

# Defending Europe Without an Army: The Potential of the Common Security Policy

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### **To what extent is a Common Security and Defence Policy impossible without a common European army?**

The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) has long been a feature of the European Union (EU). Formerly known as the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), the policy has a lot to say for itself in terms of its missions and what they stand for. The policy covers the EU's military and security defence issues as well as civilian crisis management. Since its formulation a series of developments have given the policy more clout such as the Petersburg tasks in 1992 and the 1998 St. Malo Agreement, as well as the Berlin Plus agreements. These pacts have been in response to humanitarian issues such as the escalating Bosnian war and the rest of Eastern Europe. With the development of these agreements, questions have arisen over how far the CSDP can go without a common European Army. With a lack of supranational authority, the CSDP has been hard to enforce particularly in regards to military plan of action, the intergovernmental nature of the policy means the CSDP cannot breach member states own security policies and the states can contribute what they want to the CSDP. Furthermore, NATO has become a stronger actor since the Berlin Plus agreements. This raises the question over whether, a European Army is actually necessary especially when a large majority of EU member states are already members of NATO. What is more is that NATO has a large band of resources, which the EU can access whereas the EU has to rely on its own member states resources if it wants to take decisive action. However, it is also important to point out that the CSDP does not base itself solely within a military capacity but also in other ways, particularly through soft and civilian methods. CSDP does also have a dynamic that bases itself on civilian missions such as police missions. An example of that would be in Bosnia and how the EU helped to stabilise the area following the war. In responding to the aforementioned title question, what needs to be addressed are the core functions of the CSDP and how it has been conceptualised in civilian and military terms, as well as the role of NATO. As a policy the CSDP has been efficient in implementing operations and therefore challenges the idea that the CSDP needs an army or is about military action.

At the helm of the CSDP since 1998 has been France and Britain who wanted a European security framework that was independent and spoke for itself. At the 1998, St. Malo Declaration President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Tony Blair both met to advance the development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). They both agreed that an autonomous military dimension of Europe was fitting to the EU model: 'the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises.' (Franco-British St. Malo Declaration 4 December 1998). While the reasoning of France and Britain at the time was fair; there is no clear defence force in place and EU member states have contribute to the policy individually and what they see as right: 'the EU is to rely on member states' assets (and has no 'common' instruments, troops or headquarters of its own).' (Keueleire and Delreux, 2014. pp 173). Rather than pooling their resources together, each member state can decide whether it sees fit to contribute its military resources. It was heavily emphasised in the Lisbon Treaty that national security of member states should not be altered 'the Heads of State in Lisbon remained adamant that state actors still dominate policy agenda-setting and implementation.' (Dyson and Konstadines, 2013). So far, many member states have expressed scepticism of the CSDP due to it being a compromise of many member states morals. Ireland originally vetoed the Lisbon Treaty in

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2008 due to disagreements over the CSDP. In addition, Denmark has always gone against the CSDP, due to an unwillingness to sacrifice national sovereignty. The intergovernmental layout of the CSDP makes it hard for action to be coordinated due to conflicting ideas: 'foreign security, and defence policy is regarded as the prime policy area where coordination (let alone integration) will not happen.' (Hill and Smith, 2011. pp 200). Bearing this in mind, it raises the question: whether or not the CSDP is possible without the full support of all member states yet alone the concept of an army.

Since St. Malo 1998, progression of a European Defence Policy the desire to improve European security has been of interest: 'the discourse and intentions of key European policymakers appear to point towards the direction of improved military capabilities and joint EU action in international crises.' (Trott, 2010. pp 9). If the EU were to pool its resources together, it would be the second largest military power in the world. A willingness to enhance their military stance has been shown through the development of many agencies within the system such as the European Defence Agency. Hedley Bull. thought it was necessary in order to face up to the changing patterns in the political world developed the military power theory: 'there is a need for the European Allies at least to acquire a greater element of self-sufficiency in providing for their defence, and to establish that this is the broad direction they are seeking to move.' (Bull, 1982. pp 152). Current president of the European Commission Jean Claude Juncker has spoken of the importance of a European Army in the near future so that the EU can be taken seriously as a European actor; especially, with the growing power of Russia as well as to hasten European integration. 'Juncker, who has been a longstanding advocate of an EU army, said getting member states to combine militarily would make spending more efficient and would encourage further European integration.' (Sparrow, 2015). However, while there seems to be a renewed support for a European Army there are still setbacks especially in terms of resources.

Statistically, within the European Union there are over 1.7 million soldiers and a military defence budget of over two hundred billion euros. (Keueleire and Delreux, 2014. pp 177) 1 . However, within this capacity only small margin of these are deployable. Furthermore, member states reluctance to spend on military means that there is doubt that the EU can afford its own military: 'in 2005, Europe was the only region in the world where military spending decreased, by approximately 1.7 per cent. It is questionable as to whether the EU can actually afford to launch fully-fledged autonomous military actions.' (Trott, 2010. pp 11). The lack of an EU army does show that member state cooperation is vital in order to carry out a policy such as the CSDP which covers so many important issues: 'political will/capacity of the Union's leaders to actually deploy the new military instruments at their disposal in response to a new remains in doubt.' (Grant, 2000. pp. 8). Recent missions carried out in Mali were only due to member states making strong proposals that it was work that needed doing. While the mission in Mali was referred to as an EU mission, it only had the backing of ten member states and was headed by France during their council presidency. The EU was deeply divided on how to treat Libya and what preventative measures should be used. France and UK wanted military cooperation while Germany expressed a lot of scepticism. 'For the concept of an EU army is literally without meaning unless it entails supranational control of the funds and troops contributed by member states. This, of course, is not something any EU member state is now ready to contemplate.' (Dempsey, 2015). In light of this, a European army would seem impossible as getting mutual agreement on military issues is challenging as member states often disagree, as highlighted by recent attempts for intervention.

A reason why the CSDP has been able to function is with the influence of NATO; but NATO's influence has not always been well received. An original divide between France and the UK when constructing the foundations for the CSDP was over the influence of the Atlantic in the policy. France wanted less of an alliance with the USA and sought to create a union that could stand-alone, whereas the UK felt that having a policy that aligned with American preferences would be more suitable. 'Britain's close relationship with the United States has in the past fuelled deep-seated French suspicions the Britain is primarily a faithful US ally supporting American hegemony in Europe.' (Torna and Christiansen, 2004 .pp 95). The Berlin plus agreement put in place a cooperation package in which the two organisations can work together on addressing situations together. The 2002 Berlin plus agreement is a useful tool for both sides to work together efficiently it works within a cadre that focuses on ensuring that an efficient response to a crises is met: This partnership is also about ensuring efficient crisis management and working together in order to identify the best possible response to a crisis. For this purpose, the EU and NATO agreed on mutual crisis consultation arrangements that are geared towards an efficient and rapid decision- making in each organisation in the presence of a crisis. (European Union, 1999).

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A pragmatic response to what was a difficult issue the partnership holds a lot of potential. As of the present day, 22 of the 28 EU member states are also members of NATO. This military resource could make up for the fact that there is no European Army and that NATO can stand in as a replacement. The EU has neither the resources nor the support from individual governments for an army and therefore NATO could be a viable replacement. However, once again the problem is the individual oppositions from member states such as France and disagreements between states that slow down the implementation and development. The EU receives military resources from NATO that make it a useful policy, what stands in the way of the CSDP is not so much the lack of a common European Army, but rather member states disagreements. If NATO can be considered as the military actor, we can look and how the CSDP is effective in other ways and how it is not just based within a military capacity. The theory which many critics have conceptualised the European Union as a whole is with the concept of a Civilian Power Europe (CPE). Originating from the 1970s as one of the first EU's theoretical concepts, written by Francois Duchêne. It bases itself on the notion that the EU can solidify itself as a political actor based on more democratic principles: 'the primacy of diplomatic cooperation to solve international problems; the centrality of economic power to achieve national goals; and the willingness to use legally-binding supranational institutions to achieve international progress.' (Manners, 2002. pp 26). A core feature of this theory is a reluctance to use military force. The EU is therefore recognised more for its economic nature and the potential to make impactful agreements. The EU is one of the largest trade powers in the world and therefore can wield a lot of economic influence in order to have an effect. In addition, the EU is one of the largest contributors of aid to developing countries. The EU's norms have been a useful tool, especially in applying the CSDP such as aid missions in Afghanistan and peacekeeping operations in the Darfur. Therefore, it shows that CSDP is more than just a military policy and can work through other methods.

Some criticisms have faced the concept of CPE. Hedley Bull has been at the forefront of these criticisms stating that the civilian power concept focuses too heavily within the time it was written. It does not take into consideration the potential obstacles that face the EU in the long course. Especially in response to the potential threats held by the Soviet Union. He felt that the newly-pacifist union, would result in the EU being taken advantage of and therefore that our security measures needed to be tightened: 'If the Western defensive guard were lowered, aggressive designs in the East would become feasible, and it is likely that Soviet intentions would begin to change: options not now taken seriously.' (Bull, 1982. pp 155). In response to Bull, since the conception of CPE the EU has seen a shift in focus with events such as the collapse of communism and the following events in the Balkans and Eastern Europe. The new developments of the Berlin Plus agreements saw the establishment of a system which saw the need for action in light of humanitarian crises. The new peacekeeping roles questioned the soft-power approach and how the EU can consider itself a soft power with trained soldiers in place. As Maull points out that a civilian power encompasses a lot, with military action as a last resort. He implies being a civilian power involves: a) the acceptance of the necessity of cooperation with others in the pursuit of international objectives; b) the concentration on non-military, primarily economic, means to secure national goals, with military power left as a residual instrument serving essentially to safeguard other means of international interaction; and c) a willingness to develop supranational structures to address critical issues of international management. (Maull, 1990. pp 92-93). Therefore it is worth acknowledging that the CSDP is possible without an army due to both military and civilian capabilities, an area to look at as an example is the Balkans. The EU has been an influence in the Balkans since the outbreak of the Bosnian war in 1992. The initial stance of EC was to supply aid to those in need as well as sanctions to the areas conflict. As the violence escalated, the EU became very indecisive over deciding what plan of action to take, with member states all having opposing opinions as to what should be done. 'The disagreements among its member states left the EU perceived as an indecisive, inconsistent and effectively weak international actor.' (Whitman and Wolff, 2012. pp 140). The disagreements and poor management between member states, showed the EU as a weak military actor on a global stage. On the other hand, NATO has shown itself to be a durable and trustworthy security actor who at the end of its missions passed the baton over to the EU. The relationship between the EU and NATO was of paramount importance the restoration of the region which saw NATO provide military support to the area; while the EU provided guidance to the area with EUFOR operation 'Althea.' However, this mission was only possible through the resources of NATO: 'the EU operation was able to rely on NATO assets and capabilities through the Berlin Plus arrangements between the two organisations.' (Whitman and Wolff, 2012. pp 142). What the missions in the Balkans shows is if the EU uses its resources effectively, it can have an impact. However, the role NATO played also had a significant impact and many EU missions only resulted from NATO action. Therefore, is a European Army possible or necessary with the influence of NATO? On the other hand, whether the CSDP can work when the EU makes an

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impact through civilian effort. The civilian part of the intervention worked extremely well with the EU creating a civilian identity for itself, making its priorities clear and implementing them coherently. To conclude this segment on civilian power, it shows that the Common Security Defence Policy depends a lot on civilian efforts especially in the aftermath of a humanitarian crisis. Without a European Army the CSDP depends on other areas to give itself credit, such as in this instance humanitarian aid and civilian response, as well as the implementation of EU norms.

In conclusion, the CSDP is not impossible without a European Army but rather is possible due to other EU initiatives. The EU has made itself a succinct and dependable political actor on the global stage through soft and economic incentives. Such as through the implementation of civilian and peacekeeping efforts in order to establish stability in countries after a period of crises. Or through economic clout, in applying trade sanctions to areas. Additionally, lacklustre military efforts of the EU have led to its reputation being tarnished and ridiculed. Besides, the inability to coordinate and convince member states to support military action when they do not believe so renders the notion of an army over-ambitious. Further to the point, the external factor of NATO with whom the EU can cooperate with and have access to its resources, with 22 members of NATO already members of the EU military action is easier to carry out and execute. The example, of Bosnia showed how in a military capacity the EU was disorganised and inefficient, whereas the work of NATO proved to be effective and well driven. However, the work which the EU did following on from Bosnia in the form of large scale police mission, was well-planned and proficient. Showing that as a civilian power the EU can have a bearing as to can the CSDP. Therefore, all in all the CSDP is possible with effective soft powers mechanisms, military action for the EU is too intergovernmental in nature to have any effect and therefore the European Army idea seems more impossible, than the effectiveness of the CSDP which has already made impacts through other political and civilian conduits.

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