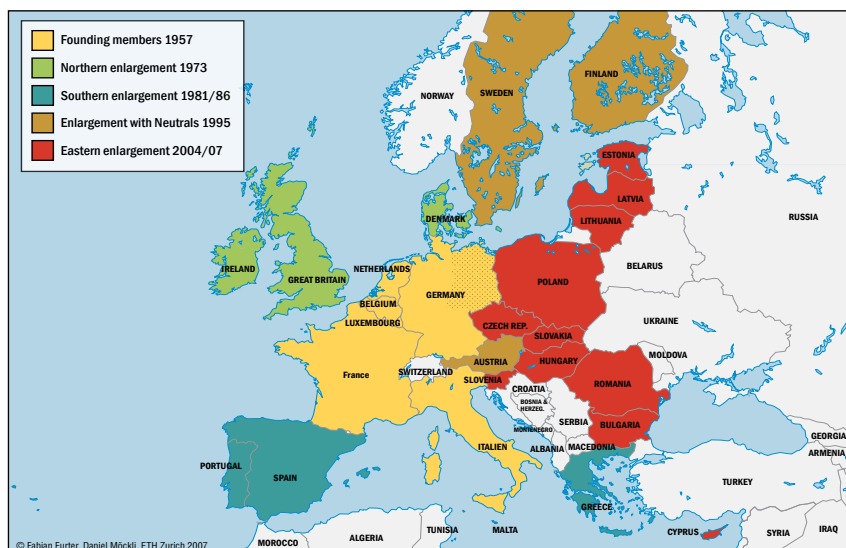


THE EU AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF EUROPEAN SECURITY

The process of European unification has fundamentally reshaped Europe's security system. Besides pacifying the continent, the EU has more recently intensified cooperation in the area of internal security as well. Furthermore, the European Security and Defense Policy has also made noteworthy progress. Security cooperation has become one of the most dynamic EU policy fields in recent years, although numerous challenges remain.



Security through integration and enlargement: European unification, 1957–2007

On the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome on 25 March 2007, the EU can look back on a successful historical development. It has brought peace and prosperity to Europe and has become the world's largest single market and a global economic power. It also plays an increasingly important role in world politics, and its comprehensive approach to peace promotion has made it an important actor in global crisis management. Today, it comprises 27 member states with a total population of nearly half a billion, and its force of attraction for neighboring states remains undiminished.

It is true that the EU is currently in crisis due to the impasse over the constitutional treaty. Nevertheless, the fact is that European unification rests on a solid foundation

and that its achievements are not in jeopardy. Furthermore, it is remarkable how the EU continues to develop pragmatically despite fundamental disagreements over its future role and structure. This is especially true for European security policy, which has become one of the EU's most dynamic policy fields in recent years. European security has undergone a marked transformation in the course of the process of European unification. The result has been a manifest increase in the security of the member states, which is all the more important insofar as the enlarged EU of today borders on unstable regions and as the most likely threats are of the transnational kind.

Security Through Integration

The most significant step in the transformation in European security has been the

rejection of warfare as a means of resolving intra-European conflicts. The unification of Europe after 1945 was also a reaction to the failure of the traditional balance-of-power security system on the continent. The security concept behind the Treaty of Rome was to markedly increase the mutual dependence of the Europeans through the integration of the national economies and the transfer of national sovereignty to the supranational level, so as to defuse the traditional security dilemma between the European nation-states and to counteract the use of force for conflict resolution.

The economic integration of Europe, facilitated by NATO's military aegis, has become a central paradigm of European security. Reconciliation between France and Germany laid the groundwork for a European peace and security community. Its central elements are the common market, which is characterized by the four freedoms for goods, services, persons, and capital; the Euro as the shared currency; a comprehensive institutional structure with supranational as well as intergovernmental components; and the basic tenets of democracy and the rule of law.

The continuous expansion of the integration process to include other European states has been a determining factor in the success of the "security through integration" strategy. The most significant enlargement rounds so far have been those of 2004 and of 2007, when the EU accepted ten former Communist states in Eastern Europe (as well as Malta and Cyprus) as members. European stability has been sig-

nificantly enhanced by the transformation of these states into liberal democracies and functioning free-market economies – a prerequisite for their accession. The EU has thus forcefully and consistently utilized the strategic opportunity that presented itself after the fall of the Berlin Wall to project its security model to all of Europe.

One question that remains unanswered to this day is where the boundaries of Europe should be drawn. Within the EU, there is an unmistakable sense of “expansion fatigue”. Nevertheless, Turkey and Croatia are involved in accession negotiations, while Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia, Serbia/Kosovo, and Montenegro have been offered at least the possibility of membership at a later date. Other states such as Ukraine and Moldova have indicated an interest in joining. Without a clear European perspective, the Western Balkans, in particular, are likely to remain a zone of instability.

Europeanization of Internal Security

A second transformation in European security concerns the internal security of states, which is being shaped more and more by the EU-level. The abolition of internal frontiers and the shifting of controls to the Union’s external borders have not only created a zone of freedom within Europe, but also imply the necessity of harmonizing internal security as well as migration and asylum policies across Europe.

Ever since Justice and Home Affairs became an EU pillar under the Maastricht Treaty of 1993, cooperation in internal security has increased remarkably. For instance, a number of information systems were developed for rapid exchange of data. The Schengen Information System (SIS) is an electronic database that has proven to be particularly useful in combating transnational crimes. Furthermore, there is a European fingerprint identification system (EURODAC), a visa information system (VIS), and a customs information system (ZIS). Related to Schengen is the European Agency for operational cooperation on external frontiers (FRONTEX), founded in 2005 and situated in Warsaw, which, among other tasks, will coordinate a network of coastal patrols in the Mediterranean. A European police office (EUROPOL) and an analogous judicial unit (EUROJUST) have also been created, with a view to coordinating the prosecution of crimes in the areas of drug trafficking, money laundering, human trafficking, and terrorism. EUROPOL has hitherto fo-

cus on collecting and processing data, but it is anticipated that it will soon have a mandate for operative measures and be able to cooperate in joint investigation teams, for example. Other manifestations of police cooperation in Europe include the Task Force of EU Police Chiefs (TFPC) and the European Police College (CEPOL).

Since internal security concerns a core area of state sovereignty, European cooperation in this area is largely an intergovernmental affair, which occasionally slows down the decision-making process considerably. Furthermore, many EU members still hesitate to allow EUROPOL officers to operate on their territory because some critical questions, including the protection of fundamental rights, remain unresolved. Intelligence cooperation is also subject to friction in the context of counter-terrorism, since the preferred format for exchange of sensitive data is at the bilateral level.

European Security and Defense Policy

The external security policy of EU member states is also being integrated more and more strongly into a European framework. The high level of economic integration and the predominantly transnational nature of the security risks require Europe to act collectively in defense of common interests and values. The rise of non-European powers such as India and China is another reason why Europeans are keen to speak with one voice in matters concerning global politics.

This particular transformation of European security has rapidly accelerated since the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) was initiated in 1998–9 as part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Whereas the EU was still largely incapable of action during the wars in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, it has since devel-



The Schengen area: Status of implementation

Nevertheless, internal security is an increasingly important pillar of European unification. The successes in this area are due, not least, to the principle of variable geometry, according to which EU members are not obliged to cooperate with the same degree of intensity in all areas. For example, the UK and Ireland have refrained from abolishing their border controls. On the other hand, seven EU countries (Belgium, Germany, France, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Austria, and Spain) decided at the Treaty of Prüm in May 2005 to deepen their cooperation in combating terrorism, organized crime, and illegal migration. There is close intelligence cooperation between the six major EU powers – the UK, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, and Poland.

oped “at the speed of light” (Javier Solana) into an important actor in external security policy. The European Security Strategy agreed in 2003 is evidence of this development, as are the EU’s newly created security policy institutions (e.g., the Policy and Security Policy Committee, the EU Military Staff, the EU Military Committee, the EU Civil-Military Planning Cell, and the European Defense Agency). In establishing a broad range of civilian and military instruments for crisis intervention and stabilization (e.g., the EU Battle Groups, the European Gendarmerie Force, or the civilian expert pool), the EU today pursues a comprehensive approach to security that includes a rapid reaction capability in addition to emphasizing prevention and sustainability.

The concept of Battle Groups, fully operational since January 2007, gives the EU the military capability to carry out “robust” operations as well.

The success of ESDP is reflected in the fact that as many as 16 civilian and military EU peace operations have been carried out since its operative start in 2003, and that the demand for such operations is still increasing. Geographically speaking, the focus of these missions has so far been on the extended European neighborhood (the Balkans, the Southern Caucasus, and the Middle East), but the European missions in Aceh/Indonesia and in Africa have underscored the EU’s determination to take on global responsibility. The two planned civilian ESDP missions to Kosovo and Afghanistan will serve as further evidence of the ability of the Europeans to relieve pressure on NATO in strategic hotspots.

Smooth cooperation with NATO is all the more important since the EU’s security policy still exhibits a number of deficits today. Successes in pragmatic crisis management are overshadowed by major difficulties in formulating and implementing effective strategies concerning major powers such as the US or Russia, or in the context of crisis regions such as the Middle East. Also, the EU’s capabilities for military action remain limited for the time being, especially at the global level. Occasionally, coherent action is obstructed by difficulties in coordination between ESDP/CFSP, which is organized at the intergovernmental level, and the community field of the EU’s “external relations”. Nevertheless, there is a manifest political will among Europeans to continue to “Europeanize” their security policy. For example, there are several indications that the position of a European foreign minister will be created even if the endeavor of a constitutional treaty should collapse altogether.

A Basic Challenge for Switzerland

Switzerland as a landlocked continental state benefits from the European security community, but is still unsure to what extent it should participate in the European unification process. Obstacles to EU membership include not only Switzerland’s idiosyncratic structural characteristics, such as its direct democracy and its distinctive federalism, but also concerns that it would be weakened as a business and finance center. Such worries are compounded by Switzerland’s historically determined role conception as a special case on the sidelines of European political and security affairs.

Swiss Contributions to ESDP Operations	
Operation	Swiss contribution
Military operation in Bosnia (Eufor-Althea, current)	25 troops, 2 Super Puma helicopters
Police mission in Bosnia (EUPM, current)	3 experts
Congo military mission (Eufor RD Congo, complete)	2 military surgeons
Observer mission in Aceh (AMM, complete)	3 experts
Police mission in Macedonia (Proxima, completed)	3 experts

Many Swiss have only reluctantly begun to discard their time-honored strategy of “security through neutrality and autonomous territorial defense”, which was determined by the necessity of surviving in a conflict-ridden neighborhood, although the rationale of that strategy has been undermined by the essentially irreversible process of European integration and the fundamental changes in the threat picture since 1989.

Switzerland tries to compensate for the drawbacks of non-membership in the EU by pursuing a policy of bilateral cooperation and autonomous duplication of EU measures and regulations – with varying degrees of intensity and success. At the economic level, the EU has granted Switzerland privileged access to the European common market without requiring it to participate in the customs union and community policy fields such as trade or agriculture. The great number of bilateral agreements is an expression of the close network of mutual relations. However, the current argument between the EU and Switzerland over taxes illustrates that this technical bilateralism without a political framework is quite susceptible to crisis. While Brussels expects Switzerland also to honor European regulations in areas that are not covered by the bilateral treaties, in return for the country’s selective participation in the unification process, Berne insists on interpreting the subject-matter in strictly legalistic terms. The question remains how sustainable the bilateral path will be in the long term.

In the area of internal security, under the auspices of the Federal Department of Justice and Police, Switzerland cooperates remarkably closely with the EU. It will be fully associated with Schengen, the European information systems, and FRONTEX as soon as all operative preparations are concluded. It also concluded cooperation agreements with EUROPOL and CEPOL, and negotiations with EUROJUST are planned. Moreover, the Swiss will participate in the Task Force of EU Police Chiefs. In these areas, too, there are obvious detrimental ef-

fects of non-membership in the EU; for instance, Switzerland has no voting rights in the dynamic development of the Schengen legislation, and has been refused direct access to Europol’s databases. However, it has largely been able to reduce such deficits by a pragmatic policy of cooperation.

There has not been any similar pragmatic convergence between Switzerland and the EU’s external security policy, despite the Swiss strategy of “security through cooperation” as formulated in the government’s security policy Report 2000. Cooperation with ESDP is selective and occurs within the format of ad-hoc participation only. The idea of an administrative ESDP-framework agreement with the EU, which was originally welcomed by the Federal Council, has been put on the backburner again. Unlike the neutral EU member states Austria, Sweden, Finland, and Ireland, Switzerland has also refrained from adjusting its military planning with ESDP and the Battle Group concept. This restrictive stance distinguishes Switzerland from other non-EU members such as Norway, which takes part in the Nordic Battle Group as well as in EU force planning. For the foreseeable future, military crisis management will remain the main task of European armed forces. If Switzerland wishes to retain its freedom of action in security policy affairs as well as the credibility of its armed forces in the long term, its security policy and especially the transformation process of its armed forces will have to be increasingly oriented towards the changing European security environment.

- Author & responsible editor: Daniel Möckli analysen@sipo.gess.ethz.ch
- Translated from German: Christopher Findlay
- Other CSS Analyses: www.isn.ethz.ch
- German and French versions: www.ssn.ethz.ch