



NEWS STORIES

Part 1: EU acts for peace and security



For centuries, Europe was a continent of war. However after the Second World War, the European Union has become a most successful peace project, being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012. Today the EU's ambition is to be a global actor for peace more than ever.

EU Member States have substantial security and defence capabilities. By working closely together, Europe further strengthen its role as global player to protect its citizens and promote peace in partner countries. Therefore the EU fosters deep cooperation among Member States in the areas of security and defence.

The EU needs to play a stronger role in security and defence

The security environment in and around Europe has become more complex and contested. Threats have multiplied. Terrorism, hybrid threats, cyber-attacks and climate change create formidable risks for EU citizens and many others in our neighbourhood and beyond.

The EU has set out to help ensure security for its citizens in what many see as an increasingly insecure world. Today, security means addressing threats that transcend borders. No single country can do this alone. Hence the EU is supporting Member States to collaborate more closely with each other on defence and also cooperates with other international partners such as NATO. A "progressive framing of a common Union defence policy" is also foreseen in the Treaty on European Union.

EU Member States taken together spend a substantial amount, approximately 200 billion Euro per year, on defence. EU Member States as a group are amongst the largest defence spenders in the world. Coordination and cooperation will help to exploit the full potential of the resources invested in defence. For example, coordinated procurements of military equipment, joint research or collective action against cyber-attacks are all very useful steps in this regard. According to studies, EU Member States could save between 25 and 100 billion Euro, depending on the degree of cooperation.



EU as a security provider - expected by citizens and partners

The EU and its Member States' higher level of ambition to work together in the area of defence is not the beginning of a militarisation or an arms race with third countries. It is a response to a changing situation, to new and challenging security threats and an effort to spend money more effectively. It follows demands for a greater role of the EU in the provision of security and stability by European citizens, as evidenced in Eurobarometer surveys, and by our global partners.

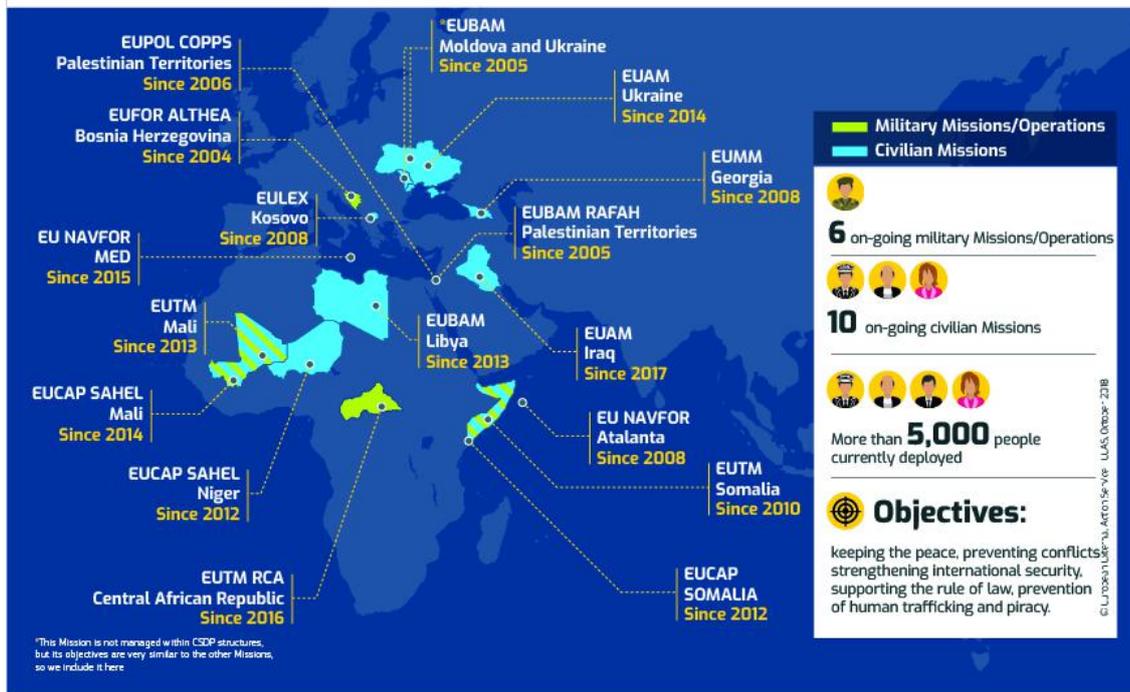


Combining instruments for security and defence - the EU's integrated approach

The EU currently conducts six military missions and operations on land and sea, to assist in creating a safe and secure environment, fighting pirates or disrupting networks of traffickers. But military missions are just one element in the EU's toolbox of instruments to tackle today's complex security challenges. There are also ten civilian missions deployed in partner countries to prevent conflicts and to support capacity building in the areas of rule of law and security sector reform. A map showing all missions and operation is below. The EU also has other important instruments at its disposal such as diplomacy, development cooperation and humanitarian aid, to name but a few. Hard and soft power work best in tandem when addressing conflicts and crises. An integrated approach, helping from different angles with different tools stands a larger chance to effectively stabilise crisis situations in the short and also the longer term. Deploying mutually reinforcing instruments in a coordinated manner persistently over the lifecycle of a crisis is the EU's approach.



EUROPEAN UNION CSDP MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS 2018



Some concrete examples of EU security and defence action

In 2016 High Representative Mogherini published the "Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy". Since then **a wide range of initiatives have been taken by the EU to further develop its toolbox to better protect the Union**, enhance the resilience of partners and strengthen its role as global player for peacebuilding and human security. By way of illustration, three important EU actions are outlined below.

- **EU military and civilian missions and operations outside the Union: The security of EU citizens does not start at our borders**

The EU has developed its track record as security provider through deploying **civilian and military missions and operations** under its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The first missions under EU flag were launched already back in 2003. Since then 34 EU missions have operated on three continents. CSDP missions and operations go hand in hand with other EU activities such as diplomatic efforts, development cooperation and humanitarian aid. The objective is to foster security and stability in the EU's wider neighbourhood and also to counter security threats to the EU and its citizens such as international terrorism.

- **The European Defence Fund: the EU needs a European Defence Industry to be a lasting and credible security provider**

Coordinated planning and investment enables Member States to spend more effectively. This is why the [European Defence Fund](#) was established. It encourages joint research and development. Collectively, Europe is one of the world's largest military spenders and the potential for savings and getting greater value out of every Euro spent, is substantial.

- **Structured defence cooperation among Member States: when it comes to security the interests of all Member States are inseparably linked.**

The changing security environment demands stronger commitments and a framework for cooperation in line with the strategic priorities outlined in the EU Global Strategy 2016. The [Permanent Structured Cooperation \(PESCO\)](#) is an instrument which enables willing Member States to pursue greater cooperation in defence and security. Out of the 28 EU Member States, 25 have joined PESCO and thereby agreed to more binding commitments in the defence domain. Furthermore, participating Member States have developed projects working together in groups to enhance military training and exercises, strengthening jointly their capabilities on land, air and sea, but also for example in the ever more important cyber domain.

None of the aforementioned actions and initiatives is stand-alone. In each case they are part of a coherent EU approach involving all relevant EU institutions and entities including the European Defence Agency (EDA) as well as Member States to enhance collaborative defence capability planning, development, procurement and operations.



In next week's feature on defence and security, on 9 August, we will take a closer look at the initiatives to foster 'military mobility' across Europe.

See also

The EU strengthens cooperation on security and defence

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