Drivers of defence integration within the European Union

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Abstract

Due to the primacy of sovereignty and alliance commitments, and consequent TEU-based constraints, defence is tied to strict intergovernmentalism, as a voluntary and bottom-up approach, in the *acquis* and governance of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The *practice* of the (Common) European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), however, has brought about joint steps in tasking, institutional construction and capabilities development, and operational outcomes that constitute a significant, and unexpected, advancement of cooperation in defence policy, including common strategic thinking.

The paper reviews substantive issues and examples within the realist, institutionalist and constructivist explanations for the progress of the ESDP. In addition, recent developments, the *Long-Term Vision* and the *EU Battlegroups*, are analysed as indicators and drivers of further defence integration, which is measured *qualitatively* in terms of competence as power, capability as governance, and culture as identity.

The paper will assess how the practical could supplant the constitutional in EU integration, whether defence will remain a distinct case, and how the EU is shaped as an international actor by the ESDP. Using the three-some definition of applied, the paper concludes that defence integration is most effectively driven by institutional factors at the Union level, conditioned increasingly by cultural factors at both national and Union levels, and limited ambiguously by the juxtaposition of national policies on the scope of competence on power that is to be transferred to the Union level.

Note: Statements of fact and opinion are those the author and do not imply endorsement by the Government of Finland.

Introduction: explaining the genesis and dynamics of the ESDP

The (Common) European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)[1] has been in recent years arguably the most dynamic and successful sector in the practice and development of the European Union (EU). It is an intriguing phenomenon, since, while defence was an integral and prominent part of the early efforts for European integration (the Treaty of Dunkirk 1947, the Brussels Treaty 1948/1954, the European Defence Community 1950-54), they were either frustrated due to internal disputes or subsumed by NATO in the reality of power politics, and the historical process of European integration in the framework of what is today the European Union was launched as a markedly civilian enterprise. Defence in all of its aspects was left aside as historically and politically too challenging a policy sector to be subjected to ever-deepening cooperation or the pooling of sovereignty, not to speak of supranationalism. After all, even a common foreign policy was a cautious late-comer in the development of the European Community in the 1970/80s.

When the framing of "a common defence policy", with "a common defence" as a conditional long-term perspective, was introduced in the Maastricht (1992) and Amsterdam (1997) Treaties on European Union (TEU), it did not have much practical effect until the ESDP was launched by the Franco-British St. Malo statement (1998) and the subsequent Cologne and Helsinki summit decisions (1999) as a new political project to provide "beef" to what was the genuinely new area of military cooperation and performance, albeit supported and complemented by the Union's unique civilian capabilities. While there is a plethora of generic and contingent explanations to the genesis and subsequent dynamics of the ESDP, it remains a disputed, complex and even disconcerting item for analysis among practitioners as well as theoreticians. (Howorth, 2007, 33-60)

Even the early assertions on the purposes of the (C)ESDP[2] reveal the various dimensions where drivers behind the ESDP can be found:

- "The European Union needs to be in a position to play its full role on the international stage." (St. Malo). "To this end, 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 without prejudice to actions by NATO. The EU will thereby increase its ability to contribute to international peace and security in accordance with the principles of the UN charter." (Cologne) "The European Union underlines its determination to develop an autonomous capacity to take decisions and, where NATO as a whole is not engaged, to launch and conduct EU-led military operations in response to international crises." (Helsinki) "... The Union will improve and make more effective use of resources in civilian crisis management in which the Union and the Member States already have considerable experience." (Helsinki) "All these measures will be taken in support of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and they will reinforce and extend the Union's comprehensive external role. With the enhancement and concertation of military and crisis response tools, the Union will be able to resort to the whole range of instruments from diplomatic activity, humanitarian assistance and economic measures to civilian policing and military crisis management operations." (Helsinki)

There is the *realist* or power dimension: securing the position of the EU as an emerging actor in the international configurations of power politics, in particular the Union's relationship with the United States and its leadership of NATO but also the Union's capability to address new conflicts and threats regionally and globally. There is the *institutionalist* or governance dimension: generating the enhanced and multi-faceted capability required for external action, as part of the overall development of the Union, and closely linked to internal change. There is the *constructivist* or cultural dimension: asserting the distinct value-based character of the Union as an international actor, with the perspective of constructing strategic identity and culture as a requisite foundation. While being moulded by such a combination of exogenous and endogenous forces, the driving factors are also shaped by experience and lessons learnt in the implementation of the ESDP as a self-reinforcing process of inter-linking factors.

Defence integration will be defined here as a practical measure of competence, capability and identity and their combination at the Union level.

Competence in defence policy is organically linked with the potential for power, as it defines and measures the scope of issues and functions that are included in the ESDP. To what extent are military affairs planned, dealt with and decided jointly by the Union in its common organs as the basis for the

Union's use of power? In the last instance, it may indicate the extent to which decision-making and sovereignty in defence is pooled at or transferred to the Union level based on constitutional decisions.

Capability as a measure of defence integration refers to the establishment of common institutions and the manner and effects of their functioning in defence policy and how capabilities are developed and made available for the ESDP. A key issue is the relative status of top-down mechanisms in parallel with the bottom-up practice.

Identity as the essence in a common culture of thinking strategically about the role of the ESDP may be a consequence of competence and capability developments and as such a planned process. On the other hand, the reverse may be true, as identities and worldviews may be transformed by endogenous and exogenous factors, while legitimacy and acceptability play an increasingly significant role in ESDP actions.

The *paper* will *firstly* establish the main categories of drivers or explanations for the ESDP along the above three general dimensions. *Secondly*, two recent processes, the adoption of *An Initial Long-Term Vision for European Defence Capability and Capacity Needs* (the Long-Term Vision, LTV) (European Defence Agency, 2006) as a planning document and the generation of the full operational capability of the *EU Battlegroups* (EUBG) (2006) as a cutting edge in military crisis management will be analysed as reflecting and inserting qualitative steps in the ESDP. *Thirdly*, conclusions will be made on how such practical steps, along the dimensions of power, governance and identity could constitute advancement in defence integration, supplanting the need for constitutional solutions.

If the practice of ESDP would replace the need for constitutional reform, which would mitigate such constraints as intergovernmentalism, unanimity and the exclusion of collective defence arrangement, defence would no longer remain such a distinct case in EU integration. A parallel question to be asked, however, is whether a concurrent change is underway in the balance between intergovernmental (Council) and supranational (Commission) aspects of the formation of EU external relations and the CFSP and how it involves ESDP. A related question concerns the relative weight of Brussels and national capitals in policy formulation.

1. Driving forces of defence integration

Power, governance and identity constitute three dimensions that make and shape an international actor. In the case of the European Union, which is an emerging *sui generis* actor, those dimensions do not develop necessarily in an even manner. Moreover, the actorness of the Union may be built by small and large steps and by programmatic actions as well as constitutional decisions.[3]

Realist explanation

It is widely agreed and verified that the dominant external contingency for the St. Malo initiative and its acceptance among the member-states was the reappearance of war and ethnic cleansing in Europe, at the borders of the European Union, and its failure to prevent, manage or resolve violent conflicts in Former Yugoslavia, particularly BiH, and later in Kosovo. Moreover, while the coercive capability of the United States through NATO proved indispensable for subjugating the opponent and stopping the military phase of the conflicts, it demonstrated in a tangible way the unsustainable nature of the asymmetric dependency of the European allies and partners on US assistance and support in post-cold war European security, made even more critical by the shift in US strategic attention away from Europe.

At the same time, the internally contradictory, even "schizophrenic" (Howorth, 2007, 137) character of the US attitude made the coexistence between the EU/ESDP and NATO/US recurrently difficult and dispute-prone. While Washington welcomed greater European self-reliance and pushed for more burden-sharing, it was distrustful and resentful of potential EU challenge to its leadership. On the other hand, the credibility of the EU capabilities to be generated was doubted in Washington, which might be forced to come to assist an EU mission stranded in a harm's way. While there was a wider spectrum of

opinions among the US elites, the worst outcome would be an ESDP geared to engine European integration while not producing added value in capacity usable in missions of strategic significance to the US and the West as a whole. (Hunter, 2002; Hamilton, 2004; Peters, 2004)

On the other side of the transatlantic relationship, there was uneasiness and concern because of the evidently diminishing strategic and geopolitical significance of Europe for the United States in the post-cold war global order. While the Europeans recognized the necessity of taking greater responsibility for European security, and even forged ahead in the construction of an autonomous capability, a US disengagement was viewed as a strategic catastrophe and not an outcome sought after by responsible actors. The ESDP was designed to enhance the EU's global role in conflict management and coping with other security problems, but the aim was a more distinct and balanced strategic partnership with the US and not a strategic divorce. In fact, for the UK, the ESDP initiative was principally a *sine qua non* of making the US remain committed to NATO and thus preserving the Alliance. At the same time, the UK was to be at the forefront in warning lest a politically too ambitious or autonomous ESDP drive the political Washington into military withdrawal from Europe.

The concept of “autonomous” action, although it referred to the ability of independent decision-making and management of military missions as an issue of competence, raised indirectly also the issue of the sufficiency and usability of the European indigenous military capability. As the model of resorting to the structures of the WEU – as envisaged in the TEU – was never used and was taken off the table with the demise of the WEU, and the idea of forging “separable but not separate” European capabilities from within NATO (European Security and Defence Identity, ESDI) did not make any headway either, the only remaining model for generating European resources for the use of the EU, replacing or complementing the Union's own efforts, would be assets and capabilities provided by NATO with the consent of the US. The concept of “autonomous” as exclusive ESDP capability - the EU acting without capabilities assigned by the same countries, together with the US and other non-EU allies, to NATO - would be tantamount to - or at least risk - resource duplication with the potential for strategic decoupling, going against two of the framework conditions set by the US as response to the emergence of the ESDP.[4]

There never was even a practical possibility of duplicating armed forces – all the European members of the EU and NATO maintain one set of forces and strategic enabling resources, assigned for both EU and NATO missions as needed -, but the process of “constructive duplication” whereby the EU generates European strategic enablers became both practical and increasingly acceptable after 9/11 when the United States turned its attention and devoted its military resources increasingly outside Europe and was looking even from disengaging from European contingencies such as those in Western Balkans. (Schake, 2001; Howorth, 2007, 138-140) At the same time, it has become evident that strategic capabilities generated by European governments and industries, whether in the EU or NATO frameworks, would benefit both institutions facing the same kind of shortfalls, making disputes on relative competencies unnecessary. (Flournoy and Smith, 2005)

Consequently, an “autonomous” EU mission driven by European national or multinational planning structures and strategic enablers such as C3, lift and intelligence, which was established as an option from the outset, alongside “the Berlin Plus” mission with recourse to corresponding NATO assets and capabilities, has become to an increasing extent both politically acceptable and practically possible with the enhancement of the ESDP. Such a trajectory includes the possibility of European capabilities being increasingly developed and generated within the EU framework, with its economic, financial and technological resources, and its institutions for enacting on them, which would strengthen the Union as a military actor, albeit that the same strategic capabilities (lift, IT, intelligence etc) would also available for NATO.

The political tool for management and control of the related competences in the relationship between the EU and NATO was introduced in the ESDP documents as the line “where NATO as a whole is not engaged”[5], which instigated a discussion on NATO’s “right of first refusal” on the decision and deployment of a crisis management mission by either institution. Being another ambiguous aspect of the strategic relationship between the EU and US/NATO, such a first right was not formally insisted or

admitted nor would it have any binding legal effect on the EU's competence in its actions (Kielmansegg, 2005, 238-239).

The characterization of NATO's primary position indicated political understanding among the EU members that ESDP would be complementary to and not in competition with NATO. Common political sense would dictate that as the EU will rely on institutional and material support from NATO, it would not insist on an EU mission if NATO is willing and available. The establishment of institutional links for consultation and coordination between the two institutions (at the SG and NAC/PSC as well as working levels) would be used for avoiding friction, although they have proved to be rather weak. For the US, the ESDP would be acceptable and even beneficial when/if it would not challenge its or NATO primacy and bring new capacity useful for NATO as well. For the Europeans the EU/NATO relationship was a divisive issue, reflecting basic strategic orientations among the member-states, but a wide agreement existed on the need to push ESDP forward and prove its useful not only for the EU's values and interests but also for the transatlantic partnership. (Kielmansegg, 2005, 235-238; Howorth, 2007, 140-142)

There remains ambiguity in the EU-NATO relationship as partners, however. Because of the weakness of the institutional linking arrangements, the strategic ambiguity of the relationship, and the dynamics of change in the security environment, there have been a few grey-zone situations, indicating a potential for future tests of political dispute management. In the case of *Artemis*, the first autonomous EU military crisis management mission (2003), the US and NATO accused the EU for a failure of consultation and suspected an overly French dominance in the decision (Larrabee, 2004). In the case of assistance to the AU mission in Darfur, the EU was disturbed by NATO's eagerness to rush to a task which was both geopolitically and qualitatively supposed to belong to the EU's turf. Moreover, the recent discussion of "a Berlin Plus in reverse", whereby NATO would be entitled to recourse to the EU's civilian assets to support its own civilian-military missions, has been viewed by many as an inconvenient reversal of the original and natural understanding of the respective roles of primacy between the two institutions.

While the working relationship with NATO was instrumental for the capability of the European Union in conflict prevention and crisis management, the change in the security environment, not only regionally in the wider Europe but globally, presented a challenge that drove the EU to create the requisite capability to play its "full role" on the international arena. Here, the main strength of the EU was to be the uniquely wide range of its non-military capabilities and policies, suitable for addressing the new cross-border and transnational threats of the globalizing world. Although the EU placed a special attention to the neighbouring areas in its security and stability policies, its security strategy (ESS, 2003) called for enhancing effective multilateralism as the backbone of the global security order. As the EU itself was emerging as a great power of sorts by striving to establish a network of strategic partnerships with other leading players, it situated itself, consequently, at the juxtaposition of multilateralism and multipolarity in the politics of global ordering.

The issue of collective defence is indicative of the ambiguous and open-ended power perspective in the development of the ESDP. To introduce collective defence as a practical task for the European Union with the appropriate integrated command arrangements would be a direct challenge to the exclusive role of NATO in territorial defence for its members as ascertained and recognised in TEU and also in the Constitutional Treaty, and indirectly also to the leadership of the United States in the Alliance. In this light, the introduction of the mutual assistance clause in the Constitutional Treaty (I.41.7) has raised questions as regards its political and practical significance.

Irrespective of formulation of the clause, the political intentions in the particular historical situation of EU development provides a key explanation. The clause can be viewed as a political gesture rather than an attempt to create an EU-based defence alliance, thus serving to underline the basic solidarity between the member-states within the EU. (Cameron, 2007, 77-78; Duke, 2004)

In the legal perspective, the assistance clause is problematic as it does not define the criterion of assistance and leaves it to the discretion of member-states, thus seeming to remove the obligation to the sphere of high politics and solidarity. (Koutrakos, 2006, 502-504)

The "non-collision" norm of TEU that leaves territorial self-defence in the traditional and practical sense as the matter for NATO (until the European Council decides unanimously otherwise) is not changed by the assistance clause in the Constitutional Treaty, where the reservations concerning the NATO and non-NATO members of the EU are repeated. The clause has made the EU into a system of self-defence but not into an organisation for collective self-defence, as there is no Union *acquis* for building an integrated command structure, which would mean undertaking the functions of a military alliance. The EU member-states can use the competence laid down in the clause to defend themselves, but (for NATO members) it would lead in practice to the use of NATO capabilities for implementing collective measures of territorial defence. (Kielmansegg, 2005, 464-466)

The formulation of the mutual assistance clause was a conflictual process, which reflected the differences in strategic doctrines among the member-states. The end-result left confusing interpretations, but the very fact that a cause on mutual assistance, binding equally all the member-states, was included in the Constitutional Treaty represented a significant step. It emerged as common sense recognition that in the event of an aggression against one member-state, the others would do what they feel they can or should do to assist. They would not need a legal obligation for such response within an integrating institution. (Howorth, 2007, 120-124)

Collective defence as an alliance-type combination of obligation and structure remains a distant possibility, as there is no willingness among the member-states to embark on such decisions and steps, at least unless the Unites States decides to withdraw from NATO. The absence of collective defence leaves the EU incomplete as a defence actor, which may have implications for its role in crisis management, in particular in high-intensity conflicts. On the other hand, the growing salience of crisis management and the strengthening of relevant ESDP capabilities will have a corresponding effect on the EU's status in the configuration of power in the global security order.

Institutionalist explanation

The organisation, resource allocation and operationalisation of the European Security and Defence Policy have contributed to the institutionalisation and consolidation of the European Union as an international actor. While remaining a *sui generis* structure as an actor - less than a state or even a federal state but more than a regular intergovernmental organisation -, the EU deals with states, and in particular with great powers (the US and "BRICs") as one of the kind and with the United Nations as a key partner. At the same time, the Union represents and promotes a model of regional integration in a world order increasingly shaped by regionalisation. (Buzan and Wæver, 2003)

What does the ESDP bring to the table regarding institutions and capabilities in the advancement of the EU as an institutional actor?

At the outset, the member-states noted in common that the Union can not play its full role in international relations without a military (and civilian) crisis management capability. The ESDP has made the Union into a complete actor, complementing the non-military functions within the Council-led CFSP framework, which constitutes a parallel process to the wide array of non-military issue-areas and related organs in the framework of the Commission-led External Relations, underpinning the EU's global reach and influence as an actor. (Ortega, 2007; McCormick, 2007)

The CFSP/ESDP is placed in the intergovernmental second pillar, while the External Relations falls in the supranational first pillar. The Constitutional Treaty project involves depillarisation of the constitutional structure, but whether such an organisational integration of the CFSP into a single structure will be followed by normative and substantive integration into a single policy remains an open issue. In legal terms, the CFSP is managed as an area of activities where the member-states have retained a competence to conduct foreign relations as fully sovereign subjects of international law and take national decisions on specific actions. This is particularly true for decisions on deploying troops to missions under the (C)ESDP, which remains distinct from the rest of the CFSP issue-area also because the adoption of common defence is specifically placed behind the lock of a unanimous European Council decision. (Koutrakos, 2006, 493-495; 497-499)

Although the ESDP is constitutionally and politically distinct among the policy-sectors of the Union in its devotion to the doctrine of sovereignty, including the primacy of nation-states and alliance commitments in territorial defence, it has been a key contributor to the recent progress and visibility of the European Union, thus strengthening its actorness.

In the area of public support, so far, the CFSP has been a privileged sector among Union policies, with over 60% support for the EU to play a significant role in world affairs; the ESDP separately having enjoyed an even higher backing. Although the publics accept that security and defence issues are dealt with at the Union level, they do not favour transfer of decision-making authority away from the capitals to Brussels, especially the deployment of troops is to remain the national governments' and parliaments' purview. (Oppermann-Höse, 2007, 164-165)

It is, however, unlikely that the support of public opinion for ESDP will continue to flow as smoothly as before. As the ESDP is increasingly tackling tangible and demanding actions of higher societal salience, the public opinion, with its effects on parliamentary opinion, may turn into a potentially constraining factor. At the same time, the feasibility of ESDP projects will depend increasingly on their legitimacy and acceptance in the public eye and consequent public support for the EU to function as an institution. (Oppermann-Höse, 2007, 166-167)

In the institutional and decision-making structure created to run the ESDP and registered in the Nice treaty (2000), the Political and Security Committee (PSC) was established as the linchpin, with the responsibility for preparing decisions and conclusions to be taken by heads of state and government and foreign ministers in the area of CFSP/ESDP. More specifically, the PSC is acting as the central organ in crisis management under the auspices of the Council of ministers (GAEC), assigned with the responsibility for leading the formation and implementation of civilian and military ESDP missions. The role of the PSC is a key indicator on the effects of the ESDP on the institutional growth of the EU in international relations.

According to a study (Juncos and Reynolds, 2007), the behaviour of the member-states in the PSC can be explained by the theoretical approach of sociological institutionalism and the logic of appropriateness rather than rational choice and the logic of consequences. A process of socialization does shape actor preferences, in line with the constructivist argument, with the high number of contacts strengthening a problem-solving approach among the PSC ambassadors, who seem to have a relatively large margin of manoeuvre in accepting and joining in common decisions. At the same time, the core preferences of other member-states are not challenged, as a common decision is pursued with consensus-building rather than hard bargaining. (Juncos and Reynolds, 2007, 141-145)

The measure of free rein given to the PSC as a forum for information, consultation and consensual decision-making in Brussels should not be overestimated, however, as the representatives remain under the direction of the MFAs in the capitals. In fact, the PSC is a follow-on body to the Political Committee of the political directors, who may still convene occasionally as the PSC. The capitals weigh most heavily in matters of great strategic significance; the issue of the Iraq war was kept off the PSC agenda. The PSC has worked best in its core task of exercising "political control and strategic direction" of crisis response missions. The authority of the PSC is affected by the varying level of representation of the member-states, while at the same time individual ambassadors may have a particular role in individual cases. The PSC as a whole is relatively a young body, with the potential for increased influence in the future. (Howorth, 2007, 67-73)

With the PSC, together with the Military Committee and the Military Staff, as the first military bodies, the ESDP has brought new dynamics and new political weight to the Brussels end of the CFSP area. Of key symbolic and practical significance for the transformation of the EU's role have been the military and civilian crisis management missions undertaken in a rapid sequence since 2003. They have brought the institutional and recourse capabilities into action, bringing the Union onto the scene occupied so far by the UN and great power-led coalitions and creating a relationship of parallelism between the EU and NATO. The missions have tested the functioning of autonomous and Berlin plus command arrangements, civilian-military cooperation, transfer of tasks from NATO to the EU, and

planning bodies in the Council structure and covered tasks from monitoring missions and purely civilian operations to higher-intensity operations of protection and separation of forces.[6]

Constructivist explanation

The adoption and implementation of a security and defence policy, including military missions has enlivened the entrenched discussion on the distinct character of the European Union as an originally and basically civilian actor with a normative and principled approach to international and global issues. (Keisala, 2005) The construction of the EU as a value- and norm-based polity is viewed to shape the discourse and practice of its relations with the rest of the world. (Lucarelli, 2006) Identification as an institution with strong ethical and normative considerations incurs responsibilities for the impact of its policies and strategies on the global order. Such expectations of the EU as a responsible actor are entertained both within and outside the Union. (Vogt, 2006; Szigeti, 2006)

At the same time, a common strategic view of the global environment and its security challenges is seen to be required for an international actor to be effective, foremost in situations where the use of force or the launch of any other kind of intervention are considered. In fact, according to realist theories, a real security player needs to be a state- or federal-state like actor to be able to forge and maintain a common strategic culture that would underpin hard decisions and actions. Or in any case, within a community like the EU, such a common strategic worldview could only be entertained by the larger and powerful member-states, not the whole group of states with their different traditions and cultures. (Freedman, 2004; Howorth, 2007, 181-184; Johansson-Nogués, 2004)

However, the European Union has set upon itself the task of forging a common strategic culture as a precondition to the implementation of its first attempt at a global strategy, the *European Security Strategy* (ESS, 2003), where the ESDP is to play a key role. The question posed by the combination of global strategic ambitions and emergent military capabilities is whether such a strategic culture is possible with a security and defence dimension added and if so, how much a *sui generis* actor would change in passage from an entrenched civilian to aspirant military status. (Larsen, 2002; Heiselberg, 2003; Rynning, 2003; Meyer, 2005)

The constructivist answer is that a common strategic culture is an identity-driven process, where interactive communication, ideational discourse and mutual socialisation among the member-states may act as factors that shape and transform political traditions and preferences from within the Union. In a transformational process, identities are shaped and changed. In the interaction of the Union with the external environment, cultural change takes place under the impact of joint experiences and lessons learnt. As identity formation is a relational process that can also be used by the external actors, it matters what kind of challenges and missions the ESDP entails for the Union.

It is in particular the doctrine of crisis management based on the normative principles and policy guidelines invoked in the ESS that makes members adapt their national doctrines to a Europeanized policy. Collective norms emerge on how conflict prevention and crisis management should be handled, with the concept of civilian-military mix of tools as a notable example. (Howorth, 2007, 187-189; Rieker, 2006) The convergence of norms in strategic thinking may reach even deeper into national strategic doctrines, as a consequence, with the reduced salience of territorial defence in favour of international crisis management tasks being the most evident change. (Meyer, 2005; Howorth, 2007, 190-192)

Another way of approaching the issue of cultural change in strategic issues, relying more on institutional adaptation, is to focus on the practical steps taken by the Union within the ESDP, such as institutions, capabilities, and missions and their effect on coherence and consistency. Pragmatic steps may not only measure the implementation of ESDP-related programmes and projects but also indicate over time the convergence of the strategic notions and worldviews of the members as the basis of a common security and defence policy. In such an instrumental perspective, the key to common strategic culture is the development of a common understanding of the tasks to be solved and a workable discourse among the member-states.

Whether the strategic footprint of the EU corresponds to the values and principles it represents as a political entity is a measure of not only a convergence of identity among the member-states but also an indication of the impact of identity on foreign policy in general. Here also the area of security and defence stand out as a critical factor.

In soft security issues such as human rights, democracy promotion, climate change or even trade the Union is capable of establishing a common line and a degree of consistency as a champion of the good, normative objectives. It is much more demanding to find and pursue a common line in issues that have to do with the use of force, albeit that progress has been made in military crisis management. The background of the Union as a civilian power plays a major role, but, at the same time, the disappearance of the border between external and internal security issues has made a wider spectrum of issues of direct relevance for the security of the Union and its members. This makes it expedient and acceptable to apply hard tools in cases that earlier could only have been objects of soft security. The values and principles that guide the Union's CFSP/ESDP and external relations are increasingly agnostic regarding the benign/malign or soft/hard divides, as the external environment becomes more demanding. (Lucarelli, 2006, 1-7)

When common political identity is defined as the set of social and political values and principles that European recognise as theirs and that give sense to their feeling of belonging to the same political entity (Lucarelli, 2006, 13), it becomes part of self-identification. In this perspective, political identity is not necessarily a product of cultural heritage, but a constructed phenomenon that is driven by politics. It is made even more difficult to analyse as an identity-driven process, because what can be called EU foreign policy is the output of a multilevel governance of the CFSP, external relations run by the Commission and the member-states' foreign policies.

As for the formation and construction of the common view and doctrine of the use of force, it is critically influenced by the fact that the Union is an incomplete policy; no *finalité* is determined or at sight as far as its international role is concerned. While common values seem to construct common identity in such issues as humanitarian intervention based on the securitisation of human rights and other values, it has not been necessary for the EU to determine a distinctive discourse and doctrine across the entire spectrum of the use of force, beyond crisis management, because the primacy role of NATO and the United States in the coercive use of force and, in the last instance, as the framework of collective defence. (Lucarelli and Menotti, 2006, 147-152) In practice, however, the juxtaposition of crisis management and collective defence as drivers of strategic cultures may not constitute as sharp a divide as traditionally thought.

2. Case: Long-Term Vision as a strategy for capability development

The *Long-Term Vision* serves as a jointly worked out planning tool for military crisis management in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy with the perspective of 20 into the future. The LTV flows from the political and strategic objectives set in the European Security Strategy for the purpose of the European Union's global security policy and the guidelines and benchmarks for resource development set in the Headline Goal 2010. Although the binding character of the "Initial" LTV is carefully conditioned and its follow-up focussed on the agenda of the EDA in the decision adopted by the Defence Ministers as the Steering Board of the EDA,[7] the document can be read as a generic analysis of the future requirements of military capabilities in the development of the ESDP.

As for the level of ambition, the LTV was not mandated to go beyond the framework conditions set for the tasks of the ESDP in the ESS and the HG2010 with the attached *Requirements Catalogue* 2005, which includes the planning assumptions and five illustrative scenarios for EU military missions[8] derived from the Petersberg tasks, nor was it allowed to anticipate or speculate any change of the European Union as an integrating institution in the 20 years span of the exercise. Accordingly, methodologically the LTV represents a foresight or path analysis, which takes ongoing trends as the basis for future visions, developments and recommendations. The LTV is not forecasting, nor conducting a scenario analysis, which would take up ruptures or maelstrom events, overturning the original framework conditions. Even with these limitations and specifications, the LTV is a politically

relevant document that stands out as a source for analysing the future of the institutional and capability development of the ESDP.[9]

In the analysis of the *global context* (Gnesotto and Grevi, 2006), a demanding security environment is pictured with growing complexity, interdependence and inequality caused by globalisation, and with adjacent regions to the east, southeast and south of the EU becoming losers in globalisation, causing instability, migration pressures and problems with energy security. At the same time, increased publicity and the working of the knowledge society may constrain governments' readiness for demanding missions and interventions, where the issues of legality and legitimacy in the public eye will become increasingly important as framework conditions.

As for the *military context*, the EU will need to cope with the changing role of use of force, with the political outcome being determined not just by the achievement of military objectives but also by the manner in which the operation is conducted or perceived to be conducted by participants and outsiders. The legitimacy and legality in international law, the wide agenda related to the Responsibility to Protect requirement, the avoidance of collateral damage and civilian casualties and the overall management of information and intelligence will continue to be an integral part of military planning.

In parallel, the *technological revolution* will make it difficult for the EU to maintain unilateral advantages, as the adversaries will resort to asymmetric strategies, denying, for example, the more advanced party clear targets. The proliferation of technology and knowledge outside the control of governments will increase the risks of operations and stress the importance of protection. The role of civilian technology will grow and non-state actors may be critical players in conflicts and their resolution, stressing the need for flexibility and adaptation and the significance of knowledge management even for military technology to remain effective.

Implications of political, military and technological changes in the security context for EU missions confirm the ongoing trend, where a typical ESDP military crisis management operation is expeditionary, multinational and multi-instrument. The EU needs to be prepared for a wide range of operations and the use of softer and harder tools with knowledge management again a key requirement. An asymmetric conflict may put high-technology against low-technology, big against small, centrally-controlled against network-enabled operations and opponents with widely different concepts of political order against each other.

Implications for capability development call for comprehensive and effects-based planning of future forces: the desired effects will be produced by the combination of (hardware) equipment and (software) strategic concepts, doctrine, training and organisation. The main characteristics of the capability put to field by the EU will be synergy (land, air, space and maritime elements), agility (rapidity of response, tailorable force packages, deployability), selectivity (use of kinetic and non-kinetic, lethal and non-lethal means) and sustainability (operating from distance and on location, capacity for pipelines).[10]

The LTV touches upon several issues that will have long-term effects on not only cooperation and coordination within the Union structures but also on national defence policies, although they remain the sovereign authority of the member-states.

- Interoperability is required within national forces, between national forces, and with civilian actors. Interoperability for equipments and systems calls for consolidating the demand side of the European defence equipment market, stressing harmonization as far "upstream" as possible. Moreover, it takes up pooling in procurement, joint ownership, specialisation and integration of equipment development.

- In manpower development, the LTV calls for an increase in the proportion of investment in defence budgets and a reduction of operating costs for personnel, which needs to be reduced as armies professionalize and birth-rates fall.

- Rapid exploitation of technology will be based increasingly on advancement of civil technology as the distinction between civil and defence research and technology will become blurred. Legacy equipment

needs to be modified, refreshed or upgraded, in particular in the area of information technology, because of future needs of mobility and adaptability.

- In industrial policy the LTV puts a focus on maintaining and improving a capable defence technological and industrial base (DTIB) for Europe, which is a key item on the EDA agenda. To remain competitive with the US, and also the rising Far East, the EU must focus on defence R&D, where it is being outspent by the US, and also increase the share of investment in defence budgets. Although governments remain major owners of defence industry, private ownership is growing and is prone to migrating abroad. Unless the trend is arrested, and expenditure on R&T turned upwards, European defence industry is in danger of contracting into niche producers for US primes.

As a whole, investment needs to be directed towards future capability needs, where meeting the growing demand for crisis management is dominant. Fragmentation of the European defence industrial scene needs to be overcome, and the first introduction of competition in the equipment market is welcomed.[11] More significantly, the LTV calls for efforts to achieve consolidation on the demand side of the market, and to facilitate progress towards supply side consolidation. The EU countries need to accept that the defence technology and industrial base in Europe "can only survive as one European whole, not as a sum of different national capacities."

Although the Long-Term Vision does not commit the member-states into revising the *acquis* or structure of the ESDP, it opens up perspectives and visions that anticipate change in the EU as an international security actor. Even the method is new: the LTV is a top-down guideline for the ESDP, which is founded and run by bottom-up and voluntary cooperation based on unanimity. The significance of the top-down approach is bound to grow, as the Union is striving to meet the requirements for capability development in the future environment.

Capability requirements and benefits from collaboration pull member-states into investing more in capacities aimed for crisis management, albeit that they may enhance territorial defence as well. Moreover, several member-states are transforming their defence doctrines to focus on expeditionary missions, while territorial defence is diminishing in relevance. Whether a push or pull effect, the outcome is potentially further spread of specialisation, use of a niche strategy and the division of labour among the member-states, in particular smaller states, although harmonisation of defence policies is not called for directly in the LTV. In the longer term, even the larger countries can not remain self-sufficient.

Another harmonising factor is the pressure for structural change in resource allocation, as the legacy systems of personnel, equipment and budgets need to be streamlined. Although the EU has not adopted a common target percentage per GNP for defence spending like NATO, it has been referred to as a model. More specifically, the emphasis has been placed on qualitative defence reforms, which is measured by the share of R&D inputs and new investments in defence spending.[12]

Although the LTV does not deal with collective defence or national or alliance defence policies as such, but only crisis management tasks set in the ESS and HG2010 for the EU/ESDP, the high level of capability requirements is conspicuous. Quantitatively, the scenario envisaging the separation of parties by force could correspond to what would have been a ground intervention in Kosovo 1999. More relevant are, however, the qualitative requirements for coping with asymmetric conflict, network-centric warfare or knowledge management that would prepare the EU for even the most demanding or highest-intensity missions. The task or opponent is not specified in terms of scenarios but presented as a continuum, calling for the EU to prepare for the employment of the most demanding capabilities in the last instance. The LTV does not note that in many operations the highest-level technology or capability may not be needed, although it stresses the importance of combining hard and soft tools.

The strategic enablers in the qualitative development of capabilities would not differ from those required for more coercive missions or territorial defence. As a whole, the LTV is taking the EU into a parallel course with the United States in defence transformation as a prerequisite for addressing complex post-cold war and future security threats and tasks by expeditionary missions. (Varwick, 2007)

3. Case: the EU Battlegroups at the stage of full operational capability

The background of EU Battlegroups as a tool for rapid reaction is found in the Helsinki 1999 conclusions, and in several initiatives taken by the UK and France for developing the concept. The implementation of the project was launched by the Headline Goal 2010, which stresses rapid response capability as a key element in the development of forces for crisis management. In January 2005, the initial operational capability was reached, with the minimum of one BG on standby, and in January 2007, the full operational capability with two concurrent BGs on standby. (Lindstrom, 2007)[13]

The BG concept defines a force which has a generic composition of 1500 troops, based on a combined arms, battalion-size force package with combat support and combat service support, including operational and strategic enablers. Although it is up to the contributing countries to decide on the exact composition of their BG, the concept calls for a force that can act independently and take upon a variety of tasks. A BG should reach the field in ten days from the launch of the operation and sustain 30-120 days.

The BG as a concept is distinct from other crisis management capabilities in the required rapidity of deployment and the flexibility of tasks, which as a rule are deemed to be auxiliary to a larger operation by the EU or the UN, but may self-standing missions as well. The missions of the BGs need not entail greater risks than larger, more stationary and longer-term missions.

The impact of the introduction of BGs on EU defence integration is conditioned by the fact that they are based on the initiatives, decisions and cooperation of (one or) several individual member-states, who pledge their project to the standby list coordinated for the Council by the MC and MS.

The participating states create each BG, under the auspices of a framework nation, generate troops, and pre-identify the operation command structure normally from the list of five national OHQs available to the EU, although SHAPE or the EU Operations Centre cannot be excluded as alternative arrangements. Also the preparatory phase of consultation and training may vary according to the working models chosen by the states participating in the BG. Even certification of the assigned troops remains the responsibility of the contributors, with the framework nation certifying the BG as a whole for serving the Union, using guidelines offered by the EU and relying to the extent possible on NATO standards and criteria to ensure interoperability, which is instrumental also because countries may enlist the same troops to the service of NATO Response Force (NRF).

While the execution of the task assigned to the Battlegroup is performed by the contributing countries, the same process of military and strategic planning, decision-making and political direction within the Council institutions (Council, PSC, MC, MS) applies to the BGs as to regular crisis management operations. To what extent the BGs facilitate multinational habits among the member-states and defence integration at the Union level is a complex question because of the flexibility of the arrangements within the overall concept and the dominant role of individual members acting through enhanced cooperation.

Battlegroups are by definition multinational, but their potential impact on the practice of multinational cooperation within the ESDP varies from case to case. It could grow, if the groups of contributors would exchange experiences and take advantage of lessons learnt in coordination meetings, which presently are purely technical. Over time, the formation of multinational Battlegroups could bring more content to the concept and make its implementation more uniform.

The use of ESDP bodies and tools to support or facilitate the generation and operation of Battlegroups is a potentially significant question, but no ready-made model exists. The EU Military Staff and the Situation Centre could be used for planning, and the Satellite Centre could assist the BG in operation, but it would require active contacts by member-states and training. The Civil-Military Planning Cell performs strategic planning, but it may be used as an operation headquarters for missions with a major civil element. The role of the Cell as well as that of the Operations Centre in support of Battlegroups is evolving. It is indicative, however, that the idea of establishing a standing strategic headquarters and

mobile operation headquarters for the Union has been one of the first items in the discussion on EU defence integration or European defence. (Gnesotto et al, 2004) For practical reasons, the BGs may call for more structures and capabilities generated and made available at the Union-level.

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The development of rapid response capabilities is aimed at serving as a vehicle for defence transformation. As such, Battlegroups call for a high level of mobility, flexibility, deployability and knowledge management. The same transformational purpose applies to NRF, which would open natural cooperation between the Allied Command Transformation (ACT) and EDA, although it is so far arbitrary and susceptible to competence disputes. The capability requirements as outlined in the LTV will facilitate EU-NATO capability cooperation and strengthen the readiness of member-states to contribute as well to NATO as EU crisis management tasks.

Although it is difficult to forecast the development of EUBG-NRF cooperation, as neither of them have been used in practice (albeit, NRF was used in Pakistan earthquake assistance and Katrina), it is likely that to be improved as far as institutional capabilities are concerned. At the same time, the parallel introduction of rapid response capabilities within both institutions will highlight the significance of coordination and consultation to avoid overlapping stand-by turns for the same troops as well as competence disputes on the order of decisions on interventions.

On the other hand, the military transformation process, as outlined in the LTV, generating new information technologies and strategic enablers, may improve the operational effectiveness of the BGs and their sustainability. Implications vary, however, as regards different types of missions and further specialisation may make interoperability more difficult with other actors within the UN. As the readiness for technologically demanding missions is improving, it does not necessarily facilitate the capability for humanitarian or stabilisation missions as complex enterprises.

Concluding remarks

The European Security and Defence Policy is driven by realist (power), institutional (capability and cultural (identity) factors, which interact in strengthening the role of the European Union as an international actor. Despite the stalling of the constitutional process, endogenous and exogenous factors combined have kept the ESDP process going as response to practical challenges.

The introduction of **military affairs** has made the EU into a more complete player in international security. Because of the salience of crisis management, the effect of the ESDP is more significant than the scope of decision-making authority and resource assignment at the Union level on defence would otherwise indicate. The ambiguity of the relationship with NATO in the competence for crisis management, including the openness of the issue of collective defence, pushes the EU higher in the power configuration, but it remains a potential and contingent effect.

Institutionally, the ESDP has enriched the agenda and facilitated the practice of decision-making on security and defence issues in the Council framework. The introduction of top-down planning in **capability development** and the incentives towards further openness and consolidation of the defence industrial and technological market – creating additional pressures on harmonising both the demand and supply sides in procurement - have a pull effect on the resource side of the EU's role. The implementation of missions, with the Battlegroups as the cutting edge, has tested and improved the salience of the emerging capability of the EU in addressing security tasks.

The process and functioning of the ESDP has facilitated the creation of **common strategic culture** among the governments through the effects of such internal processes as consultation habit, socialisation and lessons learnt. At the same time, interaction between the domestic public opinion and the external security developments has become closer, with a growing impact on the acceptability and feasibility of ESDP actions. While the differences of strategic traditions and cultures among the

member-states remain, their significance may decrease under the pressure of common external challenges in the complex global order.

Going back to the definition of applied in the paper, defence integration within the EU/ESDP is driven most effectively at the Union level by institutional factors, conditioned increasingly by cultural factors at both national and Union levels, and limited in an ambiguous manner by the juxtaposition of national policies of the member-states on the scope of competence on the usage of power that is to be transferred to the Union level in the global order of international security. Small (quantitative) steps are turning into (qualitative) change in EU defence integration, which remains a distinct and key process in the development of the Union as an international actor.+++

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Notes

[1] It is to be noted that while the policy was called "the common European policy on security and defence" in the foundational Cologne and Helsinki summit documents (1999), signalling that it was meant to be just as much "common" as the *Common* Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), in support of which, or as part of which, it was designed, the usage of the title "the *European* Security and Defence Policy (italics added)" (ESDP) was as soon as 2000 established pursuant to European Council and other documents instead of the short-living CESDP. The renaming of the policy to the "common security and defence policy" (CSDP) in the Constitutional Treaty, adopted by the European Council and signed in Rome 29 October 2004, can be viewed as an indication of renewed interest in the policy as well as a statement of political will to further strengthen the common nature of the policy in the overall progress of integration within the European Union. Cf Koutrakos (2006, 497).
[2] The most convenient source for official ESDP materials is the series of collections of core documents on EU security and defence published by the EUISS in its Chaillot Papers, starting in 2001, with the VII volume out in March 2007. Not specified here in each case of reference.
[3] Cf. Ojanen, 2006, on roots of the theoretical discussion on ESDP.
[4] Such a policy of strategic balancing is seen behind the ESDP by Posen (2004); in Möttölä, 2005, the developments in capabilities, outcomes and intentions are measured as evidence of policies of bargaining, binding and balancing towards the US. Cf also Biscop, 2005. On the EU/ESDP role in harder security issues, cf Bailes, 2007.
[5]The phrase was politically corrected, under the pressure from the US and UK, from the less demanding or binding phrase “without prejudice to actions by NATO” in the Cologne document. Cf. Howorth, 2007, 163-165.
[6] A useful and comparative analysis of the missions is found in Howorth, 2007, 212-241.
[7] The LTV document was endorsed with "the status of a document extensively discussed with and broadly supported by p[articipating]MS - but without word-for-word agreement." With such flexibility, and without going through the regular CFSP/ESDP decision-making procedure in the Council, it can be argued that the discussion and the final text could touch upon sensitive and open future issues more freely.
[8] Charting the size of troops, the geopolitical range of deployment and the time of readiness and sustainability for missions; scenarios are titled as Separation of Parties by Force (SOPF), Stabilisation, Reconstruction and Material Advice to 3rd Countries (SR), Conflict Prevention (CP), Evacuation Operation in a non-permissive environment (EO), Assistance to Humanitarian Operations (HA).
[9] Formally, it is not even agreed that the LTV fulfils the "longer term vision beyond 2010" tasked in the HG2010 to be formulated, but in practice it is what the member-states (Denmark excluded due to its reservation on the ESDP) can accomplish and is not likely to be duplicated. In the formal ESDP structure, the next binding decisions in capability planning will be made, when the HG2010 is updated into HG2020. In any case, the LTV is referred to in the Presidency Report on ESDP, the Conclusions of the European Council Conclusions (Brussels, 14-15 December 2006), making it part of the *acquis* of the ESDP.
[10] The characteristics are translated for each of the six capability domains listed in the annexed "Future Capability Profile": command, inform, engage, protect, deploy, sustain. The profile section was drafted and adopted by the Military Committee, as the only section of the LTV that went through such official decision-taking. Consequently, the governments insisted on its adoption as such in the LTV, while the EDA had rather free hand in writing various drafts and parts of the living document and its final version. The tug of war between the EDA, which is an international organ with seconded personnel, albeit within the Council framework, and the MC, composed of MS representatives, was the only serious dispute over competences in the LTV work. As a follow-on, the EDA is elaborating an ESDP Capability Development Plan, based on issues and challenges brought out by the LTV, in support of further work by the member-states in implementing the HG2010 and going beyond towards 2020.
[11] At the first instance, 23 countries have opened their tendering processes to suppliers from each others' countries on a voluntary and reciprocal basis, with the code of conduct launched 1 July 2006.
[12] As a further form of peer pressure, the EDA has started to publish defence statistics.
[13] A detailed study on Battlegroups used in this section as the main source. See also the report of seminars arranged, respectively, by the Finnish Presidency and by the German Presidency (IESUE/SEM (06)19, 2006; IESUE-SEM(7)05, 2007)