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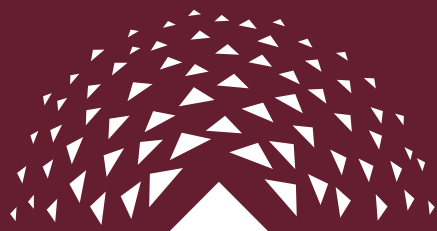## An Evaluation of European Security and Defence Policy Initiatives from the Hungarian Perspective (1)

Az európai biztonság- és védelempolitikai

kezdeményezések értékelése

Magyarország szempontjából (1.)

GERGELY VARGA

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Abstract: The recent negative developments in Europe's security environment and the internal dynamics of the European Union have led to significant changes in European security and defence policies. In this context, the goal of a Europe able to react to geopolitical changes and capable of defending itself on its own has become a recurring theme in European political discourse. The main objective of this two-volume study is to examine and evaluate recent European defence initiatives, placing them in a political and institutional context. The first part of the study examines the political-strategic context of the European defence initiatives and its relation to NATO, followed by an in-depth analysis of the political and institutional conditions of creating a European army. The second part examines how far recent European defence initiatives have developed (both those devised within the EU framework and those outside of it) and evaluates the developments from the perspective of Hungarian security and defence policy.

Összefoglalás: *A közelmúlt geopolitikai változásai és az Európai Unió belső dinamikái következtében jelentős változások történtek az európai biztonság- ésvédelempolitika területén. Ezzel összefüggésben az európai politikai diskurzusnak részévé vált az a tétel is, hogy idővel Európa önállóan is képes legyen a világpolitikában bekövetkező változásokra reagálni és a saját védelméről gondoskodni. A jelen (kétrészes) tanulmány alapvető célja az, hogy a legújabb európai védelmi kezdeményezéseket – politikai és intézményi kontextusba helyezve – megvizsgálja és értékelje.*

Az első rész az EU védelmi ambíciójának a transzatlanti politikai-stratégiai kontextusát és a NATO-hoz való viszonyát ismerteti, majd részletesen foglalkozik azzal a kérdéssel, hogy egy közös európai haderő felállításának milyen politikai és intézményi feltételei lennének. A második rész az – EU keretében és azon túl megfogalmazott – eddigi európai védelmi kezdeményezések eredményeit fogja megvizsgálni, s az elemzendő folyamatokat a magyar biztonság- és védelempolitika perspektívájából is értékelni.

INTRODUCTION

The recent negative developments in Europe's security environment and the internal dynamics of the European Union has resulted in the birth of new European security and defence initiatives. New practical collaborative schemes have been created to strengthen the EU member states' defence cooperation, primarily focusing on military capability development. The plan to make the continent able react to geopolitical changes and capable of defending itself became part of the European political agenda as a long-term objective, as did the establishment of a common European Army.

This study[1] analyses the feasibility of the visions appearing on the level of political declarations in a strategic context and examines these plans by reflecting on recent defence policy initiatives. First, the existing and potential concepts of a European military build-up are presented. These scenarios are interpreted through the lens of the "European Strategic Autonomy" and the European defence structure defined by NATO. The study continues with a detailed description of the political, institutional, and military conditions of the foundation of a real, autonomous European army, which would potentially mean an ambitious operational independence from NATO. This operational autonomy is then compared to the current European defence initiatives. Finally, the analysed processes are evaluated from the perspective of Hungarian security and defence policy.

EUROPEAN DEFENCE INITIATIVES FROM A STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE

THE PROBLEM OF A EUROPEAN STRATEGIC AUTONOMY

There is no doubt that the last few years' changes in the security environment of the European Union has shaken up the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and the political initiatives regarding European defence in general. The most significant events have been the following:

- Acceptance of the EU's global strategy (June 2016)
- EU-NATO common declaration (July 2016)
- Foundation of the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MMPCC) (June 8, 2017)
- The European Commission announces its European Defence Action Plan (November 30, 2016)
- The European Defence Fund (EDF) is launched (June 7, 2017)
- The European Commission publishes its thought-provoking document on the future of European defence, including the proposal of a European Defence Union (June 2017)
- New financial agreement for the funding of the EU Battlegroup (June 22, 2017)
- Decision on the launch of the Lisbon Treaty's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) (December 11, 2017)
- Kick-off of the European Intervention Initiative (EII), proposed by France
- Introduction of the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD)

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1 The following experts contributed to the completion of the study: Tamás Csiki-Varga (NUPS ISDS), Alex Etl (NUPS ISDS), Anna Molnár (NUPS FIES), Anna Nádudvari (NUPS ISDS), Péter Tálas (NUPS ISDS), Gergely Varga (IFAT), Péter Wagner (IFAT). The manuscript was closed on the 1st of June 2019

Beside certain external factors, it was Brexit that has opened the floor for these initiatives. If the United Kingdom leaves the EU, the EU member which has been able to block the German and French security and defence policy initiatives will step aside. Nonetheless, the EU will also lose its strongest military power. This urges the further strengthening of the security cooperation in the EU framework, in order to prevent the erosion of the EU's security credibility.

Regarding the factors of uncertainty concerning the future of EU integration, it should be clarified what "European security initiatives" refer to. The relevant security and defence policy initiatives, both those embedded in the EU framework and those outside of it, can play a major role in shaping future European security policy as organizationally independent from NATO. Therefore, this study considers EU initiatives as well as existing and potential non-EU collaborations led by EU states as part of "European defence initiatives".

The emergence of old and new security initiatives on the agenda demonstrates a demand for tighter cooperation between the EU and European states and for a more effective and more impactful pursuit of their interest on the global stage. These initiatives, however, do not show Europe's long-term strategic objective to ensure its security and defence. Some scholars interpret the presented events by saying that the EU's transformation into a defence union has begun, and although it will be a long process with many bumps in the road, it can result in the establishment of a real, European army. From another approach, it seems that no meaningful shift has occurred to deepen the CSDP, and it is highly uncertain whether European countries will move in the direction of a tighter cooperation in the foreseeable future. Debates on the topic have been focusing on the notion of "strategic autonomy" for a long time. NATO has been the reference point in these debates: on the one hand, a military alliance of outstanding importance regarding Europe's safety and defence; on the other hand, the organization that embodies the continent's political and military dependency on the United States.

The pursuit of achieving *"European strategic autonomy"* reflects the need to reduce or entirely end this dependency on the United States. Although this notion points to the core of the debates about the European security policy, it is difficult to give a precise definition to it. According to one approach, advocated mainly by France, strategic autonomy means an autonomous and independent foreign and security policy orientation defined by own interests; in other words, it is a full-scale political (institutional, decision-making) and military (capacity and capability) autonomy. In another approach, which is represented by most Central and Eastern European countries, strategic autonomy only covers operational autonomy[2], meaning the existence of military capacities and assets that enable the planning and running of autonomous military operations.[3] Beside political and military autonomy, it should be noted that military industry autonomy is a separate notion, which would create the basis for the long-term needs of operational autonomy.

2   Including the existence of a decision-making mechanism to prepare and execute operations.
3   Camporini et al., 2017; Kempin–Kunz, 2017

However, a more sophisticated approach of strategic autonomy than those described above shall be used to understand the security and defence policy developments in the European Union. Either a full-scale strategic or operational autonomy is on the table, there are many levels of independence and European defence integration, partly because a higher level of independence and European defence integration can be achieved as a result of a lengthy process. As it will be pointed out later, when evaluating the possibilities of current security initiatives, one can talk only about a very limited scale of operational autonomy for now.

Any change in the level of strategic autonomy depends on two closely inter-twined factors (beside the perception of threats): the relation of the EU and its member states with the United States (transatlantic relations), and the scale of the EU's security and defence policy integration. Regarding the latter factor, it will be analysed which political, institutional, financial, and military conditions must be fulfilled to achieve or get closer to a European strategic autonomy. Changes, both in transatlantic relations and European integration, carry potential risks for both the EU and Hungary.

RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES RELATED TO NATO AND A EUROPEAN STRATEGIC AUTONOMY

Many factors push Europe in the direction of strengthening European strategic autonomy out of the scope of NATO. One group of these factors comprise the weaknesses and risks of NATO:
- Questions about the United States' commitment towards Europe and the long-term validity of the American security guarantee (the experiences of the Obama administration's Central European policy, the Chinese threats, the shift of attention towards Asia, decreasing domestic support)
- The partially diverging geopolitical interests and priorities of the USA and the EU (in Eastern Europe, Northern Africa, and the Balkans, regarding the migration crisis)
- European forces' strong operational dependency on the USA (e.g.the experiences of the Kosovo war, the Libyan military intervention)
- Disagreements between NATO members about the proper share of burden

Beside these aspects, the EU's rising security and foreign policy ambitions and its aspirations to increase its international leverage also play an important role. The factors potentially favourable to achieving strategic autonomy include:
- The EU's ensuring and strengthening its own defence
- Cost efficie,ncy
- Cementing the EU's international role by improving its bargaining position in non-security spheres
- Stronger defence and security policies for the EU, which could settle debates among NATO members about sharing the burden

Although the EU-NATO relations have improved recently, the European Union's defence ambitions are still a concern for NATO, primarily, with regards to the problem of duplications. An institutionalized version of a European strategic autonomy in the EU framework, which questions the relevance of NATO, has many drawbacks and risks:

- The EU lacks a natural leading power such as the USA in NATO, who would take on more duties and coordinate others, making decision-making easier and increasing operationality;
- The end of the USA's strategic presence would de facto mean the post-World War II institutional environment of security and defence;
- The validity and credibility of Article V, ensuring the collective defence of NATO members, would weaken, with respect to both political willingness and military capabilities (traditional military capabilities as well as nuclear deterrence);
- Much more limited crisis management capabilities and capacities are expected compared to NATO in the short and medium term;
- The European Union would suffer a significant reduction of military capability and capacity due to the UK leaving the EU;
- A French-German dominance after Brexit, and the strategic culture of these two continental leading nations (a high level of ambition, foreign policy priorities, willingness to use armed forces, security policy decision-making) would involve risks, which Central European countries are especially sensitive to.

EUROPEAN SECURITY INITIATIVES
IN THE CONTEXT OF TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

Since the launch of CSDP, the main challenge in the creation of an independent European defence policy has been its compatibility with NATO. Without solving this dilemma, NATO's (i.e. the United States') military presence in Europe makes strategic autonomy unnecessary, while a full-scale European strategic autonomy would question the relevance of NATO.[4] The dominant American opinion suggests that the USA and non-EU member allies would oppose a European strategic autonomy, which would threaten NATO's cohesion. However, small steps towards operational autonomy have only triggered a modest opposition, since the involved military build-up partially aligns with the American demands for a stronger European burden sharing in the transatlantic cooperation. During the defence initiative processes, the EU put emphasis on the role of the CSDP as NATO's complementor and supporter and underlined the avoidance of duplications. Accordingly, military capability programs and their institutional frames and the operations' command system do not question NATO's priority role in security policy.

4   Howorth, 2018

Notwithstanding, it is important to point out the United States' controversial behavior towards the European defence initiatives, and to examine how it affects transatlantic relations[5]. The USA supports European capability developments, though it does not approve of Europe's significant strengthening in military aspects, and it strictly opposes the building of any autonomous, political-defence structure independent from NATO. The American attitude towards military capability development is ambivalent, since Washington sees a protectionist European defence policy in these programs.

Among Hungarian experts, the general view is that a more autonomous defence policy would weaken transatlantic relations. At the same time, if Europe was not going to be able to achieve significant military operational autonomy, it would also lead to worsening transatlantic relations and the loosening of the bond between Europe and America. Therefore, certain Western experts advise the build-up of CSDP within NATO frames and the gradual reduction of the American engagement. These scholars assume that the latter is inevitable in the long run because of the structural shift in geopolitical threats.[6] Taking into consideration the uncertainty of European political developments, a potential alternative – but not favourable - scenario to the current NATO-led European security structure would involve not only the weakening of transatlantic relations but also the erosion of cooperative EU structures as well.[7]

Most Hungarian experts suggest that a new balance should be achieved in the cooperation between the US and its European allies, which would strengthen the EU's operational military capabilities but would not compromise the primary role of the NATO, or in other words, the US commitment in European security.

A crucial question is whether it is possible to achieve European operational autonomy and the establishment of a defence union without creating parallel structures, which the US has heavily opposed. Another question is what kind of further security and defence integration would be necessary to achieve operational autonomy. The next chapters will show that it will probably be inevitable to gradually build and strengthen structures independent from NATO if Europe wants to achieve operational autonomy.

THE ROLE OF FRANCE AND GERMANY IN EUROPEAN STRATEGIC AUTONOMY

France and Germany have distinguished roles and outstanding power in the EU, which can be the source of several problems regarding the achievement of a potential European strategic autonomy. The overall level of ambition would be defined by the military spending and engagement of Germany as the strongest European power. A Germany with a much larger defence budget and stronger military capabilities than at present would create distrust in several European countries. At the same time, the quantity and quality of European military

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5 Riddervold–Newsome, 2018; Barrie et al., 2018
6 Howorth, 2018
7 Riddervold–Newsome, 2018

capacities could not be increased without the German resources. However, with a view on the policy preferences of German society, Berlin's low level of military and defence ambition is still the more acute problem.

Although no member states have shown a willingness to support a version of European strategic autonomy which involves collective defence as an alternative to NATO, and no such proposals have been submitted, the political and military ambitions of France are worth attention. It is highly questionable whether it would be credible and realistic if France expanded her traditional military and nuclear deterrence to defend all EU members. Even if agreements were made to create a French-British joint deterrent protecting Europe, serious problems of political and military capabilities would remain.

For Central European states, France and Germany embody several challenges. The influence of France creates an excessive turn towards North and Sub-Saharan Africa, while the German-Russian relations (in terms of bilateral deals) are also troubling. Berlin's risk-averse military strategy may be insufficient to handle threats from the East and the South. The slow and cautious security policy decision-making characterizing Germany would influence the EU's responsiveness. Despite these difficulties, potential German and French initiatives can strengthen the EU's common security and defence policy. This would enable the EU to handle security challenges in its Eastern and Southern neighbourhood more effectively, though this more dominant engagement would serve German-French interests.

The basic differences between the French and German approach should also be highlighted.[8] Paris is the supporter of "European hard power"; therefore, her priority is to improve military actionability (capabilities, operations) with a French leadership. According to these plans, some supranational elements would become more dominant, but the intergovernmental character of the cooperation would not change fundamentally. Berlin's relevant priorities will be defined by the transatlantic relations, her relations with Central European countries, and generally the dilemmas surrounding the cohesion of EU as a whole. Both countries will pursue maintaining a tight defence cooperation with the United Kingdom.

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF EUROPEAN DEFENCE INTEGRATION

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF DEEPENING
EUROPEAN DEFENCE AND SECURITY COOPERATION

There are many levels of possible European defence integration depending on the subject and the intensity of the integration, or whether it will be based on federal or intergovernmental cooperation. Several versions can be distinguished in theory; however, our approach categorizes the various concepts of future European defence based on levels of ambition. The advantage of this

8   Keohane, 2018

approach is that it aims to define the military potential European countries are planning and willing to develop and what kind of military operations they want to carry out on their own.

Taking into consideration the relevant proposals and scenarios of experts, four concepts of defence integration could be differentiated based on the ambition level approach . The departing points of these categories are the military weaknesses and capability insufficiencies of European countries. The last decades' difficulties in crisis management and defence budgets underline the importance of highlighting vulnerabilities.[9]

The categorization defines the following factors:
- Existing military capabilities of European countries
- Diverging defence policies and fragmentation of military capability development amongst member states[10]
- Expected level of European defence spending
- Capability requirements of different ambition levels (with respect to the sustainability of operations and the needs of simultaneous operations)[11]

This study distinguishes four concepts based on these factors:
1. Maintaining the prevailing weak ambitions and the existing European defence structures
2. Limited level of ambition: limited operational (crisis management) autonomy (the ability to conduct an operation of significant size and moderate intensity, the "Afghanistan scenario", and three smaller, low intensity operations simultaneously)
Features:
- Intergovernmental decision-making (based on the present form of CSDP)
- Continuous development of bilateral and multilateral military collaborations
- Improvement in the availability of strategic enablers (e.g. strategic airlift capability) beside the application of certain NATO structures
- Operations funded by the revised "Athene mechanism"
- Capability development focusing on strengthening member states' military capabilities, some common capability development programs with better exploitation of existing CSDP structures

3. Ambitious crisis management autonomy: the establishment of a European Armed Forces (the ability to conduct an operation of a significant size and high intensity, the "Libya scenario", and an operation of significant size and moderate intensity simultaneously).

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9   Csiki-Varga, 2014; Csiki-Varga, 2017. For a further overview of the European capability shortfalls, see: Barrie et al 2018. p. 37-42

10 Currently, 80% of European defence procurement and 90% of defence R&D is spent on a national basis. European countries could save up to 30% of related costs if there was a better synchronization of defence procurement programs. Varga, 2017.

11 For a further overview of the European capability shortfalls, see: Barrie et al 2018. p. 37-42

Requirements:
- Modification of the Treaty on European Union, limited communitarisation of CSDP
- Reforming and strengthening the relevant EU institutions (European Parliament, European Commission, European Defence Agency, transferring authority to them, the foundation of a security council)
- Definition of the level of European crisis management ambitions (a framework for military engagement)
- Common (supranational) defence decision-making mechanism with a qualified majority rule
- Integrated elements of the military (common and permanent military organizational structure)
- European strategic enablers operated commonly
- Operational planning and leadership
- Common operational budget
- More enhanced integration of capability development (serious weapon systems), procurements, research and innovation, and the defence industry

4. Full-scale strategic autonomy: ambitious operational autonomy and collective defence (in case of a high-intensity conflict with Russia). Conditions:
- Modification of the Treaty on European Union, full-scale communitarisation of CSDP;
- Fulfilment of the requirements of the ambitious crisis management operational autonomy
- Achievement of the requirements of collective defence:
  - High level of ambitions (territorial defence);
  - Nuclear deterrence: expansion of the French (and British) nuclear umbrella, its "Europeanization";
  - Integrated military elements regarding capabilities relevant to territorial defence;
  - Common planning and execution of operations of collective defence;
  - Full-scale integration of capability development;
  - High-level harmonization of member states' defence budgets.

DETERMINING FACTORS OF EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY INTEGRATION

There is a fundamental difference between NATO and a common European defence policy. On the one hand, NATO is a defence alliance based on a clearly intergovernmental, consensual political decision-making process. In the European context, on the other hand, it seems inevitable to delegate national autonomy to a certain degree in order to achieve either full-scale strategic or operational autonomy. At the end of the day, this would require federative

Gergely Varga

Relevant fields of defence policy	Determining factors of cooperation
Security and defence policy strategy	• Evaluation of strategic environment • Common perception of threats • Common security and defence goal setting • Level of ambition
Common military capabilities	• Defence planning • Management and command systems (integrated command centres) • Common military capabilities (strategic enablers: C4ISR) • Deployment, doctrines, military trainings and exercises • Funding
Military operations	• Political-strategic command of operations: mandate, setting operational limits • Operation-level management and command, doctrines • Funding of operations
Capability development	• Harmonization of defence planning • Common procurements, R&D • Level of defence industry integration • Funding

structures and modifications of the Treaty on European Union. Achieving European operational autonomy, in the case of the establishment of a European armed force, would touch upon questions of national sovereignty alongside all of its relevant security and defence policy dimensions. The degree of European defence integration is determined by the character of cooperation in the fields of defence policy presented in the next table.

Based on the ambition level concept, the determining factors of the depth of integration, and the present European political realities, it seems obvious that the limited operational level of ambition is the most viable option regarding the reinforcement of European defence. Although ambitious operational capability is a less probable outcome, efforts to achieve this level may lead to a critical point when further deepening will begin. The ambitions of the supporters of a full-scale autonomy is extremely unlikely taking the political and military realities into consideration.

CONDITIONS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A EUROPEAN ARMY INTEGRATED IN AN AMBITIOUS EUROPEAN OPERATIONAL AUTONOMY

Since it has appeared on the European political agenda, it is worth analysing the conditions of the establishment of a European army in detail, which embodies the concept of ambitious operational autonomy. It should be highlighted that the vision of a European army has only appeared in the political discourse, but no member state has come up with any substantive or detailed suggestions. As it has been pointed out earlier, the level of European ambition as well as the sufficient military capabilities closely depend on the necessary level of political integration. Any proposal beyond the present frames and depth of CSDP or the initiatives on the agenda would take 5-10 years to achieve, even if the political conditions were fulfilled. Nevertheless, the changes in the geopolitical environment have made the idea of a European army an important topic of political discourse, hence the conditions of the foundation and operation of such an army are worth a thorough analysis.

BUILDING A COMMON EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE STRATEGY

The political precondition of the establishment of a European army, beside the modification of the Treaty on European Union, is the creation of a new global foreign and security strategy for the EU, one deeper than the current one.[12] To improve the political elements of European strategic actionability, the further harmonization and convergence of nation-specific threat perceptions and strategic cultures (foreign policy orientations, boundaries of the usage of armed forces) is necessary. The EU's global strategy already involves many elements of a European political consensus which are essential for strategic actionability. The level of ambition is still not set precisely, and this is the most important missing element. In other words, it is not defined what is the geographical scope of manageable and sustainable military operations, nor is their number, size, or nature (the range of manageable operation types). The clarification of this issue is a minimum criterion of the establishment and operation of a common European military.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMON EUROPEAN MILITARY

If a deployable European army was to be established under a common command, it would be unavoidable to give up national sovereignty to a certain extent and to harmonize member states' defence policies. This would involve the delegation of member state rights (to command and manage their troops integrated in the common army) to a higher level and the harmonization of

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12 European External Action Service, 2016

Gergely Varga

	Political/military conditions affecting sovereignty	Consequences in decision-making
European security and defence strategy	• Common evaluation of the strategic environment • Common threat perception • Laying down security policy and strategic goals	• Acceptance of a European security strategy (unanimous European Council resolution)
	• Setting a level of ambition (geographical scope, number, size, nature of simultaneous military operations)	• Acceptance of a European defence strategy, including the level of ambition (unanimous European Council resolution)

member state defence planning processes. Furthermore, operational autonomy entirely independent from NATO would require the availability of own strategic enablers, and primarily the formation of a common central command.

In order to possess the necessary forces (military units) and suitable capabilities to establish a European army, not only the current configurations of EU military cooperations should be reinforced (deployable multinational command, modular operational configurations, integrated operational configurations, permanent transfer of authority in command, specialization).[13] The number of multinational configurations responsible for the management of national units joining the common army should also be increased, and their authority should be expanded significantly. The member states would still be sovereign over their own military power, but those military units which are voluntarily transferred to the common EU army would be under member states' common control and command. These transfers would be based on regular member states' offers consistent with the European defence planning cycle. The common control and command would work within the common political and military structures with a qualified majority rule instead of communitarian (consensual) decision-making.

To establish a jointly commanded military, which is automatically deployable in crisis situations, as it has been mentioned several times, it is necessary to limit national sovereignty to a certain extent and harmonize member states' defence policies. This primarily means giving up rights to command and manage troops transferred to the European army and the harmonization of member state defence planning. The achievement of these steps would require the federative

13 Zandee et al., 2016

	Political/military conditions	Effect on sovereignty
Common military capabilities ("European army")	• Common defence planning (expansion of the authority of CARD)	• Synchronization of national defence planning procedures, setting capability targets, permanent monitoring, supervision (strengthening transparency and control) • Harmonization of national and EU priorities
	• Common command-management systems (central command)	• Foundation of a command independent from NATO and ready to plan, manage, and lead executive operations
	• Common crisis management planning	• Harmonizing national and EU crisis management planning
	• Ensuring the readiness of the armed forces (size and capabilities determined by capability targets) • Permanent common military capabilities (strategic enablers: C4ISR)	• Automatic readiness of the troops and capabilities, according to member states' obligations • Permanent transfer of authority over the armed forces offered to the European army
	• Common doctrines, trainings, military exercises	• Acceptance of procedures and doctrines of common command
	• Free movement of the European army in the territory of member states	• Construction of legal insurance enabling the transit of the European army through the territory of member states
	• Common funding of the European army	• Funding of strategic enablers

modification of EU treaties. If the European Army wants to become entirely independent in institutional and organizational terms, it is inevitable to build parallel structures independent from NATO, gain strategic enablers[14], and form a common European command.

CONDITIONS OF THE OPERATIONAL DEPLOYABILITY OF A EUROPEAN MILITARY

I f a European army was to be established, it would be essential to create the political and military conditions which can enable its deployment in case of crisis situations. The nature of decision-making on the deployment of the common armed forces would affect national sovereignty the most significantly. The EU's security policy actionability is limited by the Council of the European Union (in the following: Council) rule which requires a unanimous decision. If this limiting regulation were not replaced with respect to the deployment of the European army and the determination of mandates, the concept of a European army would end up like similar past defence initiatives (like the EU Battlegroup concept), meaning that it would become de facto undeployable due to the lack of political consensus. Therefore, a shift towards a majority-rule decision-making process in the political direction of military operations is a crucial condition of the immediate deployability and defence actionability of a European army.

A common fund seems to be an effective way of achieving a more balanced European share of burden, similar to the European Union External Action proposed by the High Representative.[15]

	Political/military conditions	Effect on sovereignty
European military operations	• Political-strategic direction of operations: mandate, setting operational limits	• Qualified majority rule decision-making or expansion of the institution of constructive abstentions to the European Council
	• Common operational management and direction, doctrines	• Common command, development of doctrines
	• Common funding of operations	• European peacekeeping mechanism (foundation of a separate common fund not belonging to the EU budget)

14 "Strategic enablers" refer especially to C4-ISR capabilities (Command, Control, Communications, Computers; Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance)
15 European Union External Action, 2018

THE CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMON EUROPEAN ARMY AND MEMBER STATE MILITARIES

The high-level integration of military capability development programs and its necessary military industry background is the precondition of the transformation of the current fragmented member state forces struggling with serious deficits to be capable of fulfilling a robust, full-scale level of ambition. The synchronization of the national defence planning processes (the further development of CARD and making it mandatory similarly to the European Semester) is the most important condition of improving efficiency in the use of resources and meeting capability development targets. This would involve the setting of capability development targets embedded in a general and multilateral framework in reference with the common absorption of the increased European Defence Fund, as well as the synchronized timing of the preparation and execution of these developments (PESCO).

	Political/military conditions	Effect on sovereignty
Capability development	• Harmonization of defence planning	• Synchronization of national defence planning procedures, setting capability targets, continuous monitoring, supervision (strengthening transparency and control) • Harmonization of national and EU priorities
	• Common procurements, common operations, R&D	• Strategically relevant procurement programs as part of PESCO • Linking EDF, PESCO and CARD • Strengthening interoperability, common standards • Drastic reduction of different types of weapon systems that have the same capabilities
	• Deepening defence industry cooperation	• Strengthening the common European defence market (the acceptance and execution of an EU directive of defence and security procurements)
	• Funding	• Fulfilling national defence budget obligations (2%) • Gradual increase of the European Defence Fund

It is necessary to drastically reduce the number of different types inside weapon systems of the same capabilities (e.g. tanks), to produce and operate the military more efficiently, in order to make European capabilities more robust and to rationalize them. This covers the complete withdrawal of certain models and the unification of standards. The latter is especially essential for the gear and tools of the troops integrated in the European military.

Strengthening defence industry centres is crucial to ensure the long-term sustainability of European operational autonomy. European countries face the dilemma that the economy of scale, although capability developments' resource need and international competition all push towards the integration of the fragmented European defence industry, member states' security and industry interests incentive the protection of national bases.

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