



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI  
FIRENZE

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## **THE EU AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES 28 IDEAS FROM THE ERASMUS GENERATION**

School of Political Science,  
MA in International relations and European Studies,  
University of Florence  
**3 – 5 May 2017**

### **EU CSDP Peacekeeping Missions and Operations as a Possibility for European integration**

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## **Introduction**

It is not uncommon for a student of International Relations to begin his or her journey through studying the European Union (EU) with the five stages of EU integration. Free Trade Area, Customs Union, the Common Market, Economic Union and Political Union are the usual five stages described, studied and debated at universities across Europe. Students are challenged with various explanations of why the Economic Union is incomplete and if/when EU should move further into political integration. However, with European Parliament voting in favour for the new European Defence Union it seems that the time for political integration is already past the horizon. As such, we wish to distance ourselves from economic integration of EU and look into political integration, specifically the project of the new European Defence Union. Can it be created through the spill over EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) operations, which are arguably the most developed field of the EU security cooperation? In the end, formation of further political integration requires political will, but would it be easier to convince leaders that integration is possible if we can show them, that integration is already underway in the form of a spill over of current integration in the field of EU External Action?

## **Basis for integration**

Theories of integration have their roots in the theories of social contract in a sense, that the social contract can be identified with integration on an individual level. Individuals limit their freedom in favour of a newly established (integrated) community. We can poke into the timeless debate of the state of nature expressed by Jean Jacques Rausseau and Thomas Hobbes, but business in the EU is simply conducted on a level far more complex as only survival or common welfare. Neofunctionalism encompasses the pragmatic approach to government of Jean Monnet with a compromise between global integration and the concept of State where potential networks are established in order to create interdependence among states that ensures both the creation and maintenance of peace between them (Mansour, 2011)<sup>1</sup>. »The key element in the theory of neofunctionalism is the spill over effect« (Majone 2009, 104–5). It occurs in the ongoing process of integration where integration in certain sectors spontaneously leads to integration in another sector by extension of authority in one sector. For example legal operations might require armed escort and lead into cooperation in that field.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on functionalism and its emergence in the form of neofunctionalism we suggest reading: Mansour A., Nisreen. 2011. *Neofunctionalism and European integration: Is it still a case of spill over?*.

»Political integration is the process whereby nations forgot the desire and ability to conduct foreign and key domestic policies independently of each other, seeking instead to make joint decisions or to delegate the decision-making process to new central organs« (Haas in Lindberg 1963, 3). If we understand that political integration is indeed a process we can probably divide it into segments or rather stages where cooperation can occur. According to Hannu Heinonen (2006, 7) we can identify three such stages:

Coordination – lowest level of cooperation that involves voluntary alignment of policies.

Harmonisation – a higher level of cooperation that involves harmonisation of national legislation and adoption of common legislation where legislation is still national.

Integration – highest level of cooperation where traditional decision-making powers of nation states are handed to a supranational level that supersedes national legislation.

If we try to generalise we can identify three fields on which integration can be based, namely: economic, cultural and security integration (Reves 2006). Similarities in cultural traditions and values can contribute to willingness for cultural integration, the question of being safer as individuals or groups started the social contract, and if it economically sound or creates more favourable economic conditions, we can discuss economic integration. Although these are the fields of integration in the most general terms, which we purposely illustrated in a very plastic way, they can as a group contribute to individual cases of integration as we wish to illustrate in the case of EU CSDP operations.

### **The study case of the EU security cooperation**

As an integral part of the external relations of the EU, security cooperation has also been part of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Inside CFSP, the development of the CSDP has since the outset aimed at strengthening the capacity of the EU to take action through its capacities, until now in the form of the conflict prevention (Bickerton 2010). It can be said that the historical roots of the EU are linked to the horrors of the Second World War, and therefore the idea of preventing further conflict breakouts is by default at the very heart of the Union and its actions. In the past, one of the intentions of the EU was to secure peace in Europe; today, it is about being a peace-builder in the rest of the world (Jung 2014). Security cooperation hence is considered one of the key objective of the EU's external relations and foreign policy, as according to the Lisbon Treaty "the EU shall...preserve peace, prevent

conflicts and strengthen international security” (Article 21)<sup>2</sup>. Inevitably, CSDP evolved rapidly from its inception. At the time of its launch, many hoped it would provide Europeans at least with the military capacity to manage a Kosovo-like crisis – large-scale operations in Europe's own near abroad (Bickerton 2010), but less than two decades later, the Union is currently engaged in 6 military operations and 9 civilian missions and has conducted 35 CSPD missions and operations (European External Action Service 2016).

Member states hence already perform joint mission to guarantee or create peace and stability. Why should it not be possible to apply this practical experience to the strategic and political level? Taking into account identified fields of integration (security, economics and culture) it is clear that some of these already exist on the level of the EU, but their pooling and sharing<sup>3</sup> is in some cases underdeveloped.

### **Security aspect**

In terms of the factor of security, the current level of ambition of CSDP is still based on goals set in another era (Bickerton 2010). In that sense CSDP is outdated and the new security environment makes a fundamental review unavoidable and efforts have already been made in that area (Gomes 2014). The question is how CSDP should be used as an instrument in the wider set of EU tools to deal with these challenges.

The recent refugee crisis has shown that there is a role for defence in border security. The evolution of Frontex, European Border and Coast Guard Agency happened as the part of the greater policy context that has emerged as a spill over effect of three multiannual policy programmes since 1999. The EU has presented its agenda for developing migrations, border and asylum related policies in the form of these programmes and they have set the guidelines for the development of policies in the field of freedom, security and justice (Smetana 2012, 6). Up to 2005, the year of Frontex creation, the EU external border control was the sovereign right and responsibility of the concerned Member States, and then in 2015 the mandate of Frontex was further extended and transformed into a fully-fledged European Border and Coast Guard Agency. However, although Frontex does not belong into the framework of the CSDP,

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<sup>2</sup> Treaty on the European Union, signed 7 February 1992 in Maastricht, entry into force on 1 November 1993, changed by the Lisbon Treaty, signed 13 December 2007 in Lisbon, entry into force 1 December 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Pooling and sharing means that national capabilities are being offered to others by installing a multinational structure that combines them and coordinates their usage. If this occurs on a permanent basis, the partners can save costs on this capability. (Jung 2014).

it became at some point at the end of 2013 connected to the CSDP. Both the civilian external border management agency Frontex and the military operation EUNAVFOR MED Sophia cooperated and engaged in similar search and rescue tasks (Clingaendael Report 2016) – hence the agency, which is completely funded from the common budget, relied on the cooperation with military structures of CSDP. CSDP has come closer to European borders and this trend is likely to continue, as the arc of instability around the EU will remain (European Parliament 2016).

We have already witnessed the plans pursued by the EU to enhance its internal and external security with the change of its strategic objectives, legal mandates and operation plans, which shows the evolution of the EU institutions and the mentality of the member states as well, to adapt to new circumstances rather than being stuck in old paradigms. It is a testament that a comprehensive understanding of security includes broadened scope of security responses as well (European Parliament 2016). A similar case in point, which also leads to conclusion that the change in the security objectives is developing into a strong factor of integration is the response to the France's invocation of the mutual assistance clause of Article 42(7) Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. The invocation of this article after the Paris terrorist attacks has resulted in bilateral military and other assistance to France. Nevertheless, this mutual assistance could also be approached from the level of collective obligations, which could argue the case for making it an element of the CSDP. The implementation of the article needs move from ad hoc bilateral arrangements to a sustained approach to collective security that includes the EU institutions (Clingaendael Report 2016).

### **Cultural aspect**

Although the diverse approaches, specializations, organizational cultures and experiences deriving from different EU personnel in the mission, common approach is being developed in EU military operations, which could be one of the guiding factors in leading the integration. Moreover, the values already developed constitute a basis for the creation of the European army's culture. Gender and human rights horizontal approaches have been incorporated in missions and external observers are evaluating this integration as very successful (IECEU Roundtable discussion of experts 2016).

Many Horizon 2020 projects are dealing with recommendations on how to encourage the common approach with the development of the common EU standards, common EU best

practices etc., just three of them being IECEU and EU-CIVCAP, EUNPACK. To enhance the common EU approach in the possible European Army among personnel, methodology and the »way to do it« should be shared among member states. The member states already agreed upon the institute that they can build upon in this case, which pre-deployment trainings. Two institutes, which could be enhanced, but already exist are the five member state training providers: FBA (Sweden), SSUP (Italy), ZIP (Germany), CMC (Finland) and CEP (Slovenia). These trainings increase the cost-effectiveness, since the costs are shared between several member states; moreover, it enhances the common identity and working culture among the participants that ultimately enter EU forces abroad (FBA 2015). The step further could be made with these different national training institutes specializing in only certain capabilities and become multinational in its nature (European Parliament 2016). The second institute already existing is a pre-deployment training organised by European Security and Defence College and CEPOL – which is a potential step forward towards shared training facilities of the EU! (European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training 2016).

### **Economic aspect**

Taking into account the economical factor, the progress in CSDP military operations was made in 2004, when the Council of the EU set up Athena mechanism (Council of the EU 2016). 27 member states contribute to the financing of the military operations, with Denmark opting out on military matters. Although not optimal, since countries still pay for most of the expenses that they incur when participating in the military operation<sup>4</sup>, common costs are covered by Athena and include headquarters, IT systems, administration, public information, locally hired staff, transport costs, medical services and facilities, acquisition of information (satellite images, intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance), barracks and accommodation/infrastructure, and are estimated to account for between 10 and 15% of the total cost of the military operation (*ibid.*).

Although Athena's effects have been restricted or limited, there have been proposals from some member states to expand the eligibility of the common funded costs of the EU military operations – which would enable the 'poorer' countries to participate more actively in the military operations. The Council reviewed the mechanism and authorized some new modifications of technical nature – similarly like some countries saw the benefit of the Althea

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<sup>4</sup> The Treaty on the Functioning of the EU prohibits that expenditure arising from operations having military or defence implications be covered by EU budget.

mechanism, and suggested its expansion, this measure would also be good for the integration process of the European Army design – the mechanism should be expanded to add extra types and amounts of costs that the implementing members can recuperate (European Parliament 2016). To switch the focus further to the common burden sharing would be economically beneficial for Europe – more Europe in defence will have a positive spill over effect on the European economy. The European defence industry generates a total turnover of EUR 100 billion per year and 1.4 million highly skilled people directly or indirectly employed in Europe. Each euro invested in defence generates a return of 1,6 euros, in particular in skilled employment, research and technology and exports (European Commission 2016).

Moreover, in this regard, some experts have argued that, with more coordination and integration, the EU could save, for example, 600 million euros from the sharing of infantry vehicles and 500 million euros from having a collective system of certification of ammunition (Barnier in European Commission 2015). Not only should member states increase their defence spending, but, more importantly, they should spend much more together to overcome their overall weaknesses (European Parliament 2016). The crucial difference between the defence cooperation as practised by states so far and possible trend towards pooling and sharing is that the main purpose of the latter is to save money (Mölling 2012, 2). On the EU level, one possible solution would also be to manage the funds for the possible common army on the ‘best-practice’ basis of the UN, which stands out as the only organisation where a large portion of the expenses resulting from troop contribution are reimbursed by a standing budget financed by obligatory contributions. Each operation’s budget includes operational costs (such as troop transport and logistics) as well as the salaries of police officers and civilian staff; this budget line is also used to reimburse troop-contributing countries. These reimbursements do not necessarily cover all expenses incurred; however, contributing to a UN operation seems to pay off economically for a number of countries, for whom the financial aspect may therefore even constitute an incentive to participate (Tardy 2013, 1–2).

### **Application of neofunctionalism**

We tried to illustrate how different aspects of integration already lead towards integration within the CSDP and consequently CFSP. If we follow the premises of neofunctionalism the question of integration is not a question of “if”, but rather a question of “when”. While deliberate action would disproportionately hasten the process we are safe to assume that without

any significant shifts, interdependence due to the complexity of security challenges would indeed lead to a European Defence Union.

## **Conclusion**

According to neofunctionalism integration based on interdependence and with the context of challenges that transcend individual states, is only a matter of time. At the same time there are clear intentions, and open calls for delivering efficient, comprehensive and pro-active European security cooperation in a more integrated form, which now should be followed by deeds. This is usually not the case for multiple reasons, but the lack of the voluntarism and bureaucratic resistance are the main factors that come to mind after analysing the current framework of cooperation. The escape argument is often that “the European security cooperation is very difficult”. However, the EU should make full use of the tools that are already there, waiting to be utilised – some of them were presented in our paper. Business as usual should not be the motto, and at the same time, why wait for a tool for addressing current security challenges that would be more than needed now, if the process can be accelerated? Of course negotiating a new policy is a challenge, furthermore so in an era of populism and renewed nationalistic tendencies, but was negotiating the European Coal and Steel Community in the aftermath of World War II or the common agricultural policy between highlight agricultural and industrialised states any easier? The EU has to get its act together in order to take more responsibility for its own security. Such a European “army” should also play a part in creating a common European identity – a fact we should acknowledge these days. In order to change the deteriorating situation and the threat of disintegration, the EU has to move towards a more committed, a more politically steered and a more accountable way of improving military capabilities.

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