically we The United States of Europe, and the nuclear weapons of the French whose are they? Eh they are of the French, but with the united states of europe no. And we have to remember, because it is fundamental that the permanent members of the UN Security Council, have veto power and they are: United States, China, Russia, France and Britain. So, of these the United States and China are two global powers and China has become one, because China when it came in was a nation of peasants; Russia apart at the end of World War II was a global superpower but to this day in my opinion if Russia is taken away atomic weapons "it has the specific weight of Molise with all due respect to Molise." France and Great Britain certainly no longer represent two imperial powers that they used to be, but they are nations in sometimes very difficult conditions economically; so why have they still been there? Because they have the atomic weapons that turn them de facto immediately into a superpower so let alone if France was willing to share them for the sake of the European Union.

Because either they are united states of EUROPE or they are not united states of EUROPE, so the moment we become united states of Europe there is no France.

And since since we were not born as united, but we were born as individuals, let's take the example of the United States, which was born as separate states, as all different nations, but with a desire to aggregate, which caused them to aggregate to the point of making the 50 states of today, 48 of which are continental and two are non-continental, one Alaska and the other Hawaii.

To the extent that local defense and protection militias have become the national guard, which depends not on the president of the United States but governor. Then if the military there is a national emergency, like a conflict or a natural disaster, the president of the United States can federalize that national guard for civil protection, talking of course with the governor.

This is not so because we do not have an aggregating desire, we were not born as nation states by aggregation; in fact, the last time we talked to each other was for the resolution of World War II, where the German desire was not to join France, but to invade France and conquer it, not wanting to become one; there is a big difference.

That's why I'm telling you that our desire to continue to remain highly polarized is conflated with a structure that instead is of one color, that is the armed forces of only one color; in fact, we're talking about the Italian armed forces there are no Umbrian or Ligurian or Apulian armed forces.

Also here the United States which is an extremely museum federal country there are two types of armed forces namely the local one of the national guard then there is the United States Army which

is the American United States Army you can ask your realities are totally integrated and natural obvious but because it is a choice from the beginning of the United States to have the individual nations be part of a whole and there is a central governance.

Because then you come to today with the citizens of the member states who are against Europe and for the nation state, then in the European elections you vote against Europe makes you understand what you are discussing. “

This is how Professor Margeletti concludes the first part and also the preponderant part to make us understand how important it is to believe in a united and therefore stronger Europe, and it is from here that we will continue with our research.

3.2 "Charting the Path: Public Support for a European Union Army in Eurobarometer 101 - Spring 2024"

We then begin this second section to conclude the discussion so far, and in order to get to our final analysis, in which we try to determine how many citizens of the European Union are actually for or against the idea of a creation of what we might call united states of Europe and consequently a European army, I will first present some data on this and then conclude with the professor's final speech.

We are prompted to ask why the role of public opinion is so important that we include it in this essay, for different reasons.

First of all, the European Union operates according to the principles of democratic governance. Any major policy decisions, especially those related to defense and security, must reflect the will of the people. Public support is essential to ensure the democratic legitimacy of the creation of an EU military. Governments and EU representatives are accountable to their constituents, and public opinion can influence election results, which in turn influence policy decisions at the national and EU levels.

For a policy as important as the creation of an EU army to be effectively implemented, widespread acceptance is necessary. Public resistance can hinder compliance and cooperation among member states. In addition, creating and maintaining a military force involves substantial financial resources. Public support is needed for governments to allocate the necessary budgetary resources for this initiative without significant backlash.

Defense is closely linked to sovereignty and national identity. Public opinion reflects the extent to which citizens are willing to share or transfer sovereign powers to a supranational entity such as the EU. Historical experiences, cultural attitudes toward military engagement and national security policies differ among member states. Public opinion grasps these nuances and determines whether a unified approach to defense is culturally and politically acceptable.

Public opinion also influences how threats are perceived and prioritized. If citizens feel safer with national forces than with a European army, this will affect the political will to pursue such a project. Trust in EU institutions over national governments plays a significant role, and public opinion reflects the level of trust citizens place in EU mechanisms to effectively ensure their security. The EU operates on the basis of consensus and cooperation among its member states. Public opinion in each country influences the positions of national governments, making alignment of interests and consensus building on shared defense policies essential. High levels of public support for a European military can strengthen the sense of solidarity and unity within the EU, while significant opposition can highlight divisions and undermine collective action.

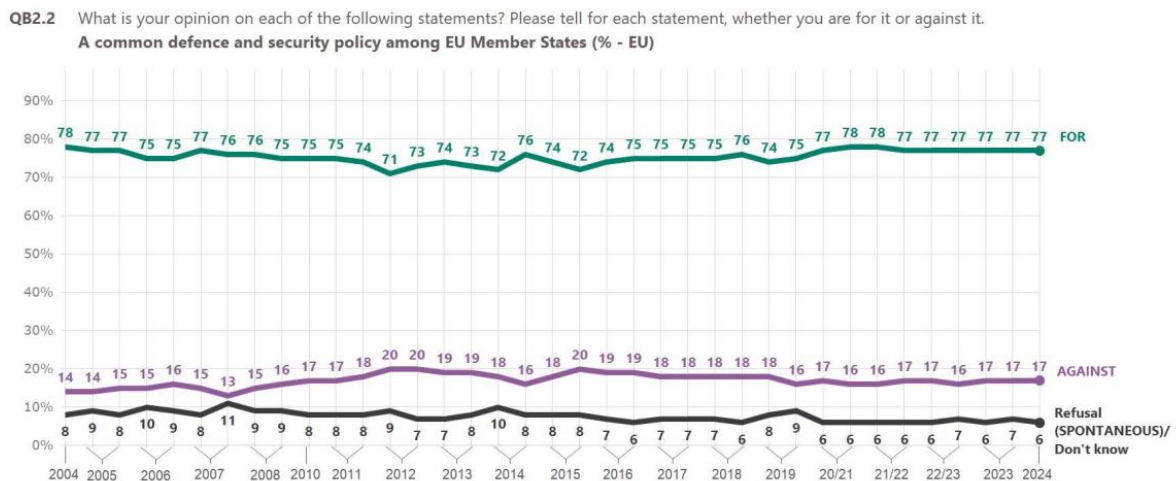
Finally, policies that enjoy broad public support are more likely to be sustainable in the long run. They are less likely to be overturned by changes in government and can withstand political fluctuations. Informed and engaged citizens contribute to a more robust and resilient policy framework. Public opinion surveys and debates can help identify potential problems and areas of concern, enabling policymakers to address them proactively.

I will proceed with the analysis and the statistical presenting, taking as references Eurobarometer. In particular I've chosen one of the latest Eurobarometer survey: Standard Eurobarometer 101 - Spring 2024, trying to specifically addresses public opinion on the creation of a European Union army. Eurobarometer surveys are crucial because they offer comparable data across different countries, enabling a comprehensive analysis of regional differences and similarities in public opinion. And also these surveys use rigorous methodologies to ensure data accuracy and representativeness across EU member states.

By analyzing these data, you can identify trends and shifts in public sentiment over time. This can help in understanding the evolving attitudes towards an EU common defense and its perceived importance.

Now, the key findings of the Standard 101 Eurobarometer are that 77 percent of Europeans support a common defense and security policy among EU countries.

"European Public Opinion: Common Defence and Security Policy Preference"



Data taken in the Publications Office of the European Union, which is the official provider of publishing services to all EU institutions, bodies and agencies. As such, it is the central point of access to EU law, and also to publications, data, research results, procurement notices and other official information. The Publication Office therefore plays a central role in informing the public about what the EU does and means for them, and in unlocking the power of data.

In addition, directly from the report, the following image shows the various views in different countries regarding the common defense and security policy.

"Common defence and security policy among EU Member States"

Standard Eurobarometer 101
Spring 2024

QB2.2 What is your opinion on each of the following statements? Please tell for each statement, whether you are for it or against it.

A common defence and security policy among EU Member States (%)

		For		Against		Refusal (SPONTANEOUS)		Don't know	
		Apr/May 2024	Diff. Apr/May 2024 - Oct/Nov 2023	Apr/May 2024	Diff. Apr/May 2024 - Oct/Nov 2023	Apr/May 2024	Diff. Apr/May 2024 - Oct/Nov 2023	Apr/May 2024	Diff. Apr/May 2024 - Oct/Nov 2023
		EU27	77	0	17	0	2	0	4
EURO	78	-1	16	1	2	0	4	0	
NON EURO	74	2	19	-3	3	1	4	0	
BE	83	1	14	-1	1	0	2	0	
BG	66	0	20	-1	2	-1	12	2	
CZ	74	3	18	-3	3	1	5	-1	
DK	78	2	16	-4	2	1	4	1	
DE	81	0	15	1	1	-1	3	0	
EE	78	1	15	-1	2	1	5	-1	
IE	63	-1	25	0	2	0	10	1	
EL	79	4	17	-3	1	-2	3	1	
ES	82	-2	12	2	2	1	4	-1	
FR	71	-6	20	4	1	0	8	2	
HR	76	2	19	-3	2	0	3	1	
IT	78	3	17	-1	2	0	3	-2	
CY	86	-2	12	3	1	0	1	-1	
LV	83	0	7	0	1	0	9	0	
LT	87	-1	6	0	2	1	5	0	
LU	82	1	10	-5	1	0	7	4	
HU	70	3	23	-4	3	1	4	0	
MT	68	-1	27	1	1	0	4	0	
NL	85	0	13	0	1	0	1	0	
AT	56	-7	37	8	2	0	5	-1	
PL	80	4	15	-5	2	0	3	1	
PT	65	-6	22	2	4	1	9	3	
RO	69	1	22	0	5	0	4	-1	
SI	79	1	16	-3	1	0	4	2	
SK	77	-4	15	1	2	1	6	2	
FI	82	2	10	0	1	-1	7	-1	
SE	64	-5	30	5	2	1	4	-1	

T80

In the same Eurobarometer, it's also pointed out that instead 71 percent of EU citizens agreed that the EU should strengthen its capacity to produce military equipment.

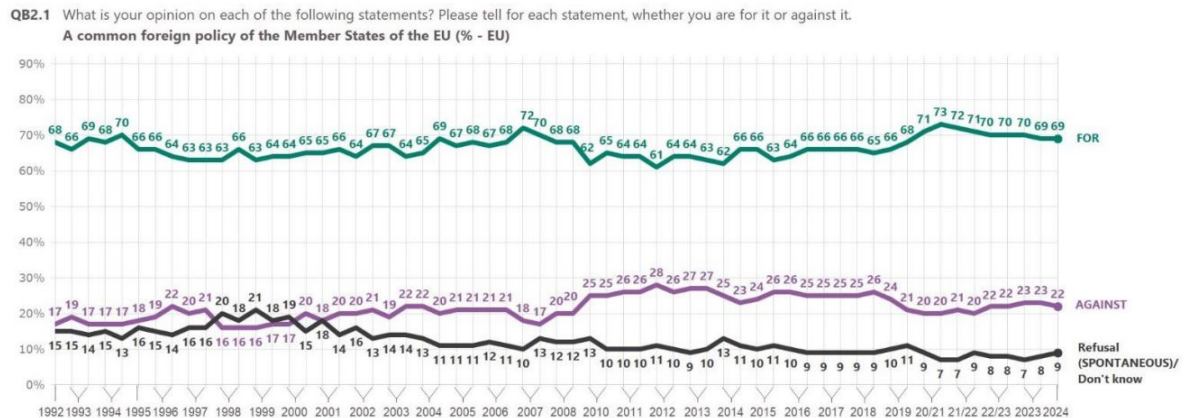
"EU Citizen Consensus: Reinforcing Military Equipment Production"



● Totally agree ● Tend to agree ● Tend to disagree ● Totally disagree ● Don't know

Finally, it highlighted that nearly seven out of ten EU citizens (69 percent) are in favor of a common foreign policy of member states.

"EU Citizen Consensus: Pushing for a Unified Foreign Policy"



Finally, to conclude the talk, I ask the Professor, what is his idea about the opinion of different European citizens. Specifically, I ask, “Do you think there is an almost 50-50 situation in favor and 50% against?”

He ponders for a second and replies, “I will preface this by saying that I have no idea of the actual percentages to date,

but I believe that the issue of defense is strong in some countries and very weak in others, in our country (Italy) the issue of defense has never been debated so it is not a relevant thing for everyone. But I can tell you that I certainly perceive a general disinterest says as in other countries toward these issues, and I really believe that it is the European citizens themselves who do not want the best for Europe and so they are the ones who are guilty of this collective disinterest.”

I thank Professor Margeletti for his speech and for highlighting the importance of the opinion and interest of the whole European community, for the common good and for a more present global defense and role.

3.3 Defense and Public Opinion: “European Leaders on the Prospect of a Unified Army”

Let us conclude our discursive chapter, just by referring to and reporting what are the speeches of the most influential leaders, within the European union, on these central issues of security and the European military, to really get a 360-degree picture on the influences and opinions of the leaders of the member states.

I will present different views starting with Emmanuel Macron, which is one of the most influential leaders in Europe because of France's role as a major EU power and because of his commitment to greater European integration.

The president of France has been a strong supporter of the idea of a European Union army. Macron has always argued that Europe must take greater responsibility for its own security and reduce its dependence on the United States. He believes that a European army would not only improve the EU's defense capabilities but also strengthen its geopolitical influence. Macron envisions a strategically autonomous Europe capable of protecting its interests independently. He cited the changing global landscape, with the rise of powers such as China and Russia, as a compelling reason for Europe to strengthen its defense mechanisms. Macron's vision is of a European Union capable of projecting power and ensuring stability both within its borders and in neighboring areas, contributing to global peace and security.

Continuando con Olaf Scholz, che come capo del governo tedesco, Olaf Scholz guida la nazione economicamente più forte dell'UE. La Germania ha un'influenza significativa sulle politiche economiche e finanziarie dell'Unione Europea.

Olaf Scholz, while supportive of greater European integration, has taken a more cautious approach to the idea of a European Union army. Scholz acknowledges the potential benefits of enhanced military cooperation but emphasizes the need for careful consideration of how such an army would be structured and financed. He is particularly concerned about the implications for national sovereignty and the existing NATO framework. Germany, being a major NATO member, places significant importance on transatlantic ties. Scholz suggests that any steps toward a European army should complement NATO and not undermine it. He also highlights the importance of consensus among EU member states and believes that a gradual, step-by-step approach to deeper military integration is more pragmatic.

Then I found it fundamental to include Pedro Sánchez first minister of Spain, he supports the idea of a European army as part of a broader vision of a more integrated and cohesive European Union. Sánchez sees a European defense force as a natural progression toward a deeper political union. He

argues that in an increasingly interconnected world, shared security is essential for shared prosperity. Sánchez is particularly concerned about the threats posed by terrorism, cyber attacks, and regional conflicts. He believes that a unified European response, backed by a dedicated military force, would be more effective in addressing these challenges. However, he also stresses the importance of social cohesion and solidarity within the EU, arguing that any steps toward a European military must be accompanied by efforts to address economic and social disparities between member states.

Continuing with Mark Rutte, the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, which is known for his experience and role in European politics, often playing a key role in negotiations and coalition building within the EU. He offers a more skeptical view of the creation of an EU army. Rutte fears the potential duplication of effort and resources given existing structures such as NATO. He questions the added value of a separate European military force and stresses the importance of strengthening NATO as the cornerstone of European defense. Rutte is also concerned about the political feasibility of such an ambitious project, given the divergent security policies and defense spending priorities of EU member states. Rutte favors focusing on strengthening existing EU defense initiatives, such as PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) and the European Defense Fund, rather than creating an entirely new military structure.

Then I decide to include two very important figures, the first one is Charles Michel, President of the European Council. Although he is not the leader of a member state, Charles Michel's role as President of the European Council makes him one of the most influential politicians in strategic and high policy decisions in the EU. Michel expressed support for the idea of greater European defense integration, but stresses the need for a balanced and inclusive approach. He believes the EU must carefully navigate the complex political landscape, ensuring that any steps toward a European military respect the different perspectives and security concerns of all member states. Michel advocates a phased approach, starting with enhanced coordination and joint exercises, and then gradually moving to more ambitious goals as trust and cooperation deepen.

Finally the second main person is Ursula von der Leyen, Presidente della Commissione Europea, which ha un ruolo centrale nell'iniziativa legislativa dell'UE e nell'implementazione delle politiche dell'Unione.

She has also been in favor of strengthening European defense. Von der Leyen, with her background as a former German defense minister, understands the complexities of defense policy. She argues that Europe must be able to defend itself and take a more active role in global security. Von der Leyen stresses that the European Defense Fund and PESCO are key initiatives that lay the foundation for greater defense cooperation. Von der Leyen envisions a Europe capable of acting decisively and autonomously in security matters while remaining a strong and reliable partner within NATO.

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, we embarked on a comprehensive exploration of the concept of creating a military force for the European Union (EU), commonly referred to as the “EU Army.” We delved into the complexities of this proposal, considering its alignment with the broader context of the EU's common defense, public sentiment, historical precedents, financial strategies, and the complexities surrounding its creation.

Our journey began by examining the historical landscape of European defense integration, going back from the creation of NATO to the establishment of the European Defense Fund in 2021. We analyzed past initiatives, considering their effectiveness, challenges and evolving threats to the continent's security. In addition, we delved into public sentiment, citing polls and surveys indicating growing support for greater defense cooperation at the EU level. These data underscored the importance of aligning future defense initiatives with public preferences for a more secure and integrated Europe.

Our analysis then shifted to evaluating various financial strategies for financing the European Army project. We examined the collective defense budget, public-private partnerships (PPPs), and the economic capabilities of EU member states. Despite the challenges associated with creating a collective defense budget and managing the complexities of PPPs, our review highlighted the potential benefits of strategic planning and collaboration in enhancing European defense capabilities. In addition, we conducted a statistical analysis of military spending in various European countries, shedding light on the significant increases in defense spending in Greece and Poland due to regional instabilities and security concerns.

In addition, we delved into the complexities surrounding the creation of a common European defense, considering the insights of academic discourse and political leadership. We explored governance structures, synchronization within the defense industry, and the role of public opinion in shaping defense policy. The examination revealed the difficulties in achieving unanimity among EU member states, the importance of democratic legitimacy, and the spectrum of opinion among influential European leaders.

In conclusion, the creation of a military force for the European Union is a significant and relevant proposition in a dynamic age of changing geopolitical dynamics and evolving security threats. Although the challenges and complexities are numerous, our analysis demonstrates the potential benefits of closer European defense cooperation. By pooling resources, promoting solidarity among member states, and aligning with citizens' preferences, a common European defense could strengthen collective security, rationalize defense spending, and promote a more secure and integrated Europe.

As we navigate the complexities and political realities, it is imperative that we approach the creation of a common European defense with strategic foresight, collaboration and commitment to democratic principles. In doing so, we can pave the way toward a future in which Europe is stronger together, united in its collective defense and security objectives.

Ultimately, the path to a common European defense is not without challenges, but it is a path worth taking for the peace, security and prosperity of the European continent and its citizens.

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