

idn E-Briefing Papers

Perspectives on Security and Defence in the European Context

Ana Francisca Duarte

idn Instituto
da Defesa Nacional

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Os *E-Briefing Papers* do Instituto da Defesa Nacional visam proporcionar o acompanhamento de temas e debates atuais nos planos da segurança internacional e das políticas de defesa nacional, incluindo resultados da investigação promovida pelo Instituto da Defesa Nacional, sobretudo na sua vertente aplicada e de apoio à decisão política, bem como contributos de outros analistas e investigadores associados do Instituto.

FICHA TÉCNICA

Diretora

Isabel Ferreira Nunes

Coordenação Científica

Isabel Ferreira Nunes

Editor

Luís Cunha

Centro Editorial

António Baranita e Luísa Nunes

Propriedade, Edição e *Design* Gráfico

Instituto da Defesa Nacional

Calçada das Necessidades, 5, 1399-017 Lisboa, Portugal

Tel. + (351)211 544 700

Fax: + (351)211 548 245

Email: idn.publicacoes@defesa.pt

<http://www.idn.gov.pt>

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Introduction

In 2021, the Institute de Recherche Stratégique de l'Ecole Militaire (IRSEM) invited seventeen European institutes of strategic studies, answerable to the respective Ministries of Defence, to participate in what became the Network of European Strategic Studies Institutes (NESSI). The network met for the first time in Paris on 27 and 28 September. In this meeting, the participating institutes agreed to:

- Promote cooperation between its members to contribute to the convergence of European strategic cultures;
- Develop exchanges between its members, joint research projects and publications, exchange of researchers and the organization of academic events;
- Hold exchanges during the network's meetings, promoting reflections and recommendations by mutual agreement to contribute to the European public debate on defence and security issues;
- Organize on average one plenary meeting and one thematic workshop every year, under an annual rotating presidency, based on jointly approved terms of reference;
- Open the network to other European strategic research institutes, in particular to those belonging or closely linked to the defence institutions of their country.

Since then, the network met again on 20 and 21 June 2022 in Lisbon and on 19 and 21 September 2023 in Hamburg. In the Lisbon meeting, a proposal by the Portuguese National Defence Institute to conduct a survey following the adoption of the European Union's Strategic Concept (SC) and the new NATO's Strategic Concept (NSC) was accepted.

In the period leading to the publication of this volume, the European and international security environment changed dramatically. The NATO-led mission in Afghanistan was terminated, leading governments to reflect upon the effectiveness and efficiency of regime change and the importance of developing in advance adequate exit strategies. In 2020, the world came to a standstill due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to an extraordinary effort of governments to collectively respond to this global threat. On July 2021, the Council of Ministers of the European Union approved the European Union's Strategic Compass, in response to the challenging political environment marked by aggressive revisionism in

Europe and instability along its eastern border. In February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine in an unlawful and unprovoked act of war leading to a united response of liberal democracies. In June of the same year, NATO approved a new and more robust Strategic Concept which, in the words of Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, would be the “blueprint for the Alliance in a more dangerous and competitive world”. Across the world, climate change effects soared with impact on human security, food security and migration due to heat waves and floods that affected America, Europe and Asia.

War raged in a spiral of instability and internal violence in Central Africa, Yemen, Syria, South Sudan and Afghanistan. Global trade was affected by regional conflicts and the rise of organized crime at sea from the Indian Ocean to the Gulf of Guinea.

The escalation of war in Ukraine led to an unprecedented international call to preserve the fundamental rights of sovereignty, democracy, and freedom to choose. A united front of democracies against Moscow put pressure on European governments to invest more in defence, combined with assured bilateral assistance measures and robust sanction packages against Russia.

In its 2023 yearly report, the Freedom House think tank stated that a decline of democracy and freedom is visible throughout the globe. The internal stability of liberal democracies has not only been affected by the war in Ukraine, but also by the rise of nationalism, populism and of far-right movements that sought to present themselves as viable alternatives to traditional political parties.

These developments are having a different impact in the six countries, which are covered in this report. Each country has its own, distinct national perspectives on how greater pressure over a rules-based system, over the effectiveness of multilateralism and the deterrent power of collective security affect NATO and the EU.

The report contains the results of a survey conducted by six NESSI participating institutes. The survey was based on nine main research questions, each directly related to the outcomes that resulted from the approval of the Strategic Compass (SC) and NATO’s Strategic Concept (NSC). An initial set of questions was adapted to allow both EU/NATO members and non-NATO members to contribute to the research.

The survey was set-up with the aim of producing a country-chapter per participating institute, based on the following questions:

- 1 - How do existing national strategic documents of countries represented in NESSI fit to NSC and SC?
- 2 - Which major emerging strategic challenges are likely to affect your country, including threat perceptions for national security and in the framework of EU and NATO?
- 3 - In which specific multi-national security & defence projects (i.e., military mobility, cyber, maritime security, EU and NATO innovation hubs) does your country participate and what is the reasoning behind this participation? Choose the project category your own country is involved in, or more than one if that is the case.
- 4 - What is your country's view on a whole-of-defence approach in a crisis management context?
- 5 - What is your country's view on role specialisation for the armed forces?
- 6 - How to implement the NSC and SC, which tools/actions mentioned in these documents are instrumental for reaching their goals, in the framework of protection of citizens, crisis management, collective defence and partnerships?
- 7 - With which allies and partners is your country likely to deepen its defence and security cooperation and what is the reasoning behind these choices?
- 8 - In your country's view, what is the perceived optimal role (e.g., provision of security guarantees and international cooperation) for organizations such as NATO, EU and OSCE?
- 9 - How can defence cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic framework be further strengthened?

The report is based on the views expressed by researchers of six institutes which participate in NESSI. One of these institutes represents a nation which is non-NATO and EU-member. Five institutes are from NATO as well as EU member states. All six nations are engaged in CSDP initiatives. The documents which were analysed included the Policy Defence Outlook (Austria), the Security Strategy (Czech Republic), the Mediterranean Security and Defence Strategy and the Directive on the Defence Industrial Policy (Italy), the National Security

Strategy (Poland), the National Defence Concept (Portugal), National Defence Strategy and the Defence White Papers (Romania).¹

The security and defence challenges perceived by the nations which participated in this study, and which are described in the various chapters of the report differ in terms of nature of the main threats, threat assessments and preferred strategic partners. Despite the differences in these security and defence challenges, what unites the six countries examined appears to be more significant than what separates them.

The report shows that the majority of the researchers acknowledge, to different degrees, the effects of the impact of the war in Ukraine and that of defence digitalization on the concerns of their countries. Those two main security drivers resulted in adaptations at the **political and strategic level**, namely in multilateral realignments and in strengthening of security and defence relations with traditional partners and organizations. The main reasons for these adaptations are a perception of higher threat levels due to the war in Ukraine, decline of maritime security, recurrent foreign interference and hybrid and cyber threats.

Different threat assessments, based on **geopolitical and geostrategic reasons**, led researchers to identify contending systemic rivalry, revisionist foreign policies and technological competition as the three main challenges to security. Despite countries' historical, strategic, and geographical contexts, NATO is perceived by all countries which have been studied in this paper as the main collective defence organisation. The reasons for this perception are **functional interdependency**, power, opportunity, presence, influence and interoperability. The countries acknowledge the EU as the main common actor in crisis management.

The six countries each attached different importance to external security arrangements, such as **bilateralism, minilateralism and multilateralism**. The differences are largely determined by geopolitical considerations and historical legacy. As far as bilateralism and minilateralism are concerned, traditional historical relations, geographical proximity and security interdependence determine their architecture. Participation in minilateral arrangements is more common for Eastern European countries, in formats such as the Visegrad Group or the Bucharest Nine. When it comes to bilateral arrangements, countries prefer to establish relations with major players that are strategically willing and capable, and with which they already have diplomatic ties and defence cooperation arrangements, such as

¹ The strategic documents used by the researchers to conduct their analyses are the ones valid for the period between 2022 and 2023.

the United States, United Kingdom, France and Germany, and in one case Turkey. When it comes to the establishment of multilateral relations there is a preference for traditional and formal organizations such as NATO, the EU and to a lesser degree the OSCE.

The researchers' views on a **whole-of-government** approach to crisis are determined by different aspects of security governance. The existence of a higher degree of institutionalization of cooperation within the country's defence and security administrations, the country's degree of international activity and the type of security cooperation with other external partners, whether those partners are organizations or states, seem to determine the level of comprehensiveness and integration. For some countries, a whole-of-government approach practice seems better developed when applied to crisis management or civil protection than to defence policy.

Among the six institutes, preferences for a **specific security and defence partner** also translate into how they interpret the notion of role specialisation in support of multilateral security. The concept of role specialisation was not understood in the same manner by all institutes. NATO is acknowledged as the main guarantor of collective defence and the EU as the main player in crisis management. Permanent Structured Cooperation projects, which may indicate some preference for role specialisation, are considered not only as a form to enhance European defence cooperation, but also as a way to further European technological and industrial development.

With respect to the **preferred roles** (best performed in terms of security and defence) for **NATO and the EU**, NATO is seen as a robust, collective defence organization, a cornerstone for Europe's defence and the preferred strategic partner for reasons of strategic reliance, defence and shared capabilities. The EU is regarded as a soft security actor, with a higher degree of political and societal resilience. European defence initiatives are perceived as being more oriented towards long-term development of a European-based industrial and technological platform, than to short-term development of a European defence project. For most of the researchers, the EU strategic autonomy is a secondary matter of concern. In some cases, it is not even a subject of strategic consideration in national strategic guidelines, in particular if "autonomy" implies a strategic decoupling from NATO or from the United States. The OSCE, only in a few cases, is considered a forum for dialogue and preservation of a rules-based system.

Security and defence cooperation between the EU and NATO appears to have become a pressing matter due to the invasion of Ukraine and Moscow's expansionist policies. Together

with the American turn to the Indo-Pacific, the old Euro-Atlantic debate of division of strategic labour and more equal defence spending is back on the agenda. In the defence sector, EU-NATO cooperation includes joint research, joint capability development and joint procurement, all aimed at avoiding unnecessary duplication. There is a general view that, for both organizations, capability development and procurement should be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the respective defence planning cycles. For some institutes, EU-NATO cooperation would be more beneficial in non-military security sectors.

In the report, the EU and CSDP are often downplayed and referred to as “the European pillar of NATO”. The EU and CSDP acquire however greater relevance in the face of the US strategic shift to the Indo-Pacific, of the aggressive and expansionist behaviour of Russia and due to increasing attempts from China to acquire strategic leverage in the Mediterranean region and in African countries. Researchers considered the method of variable geometry in defence cooperation, through participation in PESCO projects, as a positive incremental form of European integration. The level of participation in PESCO depends on Member States’ national interests, with their level of technological and industrial development and with their defence commitments in the context of NATO.

In addition to the data from the survey, we have complemented the questions with an annex containing relevant information about national defence spending, about the size of the armed forces and about the international missions in which countries are engaged. This information was taken from the Military Balance, published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) to which most of the Ministries of Defence provide official data.²

The views and opinions expressed in the chapters are the sole responsibility of the authors and they do not necessarily represent the countries’ official position on security and defence policy.

The outcome of the survey is published as a research report online. By accepting the invitation to contribute to this report, authors have agreed on the digitization, upload, and dissemination of the chapters on the IDN digital content platforms, repositories, and bibliographic databases.

I would like to express my appreciation to the directors and researchers of the institutes that contributed to the research. Their commitment and expertise made it possible to publish this E-report on strategic perspectives in Europe.

² I would like to acknowledge the contribute of the research assistant Ana Francisca Duarte related to the data search for the Annex included in this Report.

I hope and expect that NESSI will contribute to a better awareness and understanding on strategic culture and defence governance among our institutes and nations. In times of war, global instability and contested worldviews, it is essential to build on and strengthen what unites us. We should do that in the framework of the two organisations which are best positioned to protect and guarantee our nations' freedom and progress as sovereign states: NATO and the European Union.

Isabel Ferreira Nunes

Director of the National Defence Institute

Portugal

Austria

National Defence Academy

Author: Institutional Contribution

1. How do existing national strategic documents of countries represented in NESSI fit to NSC and SC?

The security policy of the Republic of Austria is based on several pillars. The overall responsibility lies with the Federal Chancellery. A political will is regularly formulated and is based on a permanent risk assessment and the conclusions drawn therefrom. The “Defence Policy Outlook” also includes permanent monitoring of the environmental conditions and conclusions based on this by the Federal Ministry of Defence. In order to be able to carry out this monitoring in a targeted manner, the relevant policy documents are to be consulted. These are, for example, the “Austrian Security Strategy” (ÖSS; Österreichische Sicherheitsstrategie [2013]), as well as the “Defence Policy Sub-strategy” based on it, and the “Defence Policy Realisation Intention”.

Against the backdrop of global conflict developments in recent years, there has been a lasting change in the international order from the Austrian perspective, which points in the direction of a confrontational multipolar world order. The consequences of strategic trends, such as the different population development in the individual regions, the effects of climate change or the growing economic networking, the automatization and digitalization that builds on it with its vulnerability, is increasingly being assessed in Austria. Another risk arises from the EU’s confrontation with the Russian Federation in the course of the Ukraine war.

2. Which major emerging strategic challenges are likely to affect your country? Please include the threat perceptions for national security and in the framework of EU and NATO. Countries perceive different threats and risks in different cooperative security contexts?

Austria’s security environment is deteriorating despite its central geographical location in Central Europe and despite its neighbourhood exclusively to EU Member States, with the exception of Switzerland. The developments formulated in the trend and risk pictures reinforce the negative outlook. The main risks for Austria are identified in hybrid threats, in

an aggravating security situation in the context of the known conflicts in the southern and eastern “crisis arc”, in a possible and no longer entirely unrealistic military attack on the EU or an EU Member State, as well as, in general, in attacks in the country’s own national environment that endanger sovereignty. In this context, Austria recognizes the fact that the so-called strategic warning periods (10 years and more) no longer exist. From Austria’s point of view, this results in a need for rapid and flexible reaction capability. The possible attack on an EU Member State poses a particular challenge and will require a corresponding contribution from Austria due to the EU’s stockpile obligation (Art. 42/7 TEU). Moreover, Austria sees it has directly relevant risks predominantly in the geographical environment of the EU and is therefore interested in a proactive stabilization of the environment within the framework of the EU regional and neighbourhood policies. Austria recognizes that these regional challenges can no longer be dealt with exclusively at the national level. It sees deeper cooperation as a basic principle of defence policy and strives for active participation in the further development of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and a newly conceived Comprehensive National Defence. In addition to the aforementioned policy documents, the Security Policy Annual Forecast and the Military Strategy Concept (Militärstrategisches Konzept 2017) also refer to these challenges.

3. In which specific multi – national security & defence projects (military mobility, cyber, maritime security, EU and NATO innovation hubs, etc...) does your country participate and what is the reasoning behind this participation? Choose the category your own country is involved in, more than one, if that is the case.

Austria recognizes the urgency with which the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) has to be developed. From Austria’s point of view, an important step in this direction started with the adoption of the EU’s “Strategic Compass”. However, further steps should follow to ensure Europe’s security. While Austria participates to an above-average extent in CSDP missions and operations, the population is not unconditionally opposed to this commitment. In addition to the desire to maintain the status of neutrality, 67% of the Austrians surveyed simultaneously support more intensive security and defence cooperation in Europe.

The compatibility of CSDP with Austrian neutrality is guaranteed at EU level by Art. 42, para. 2 TEU (Irish clause), according to which “the policy of the Union in accordance with this Section [...] shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defense policy

of certain Member States". Austria can therefore decide for itself whether and in what way support is going to be provided.

Within the framework of the European Peace Facility, 2 billion euros are, meanwhile, being mobilized to support the Ukrainian armed forces (for the purchase and delivery of military equipment/weapons and the provision of protective equipment, first-aid kits and fuel). Austria contributes to all EU support measures for strengthening the capacities and resilience of third countries. For reasons of neutrality, however, it abstains from financing lethal military equipment.

Austria's share in the financing of these measures is around 2.8% of the EU's gross national income. In an EU comparison, Austria participates above average in EU military missions and operations. While the Austrian share of the EU population is around 2%, the country provides personnel contributions to military EU missions of up to 10%, currently 7.8%. For EUFOR Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Austria currently provides the Force Commander, and for EUTM Mali it was the case for six months until recently. Currently, Austria sends individuals and troops to four of seven EU military operations: EU operation EUFOR Althea, recently also to the EU training mission EUTM Mali, EU naval operation EUNAVFOR MED Iriini (Mediterranean), EU training mission EUTM Mozambique.

In addition, Austria sends personnel to four of eleven civilian EU missions: EU Border Assistance Mission EUBAM (Libya), EU Monitoring Mission EUMM Georgia, EU Advisory Mission EUAM Ukraine, EU Rule of Law Mission EULEX Kosovo. By participating in the Permanent Structured Cooperation, SSC since 2017, Austria has committed itself to cooperating more closely in the EU alliance in the planning and development of defence capabilities. Austria participates in 12 of 60 SSC projects. In the project on defence against nuclear, biological and chemical threats, Austria has the lead (participant in eight projects, observer in three).

4. What is your country's view on a whole-of-defence approach in a crisis management context?

In its strategic concept from the 2010 Lisbon Summit, NATO emphasized the necessity of using civilian and military elements for effective crisis and conflict management. The United Nations (UN), by analogy, rely on an integrated approach in the areas of strategic integration (operational cooperation of actors to achieve common goals) and structural integration to

create order and synergies within its system. Austria supports these measures and, like other international actors, has come to the conclusion that a coordinated approach that is as smooth as possible in an operational area is not only necessary from an operational point of view, but is also expected by the local society concerned. In Austria, the term Comprehensive Approach (CA), which is common in international parlance, has been established as a synonym for coordination efforts in this regard. As a working term, comprehensive approach could be defined as a guiding philosophy, guiding idea and concept for a joint effort by states and organizations to achieve a coordinated, complementary and coherent approach to conflict management.

For Austria, however, this is not an end in itself, because the direct effects should have a positive impact at the local level in an operational area. One reason for these efforts is the increasingly complex constellation of actors that confronts state strategies. Military strategies, defence strategies and national security strategies are more than ever called upon to generate the corresponding synergy effects far beyond the classic military core spectrum in view of new challenges facing the whole state. Parallel to the idea of broad coordination of crisis management measures, however, the realization also gained ground that there should be a minimum level of coordination within states in order to achieve synergy effects as well as to be able to contribute in the best possible way to a larger comprehensive approach.

5. What is your country's view on role specialization for the armed forces?

In general, Austria advocates for a comprehensive security approach with a focus on prevention and resilience. This includes an interlinked approach between internal and external, as well as civil and military security aspects (Federal Ministry of European and International Affairs). The specialization of the armed forces is viewed positively by Austrian experts, but on national level core competence in all military branches will be retained. According to Austrian Defence Minister Klaudia Tanner, the budgetary restrictions are to be overcome and further investments in central areas are necessary. Concrete plans for the new investments were already established at the beginning of 2021. In this context, the so-called development program “Unser Heer” / “Our Army” also reflects the future of possible specialization of the Austrian Armed Forces (Bundesheer 2021). The adoption of the identified defence policy requirements as well as the increase in military capability of the Austrian Armed Forces is primarily pursued in the following areas:

- Anticipation, early detection and reconnaissance;

- Defence against cyber threats;
- Defence against influence and measures in the information domain;
- Command and control of military forces in an urban environment;
- Use of drones and counter-drones as well;
- Military advice and support (ibid.).

The current global and regional risks and crises have direct impact on Austria, therefore an active participation in the CSDP framework has been recognized as crucial for maintaining the own security and defence interests. The mentioned priorities are also relevant for CSDP ambitions.

6. How to implement the NSC and SC, which tools/actions mentioned in these documents are instrumental for reaching their goals, in the framework of protection of citizens, crisis management, collective defence and partnership.

The “implementation” of the Strategic Compass considers both political as well as administrative measures. On a parliamentary level, the Strategic Compass was properly discussed for the first time in the Sub-Committee on Defence on June 2, 2022, where defence minister Klaudia Tanner expressed the need for closer defence cooperation at the European level (Parlamentsskizzen 2022). The EU Commission’s document “Implementation of the Strategic Compass” is perceived positively by the majority of the political representatives. From the defence minister’s perspective, the EU Strategic Compass should bring new momentum to the further development of European defence ambitions to maintain security for its citizens (Tanner, 2021).

The general Austrian assessment for undertaking appropriate measures for European security emphasizes the approaches of NATO and EU. Therefore, NATO remains the most important organization for dealing with conventional military threats, focused on defending the territory of the Alliance (Eder, 2022). Below the level of direct military attacks, non-conventional threats must be tackled by using various tools of “civilian and military crisis management” (Eder, 2022, p. 259). Austrian experts are convinced that defence policy has to be coordinated together with instruments of foreign policy, economic policy, or the judiciary. Consequently, internal and external security instruments have to be synchronized properly. Domains like cyberspace and information space have become legal “grey areas” (ibid., pp. 259-260). In this context, propaganda, disinformation, terrorism as well as irregular

mass migration could disrupt the “cohesion of the EU” (ibid., p. 260). Based on these analytical perceptions, Austria is currently adopting adequate concepts for its armed forces. The main document for further considerations is the already above mentioned (Q5) concept “Our Army” that could generally be seen as a “development program” for the modernization of the Austrian Armed Forces (Parlamentarische Bundesheerkommission 2020, p. 48). This program for Austrian Armed Forces is therefore directly connected to the engagement in the CSDP and is a contribution to the “stabilization of Austria and the EU” (ibid., p. 262). In the program “Our Army”, capabilities are specified that can be used for international crisis management as well as inside of Austria. This leads to the priority areas that were already mentioned above (question 5):

- Anticipation, early detection and reconnaissance;
- Defence against cyber threats;
- Defence against influence and measures in the information domain;
- Command and control of armed forces in an urban environment;
- Use of drones and counter-drones;
- Military advice and support.

7. With which allies and partners is your country likely to deepen its defence and security cooperation and what is the reasoning behind these choices?

Information about concrete implementation measures of the Strategic Compass objectives have not been publicly proclaimed by the Austrian MoD (as of Oct 11, 2022). With regard to the international partners, it can be assumed that Austria is likely to cooperate more closely with those countries that are already involved in joint PESCO projects. Austria itself is lead nation in the project “Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Surveillance as a Service (CBRN SaaS)” with involved partners: Croatia, France, Hungary and Slovenia (PESCO Secretariat). Based on European Council data, as of 2021, partners in PESCO projects, in which Austria participates either actively or as an observer, are:

- **Deployable Military Disaster Relief Capability Package (DMDRCP)**, partners: Italy (lead nation), Greece, Spain and Croatia;
- **Operation Core (EUFOR CROC)**, partners: Germany (lead nation), Greece, Spain, France, Italy and Cyprus;

- **EU Military Partnership** (EU MilPart), partners: France (lead nation), Estonia and Italy.
- **Military Mobility**, partners: Netherlands (lead nation), Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden;
- **Geospacial, Meteorological and Oceanographic** (GeoMETOC) Support Coordination Element (GMSCE), partners: Germany (lead nation), Belgium, Greece, France, Luxemburg, Portugal and Romania;
- **Common Hub for Governmental Imagery** (CoHGI), partners: Germany (lead nation), Spain, France, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands and Romania;
- **Defence of Space Assets** (DoSA), partners: France (lead nation), Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal and Romania (European Council 2021).

Due to closer defence cooperation with Germany, Italy and the countries of the Central European Defense Cooperation (CEDC: AUT, CZE, HUN, SVK, SVN and HRV, POL is an observer), a more coordinated approach with these nations is to be expected. Especially, Germany remains an extraordinarily important partner for Austria, because both countries share, among others, interests in international crisis management (Bundesheer 2022a).

8. In your country's view what is the perceived optimal role of European organizations – NATO, EU and OSCE?

With reference to the Austrian security strategy, the organizations mentioned play a key role in shaping foreign and security policy:

“Austria contributes to shaping security policies first and foremost within the UN, the EU, the OSCE, in its partnerships with NATO and within the Council of Europe. (Austrian Security Strategy 2013, p. 7)”

Against the background of Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine (EEAS 2022), which led to the occupation of 20% of Ukrainian territory since February 24, 2022 (stance mid of November 2022), the European order has changed and therefore military defence has also become an important parameter for Austrian security measures. Consequently, the government has increased the defence budget to modernize the

armed forces, but Austria will remain a neutral country. According to Defence Minister Klaudia Tanner, the NATO membership of Finland and Sweden has no impact on Austria's neutrality status (Tanner, 2022). Although Austria is neutral, NATO is recognized as the primary collective defence organization for its members.

Based on the Strategic Compass (question 6) described already above, the EU should foster and enhance its defence endeavours until 2030 and focus on crisis management operations (OTS, 2022). Because of the close links between NATO and the EU, Defence Minister Tanner does not expect Austria to be isolated within the EU (Tanner, 2022).

As the host nation of the OSCE, cooperative security has an important function for European security. The main role of the OSCE from the Austrian point of view is defined by the Federal Ministry for European and Foreign Affairs:

“The OSCE takes its role as the predestined organization for crisis management and as a driver for political solutions seriously: assistance to Ukraine and diplomatic work are sought at all levels. (BMEIA 2022)”

More strategically, the role of OSCE should be, among others, an organization dealing with these challenges that were also Austrian priorities during its chairmanship in 2017:

- “defusing armed conflicts”,
- “fighting radicalization and violent extremism”,
- “building trust” (OSCE, 2017, p. 2ff).

In summary, it can therefore be stated that NATO should be tasked with collective defence, the EU with crisis management and the OSCE with confidence building. Especially in the context of Article 42/7, CSDP could also increasingly take on defence tasks in the future, since NATO’s resources may not always be available as the former Austrian Chief of Defence Staff and current Chair of the EU Military Committee, General Robert Brieger, says (Brieger, 2022).

9. How can defence cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic framework be further strengthened, following the two EU-NATO Declarations of 2016, 2018 and current SC and new NC?

Even as a neutral country, Austria welcomes the cooperation between NATO and the EU. This was also highlighted by the fact that the Austrian Federal Chancellor, Karl Nehammer,

attended the NATO summit in 2022. At this summit, the cooperation of neutral states with NATO in general was underlined by the chancellor (Nehammer, 2022). Based on the Austrian security strategy, the Austrian approach to cooperation between NATO and the EU can be described as follows:

“The EU and its Member States are expected to make stronger efforts to organise the use of resources for CSDP in a more economic, target-oriented and efficient manner. This will result in greater cooperation, division of labour and burden sharing, even beyond the bounds of individual organisations. In addition, it will bring about an increasing level of specialisation. Cooperation between the EU and NATO is expected to be intensified. (Austrian Security Strategy, p. 13)”

In this context, the Strategic Compass and the New Strategic Concept of NATO can, from the Austrian point of view, develop the greatest added value, in which Austria as a neutral EU member can also be active. The best example are Austrian soldiers in Kosovo, who are under a NATO command. The contingent currently has between 400 and 500 soldiers (Bundesheer 2022b). Based on the strategic concepts of the EU and NATO, PESCO projects such as Military Mobility with the Netherlands as the lead nation can also play a major role in the future. The “Action Plan on Military Mobility 2.0” of the EU Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, points in this direction (European Commission, 2022). The project has a direct impact on EU-NATO cooperation:

“It will bolster the EU’s ability to support Member States and partners as regards transport of troops and their equipment. It works towards better connected and protected infrastructure, while streamlining regulatory issues. It will reinforce cooperation with NATO and promote connectivity and dialogue with key partners. (ibid.)”

To conclude, cooperation is most effective where NATO and the EU work together in crisis management, such as Ukraine, Moldova and the Western Balkans, which play a specific role in the “Action plan on Military Mobility 2.0” (ebd.). The Western Balkans are of particular importance for Austria.

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Czech Republic

Centre for Security and Military Strategic Studies (CSMSS)

Authors: Antonín Novotný, PhD, Research Fellow at the Department of Security and Defence Studies at CSMSS.

Zdeněk Petráš, PhD, Research Fellow at the Department of Military Strategic Studies at CSMSS

Fabian Baxa, PhD, Academic Fellow at CSMSS

Associate Prof. Josef Procházka, PhD, Director of CSMSS

The Czech Republic's Defence Policy (CZDP) finds itself in the eighth year of its systemic change aiming at enhancing readiness and preparedness of the Czech Republic Armed Forces (CZAF) and strengthening of its national defence system against the current security threats (Procházka et al., 2014).

The beginning of this process represents Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the reflection of its aggressive policy in the outcome of the NATO Summit in Wales and Brussels. Moreover, Russia's unprovoked and unlawful military aggression against Ukraine on 24 February 2022 has accelerated political and military efforts and provided a new impetus for defence provision.

The defence of the Czech Republic is based on the following strategic assumptions:

- The strategic landscape of the Czech Republic and its allies and partners is deteriorating.
- The Czech Republic must be prepared together with its allies to respond effectively with all its instruments of national power both to the worse-case scenario (peer to peer large military conflict) and multiple security challenges of different nature and scope including hybrid threats posed both by states and non-state actors.
- Since joining NATO on 12 March 1999, the Czech Republic's defence policy has been based on credible collective deterrence and defence, and a strong transatlantic link.
- The Czech Republic seeks its fair contribution to the burden sharing of collective defence, both in terms of inputs (defence budget) and output (capabilities).

- Moreover, the Czech Republic maintains one set of forces for NATO as well as for EU purposes.
- The capability development of the CZAF is mainly driven by the outcome of the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP).
- The Czech Republic observes the principle of complementarity, and it supports the enhancement of military capabilities of the European pillar within NATO, which is seen as a main security and defence warrant in Europe.

The above-mentioned strategic assumptions also provide an analytical framework for answering questions in this study.

1. How do existing national strategic documents of countries represented in NESSI fit to NSC and SC?

The Czech Republic's security and defence policy is communicated through a system of strategic security documents. The top security policy guidance is provided by the Security Strategy.³

The Security Strategy of the Czech Republic⁴ introduces fundamental values, approaches, tools and measures to safeguard the security, defence and protection of citizens and the state. Hand in hand with the evolving security environment, the Government develops its approaches in order to keep Czechia and its citizens secure.

The government adopted the new Security Strategy in response to the deteriorating international security situation. It also aims to boost the involvement and participation on all levels of public administration, civil society and private individuals in safeguarding our individual and shared security.

The watchword of this Security Strategy is a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. It brings forward resilience in a broad sense. The document is frank about the security situation deteriorating both in Europe and globally, and in admitting that security requires adequate investments on all levels. The strategy is also clear-sighted about threats and challenges, in particular those stemming from Russia and China.

³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. *Security Strategy of the Czech Republic 2015*. Available at: https://www.mzv.cz/public/2a/57/16/1375879_1259981_Security_Strategy_CZ_2015.pdf

⁴ The strategic document "Security Strategy" referred in this chapter was the one in force when the survey was conducted (2022-23).

Key messages at the outset of the document have been written in a straightforward and easy to read language. An entire new novelty is the chapter “Areas of strategic concern”, which provides guidance for follow-up strategic and conceptual work. Further elaborated are especially the areas of (1) Czechia’s place in international relations, (2) Czechia’s defence and the tasks of our armed forces, (3) Cyber security, (4) Economic security, (5) Internal security, and (6) Civil protection and crisis management (MFACR, n.d.).

The second most important document is the Defence Strategy.⁵ It entails political-military ambitions and sets basic principles of defence policy.

According to the new Defence Strategy⁶, the primary task is to deter the attacker. The goal is not to wage war with the aggressor, but to deter him from attacking. This requires strong defensive capabilities and the determination to use them in the event of an attack. NATO membership plays a key role in this. Together, the allies with the Czech Republic will not only defend themselves more effectively against possible aggression, but above all will deter the enemy more easily so that no attack takes place. In order for any defence to be effective, according to the document, the priority is to build well-armed, equipped, trained and combat-sustainable armed forces deployable in collective defence operations. Also important is the all-round operational preparation of the territory of the Czech Republic and ensuring the reception, transfer and support of a potentially large number of allied forces. As in the case of the Security Strategy, the Defence Strategy emphasizes the position that the defence of the country is a matter for all its inhabitants, because the Czech Armed Forces and the Ministry of Defence alone cannot ensure the country's security. The document therefore emphasizes the involvement of all necessary public administration bodies and society as a whole. According to the document, prepared and available reserves of the armed forces must also participate more in defence. The essential role of the domestic defence and security industry in strengthening the defence capability of the Czech Republic is also emphasized. It is also supposed to ensure the security of supplies and the combat sustainability of the armed forces in the event of a crisis. According to the Defence Strategy, it is therefore essential to deepen the dialogue and partnership between the state and industry. It is not possible to build a high-quality defence of the state without sufficient financial security. The Czech

⁵ Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic. *The Defence Strategy of the Czech Republic*. Available at: <https://www.army.cz/assets/en/ministry-of-defence/strategy-and-doctrine/defencestrategy2017.pdf>

⁶ The strategic document “Defence Strategy” referred in this chapter was the one in force when the survey was conducted (2022-23).

Republic will therefore spend at least 2% of GDP on its defence each year, and more if necessary.

The latest strategic documents of the Czech Republic fully reflect the dramatic changes in its security landscape, mainly the challenges stemming from Russia's unjustified and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine in February 2022. As the Government adopted the Security Strategy and the Defence Strategy in 2023, both documents fully address the latest strategies of NATO⁷ or the EU.⁸

There is a Government's ambition to update also next strategic documents in 2024 - development of capabilities of the entire national defence system⁹ and its Armed Forces.¹⁰

2. Which major emerging strategic challenges are likely to affect your country?

A set of emerging strategic challenges likely to affect the Czech Republic stems from its geographical location in the middle of Europe as a traditional crossroad of conflicting national interests and country's status of liberal democracy and its Western orientation.

In the long-term outlook, the Czech Republic's security and prosperity will be mainly threatened by renewed global power competition in a multipolar world order.

Meanwhile, the armed conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine has significantly increased the probability for a peer-to-peer high intensity military conflict with the involvement of the Czech Republic. Reflecting Russia's neo-imperial politics, territorial defence and the contribution to collective defence and deterrence have become the highest political priorities of the Czech Republic.

The systemic competition among global powers and the potential shift of the balance of power increases the likelihood of the employment of the hybrid warfare toolbox embracing subliminal activities such as subversion, cyber-attacks, rigging public opinion, election interference, weaponization of migration, and energy provision. All these activities have the potential to cause tensions within and among EU and NATO Member States (MDCR, 2019b).

⁷ NATO 2022 *Strategic Concept*. Available at: [290622-strategic-concept.pdf](https://www.nato.int/docu/strat/2022/22-01-strategic-concept.pdf) (nato.int)

⁸ *A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence - For a European Union that protects its citizens, values and interests and contributes to international peace and security*. Available at: [pdf](https://www.europa.eu) (europa.eu)

⁹ Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic (2019a). *The Long-Term Perspective for Defence 2035*. Available at: <https://www.army.cz/assets/en/ministry-of-defence/basic-documents/dv-2035-aj.pdf>

¹⁰ Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic (2019b). *The Czech Armed Forces Development Concept 2030*. Available at: https://www.army.cz/images/id_8001_9000/8503/CAFDC.PDF

Additionally, global warming connected with the growing average temperature with its extremes causing droughts, less running water in rivers, decreasing the amount of drinking water, and extreme weather phenomena/events in their intensity and appearance like tornados, floods, and storms (V4 Senior Defence Experts, 2021).

Decreasing level of energy security due to, inter alia, preference of goals like the green deal and carbon-neutral policies connected with the depletion of existing energy sources without having their full replacement, while their real consequences are insufficiently considered. Moreover, the energy supplies are manipulated and weaponised against EU and NATO nations (NATO, 2022) from the side of suppliers.

In addition, the outbreaks of pandemics and new diseases transmittable to humans have the potential to impact the Czech Republic's security and prosperity significantly.

Instability, armed conflicts, and manmade as well as natural disasters outside of the country causing an influx of migrants creates economic, political, social, and ethnic imbalance among the interests of involved parties. Migration is often instrumentalised against nations and the whole EU (NATO, 2022).

An aging population and a growing gap between the productive labour force and pensioners, at both the EU and national levels, have the potential to strike the social balance and decrease societal resilience at all levels.¹¹

3. In which specific multi-national security & defence projects (military mobility, cyber, maritime security, EU and NATO innovation hubs, etc...) does your country participate and what is the reasoning behind this participation? Choose the category your own country is involved in, more than one, if that is the case.

The Czech Republic is involved in many multinational capability development initiatives within the EU and NATO.

As far as the EU is concerned, the Czech Republic accepted several binding commitments in the PESCO projects, which are meant to increase the competitiveness of the EDTIB and deliver a positive impact on identified capability shortfalls. Respective commitments of participating Member States are periodically updated through the National Implementation Plan and their progress is as well summarised in the PESCO Projects Progress Reports. The

¹¹ Marian Jurečka: *Migrace, nebo podpora porodnosti?* Available at: <https://www.marianjurecka.cz/clanek/296-migrace-nebo-podpora-porodnosti-.html>

PESCO Projects Progress Report, issued in June 2022, brings a summary of the Czech Republic's involvement in multinational projects as follows:

- Integrated Unmanned Ground System (Projects in Land, Formations, Systems domain);
- European MALE RPAS (Projects in Air domain);
- Counter Unmanned Aerial System (Projects in Air domain);
- Strategic Air Transport for Outsized Cargo (Projects in Air domain);
- Electronic Warfare Capability and Interoperability Programme for Future JISR Cooperation (Projects in Cyber C4ISR domain) – Czech Republic is the leading nation;
- Military Mobility (Projects in Joint, Enabling domain);
- European Medical Command (Projects in Joint, Enabling domain);
- Co-basing (Projects in Joint, Enabling domain).

For the NATO part, the Czech Republic is participating in projects framed within the specific multinational capability cooperation initiative - High Visibility Projects - designed to address the NATO defence planning priorities. For the time being, the Czech Republic is involved in projects covering specific capability areas as follows:

- Training structures: NATO Flight Training Europe;
- High-end acquisition: Multi Role Tanker Transport Capability;
- Ammunition: Air Battle Decisive Munitions, Land Battle Decisive Munitions.

The Czech perspective is that the capabilities developed through the defence initiatives of the EU and NATO should become coherent and complementary. In this way, the Czech Republic pays considerable attention to avoid duplication of effort within NATO and the EU and ensure complementarity of activities and harmonisation of defence planning. In this respect, the Czech Republic supports closer cooperation in remedying prioritised capability shortfalls categorised as NATO Capability Targets (CT) and EU High Impact Capability Goals (HICG). As a contribution to this effort, the Czech Republic, using the common EU-NATO capability taxonomy, has identified those NATO CTs and EU HICGs that are of the same capability qualification and could be thus dealt with as part of a single set of forces for NATO and EU operational purposes.

4. What is your country's view on a whole-of-defence approach in a crisis management context?

In accordance with the Czech Republic's national legal framework, the key tasks assigned to the CZAF are to defend the sovereignty and integrity of the national territory against external aggression and to participate in operations and missions stemming from our operational commitments to NATO and the EU.

The concept of crisis management has a different connotation in the EU, NATO, and in the Czech Republic. In the EU and NATO context, crisis management refers to tasks of forces in crisis management operations, including peace-making, post-conflict stabilisation, as well as conflict prevention. The Czech national context refers to situations arising as a result of a natural disaster, industrial accident, terrorist attacks, etc., requiring specific assistance delivered by force units and military assets.

With regard to NATO and the EU, crisis management is a core task for which it is required an appropriate combination of political and military tools to manage crises in an increasingly complex security environment. In addition, the approach to conducting crisis management operations, as applied with NATO and the EU, requires work with other actors to contribute to a comprehensive approach that effectively combines political, civilian and military crisis management instruments.

For all EU Member States and NATO nations, today's security concerns require that civil and military components work in close interaction, in order to provide a coordinated effort among various actors. This requires development of capabilities specifically tailored to providing an effective response to a crisis situation:

- Military capability for achieving exclusively military tasks during crisis management operations;
- Military capability used during a civilian crisis management operation to relieve consequences of a terrorist attack, natural or manmade disasters;
- Civilian capability used for achieving exclusively civilian tasks during crisis management operations both of military and non-military character.

5. What is your view on a whole-of-defence approach and/or role specialisation for the armed forces?

The fundamental principle of the CZAF development is to maintain a well-balanced command and force structure. Moreover, the CZAF is a land-centric military organization able to deliver effects in multi-domain operations both within NATO and the EU broader operational framework (international crisis management, collective deterrence, and defence).

Due to the resource constraints, some costly capabilities as strategic enablers, e.g., strategic lift capability or strategic intelligence, are and will be provided through the multinational arrangements.

Moreover, the country can offer some niche capabilities, e.g., medical support, passive surveillance, CBRN.

Development and sustainability of specific capabilities can be orchestrated among the states both through bilateral and multilateral arrangements and international organizations.

6. How to implement the NSC and SC, which tools/actions mentioned in these documents are instrumental for reaching their goals, in the framework of protection of citizens, crisis management, collective defence and partnership.

The content of both papers is based on the conceptual political documents framing the key role and tasks of NATO and the EU's current deteriorating security environment. As for NATO, it is actually the Washington Treaty; the EU Strategic Compass reflects respective treaties, above all, the Treaty on the EU (Lisbon Treaty), EU Global Strategy and the implementation reports describing the Strategy's visions turning into action.

Even if the text of the EU Strategic Compass explicitly reads that it details the tools and initiatives required for achieving expected goals, the paper rather sets out definite actions and respective work strands, i.e., Act, Secure, Invest and Partner, than details tools to be used to get necessary development of the EU security and defence agenda for the next decade. However, these actions cannot be taken as instrumental for meeting specific security goals in specific areas such as the protection of citizens, crisis management, collective defence, effective partnership and cooperation with partners.

As for the implementation of the EU SC, and in order to conduct actions stemming from the paper, tools and mechanisms as applied respectively within the EU military capability

development process are supposed to be used (Council of the EU, 2003). In the context of effective partnership and bilateral/multilateral cooperation, it is of note that the role of CARD (Coordinated Annual Review on Defence), PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) and EDF (European Defence Fund) is of significant importance for participating EU Member States.

As for the implementation of the NATO 2022 SC, it sets out the Alliance's core tasks for the next decade - deterrence and defence; crisis prevention and management; and cooperative security. Implementation of these tasks is based on the development and delivery of capabilities that should provide an effective combination of cutting-edge weapons systems and platforms, and interoperable multinational forces trained to operate together. A tool that is being instrumental in providing required capabilities deliverable to operational use is the NDPP. The NDPP is the principal instrument for conducting capability development, which shall also provide a framework within which national and Alliance defence planning activities are harmonized and synchronised to meet agreed targets most effectively.

Since many EU Member States are also NATO nations, enhancing coherence between the EU and NATO capability planning processes is more and more important, since the closer NATO-EU cooperation is apparently indispensable for an effective multinational cooperation.

7. With which allies and partners is your country likely to deepen its defence and security cooperation and what is the reasoning behind these choices?

The Czech Republic maintains one of the most strategic partnerships with the US. Across the political spectrum in the Czech Republic, the US is seen as a security warrant in Europe. Defence cooperation with the US mainly embraces capability development, preparation of military personnel, exercises, and operations. There are several armament projects both in the implementation and preparation phases that underscore the importance of this partnership. Moreover, once those capabilities are fully fielded, it will elevate the relationship with the US to even higher quality.

Moreover, well-structured military cooperation is maintained within the framework of V4 nations entailing the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. This multinational arrangement is essential mainly for enhancing the interoperability and preparedness of armed forces for potential operational deployments at the Alliance's Eastern Flank. The records of

armament cooperation of V4 countries are rather modest. Defence cooperation in this area embraces several projects chiefly under the auspices of NATO and the EU initiatives.

Furthermore, procurement via government-to-government arrangements is the most preferred way of implementing the CZAF long-term modernisation plan. This approach of purchasing larger weapon systems is considered less risky and provides the Czech Government with the flexibility to balance political, military, and economic interests. Therefore, it is essential to maintain strategic partnership with France, Sweden, and Israel as the most significant providers of military equipment for the CZAF.

Additionally, the CZAF's command and force structure is flat, and there are no higher echelon structures and real CJTF HQ as well as larger units than a brigade. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to affiliate our forces to the higher command, e.g., within the Framework Nation Concept initiative with Germany and Poland. The CZAF has recognised a need to prepare its commanders and staff for their roles in higher echelon force or CJTF HQ. Due to the higher effectiveness of military units training, the CZAF is interested in allocating selected military units into larger multinational military units at division or Corps levels, offering their units to the high readiness NATO and EU forces (MDCR, 2017). Due to the above-mentioned reasons, the Czech Republic intends to cooperate more deeply with the USA, UK, DEU, SVK and POL (MFACR, 2015).

8. In your country's view what is the perceived optimal role of European organizations – NATO, EU and OSCE?

The current European security architecture includes international organizations such as NATO, the EU, and the OSCE. Their role has been evolving over the years, however, cooperation between the EU and NATO is crucial for ensuring European defence and security. In the current security context, the Czech Republic put even more emphasis on the credibility of its contributions to the NATO collective deterrence and defence provision and the reinforcement of the transatlantic link. Yet, it requires significant support from the EU, especially in ensuring military mobility in Europe, societal resilience and strengthening the European industrial base. Therefore, the Czech Republic works towards a safer and stronger Europe in the following areas: (1) enhancement of the EU and NATO cooperation; (2) support for Ukraine; and (3) implementation of the NSC and EU SC (MDCR, 2022a).

On the other hand, the unique feature of the EU is that, although the Member States all remain sovereign and independent, they have decided to pool some of their 'sovereignty' in areas where it makes sense to work together. However, defence remains the domain of strong national control and there are no signals to alter this approach in the foreseeable future. The EU's defence ambitions remain welded to the crisis management paradigm, reducing the fragmentation of defence industrial markets, and contributing to more effective capability development via multinational arrangements.

The OSCE is seen as a forum for political dialogue on a wide range of security issues and a platform for joint action to improve the lives of individuals and communities. The organization uses a comprehensive approach to security that encompasses the politico-military, economic, environmental, and human dimensions. Through this approach, and with its inclusive membership, the OSCE helps bridge differences and build trust between states by co-operating on conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. Moreover, it is also the only forum in which Russia is presented, providing thus some space for diplomacy.

However, due to the current Russian destructive action, the OSCE can fulfil its original mission and basic purpose less and less. The purpose of the OSCE is to develop dialogue, build trust between states and promote cooperation. As a participating country, Russia is currently not fulfilling its obligations, disrupting the partnership and disrupting the organization, but it must be added that it is isolated in its efforts.

9. How can defence cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic framework be further strengthened, following the two EU-NATO Declarations of 2016, 2018 and current SC and new NC?

The crucial topic stemming from NSC and SC for European countries is the dilemma of whether they should concentrate their defence efforts on consolidating the European strategic autonomy via the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) or reinforcing the European pillar of NATO.

In recent years, the changing balance of power in the world has forced the US to modify their foreign policy priorities, the outcome of which is that the US centre of gravity has shifted from Europe towards the Indo-Pacific region. Thus, it is the right time to ask the

question of what role will NATO and the EU play under the circumstances arising in the third decade of the 21st century.

Europe is experiencing fundamental changes in the security environment caused by the war in Ukraine, aggressive behaviour by Russia, the growing assertiveness of China, the persistent threat of terrorism and the rise of advanced technologies that represent both opportunities and new challenges for our security. Russian aggression emphasized the importance of the EU and the US relations. Transatlantic relations and the presence of the US in Europe are to be further developed. The EU should not be a competitor or duplication of NATO; on the contrary, both organizations must be complementary.

A strong transatlantic partnership, adequate defence resourcing invested into capability shortfalls, and improved strategic communication of our missions and operations – all those are essential for strengthening our ability to deter potential adversaries and respond effectively to any crises.

EU-NATO cooperation on defence innovations is essential. It is important to identify areas in which strategic synergies between the EU and NATO will serve this purpose, e.g., remove barriers among the defence sector, innovative private sector and academia. Moreover, the implementation of joint research, development and acquisition of military material and technologies, as well as a greater focus on the Emerging and Disruptive Technologies (EDT) - for example, artificial intelligence, autonomous weapons systems and space technologies -, are needed for creating new initiatives to provide the EU and NATO with a strategic advantage over possible adversaries (MDCR, 2022b).

Proposals for more advanced defence cooperation between the EU and NATO can also embrace the deepening of some of the existing frameworks and develop, e.g., standing military formations with units permanently assigned to them, and linking each to one of the regional defence plans (Biscop, 2022).

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Italy¹²

Istituto di Analisi e Ricerca della Difesa (IRAD)

Author: Professor Gianluca Pastori

1. Which is the likelihood of formal incorporation of security defence guidelines drawn from SC & NSC into your countries' national defence guidelines (e.g. national defence concepts)?

Since their establishment, the Atlantic Alliance and NATO have been Italy's main frame of reference on defence and security issues. From this perspective, the NSC has traditionally provided the background of the country's national security defence guidelines. This kind of relationship also exists with the new Concept. For instance, the recent Mediterranean Security and Defence Strategy (*Strategia di sicurezza e difesa per il Mediterraneo*, June 2022) largely incorporates the new Concept's provisions in both its comprehensive approach to regional security, and the emphasis it places on the role that actors like Russia and China play in shaping the regional strategic context. In the same way, the Alliance's long-lasting attention to cybersecurity reverberated in Italy's adoption, among others, of the National Strategic Framework for Cyberspace Security (2013) and the Italian Cybersecurity Action Plan (2017). Italy's most recent development in the field (such as the adoption of National Cybersecurity Strategy 2022-26) also reverberates NATO's evolving posture and the emphasis the NSC places on the cyber domain. Unsurprisingly, the reference to the multilateral framework (at both NATO and EU levels) is a constant element in Italy's strategic documents, as attested, for instance, in the above-mentioned Mediterranean Security and Defence Strategy 2022, the Directive on the Defence Industrial Policy (*Direttiva per la politica industriale della Difesa*) or the 2015 Ministry of Defence's white paper for international security and defence.

2. Which major emerging strategic challenges are likely to affect your country?

Traditionally, Italy's main strategic challenges come from the Wider Mediterranean region. In this theatre, the Mediterranean Security and Defence Strategy 2022 sketches the picture of a multi-threat environment evolving at warp speed and including the risks of terrorism, instability, and climate change in North Africa and the Sahel, but also the challenges

¹² The authors of the Italian chapter have made some adjustments to the survey questions.

emanating from Russia and China. In the coming years, with the apparent decline of the terrorist threat, migration flows will likely remain among the country's top concerns due also to their impact on the domestic political debate. Due to Italy's geography, location, and dependence on trade and energy flows crisscrossing the region, maritime and port security are another critical priority. From a broader perspective, a further challenge is adapting Italy's role to the new relevance of the Mediterranean in the global power competition. China's enhanced political, economic, and military presence in the region is part of the problem. Despite Beijing's limited inroads, the national security agencies have already pointed out the potential risks connected to Chinese companies' interests in the Italian port infrastructures. Another critical aspect is China's role in Italy's supply chains. To cope with the issue, reshoring production and achieving technological autonomy rank high on the government's agenda. However, an effective strategy in this field requires an integrated approach at the EU and NATO levels and more active coordination with the US and the European allies.

3. In which specific multi-national security & defence projects (military mobility, cyber, maritime security, EU and NATO innovation hubs, etc...) does your country participate and what is the reasoning behind this participation?

Italy's most recent defence budgets prioritise high-end capabilities such as the Tempest program, with Italy cooperating with the UK and Japan to build a sixth-generation fighter jet. Other major investment initiatives include new space-based strategic communications, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, and the modernisation of the maritime and land forces components. By 2021, Italy was the coordinator country in nine PESCO projects. It was also a member of eighteen others, among them the MALE RPAS 'Eurodrone' (coordinator country: Germany), the ESSOR - European Secure Software Defined Radio (coordinator country: France), and the Military Mobility project (coordinator country: Netherlands). The Italian Army expressed interest in the Next-Generation Rotorcraft Capability (NGRC) jointly with France, Germany, Greece, and the UK. In the field of procurement/modernisation, the MoD's Multi-Year Planning Document (DPP - *Documento di Programmazione Pluriennale*) 2021-23 includes 85 new programs and the update of 115 ongoing ones, all open for international cooperation. The MoD is also developing a program for a network of defence innovation centres and is funding R&D programs on emerging disruptive technologies. Finally, it is enhancing its multi-datalink hardware and software network and strengthening its role in the space communications domain, with

funding devoted to unmanned vehicles counter-systems, the medical sector, and contribution to the PESCO and EDIDP/EDF initiatives.

4. What is your view on a whole-of-defence approach and/or role specialisation for the armed forces?

In an increasingly complex international environment, defence and security are increasingly multifaceted, often blurring the distinction between military and non-military defence. Non-military threats, such as the one connected to climate change, increasingly affect international security. On the other hand, the military instrument is increasingly involved in non-military activities, such as supporting law enforcement agencies or assisting civilian populations during natural disasters. Coping with the needs of the new scenario requires deeper integration among services and greater cooperation with the other components of one state's security system, including civil protection, the defence industry, the intelligence community, research and academia, and the country's political establishment. However, while interoperability should be strengthened, promoting jointness and developing and implementing protocols such as the EU's Concept on Effective Civil-Military Coordination in Support of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief or the UN CMCoord system, the armed forces should retain their specificities and their ability to provide high-value assets and capabilities. Coordination at NATO and EU levels could foster the process, limiting duplications and allowing for greater efficiency in resource allocation. At the same time, an alliance-wide 'division of labour' should cover the full spectrum of the possible threats, especially if coupled with the emergence of a more effective European security and defence identity.

5. Which incentives should the EU and NATO offer to Member States to meet the security goals (protection of citizens, crisis management/collective defence, effective partnerships, and cooperation with partners) set by the SC and NSC?

Both NATO and the EU provide Member States with a practical framework to coordinate their defence policies and optimise resource allocation. They promote interoperability and a common approach to defence and security problems. Finally, the Atlantic Alliance offers a unique security guarantee enshrined in the collective defence mechanism. All these elements are strong incentives to 'stay together' in a common security framework. The NSC's high

level of ambition further strengthens this dimension, stressing security's indivisibility, especially in its non-military components. The most critical aspect is burden sharing. 'Who pays the bill?' is a central question not only in US/Europe relations but also in intra-European dynamics. The Celtic Manor pledge (2014) has proved only partially effective in pushing NATO members to allocate a given GDP's share to military expenditure. More stringent financial rules could strengthen NATO's purpose, reduce contrasts among members, and raise national preparedness levels. Equally important is the development of shared threat perception. If Russia's unlawful invasion of Ukraine triggered a compact and unambiguous Western response, in the past, divisions frequently emerged, such as between 'eastern' and 'southern' allies, about what threats to prioritise. With NATO increasingly expanding its field of interest to hybrid/non-military threats, strengthening cooperation with the EU could be another way to promote member countries' engagement and share the burden of common security.

6. Is there a preferred strategic partner(s) your country is likely to cooperate with in the field of security and defence and which is the reasoning behind this choice/choices?

As already said, Italy is deeply integrated into NATO and the EU political and military structures, which provide the country's main frame of reference regarding cooperation in the defence and security fields. From this perspective, the country's approach to defence and security is essentially multilateralist. As NATO's leading member and a key player in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, the US has been a privileged partner since Italy entered into the Atlantic Alliance. However, with the deepening of the European integration process, the role of the European countries has grown. In the industrial sector, the Italian defence industry cooperates with several European and non-European partners. Italy is also actively involved in the PESCO and EDIDP/EDF initiatives. For instance, in 2018, when the first 17 PESCO programs were approved, Italy was involved in 15 of them and was the leading nation in four. In the same way, in 2021, the Italian 'Leonardo' company was involved in 11 out of 26 approved EDIDP programs. Finally, Italy signed military cooperation agreements with several Wider Mediterranean, Asian, and African states, within the framework of its traditional 'three circles' policy of promoting the country's interests in the Atlantic, European, and Mediterranean theatres. Strengthening interoperability is one of the main aims of Italy's initiatives, together with supporting the emergence of a competitive European

defence industry as an element of a viable and credible European security and defence identity.

7. How could European countries position themselves collectively and individually in an increasingly competitive strategic environment?

In an increasingly competitive strategic environment, greater integration is essential to strengthening Europe's role and credibility and allowing its countries to foster their interests in front of more intense international competition. The EU Strategic Compass, adopted in March 2022, has been a significant step in this direction. While not an epoch-making turning point, it marked a clear leap forward in analysing the existing criticalities and proposing initiatives to address them. Another step has been the widespread increase in defence budgets after the outbreak of the Ukraine war. Higher defence budgets are one of the cornerstones of a credible European security and defence identity. At the same time, they contribute to shaping more balanced US/Europe relations. Although NATO remains the foundation of Europe's defence, the shift of US attention to the Indo-Pacific implies a rethink of the transatlantic bond. European allies should develop capabilities to conduct crisis management operations in Europe's neighbourhood without today's heavy reliance on US enablers such as strategic lift, refuelling, and C4ISR. From this perspective, the emergence of a full-fledged European security and defence identity could reconcile Europe's ambitions to raise its standing and extend the operational scope of its foreign missions with NATO's goals of closer cooperation with the EU. Moreover, greater US/Europe complementarity could strengthen their political link, reducing the risk of crises like those that dotted the Trump presidency.

8. How to ensure Europe's strategic unity and purpose in terms of language, strategic culture and capabilities?

Traditionally, 'speaking with one language' has been one of the EU's main problems, and the clash of national interests remains a permanent source of weakness, especially in sensitive fields like defence and security. This lack of a shared vision has been one of the reasons why, in the past, strategic elaborations largely failed to materialise into concrete decisions. Differentiated integration has been suggested as a possible way to overcome such a limit and empower Member States to take ownership of different strategic issues. From this

perspective, more than harmonising the conflicting national perceptions, the aim is to leverage their differences to speed up the integration process. Differentiated integration has already been successfully adopted in several areas, such as the economic and monetary union and the Justice and Home Affairs area. In the defence area, PESCO is a product of this approach. Widening its scope could provide several benefits, especially when legislative procedures require consensus among all national governments. A variable geometry approach can also be helpful to promote the emergence of a common strategic culture and facilitate conversations on long-term geostrategic matters at the highest levels of leadership. In this field, the debates leading up to the adoption of the Strategic Compass could be a model to build upon, possibly moving from a small group of states engaged in periodic conversation and gradually expanding the panel to other interested members and, possibly, relevant third-party actors.

9. How can defence cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic framework be further strengthened following the two EU-NATO Declarations of 2016, 2018 and current SC and new NC?

The Ukraine war further emphasised the gap between the US and Europe regarding military capabilities. Reducing this gap is the top priority to strengthen the transatlantic bond and make US/Europe more symmetrical. Moreover, a deeper US/Europe security cooperation can be mutually beneficial, especially in non-military sectors, where NATO can play only a limited role. To enhance its bargaining power, Europe should develop a viable and credible security and defence identity by increasing its operational capabilities, reducing its dependence on US enablers, strengthening its industrial base, and working on a shared security vision. As already mentioned, differentiated integration and more robust political and financial commitment can be tools to reach these aims. Another pivotal aspect is moving towards more balanced US/Europe political relations. The US's growing attention towards the Asia-Pacific makes this rebalancing especially important. However, greater US/Europe cooperation does not mean the end of any possible divergence. Rather, US strategic refocusing will probably emphasise the 'mixed' nature of a relationship made of both collaboration and competition. In the coming years, keeping the relationship on a collaborative track will probably be the most difficult challenge. In this context, a credible European security and defence identity could be an important element in preserving the balance between the two shores of the Atlantic and reducing the structural tensions of the post-Cold War period.

Poland¹³

The Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM)

Authors: Dr. Wojciech Lorenz, Head of the International Security Programme at PISM

Dr. Filip Bryjka, Analyst at the International Security Programme at PISM

Dr. Marcin Terlikowski, Deputy Head of Research at PISM

The February 24th Russian invasion of Ukraine has been seen in Poland as both an apex of Russia's longstanding drive to dismount the post-Cold War order in Europe and a direct – even if not imminent – challenge for core security interests of Poland, including its sovereignty in the long term. The fact, that Russia decided to openly use force in pursuit of the illegitimate concept of zones of influence, seeking a subjugation, also through attrition, of a neighbouring country, has been broadly seen in Poland as proof, that Russian neo-imperial policy is back and will shape the European security environment in the long run. Consequently, Poland doubled down on its priorities as regards both: national military potential, which will undergo a significant overhaul, and Polish alliance policies, which will put even more emphasis on making NATO's defence and deterrence credible and the US military engagement in Europe robust and petrified.

Threat Perception, Alliances and Defence Policy in Strategic Documents¹⁴

Polish National Security Strategy adopted in 2020 (SBN, 2020) underlines the importance of NATO and the EU for Polish and Euro-Atlantic security and reflects the deterioration of the security environment caused by the increasingly aggressive policy of Russia. SBN was one of key elements, which informed Polish positions in the process of formulating the new EU and NATO strategies. The EU Strategic Compass (SC, 2022) and the NATO Strategic Concept (NSC, 2022) represent a threat perception similar to the Polish approach, shaped primarily by Russia's aggressive, revisionist policy. Polish strategic goals include strengthening of both NATO and the EU and the development of European defence

¹³ The authors of the Polish chapter have chosen to present alternative subtitles corresponding to each of the survey questions (identified in footnotes), also opting for a different question order than that suggested in the survey.

¹⁴ Original question: How existing national strategic documents of countries represented in NESSI fit to NSC and SC?

potential in coordination and complementarity with the Alliance. Poland can contribute to the achievement of these goals with its plans to increase the defence spending to 3% GDP or more, strengthen the armed forces, build greater resilience of the state and society to hybrid threats (including in cyber and information domains), adjust crisis response system to NATO's mechanisms, and build capacities for technology development and production of strategic resources. Polish strategy also calls for stronger NATO defence and deterrence policy, greater allied presence on the Eastern Flank and strengthening of NATO's political cohesion and the transatlantic bonds, which was later reflected in NATO's strategy. The Homeland Defence Bill (UOO, 2022), which was adopted in 2022 to help implement the strategy, underlines that the technical modernization and transformation of Polish armed forces should address the goals agreed within the NATO Defence Planning Process, which are meant to facilitate the development of allied capabilities for common operations. Contrary to NATO and EU strategic documents, Polish strategy does not refer to China as a rival, challenge or a threat. It only notes that the rivalry between the US and China is an important phenomenon, which affects the whole international system.

The (Unchanged) Centrality of Russian Threat after February 24th 2022¹⁵

Main threats to Poland stem from the revisionist policy of Russia, which aims to subjugate Ukraine, re-establish a sphere of influence in its neighbourhood and undermine the US credibility as the main defender of the post-Cold War security architecture in Europe. Before the invasion of Ukraine, in December 2021, Russia put an ultimatum to NATO and the US, demanding the renunciation of the Alliance's enlargement policy (the so-called open door policy), the withdrawal of NATO and US troops to pre-1997 positions (rolling back the developments in Allied force posture, which took place after the first post-Cold War enlargement of NATO in 1999), and the adoption of legally binding agreements that would limit NATO's ability to support allies and partners neighbouring Russia. The strategic goals of Russia directly challenge the most vital interests of Poland as their implementation would affect Polish security and, first and foremost, Poland's ability to make sovereign decisions regarding its defence policy and alliances. With almost two years having passed since Russia invaded Ukraine, the chances that the war will end with a compromise acceptable to both Russia and Ukraine are slim (Lorenz, 2022). It is understood in Poland, that having failed to

¹⁵ Original question: Which major emerging strategic challenges are likely to affect your country? Please include the threat perceptions for national security and in the framework of EU and NATO. Countries perceive different threats and risks in different cooperative security contexts?

achieve its strategic goal of subjugating Ukraine, Russia will only double down on its confrontational approach towards the West and the region of Central and Eastern Europe, Poland included. Even if Russia's military capacity has been weakened as a result of its losses in Ukraine, Russia can still act against Poland and other NATO states under the threshold of open military conflict by the means of hybrid warfare. It cannot be also excluded, that Russia will rebuild its military potential already in a mid-term and – in certain conditions, for example when the US is engaged in a conflict in the Indo-Pacific – could decide for a direct military confrontation with NATO. Hence, Russia will remain for Poland an immediate military and strategic threat for the foreseeable future. At the same time, the US perceives China, rather than Russia, as a main strategic challenge and prioritizes Indo-Pacific over Europe (NDS, 2022). This means that Poland and other European allies and partners will have to use all available tools offered by their membership in NATO, EU and bilateral cooperation to strengthen the European pillar of the Alliance. Only a more balanced share of the burden of keeping the defence and deterrence against Russia credible can assure the continuation of the US role as the guarantor of European security.

Multinational Defence Cooperation Patterns¹⁶

Poland participates in 13 projects implemented under the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) mechanism (Gotkowska, 2019). As regards research and technology projects, co-financed by the European Defence Fund (EDF), Polish entities (both research centres and defence companies) participate in 31 endeavours (Raubo, 2022). Poland perceives the importance of EU's defence initiatives mostly through the prism of the need to reinforce the European contribution to NATO's defence and deterrence. The significance of the EU's autonomous capacity to engage in crisis response capabilities is somewhat secondary for Poland, though Polish armed forces participated in numerous EU military operations, including executive missions (like EUFOR Tchad/RCA). Both PESCO projects and EDF-funded programs with Poland's participation concern priorities, which had been identified in the context of either NATO or national capability plans. These are mostly: military mobility, secure communications (military radios) and radio navigation, rapid response to cyber threats, improvement of interoperability, logistics and operational support

¹⁶ Original question: In which specific multi-national security & defence projects (military mobility, cyber, maritime security, EU and NATO innovation hubs, etc...) does your country participate and what is the reasoning behind this participation? Choose the category your own country is involved in, more than one, if that is the case.

(including medical), joint training and simulations, integrated unmanned ground system, maritime semi-automatic mine countermeasure systems, as well as surveillance and protection of ports and maritime waters.

Poland is the lead country in one PESCO project, which aims to establish a Special Operations Forces Medical Training Centre (SMTC) with a task to enhance medical capabilities supporting SOF missions and operations in terms of training, procedures and interoperability. SMTC is being created on the basis of a Polish Military Medical Training Centre in Łódź, which has a status of a certified National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) Training Centre. The intent of the project is to provide medical training capability for SOF personnel, increase coordination of medical support for SOF operations, boost professional cooperation of participating Member States (as of 2022, Poland and Hungary) in that field, enhance readiness and capability of personnel and material and intensify harmonisation in the subject matter.

As regards regional defence cooperation formats, Poland is most active within the Visegrad Group (V4) and the Bucharest Nine (B9) formats. The V4 members are Poland, Czechia, Slovakia and Hungary. Although this format was instrumental in coordinating the accession of Poland and its neighbours to NATO, the defence and defence-industrial cooperation between all of the four countries has never significantly developed. The most important joint project is the V4 EU battlegroup offered every 3-4 years (on standby from 1 January 2023 until 30 June 2023) and engaging also Ukraine. There is also closer cooperation under the NATO framework in the area of logistics (V4 Joint Logistics Support Group Headquarters) and joint exercises.

Poland also strengthens defence cooperation in the framework of the Bucharest Nine (B9) – a format established in 2015, in response to the Russian aggression against Ukraine. It gathers nine NATO's easternmost Member States (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary) and its role is to deepen cooperation between the NATO Eastern Flank states, as well as discussing key issues of security policy (Pieńkowski et al, 2018). So far, however, this forum has not been used to generate practical military cooperation programs and was used mainly for the purpose of synchronising the position of the Eastern Flank states in NATO.

Bilateral Partnerships¹⁷

Poland continues its efforts to strengthen political, military and energy cooperation with the US - the main ally, seen as an indispensable actor as regards the long-term security of Europe. It has been a longstanding Poland's goal to augment the US military presence on the Polish territory. In line with Polish expectations, such presence should enable the US to support the defence of Poland against Russian aggression either in the framework of NATO or the 'coalition of the willing' from the very first day of a potential conflict. From the Polish perspective, such presence would have a unique deterrent effect, and should be seen as an indispensable element of the credibility of NATO and US security guarantees for the allies. As of early 2023, the number of American troops in Poland stands at around 10,000 and is organised around the NATO's multinational battlegroup in North-Eastern Poland, led by the US, the rotational deployment of an Armoured Brigade Combat Team (ABCT) together with some additional force elements, a forward-deployed HQ element of US V Corps, and extra forces, deployed after the February 24th Russian invasion of Ukraine. In the long term, Poland eyes to develop infrastructures – agreed in the Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement from 2020 – enabling much larger US deployments in times of crisis. There is also an Aegis Ashore missile defence site in Poland, which achieved operational capability and is planned to be transferred to NATO command and control system in mid-2024. Extensive defence-industrial cooperation (based on M1A1/A2 Abrams tanks, F-35 combat-aircraft, HIMARS rocket artillery systems, with more in the pipeline) complements the picture of the US as the primary strategic partner of Poland.

The United Kingdom, in turn, has to be seen as the most important Polish ally in Europe. In 2017, in response to Brexit and deteriorating security in Europe both countries signed the Treaty on Defence and Security Cooperation. The UK shares the Polish threat perception regarding Russia, deploys the most capable military force among European NATO members and demonstrates readiness to impose costs on Russia in response to its attempts to undermine the rules-based international order. The UK has also advanced industrial military base and can help Poland develop important capabilities, including surface combatants ("Miecznik" programme) and air defence systems ("Narew" programme).

Poland also gradually deepens defence cooperation with France, seen as possessing a different threat perception but offering a political, economic, technological and military

¹⁷ Original question: With which allies and partners is your country likely to deepen its defence and security cooperation and what is the reasoning behind these choices?

potential, which can be instrumental in enabling Europe to deter Russia and helping defend allies in critical contingencies. Most recently, in December 2022, Poland launched a programme with France, regarding space capabilities (Earth observation).

Whole-of-government Approach in Defence and Lessons from Ukraine¹⁸

Poland perceives defence as an effort of the whole nation and it is one of Poland's declared priorities to strengthen the cooperation between military and civilian structures (DCRP, 2017). This should strengthen state's resilience during crisis situations arising from natural and man-made threats, as well as enhances the ability of the entire state to defend itself against hybrid threats and in situations of military aggression. The crisis management system in Poland is multi-level and consists of the following components: 1) crisis management bodies, 2) consultative and advisory bodies competent to initiate and coordinate actions undertaken in the field of crisis management, 3) crisis management centres, maintaining 24-hour readiness to undertake actions.

Polish Crisis Management System			
Administrative Level	Crisis Management Body	Consultative and Advisory Body	Crisis Management Centre
National	Council of Ministers, Prime Minister	Government Crisis Management Team	Government Security Centre
Resort	Minister in charge of a government administration department, Head of a central authority	Crisis Management Team (Ministries, Central Offices)	Crisis Management Centre (Ministry, Central Office)
Provincial	Voivode governor	Provincial Crisis Management Team	Provincial Crisis Management Centre
District	District governor	District Crisis Management Team	District Crisis Management Centre
Municipal	Mayor	Municipal Crisis Management Team	Municipal Crisis Management Centre

¹⁸ Original question: What is your country's view on a whole-of-defence approach in a crisis management context?

Since 2017, the newly formed Territorial Defence Forces (WOT) have been playing a role in crisis management system, whose tasks include supporting civilian services in crisis situations (Skrzypczak, 2017). This type of military is not only dedicated to supporting operational forces in case of military aggression, but also to countering and responding to hybrid threats. It has a locally oriented reconnaissance system, its own cyberdefence component, information and psychological operations (INFO/PSYOPS) cells, as well as structures responsible for strategic communication (STRATCOM) and civil-military cooperation (CIMIC). In the case of external aggression, WOT soldiers are prepared to conduct various type of irregular warfare operations (e.g., subversion, sabotage), are responsible for the organization of resistance in occupied areas and combat units of the enemy (including special, reconnaissance and airborne troops). Currently, the WOT troops comprise more than 36,000 soldiers, of whom approximately 10% are professional soldiers, with the remainder performing voluntary service, but staying in their area of responsibility, while being professionally active in the civilian domain. The target number for the formation in 2026 is 50,000. So far, the territorial defence forces have proven their usefulness and ability to respond quickly during, among others, the COVID-19 pandemic (Operation “Resistant Spring”) and the migration crisis on the border with Belarus (Operation “Strong support”).

The Polish parliament is also working on the adoption of a law on civil protection and on the state of natural disasters, which is expected to provide the legal basis for strengthening the crisis management system (especially in the civil defence dimension). Based on observations from the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, Poland needs to bolster capacity to provide protection for the civilian population by, among other things, developing a system of air raid shelters. Models in the Scandinavian countries as regards “total defence” concepts, for example, could serve as patterns for these efforts. The crisis management system in place is based on the use of national resources, and only after these have been exhausted does it provide for the possibility of requesting assistance from NATO and EU allies.

Armed Forces Specialisation¹⁹

Because of its size, geographical location, threat perception and the most likely scenarios of military escalation by Russia against NATO, Poland aims to maintain a full-spectrum military force, which consists of all branches (army, navy, air-force, special forces) and is able to conduct joint military operations, both independently and as part of a coalition (DCRP,

¹⁹ Original question: What is your country’s view on role specialization for the armed forces?

2017). Specialization of the armed forces is now not considered a viable goal for Poland, particularly since lessons learned from Ukraine point, *inter alia*, to the need to develop a coherent force package. Yet, specialisation has been as a matter of fact pursued by Poland, mainly as a political instrument, which can allow increasing the visibility of the state and its armed forces in NATO structures, create a platform for the development of cooperation with allies and can lead to the deployment of NATO/US military structures and forces on Poland's territory. At the NATO summit in 2002, Poland with all other allies adopted the Prague Capabilities Commitments (PCC) and declared that its specialization in the North Atlantic Alliance would be special operation forces (SOF). What followed was significant investments into SOF, which formally became a separate service in 2007. This step enabled more flexibility in their use in allied contexts and also a quicker growth. As of 2020, Polish SOF strength stood at approximately 3,500.

In addition to participating in combat operations in allied missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, Polish SOF also sufficiently contributes to Security Foreign Assistance (SFA) and Building Defence and Security Capacity (BDC) of NATO and EU partner states in the Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Middle East and North Africa. Their involvement in the training of Ukrainian Special Operations Forces (SSO) within the framework of bilateral and multilateral cooperation (JMTG-U) has been crucial to enhancing Ukrainian combat capabilities for irregular operations against Russian aggression.

The Challenge of Implementing the NATO strategy and EU's Strategic Compass²⁰

The implementation of the NATO strategy – which declares a shift of allied strategy from forward deterrence to defence, being in itself a breakthrough decision – requires the development of forces and capabilities, which will be prepared for high intensity conflict with a near-peer competitor, like Russia, but will also be able to participate in different types of crisis prevention and management operations. At the 2023 Vilnius summit, NATO leaders approved new regional defence plans that are intended to ensure the ability to respond to the threat from Russia from multiple directions simultaneously. The plans are supported with a New Force Model (NFM) of at least 300,000 troops in high readiness. These decisions are augmented by a new Defence Investment Pledge (DIP) – that allies will invest at least 2% of

²⁰ Original question: How to implement the NSC and SC, which tools/actions mentioned in these documents are instrumental for reaching their goals, in the framework of protection of citizens, crisis management, collective defence and partnerships.

their GDP on defence -, and Defence Production Action Plan (DPAP), which should stimulate the investments and the development of agreed forces and capabilities. However, even with new instruments such as European Defence Industry Reinforcement through Common Procurement (EDIRPA), European Defence Investment Programme (EDIP) and Act in Support of Ammunition Production (ASAP) the allies will face a challenge of increasing the defence production so they are able to both replenish stocks emptied due to massive arms and ammunition deliveries to Ukraine and strengthen their military potential. NATO and EU members will also have to use the newly created NATO Defence Innovation Fund, Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA), European Peace Facility (EPF), European Defence Fund (EDF) and PESCO to develop capabilities and technologies that will be crucial to maintain military edge over the adversaries.

Under the EU Strategic Compass, the Member States committed – most importantly – to establish a Rapid Deployment Capacity (EU RDC) of some 5,000 troops with additional enablers. The process of building the EU RDC will have to be carefully coordinated with NATO's implementation of the New Force Model as regards increasing the readiness and availability of forces for operations. Lack of coordination and synchronization may hamper advances in both NATO and the EU as regards the force posture development, while having also adverse political effects, linked to the long discussed issue of the potential EU-NATO competition over resources.

Both the EU and NATO can, however, work closely together to strengthen resilience of their Member States. To achieve this goal, both organizations should, in the first place, agree to the methodology, which will help to measure the states' preparedness for different forms of crisis and hybrid attacks. Next, the allies should make the assessment of their vulnerabilities and adopt the plan of strengthening their preparedness. NATO should make the regular assessment of the implementation of the plans. The EU should adopt the guidelines for resilience, corresponding to already adopted guidelines by NATO. EU political mechanisms should be used to increase pressure on the Member States to implement the necessary procedures and plans.

Strengthening Euro-Atlantic Security: Next Steps²¹

In light of political difficulties in strengthening political cooperation between NATO and the EU due to the membership issue, a bottom-up, pragmatic approach (which is the foundation of the cooperation of both organizations) should be further developed. Both organizations will have to continue informal consultations to agree on the coordination of their policies. Their priority should be the adjustment of their cooperation to their new strategies and the new reality created by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Strategic areas of cooperation should be identified following the assumption that the US will be increasingly focused on rivalry with China, and even though it will remain committed to European security, it may not be able to commit its full potential to the defence of European allies. Europe will also need to strengthen its ability to react to different crises in the European neighborhood, without US leadership and capabilities. Hence, it is in the strategic interest of both organizations to coordinate their efforts in five crucial areas: they should help Ukraine defend itself against Russian invasion, strengthen the European pillar of NATO, strengthen the defence and industrial base so it is able to deliver arms and ammunition in sufficient numbers, develop an independent European crisis management capability and strengthen European capacity to support United States' efforts to protect the freedom of navigation even outside the Euro-Atlantic area. NATO and the EU should provide a regular update of the capabilities, which can be developed in a collaborative way. They could also review seven areas of cooperation and 74 concrete proposals for their implementation – following the three joint declarations – in light of new strategic priorities.

What future role for NATO, EU and OSCE in Safeguarding Peace in Europe?²²

Poland recognizes the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (along with the bilateral cooperation with the US and regional cooperation), as the main pillars and instruments of its external security (SBN, 2020). From the Polish perspective, NATO is primarily a collective defence alliance, which should be able to defend the territory and populations of the Member States, and to prevail in the conflict with the aggressor. Poland is a vocal advocate for strong transatlantic relations, as the credibility of

²¹ Original question: How can defence cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic framework be further strengthened, following the two EU-NATO Declarations of 2016, 2018 and current SC and new NC?

²² Original question: In your country's view what is the perceived optimal role of European organizations – NATO, EU and OSCE?

NATO is best guaranteed by the US military presence in Europe and ability to rapidly support European allies with conventional and nuclear military capabilities.

The EU is perceived mainly as the political and economic integration vehicle, which has, nevertheless, an important role to play in the security domain. Polish interests include the increased role of the EU in its eastern neighbourhood, including through the Eastern Partnership framework. However, Poland is sceptical of interpreting the concept of European strategic autonomy in the context of building a European “alternative” to NATO and the transatlantic bond. Even if such interpretations are not common now, in the conditions of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the destruction of the post-Cold War security architecture in Europe, Poland is concerned with an ill-informed development of EU military capabilities (mostly: the EU RDC and the required command and control capacity on the basis of the MPCC cell). The Polish concern is that if implemented without synchronisation with NATO capability plans, these plans could somewhat undermine NATO’s effort as regards the New Force Model agreed at the 2022 Madrid summit of the Alliance, and thereby undermine European security, instead of offering a credible military potential, which could be used by Europe as both: a contribution to defence and deterrence under NATO and as, a very much needed, Europe’s own tool to react to crises in its southern neighbourhood. Nevertheless, it is a declared Polish interest to use all available tools to strengthen the European defence potential in synchronisation with NATO, support EU crisis management capabilities, as well as strengthen the European defence industry, so that it is capable of the development of new technologies and cooperates also in the transatlantic and non-EU European formats.

The OSCE is for Poland the main multilateral organization, which helps protect the post-Cold War, rules-based Euro-Atlantic security architecture. Poland, which took over the OSCE chairmanship in 2022, aimed at the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the OSCE area, in line with the organization’s principles and commitments. However, Russia’s aggression against Ukraine and violation of agreed norms undermined the effectiveness of OSCE in the politico-military dimension (Kolarz, 2022). Nevertheless, OSCE can still remain relevant as an instrument for strengthening the human dimension of security and a tool for exerting pressure on Russia for its revisionist policy contrary to OSCE commitments.

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Portugal

Instituto da Defesa Nacional (IDN)

Author: Ana Francisca Duarte, Research Assistant at IDN

1. How do existing national strategic documents of countries represented in NESSI fit to NSC and SC?

The most recent national defence concept was adopted in 2013, and is currently under revision, thus it cannot reflect orientations coming from the NSC and SC, as it precedes these documents and was informed by an international environment wildly different from the present one, especially in terms of technological progress and, consequently, the types of threats conceivable. In that sense, there is an ongoing debate in the competent spheres in Portugal over the possibility of shortening the revision cycle for future national defence concepts. Currently, the revised national defence concept awaits formal approval. Nevertheless, there are still fundamental issues for defence that remain mostly unchanged, and for the areas that have experienced the deepest changes, such as technological innovation, other strategic documents of narrower scope can clarify the links between national strategy and the recently adopted EU and NATO guidelines.

Overall, the Portuguese perception of the international security environment is similar to that expressed in the NSC and SC, marked by the crucial shift that the invasion of Ukraine by Russia provoked in Europe, the prevalence of climate change and complex emergencies in future crisis scenarios, and the rise of hybrid threats that elevates the importance of the cyber and space domains.

Regarding alignment with the EU, in particular, and its Strategic Compass, which is composed of four chapters (act, secure, invest and partner), there is a clear implementation of its orientations in Portuguese strategic documents regarding several areas. One of the key points of the SC concerns the call for EU's increased preparedness for crises and threats and faster action and decision-making in the face of crises, an idea mainly explored under SC's chapter "Act". Portuguese strategic documents mirror this in identifying the readiness of the deployment of the armed forces in response to complex emergencies, namely in disaster situations, humanitarian missions and missions in support of the development and well-being of populations (Despacho n.º 2536/2020), as one of the priorities in the development of national military capabilities. Moreover, this expressed priority also touches upon the topic

of protection of citizens beyond borders, which is pivotal in Portuguese defence and foreign policy and is also featured in the SC's chapter "Secure".

Other key orientations presented by the SC have permeated to national documents, such as the focus on hybrid threats and the space and cyber domains, also prevalent in the NSC, which is reflected in national defence capability building plans and technological development and investment priorities (RCM n.º 52/2023, p. 30), as well as the pressing objective of enhancing overall resilience within the EU domain, also in relation with climate change. In this regard, the 2013 Portuguese defence concept already included climate-related risks in its assessment of the threat environment, stressing the need to improve the capacity for prevention, adaptation and rapid response to those challenges (MDN, 2013). Furthermore, the latest Strategy for the Development of the Technological and Industrial Defence Base clearly emphasises the importance of integrating sustainability, climate change mitigation, energy transition and circular economy principles in the development of new defence capabilities, through an increased investment in electrification, automation and digitalisation (RCM n.º 52/2023, p. 36).

In line with the orientations emanated from the SC chapter "Invest", Portugal has increased participation in PESCO and EDF projects. The recently published Strategy for the Development of the Technological and Industrial Defence Base 2023-2033 (EDBTID in Portuguese) references the SC numerous times, and reinforces the need to further deepen collaboration in innovation and development in defence, within the EU. The EDBTID highlights the importance of having a national strategy that is consistent with the objectives and research, development and innovation priorities of NATO and the EU (RCM n.º 52/2023, p. 27), an orientation also coming from these organisations. Additionally, the document identifies key industry sectors and priority technological areas aligned with those identified by EU and NATO predictive analyses as trending technologies for the future, which reflects the SC's goal to develop "the next generation capabilities in all operational domains". Formal strategic guidelines seem to indicate that Portugal is conscious of the fact that the development of national defence capabilities must account for needs derived from multilateral efforts in the framework of NATO and EU (Despacho n.º 2536/2020).

Concerning the subject of partnerships, both the SC and NSC convey a partnership diversification approach based on mutual respect and benefit, a position also assumed by Portugal in the latest Great Options for 2022-2026 with the affirmation that it will look for "diversified relations" in reference to bilateral partners. Furthermore, in the EU context,

chapter “Partner” highlights the need to seek tailored partnership agreements in order to diminish strategic dependencies and increase autonomy, a logic that Portugal supports.

Looking to orientations specific to NATO, the most evident are, firstly, the overarching goal of ensuring a credible deterrence capability, which guides Portuguese military capability planning and national plans, in line with the need to increase defence spending. With respect to security/defence functions, the focus on maritime security presented in the NSC has been a prevalent element of Portuguese defence strategy. The latter is mentioned in the national defence strategy in relation to threats identified, main strategic action vectors and as a crucial part of Portugal’s identity within NATO and internationally (MDN, 2013). Moreover, it is very important for Portugal that NATO, through the NSC, continues recognising the significance of the Southern Flank to the defence of the Alliance, including from the Russian threat as its interference in countries in Northern Africa and South Mediterranean increases (Reis, 2022; Daehnhardt, 2022).

2. Which major emerging strategic challenges are likely to affect your country?

Please include the threat perceptions for national security and in the framework of EU and NATO. Countries perceive different threats and risks in different cooperative security contexts?

The national defence directives and the national defence concept of 2013 do not acknowledge the existence of direct threats to Portugal. The Portuguese perspective is that national security expands beyond the territorial borders of the state, since democracies have a collective responsibility towards the international (in)security context, and thus should contribute to reduce factors of global insecurity and regional conflicts (MDN, 2013). In that vein, national strategic documents describe a changing environment characterized by: an international system that is in the midst of a transition period that triggers crises and conflicts; growing competition between superpowers; a shift in US priorities towards the Indo-Pacific region; the accelerated development of emerging and disruptive technologies that create new opportunities for unlawful and criminal actions; and the war in Ukraine. These changes generate global challenges, threats and risks that affect areas of national strategic interest.

The identification of threats and risks in the official documents translates into a more geographical and thematic expression than a substantive one. Therefore, in the latest national defence concept (2013), the main risks and threats identified are divided into threats of a global nature and risks of an environmental nature. The first comprise threats related to

terrorism, the proliferation of mass destruction weapons, transnational organized crime, cybercrime and piracy. The second encapsulate climate change, heat and cold waves, threats to the ecosystem (terrestrial and maritime), pandemics and other sanitary risks. On the other hand, the geographical expression presented by the current defence concept regards:

- The near neighbourhood in the Mediterranean context, including the Maghreb region and the Middle East, with respect to energy and migration flows and human and drug trafficking originating from the region. Moreover, local conflicts pose a threat to gas and oil supplies to Portugal, eventually also representing a potential increase in demographic pressure.
- The Atlantic, in the euro-Atlantic context, in terms of maritime security, notably the protection of maritime critical infrastructures (such as communication lines), sea resources, freedom of navigation and maritime routes protection.
- The African space, especially the Sahel region and the Gulf of Guinea, where terrorist movements and organized crime expand, thus causing transnational challenges that undermine national, European and strategic partners' interests, and endanger Portuguese diaspora communities.

These areas fit also to the five main spaces of interest, permanent in the Portuguese defence strategy, which consist of: Europe, the North Atlantic, the Maghreb region, the South Atlantic (comprises the Portuguese language space) and Asia (given its centrality in the current international politics environment but also the historical ties with the continent, namely East-Timor).

When looking at the challenge perception from the Portuguese public, however, the picture changes inevitably to concerns of a more domestic nature and affecting the citizens' daily lives, such as the national economic situation, inflation, health and social security, and unemployment, according to Standard Eurobarometer data (European Commission, 2023, 2022a, 2022b, 2021a, 2021b, 2020, 2019a, 2019b, 2018a, 2018b). Comparatively, transnational challenges mentioned in the national strategic documents such as climate change, energy supply and terrorism occupied, over the last five years, the lower positions of the list of 13/14 main concerns worrying the Portuguese at the national level, corresponding to averages of 5.1%, 3.2% and 0.7%, respectively. This likely stems from several factors namely the human tendency for prioritising ontological security concerns; a generalised lack of knowledge regarding national defence policy and strategy in Portuguese society; and the fact that defence diplomacy, especially through participation in international missions in

support of partners and allies, is a crucial part of Portugal's international image and foreign policy stance as a builder of bridges and consensus at the multilateral level (Freire, 2023, p. 855), an effort that often goes fairly unnoticed by most of the Portuguese civil society.

In the NATO context, the main challenges identified are Russia's expansionist plans, threats to the members' territorial integrity and in the cyber and space domains. In addition, challenges associated with crisis management and prevention, and maritime security, which is an increasingly important priority for NATO, comprising threats to the freedom of navigation, to harbours and infrastructures, amplified by recent strategic competition in the North Atlantic. Maritime security is a particularly significant challenge for Portugal considering the extent of its area of responsibility, namely for search and rescue missions, and which is expected to become even greater if the process for the extension of the continental platform is successful.

On the other hand, in the framework of the EU, the main challenges perceived are related to the return of war and instability to the European continent and EU neighbourhood, which had repercussions for all EU Member States', in many areas, including in terms of food and energy supply, integration of war refugees and also in how European defence and defence spending is perceived by European countries. This resulted in an awareness of the need for strengthening European strategic autonomy and developing resilience in the face of crisis, which is tangible in the Portuguese discourse about the EU context.

3. In which specific multi-national security & defence projects (military mobility, cyber, maritime security, EU and NATO innovation hubs, etc...) does your country participate and what is the reasoning behind this participation? Choose the category your own country is involved in, more than one, if that is the case.

At the EU level, Portugal currently participates in 17 projects implemented under the PESCO mechanism, mostly in the following domains: maritime, cyber, joint procedures and training (Table 1); more specifically leading in areas such as cyber defence and cybersecurity, autonomous systems and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and modelling and simulation systems (RCM n.º 52/2023). Moreover, Portugal coordinates three of these projects, specifically:

- the Maritime Unmanned Anti-Submarine System (MUSAS), which is developing an “advanced command, control and communications service architecture for anti-

- submarine warfare” (European Union, n.d.), which benefits the protection of underwater infrastructure, sea-based energy systems and sea lines of communication;
- the Automated Modelling, Identification and Damage Assessment of Urban Terrain (AMIDA-UT), which aims to create an automated system for improved mapping and identification of target structures; and
 - the EU Cyber Academia and Innovation Hub (EU CAIH) that aims to create an “innovative web of knowledge for cyber defence and cyber security education and training” (European Union, n.d.); while exploring synergies with industry and academia, and stimulating international cooperation at the EU and NATO levels.

This corresponds to a significant increase in participation from 2020, when Portugal was a project member in a total of 10 PESCO projects (idD Portugal Defence, 2021), and reflects a strategic orientation to maximize the utilisation of financing and collaborative mechanisms created by the EU (CEDN 2013). According to data from the national plan for the implementation of PESCO, at the start of 2023, Portugal was also an observer to 20 other projects.

Regarding projects dedicated to research and development in defence, Portugal is represented by 20 entities in 11 of the 61 projects selected for financing in the European Defence Fund 2021 call (idD Portugal Defence, 2022), three of these in the research domain and eight in development. Moreover, in projects financed by the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP), Portugal leads in the area of quantum technology applied to cryptography, and participates in areas related to new materials and energy materials, man-machine interface, space, command and control, and autonomous systems (RCM n.º 52/2023, p. 32).

At the NATO level, Portugal is also involved in several collaborative projects, namely five High Visibility Projects in the key capability areas of command and control, high-end acquisition, and ammunition (air, land and maritime ammunition acquisition projects). Portugal also hosts a testing centre and an accelerator site for the Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA) project, which consists of a network that brings together universities, industry and governments aiming to speed-up the development of emerging and disruptive technology solutions, with an emphasis on dual-use technologies.

Table 1

Portuguese participation in EU and NATO multi-national defence and security projects

Domain/Area	Project
EU - PESCO projects (Total: 17)	
Maritime (5)	Critical Seabed Infrastructure Protection (CSIP)
	Maritime Unmanned Anti-Submarine System (MUSAS)
	Essential Elements of European Escort (4E)
	Harbour & Maritime Surveillance and Protection (HARMSPRO)
	Maritime (Semi-) Autonomous Systems for Mine Countermeasures (MAS MCM)
Cyber, C4ISR (4)	European Secure Software Defined Radio (ESSOR)
	Cyber Threats and Incident Response Information Sharing Platform (CTIRISP)
	Automated Modelling, Identification and Damage Assessment of Urban Terrain (AMIDA-UT)
	Strategic C2 System for CSDP Missions and Operations (EUMILCOM)
Enabling, Joint (4)	Military Mobility (MM)
	Role 2F
	Geo-Meteorological and Oceanographic (GEOMETOC) Support Coordination Element (GMSCE)
	Materials and Components for Technological EU Competitiveness (MAC-EU)
Training, Facilities (2)	European Defence Airlift Training Academy (EDA-TA)
	EU Cyber Academia and Innovation Hub (EU CAIH)
Space (1)	Defence of Space Assets (DOSA)
Air, Systems (1)	Next Generation Small RPAS (NGSR)
NATO High Visibility Projects	
Command and Control (1)	Command and Control Capability for Surface Based Air and Missile Defence for the Battalion and Brigade Level (SBAMD C2 Layer)
High-end Acquisition (1)	Maritime Unmanned Systems (MUS)
Ammunition (3)	Air Battle Decisive Munitions (ABDM)
	Land Battle Decisive Munitions (LBDM)
	Maritime Battle Decisive Munitions (MBDM)

 - Projects coordinated by Portugal.

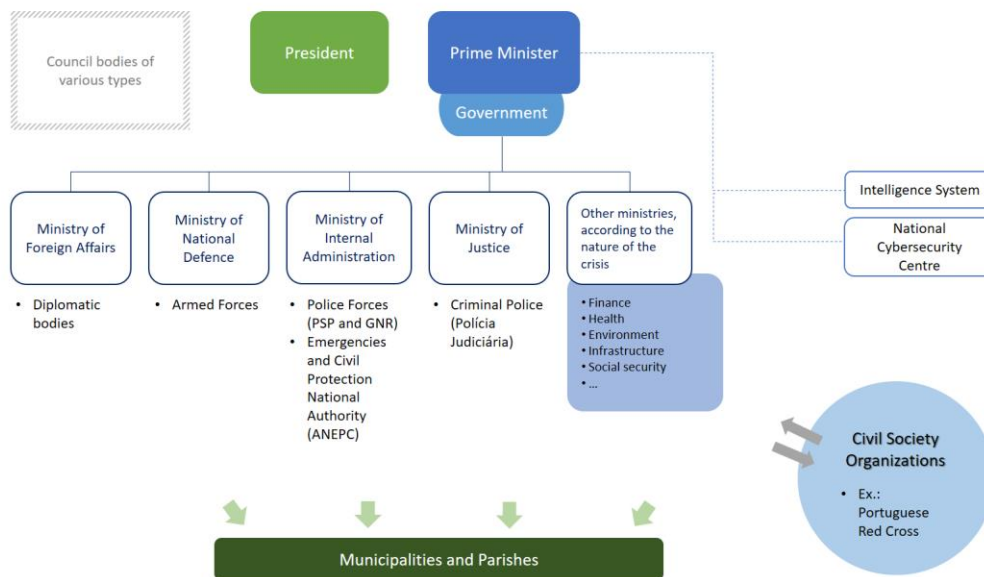
Portugal's objective is to further increase participation in these projects, as a way of fulfilling the guidelines presented by the SC and NSC regarding collaborative capability development

and research, improving the national defence economy and contributing to a stronger European defence pillar in the Atlantic context, with the limited resources inherent to a smaller territory and demography. It is also in line with one of the action areas defined by the national defence strategic concept, “Investing in knowledge, technology and innovation”, which calls for participation in international cooperation projects in research, development and production of new defence equipment of national interest, while trying to secure economic return for the country, in terms of both wealth and employment (MDN, 2013). In fact, studies show that defence economy is not only important for the defence sector but for the whole national economy as it contributes to promoting the internationalization of Portuguese companies, the creation of highly qualified jobs and the development of the national value chain and competitiveness.

4. What is your country’s view on a whole-of-defence approach in a crisis management context?

The crisis management system in Portugal is complex, divided through numerous different bodies and structures, which, although diverse and covering a wide range of governmental areas, still has a limited degree of interoperability and intercommunication in comparison to that of a typical whole-of-government approach. In fact, in 2004, a law was passed that created a national crisis management structure with the purpose of supporting the Prime Minister’s decision-making in a crisis context; however, in four years’ time it was revoked, without ever being implemented.

Even though an explicit national crisis management structure does not formally exist, in practice, the Portuguese system and its crisis management bodies and structures can be generally divided into five main national government areas (Elias, 2020): diplomacy/foreign affairs, national defence, internal security, civil protection and cybersecurity; and can be represented in very general and simplified terms by the following figure.



Source: The author.

For the most part the crisis management entities and structures that integrate the Portuguese system were created (or reformulated to include new functions) over time, according to the contemporary political needs. In that sense, they were not designed with an integrated view in mind, therefore, although in most circumstances, their capabilities and purposes are complementary and each entity and entity head knows exactly what its role is in managing a national crisis, there can also be overlaps, redundancies or omissions at times, particularly in regard to information sharing and communication procedures.

On the other hand, the absence of an explicit structure or integrated system of crisis management in the Portuguese legislation provides institutions and the political power with more flexibility to adjust according to the specific nature and dynamics of each crisis, calling upon the relevant actors when necessary. The Portuguese perspective is that of crisis management as a global strategy, in the sense that every resource can be valuable and put to use when considered necessary, throughout the crisis management process.

Regardless of Portugal not having a centralised consolidated crisis management structure, the system currently operating has adapted to the changing international environment, and is able to fulfil its mission to respond to the current state of recurring crisis (Elias, 2020). Nevertheless, there is an awareness of the need to improve joint collaboration and strategic and operational coordination between departments, especially in the communication and information-sharing domains.

Recently, there has been an increasing focus on the importance of a whole-of-government approach, particularly in the crisis context, motivated by the COVID-19 pandemic, but also due to the increased frequency of the occurrence of “crises”.

The most recent strategic documents comprise several measures related to defining an integrated strategy of national resilience – the word resilience has in fact become prevalent in the Portuguese discourse on crisis management -, promoting an integrated approach in response to threats and risks, improving information-sharing procedures between national entities, guaranteeing Portugal’s strategic autonomy, and ensuring centralised coordination between civil society, public and private institutions. In the same vein, it is especially important that the private business sector and military are fully included in crisis preparedness plans, since the former own most of the energy, transportation and communications infrastructure and services (Costa and Sampaio, 2023, p. 22), and the latter are not only one of the main civil protection agents (art. 46º, Lei de Bases da Proteção Civil), but possess unique skills that are advantageous in emergency scenarios.

5. What is your country’s view on role specialisation for the armed forces?

Typically, countries are more likely to embrace role specialisations if they have better-developed whole-of-defence approaches and highly developed cooperation strategies with like-minded states. Also, limited defence budgets and the Augustine problem of rising defence costs justify a tendency for countries to invest more in capabilities they excel at, which can bring more added-value to their national defence economy but also to the defence cooperation contexts they are inserted in. However, in the uncertain and volatile international environment that characterises the present time, with the expansion of defence domains (to space, cyber and hybrid) and the multiplication of agents and activities that can compromise national security and defence strategies, states need to keep a widening range of capabilities. The feasibility of this will increasingly depend on some degree of capability sharing, usually under the concepts of pooling and sharing programs and smart defence policies, nowhere near traditional role specialisation (Stoetman and Zandee, 2022), which is a sensitive topic for most countries as it interferes at some level with their political sovereignty. Nonetheless, it can be a viable option when it comes to military training and communication systems, among countries aligned in a concerted vision and defence policy, such as those of the EU and NATO.

In this sense, Portuguese national strategic documents acknowledge that a more integrated process of defence capability development at the European level, articulated with the Alliance, should guide defence investments. In fact, defence development cooperation mechanisms are crucial in ensuring Europe's transition to the forefront of technological innovation in a sustainable way. In that vein, Portugal has recently identified its key defence industry sectors based on EU and NATO analyses and orientations, as well as national strategic needs, namely in the following areas: aeronautics, naval construction and reparation, technical textiles, robotics and automation, software development, cybersecurity and cyber defence, energy, autonomous systems' advanced materials and space (RCM n.º 52/2023).

Beyond that, the question of specialisation in the armed forces has a limited consideration in Portugal. There is preference by national authorities for a modular and flexible concept of Armed Forces (MDN, 2013, p. 38) that values integrated and joint solutions and operations. The Portuguese armed forces are organised according to the guiding principle of concentration, hence prioritising double use (in civilian contexts) and resource sharing practices amongst the branches, while avoiding unnecessary duplication and limiting the number of infrastructures (MDN, 2013). Nevertheless, the prevalence of hybrid threats in the current context makes it necessary for Portugal to dispose of a wider range of capabilities and reinforce its capacity to intervene in a multi-domain environment, in order to possess a credible deterrence capability, not only in a national but also collective defence perspective (Despacho n.º 2536/2020). This may limit a more structured approach to specialisation, instead orienting it towards securing more autonomy in strategic areas (RCM n.º 52/2023).

In the multilateral context, however, Portugal, as most countries, has naturally developed a certain expertise in specific areas/domains of international defence cooperation. Therefore it would be the logical way forward for Portugal to affirm its centrality in those areas, namely, in the EU context, in matters of maritime security and as the liaison between the EU and African countries, especially Portuguese-speaking ones, mainly taking on the role of providing technical consultancy and contributing to local capacitation in the context of international missions.

Ultimately, the Portuguese armed forces aim to foster capabilities that allow for both its autonomous engagement, as well as for integrated engagement in multinational forces and missions.

6. How to implement the NSC and SC, which tools/actions mentioned in these documents are instrumental for reaching their goals, in the framework of protection of citizens, crisis management, collective defence and partnerships.

The new NATO Strategic Concept reaffirms collective defence as the unquestionable first priority of the Alliance, by identifying Russia as a direct threat to its members and China as a challenge to its value system and interests. Furthermore, it presents a set of priorities and tasks based on a 360-degree approach, that aims to be comprehensive both geographically and thematically, although more expressive in regard to the eastern front (Gaspar, 2022).

Concerning the tools presented for achieving collective defence, the NSC mentions joint training and exercises in various domains, the alignment of national and NATO defence plans, increased defence budgets – ensuring members fulfil their commitment to the Defence investment pledge, and understand it as a starting point (Reis, 2022) -, investment in emergent and disruptive technologies and the promotion of innovation in defence technology, through initiatives such as DIANA and the NATO Innovation Fund. In the framework of crisis management and protection of citizens, concepts more recent to the Alliance’s agenda, the NSC emphasises the importance of its partners’ contributions, especially the EU and the United Nations, in actions regarding crisis management and preparedness, countering terrorism and fighting hybrid challenges – the latter referring to the EU in particular. Hence, it also calls for the reinforcement of current partnerships, highlighting the EU as a “unique and essential partner”, and increase in outreach to other countries, particularly in the Indo-Pacific neighbourhood, both with a focus on political dialogue and cooperation (NATO, 2022).

The EU Strategic Compass is the first EU document to present a common vision of the international security environment and is more heavily concerned with the areas of crisis management and protection of citizens, but also in improving common defence and security through capability and technology development and strengthening cooperation with partners. In terms of crisis management, the most significant measure announced by the SC concerns the development of the EU Rapid Deployment Capacity with a projectable multi-domain force of up to 5,000 troops, consisting of modified EU Battlegroups and Member States’ military forces and capabilities (European Union, 2022).

Portugal is committed to the goals and actions presented by both documents and is supportive of the EU’s efforts to reinforce its strategic autonomy (Despacho n.º 2536/2020) and defence pillar in complementarity with NATO’s actions. However, most importantly for

Portugal is that EU-NATO cooperation continues to increase and that the two organisations further converge strategically, in all these domains, especially considering the announcement of new or improved instruments (the new NATO Force Model and EU Rapid Deployment Capacity) that require a substantial increase in troop numbers and equipment, which is a challenge for Portugal with the continuous decline over the years in military personnel numbers. Therefore, it is paramount for Portugal that these goals are achieved on the basis of the ‘three D’ doctrine, meaning with no duplication, no dissociation and no discrimination (Martins and Pinéu, 2023, p. 899).

7. With which allies and partners is your country likely to deepen its defence and security cooperation and what is the reasoning behind these choices?

At a multilateral level, Portugal’s allies are NATO, the EU, the UN and the Community for Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) or Lusophone community. NATO is the main security provider in Europe and a pillar for international security, therefore it is the most important multilateral partnership for Portugal, in defence and security. The EU plays a complementary role to NATO in the defence and security of Europe; hence, the development of its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), which contributes to Euro-Atlantic security, is a national priority for Portugal (MDN, 2013). In that sense, Portugal is committed to deepening defence and security cooperation with its Member States through, among others, the gradual synchronisation and mutual adaptation of the national defence planning cycles (Despacho n.º 2536/2020) and increased participation in cooperative programs and mechanisms.

The UN and the Lusophone community are also important partnerships, involving security contexts that Portugal does not belong to geographically, but with which it shares a cultural and historical identity, in the case of the Lusophone community, or has responsibility to assist as a member of the democratic international order and as an international security provider, as is the case of its participation in UN peace missions. Moreover, defence and security cooperation in the framework of the Lusophone community has the potential to contribute to the stability of African regional contexts, namely through the development of joint peace missions, under a United Nations mandate.

At the bilateral level, Portugal’s interest is firstly in relations with neighbouring countries such as Spain, the United Kingdom (Portugal’s oldest ally), France and the US (Lei n.º 24-C/2022). The alliances with the US and the UK are particularly important, as they are crucial

for transatlantic security, and consequently national security. The US in particular is decisive not only in that regard, but also in the consolidation of Portugal's position in its main geographical areas of interest and in the development of its blue economy (MDN, 2013); which is why Portugal will continue intensifying defence and cooperation relations with the US - an objective constant throughout the years.

Portugal is also looking to continue to deepen its relations with the Atlantic "Front", and Mediterranean countries, where the national maritime space offers opportunities and challenges, the Maghreb region and the Middle East, through multilateral frameworks such as the 5+5 Defence Initiative, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and the Mediterranean Dialogue (MDN, 2013).

In addition, Central and South American countries, particularly those belonging to Mercosur and the Pacific Alliance, with Brazil naturally assuming a central position in Portugal's relations with the region and being considered indispensable in the European diversification of international partnerships and multilateral order rebuilding. In that same vein, Portugal is also committed to a European strategy that intensifies political, economic and security ties to Indo-Pacific states, naming India, Japan and South Korea in the most recent strategic documents (Lei n.º 24-C/2022), considering the region's central role in international competition, but also its special ties to East Timor. Additionally, Portugal has a strong relation, historically and culturally, to Macau, which was under Portuguese administration until 1999, that naturally connects it also to China.

Indeed, each of the Portuguese speaking countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia, corresponding to CPLP/Lusophone community members Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, Brazil, East Timor, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea and São Tomé and Príncipe, are partners of extreme significance, as they encompass large Portuguese diaspora communities. In these countries, it would be important to further cooperation through establishing strategic security partnerships and relevant cooperation frameworks for the defence of shared interests, such as crisis management and the safety of maritime communication lines, the implementation of security sector reform initiatives and the strengthening of technical-military cooperation (MDN, 2013).

Portugal is known to have a preference for multilateralism (Martins and Pinéu, 2023, p. 895), adopting a "global geostrategic vision", more recently reinforced by a tendency for the diversification of partnerships as a consequence of SC and NSC orientations, however it

should be highlighted that Europe and the Atlantic remain the most important strategic spaces for the Portuguese national interest.

8. In your country's view what is the perceived optimal role of European organizations – NATO, EU and OSCE?

Portugal perceives NATO as the main collective defence organisation, the main provider of European security and the pillar of international security. It also has a major role in centring Portugal in the western context, geographically and strategically. Whereas from the EU perspective Portugal has a peripheral position, from the NATO perspective it is the bridge between both sides of the Atlantic (Martins and Pinéu, 2023, p. 897), giving it a bigger projection in the international system compared to its territorial and demographic dimension (Palmeira, 2022, p. 13). Moreover, the recognition of Portugal as an international security co-producer and a contributor to the protection of the global commons, takes place mainly in the NATO framework, namely through Portuguese participation in international missions (MDN, 2013), which serve as an opportunity for Portugal to have a more meaningful role in the stabilization of its near neighbourhood, than it could on its own or through other frameworks.

The EU is a political organisation with its own responsibilities in European security, but of a complementary nature to those of NATO. In this regard, the EU has the features better suited to deal with climate change and the energy crisis, while NATO leads on questions of defence (Fernandes, 2022, p.17). The EU is also crucial in providing a valuable framework for research, development and innovation in defence, fostering capability development programs, initiatives and funds, which are fundamental for the operability of the Portuguese armed forces. This is the case with PESCO projects, which greatly help reinforce Portugal's technological competitiveness and develop the national defence industry, and, consequently, the national economy.

Thus, it could be said that while NATO represents Portugal's geography of security and defence, the EU represents its geography of politics and economy. However, both are crucial in a number of key processes and domains for European (and Portuguese) security and defence, for instance in providing financial support to the development and edification of national defence capabilities, guidance in the definition of national defence policies and planning cycles, as well as in the domain of education and training in security and defence,

with a significant investment in the NATO Communications and Information Academy (located in Lisbon) and the European Security and Defence College.

The OSCE is an important regional forum for conflict resolution and trust building between countries that works in three dimensions of security, political-military, economic-environmental and human, complementing the EU's work in a number of issues. In the OSCE context, Portugal has and will continue focusing on the political-military and human rights domains, particularly on the work of the Representative on Freedom of the Media (Lei n.º 24-C/2022), but also on strengthening relations with its partners in cooperation initiatives, especially in the Mediterranean (Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros, n.d.).

9. How can defence cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic framework be further strengthened, following the two EU-NATO Declarations of 2016, 2018 and current SC and new NC?

Strategic alignment between NATO and the EU is paramount in consolidating transatlantic and European security and defence. The Portuguese perspective is that it is important to have a renewed alliance between Europe and the US that promotes a transatlantic agenda focusing on disruptive technologies in the field of defence, cybersecurity, the monitoring of critical investments and the impact of climate change on security and defence. In order to reinforce Euro-Atlantic defence cooperation in the next years, it is fundamental to cooperate further in areas such as the drafting of guiding strategic documents; the development of defence capabilities that are coherent, complementary and interoperable between organisations; military mobility; the fight against disinformation, cyber defence, the response to complex emergencies and the coordination of missions on site.

Regarding the recently adopted Euro-Atlantic documents, there is a consensus on the importance of increasing EU-NATO cooperation, in fact the NATO Strategic Concept 2022 acknowledges the EU as a unique and essential partner, while the EU Strategic Compass considers NATO essential for Euro-Atlantic security.

The new NATO Strategic Concept (NSC) indicates the 'fullest involvement' of non-EU Allies in EU defence efforts as an essential condition for defence cooperation between the two organisations to succeed. It also indicates the intent to: (1) strengthen political consultations; (2) increase cooperation on common issues and (3) develop coherent, mutually reinforcing capabilities, while avoiding unnecessary duplications (NATO, 2022).

On the EU side, it is necessary that its numerous documents are operationalised, as the organisation needs to have the necessary tools and instruments for Member States to implement its orientations. It is also fundamental that the EU continues to increase political agreement on the prioritisation of security and defence in its budget, while focusing on the development of PESCO in articulation with EDA and EDF, the reinforcement of operational command capabilities in missions in the EU framework, and making mandates for CSDP missions more robust and flexible.

Portugal is committed to reinforcing cooperation between the EU and NATO, according to the perspective that a stronger, more autonomous and capable Europe at the security and defence level will be able to contribute more effectively to the security of the Alliance's nations (Despacho n.º 2536/2020).

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Romania

Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History (IPSDMH)

Authors: Serban Filip Cioculescu, PhD, Senior Researcher at IPSDMH

Dorin-Alin Gal, PhD, Scientific Researcher at IPSDMH

1. How do existing national strategic documents of countries represented in NESSI fit to NSC and SC?

NATO's Madrid summit was transformative, providing the framework for a fundamental shift in our collective posture, by consolidating NATO's deterrence and defence posture and forward defence, through establishing four new Battlegroups and ensuring strong defence capabilities covering the entire strategic belt, from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

This remains a key goal assumed by Romania in accordance with the main national strategic documents. At the same time, the Strategic Compass brings a significant contribution to the overall efforts of strengthening transatlantic security.

The Strategic Compass, as well as the EU's Versailles Declaration, provides clear political guidance for the planning of our future defence investments to implement the EU Level of Ambition, making full use of the different processes and initiatives launched in the last years.

From Romania's perspective, the main outcome reflected in the Strategic Concept and Strategic Compass is highlighted by:

- the pragmatic approach to the relation with Russia; the reaffirmation of collective defence as the core and main purpose of the Alliance;
- the strong commitment to defending every inch of allied territory;
- the guidance on the adaptation of the collective deterrence and defence posture;
- the first-time outline in the NATO Strategic Concept of the Black Sea region as of strategic importance for Euro-Atlantic security;
- the reaffirmation of the EU as a relevant actor and provider in the domain of security;
- the importance of the increased relationship and support to Eastern like-minded partners, particularly Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Georgia.

The National Defence Strategy, the White Paper of Defence and the Military Strategy of Romania acknowledge the European and Euro-Atlantic common values, recognize the profound change in the security environment, the main risks and challenges to Euro-Atlantic security, the strategic importance of the Black Sea region and the need for close defence coordination with allies and partners, as well as enhanced efforts to strengthen national resilience.

2. Which major emerging strategic challenges are likely to affect your country? Please include the threat perceptions for national security and in the framework of EU and NATO. Countries perceive different threats and risks in different cooperative security contexts?

The strategic context where Romania defends and promotes its values, principles, interests and strategic and security goals is characterized by geopolitical instability and volatility. The Russian invasion of Ukraine poses the gravest threat to Euro-Atlantic security and, implicitly, to Romania's as well.

Against the background of a growing Russian aggressive posture, the Black Sea remains a critical area of security concern. Following the annexation of Crimea, Russia highly strengthened its military infrastructure in the region, extended its A2/AD capabilities, and developed a broader capacity to launch military operations in the area and project its power in the Black Sea and Mediterranean.

Adding to this, there is a high possibility of frozen conflicts activation that could lead to a multiplication of asymmetric and hybrid conflicts, due to various conflicting interests among regional countries and Russia's military pressure. Taking into account the existence of such conflicts in the proximity of Romania and the behaviour of the Russian Federation, these types of confrontations represent a matter of major concern.

The hybrid risks are growing due to technological advances and we might observe a constant variation of actions and coordinated resources employed against national security interests.

Due to recent military developments generated by Russia's conduct, the NATO Eastern frontier, from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, became the critical focus point leading to unprecedented measures and actions taken by the North Atlantic Alliance to consolidate its deterrence mechanisms and provide defence to its most Eastern allies. As one of the countries on the Eastern flank, Romania firmly supports NATO's coherent, unitary

approach in order to facilitate a defence infrastructure that will answer the security concerns of all allied states.

Other, broader, challenges can also be identified. The destabilization of the Western Balkans area, with the plethora of ethnic conflicts there and attempts by international actors to gain influence. The huge economic and social effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). We can also point out non-traditional challenges like cyber-attacks, emerging disruptive technologies, unregulated migration, and human-drug-weapons traffic.

3. In which specific multi-national security & defence projects (military mobility, cyber, maritime security, EU and NATO innovation hubs, etc...) does your country participate and what is the reasoning behind this participation? Choose the category your own country is involved in or more than one, if that is the case.

The current security environment requires a coherent and combined effort of all actors with responsibilities in the security and defence field.

Romania participates in both the Hub for EU Defence Innovation (HEDI), established at EDA level, as well as within NATO's Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA).

Innovation and Emerging and Disruptive Technologies (EDT) have recently become a priority topic in Romania, being an important issue on the Summit and NATO's 2030 agenda, as well as the EU agenda. National efforts on EDT are focused on seven specific domains: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Data Computing, Autonomy, Quantum technologies, Bio-technologies, hypersonic technologies, and Space. Innovation and EDT are included in a series of strategic-level planning documents, such as: the National Defence Strategy, the White Paper on Defence 2021, the Strategic Defence Review, the Military Strategy.

The Ministry of National Defence's (MoND) research and development strategy for the 2021-2027 timeframe has a focus on EDT. The main MoND research and development financial tool is the Research and Development Sectorial Plan, which includes projects from the Autonomy and Artificial Intelligence domains.

The security situation in and around Europe requires the capacity to act swiftly with the appropriate force, at the right time, and in the right place. Today, more than ever, rapid response has become an essential requirement for our security.

Military mobility is also a flagship domain for EU-NATO cooperation, justifying an engagement assumed by Romania as a member of both organizations. Romania is actively involved in the ongoing initiatives launched within EU and NATO frameworks, aimed at improving cross-border military transportation in Europe. We consider that the military mobility project will not only support the development of interoperability and infrastructure as such, but mostly, will become a solid element of deterrence through the increase of the rapid reaction of our forces at home and in the entire European space.

Romania has proposed, under the aegis of the Three Seas Initiative, a dual-use project named The Rail-2-Sea: modernization and development of the Gdansk (PL) – Constanța (RO) railway line. The main objective of this project is the construction of a civil-military dual-use railway line between the two ports. We also support the project proposed by Poland, Via Carpathia.

The European Defence Fund is a game-changer initiative. Romania encourages its national industrial and research entities to engage as much as possible in this initiative. We currently support 12 projects funded through EDT/EDIDP.

Romania currently participates in 21 projects within the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), in 19 projects under the framework of the European Defence Agency (EDA), and is also supporting a number of 12 projects financed by the European Defence Fund (EDF/including its precursor, EDIDP).

4. What is your country's view on a whole-of-defence approach in a crisis management context?

According to official documents, whole-of-defence approach means enhancing inter-institutional cooperation in all realms regarding national defence, in order to increase the effectiveness of national security policies. The White Paper on Defence 2021 establishes directions for the implementation of the defence policy objectives seeking to enhance inter-institutional cooperation in all national defence domains.

The Ministry of National Defence participates in the whole-of-government effort to develop our national resilience and to be better prepared for crisis-management situations. As an example, it has provided consistent support with capabilities and specialists to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and to the Ministry of Health in their efforts to manage the health crisis generated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The cooperation between the public and the private

sectors is also encouraged as being vital in order to build the all-around resilience encompassed in the whole-of-defence approach.

5. What is your country's view on role specialisation for the armed forces?

Romania's national defence documents (The National Defence Strategy, the Military Strategy of Romania and the White Paper of National Defense) mention that the responsibilities of the Romanian Armed Forces are to defend the national territory, cooperate for the defence of the other allied states within NATO, to be engaged in crisis-management, peace-keeping missions and operations, and deal with natural or human-made disaster management. Romania supports the continuous processes of adaptation and modernization within NATO and the EU, as organizations that have to be able to answer a wide spectrum of new and constant challenges. As a member of both, Romania's army has to be able to conduct various types of mission in accordance to the changing security landscape.

The defence policy objectives envisage a comprehensive approach of aspects related to the modernization and adaptation of the Romanian Army to provide an adequate response to the current risks and challenges of the security environment, in a whole-of-government approach based on the MoND's specific responsibilities, and taking into account Romania's national security objectives. The specialization of the national armed forces must be understood in the context of resource management and assumed security objectives, at a national and international level.

6. How to implement the NSC and SC, which tools/actions mentioned in these documents are instrumental for reaching their goals, in the framework of protection of citizens, crisis management, collective defence and partnerships.

Implementing NATO's Strategic Concept commitments regarding the consolidation of defence and deterrence on the Eastern Flank in a balanced way, from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, is a prominent feature of Romania's national security policy.

When it comes to protecting citizens, crisis management, collective defence and partnerships, both the EU's Strategic Compass and NATO's Strategic Concept underline the need for enhanced cooperation, strategic dialogue on security and defence issues, growing efforts to consolidate the national military potential of member countries and engaging with partner countries by providing support and assistance.

The decisions adopted at NATO's Madrid summit are instrumental in enhancing the deterrence and defence on the Eastern flank. The decision to strengthen the entire flank, from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, having in view the Alliance's objective to implement a 360-degree approach, can only be done through resource pooling and common military actions. The New Strategic Concept sees war as a reality of today, so we must focus on developing resilience, consolidating multilateral cooperation, and taking concrete actions in order to make the adopted initiatives in the field of defence and deterrence a reality. It is important to have all allied states committed to provide support and assistance, to be engaged in increasing the force deployments on the Eastern flank and continue to generate capacity building. Each NATO member state needs to invest in its own military preparedness and contribute actively to collective defence. Unity in purpose and solidarity in action are key to generating power and strength as part of the broader 360-degree concept to security assumed by NATO.

In order to successfully implement the EU's Strategic Compass, we need to promote inter-institutional cooperation and the involvement of the civil society, since the protection of citizens remains a key objective of national security policies. Furthermore, the European Union has to develop scenarios that will guide the development of the Rapid Deployment Capacity until it becomes operational. The European Commission should keep a close eye and produce regular reports on existing defence gaps, while gathering proposals from all Member States on how to remedy these gaps. In a later phase, live exercises at the EU level, as proposed by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, during the launch of the Strategic Compass initiative, can prove invaluable.

7. With which allies and partners is your country likely to deepen its defence and security cooperation and what is the reasoning behind these choices?

One of Romania's defence policy objectives, mentioned in the White Paper on Defence, is "Deepening the strategic partnership with the USA and developing Romania's cooperation with other strategic partners".

The deepening of the Strategic Partnership for the 21st century between the United States of America and Romania, by means of extending cooperation and consolidating bilateral defence relationships, brings a decisive contribution to promoting Romania as a vector of stability and security in the Southeast of Europe.

Romania's security policy is based on three main directions of action: increasing Romania's role and efforts in the EU, enhancing the strategic profile in NATO, and deepening and consolidating the Strategic Partnership with the USA. Having in view the dramatic shift in the regional strategic configuration under the impact of Russia's aggressive actions, the strategic partnership with the USA remains a cornerstone of Romania's defence policy, and this will continue to remain a major focus in all national efforts aimed at building and consolidating the country's defence capacity.

Romania also has strategic partnerships with other countries like, but not limited to: Great Britain, France, Germany, Poland, and Turkey. The strategic partnerships prove the significance of security and military relations at a bilateral level, but they also reflect the consistent cooperation in other fields: economy, culture, trade, education, etc. These are partnerships built on sharing common values, common security interests and concerns, as well as joint commitments to manage together the emerging Euro-Atlantic and global risks and challenges. France's decision to take over as framework-nation at the lead of NATO's battlegroup in Romania proves the significant potential of strengthening Romanian-French military cooperation.

Romania also participates in regional cooperation initiatives, such as Bucharest 9 (B9) and the Three Seas Initiative. Romania attaches great importance to the efforts to further develop the B9 political framework, which remains a key vector in expressing common positions and policies of its Member States, and further advances the process to ensure the entire Eastern flank provides a coherent, unified response in the face of Russian threats.

The strategic partnerships have valuable potential to strengthen our cooperation and harmonise positions with regard to issues of common interest, adding to other strands of work aimed at consolidating NATO's defence and deterrence in the Central and Eastern parts of Europe.

8. In your country's view what is the perceived optimal role of European organizations – NATO, EU and OSCE?

NATO is the cornerstone of collective defence and the main provider of military security for Romania. Its most important role is to boost collective defence on all allied territory, ensure the security of all allies, and provide peace in the Euro-Atlantic area. Article 5 remains the collective defence guarantee, which provides the basis of defence cooperation between

the two shores of the Atlantic. Having in view the new Strategic Concept of 2022, the role of the Eastern Flank has been amplified even more, so NATO, but also other key actors such as the EU and OSCE, remain vital players in the region.

Regarding the European Union, Romania shares the EU's desire and intent to play a more active role in the continent's security architecture, in accordance with the Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy of 2015 and the Strategic Compass of 2022. The level of cooperation between the EU and NATO must be enhanced, and the EU must also be able to deal with the current threats and risks to international security: Russia's aggressiveness, economic decline, the increased price of energy, the problem of agricultural food products and the social unrest appearing in many states of the continent. The EU should take more responsibility in the field of defence and security, using the Strategic Compass Initiative to play a more active role as a strategic actor, but it also has to avoid duplication with NATO and preserve complementarity when dealing with crisis management and collective defence.

OSCE brings a comprehensive approach to the concept of security and, from this perspective, acts on three dimensions: political-military; economic and environmental; human. Consensus is almost impossible to reach within the OSCE, as Russia is a member and its hostility towards Western countries prevents any kind of agreement from going through. However, the OSCE remains an important tool for security dialogue, having the capacity to contribute to the management of various crises and tensions, finding solutions and coordinating positions among Member States.

Unfortunately, OSCE could have a stronger role in providing conflict prevention and resolution, something that proves to be of the utmost importance during current times. Romania promotes a stronger role for the OSCE in dealing with the main security risks and threats in Europe, a role that is closely complementary to the efforts of main organizations such as the UN, NATO, and the European Union.

9. How can defence cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic framework be further strengthened, following the two EU-NATO Declarations of 2016, 2018 and current SC and new NC?

NATO's Madrid summit and the new Strategic Concept have further strengthened the Alliance's position as the cornerstone of Europe's defence, the guarantor of security in the whole Euro-Atlantic area. But the war in Ukraine also highlighted the EU as an important

security actor. The EU has played a significant role in the Western response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, complementary to NATO.

The threatening strategic environment clearly requires Europe to take more strategic responsibility and do more for its own defence. Thus, a stronger EU would reinforce transatlantic security. As chancellor Scholz emphasized during his Prague speech, "every step towards greater compatibility between European defence structures within the framework of the EU, strengthens NATO".

The EU and NATO have to cooperate on issues of common interest and continue to work side by side in crisis management, capability development, and political consultations, while still meeting their security objectives and supporting their common partners in the East and South. As the two organizations share a majority of members, promote the same values and strive for similar security objectives, while facing similar threats and challenges, they would both benefit from ensuring any common initiative is rapidly brought up for discussion and then implemented with concrete steps.

Further Readings

EU and NATO Strategic Documents

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NATO (2022). NATO 2022 Strategic Concept. Available at: <https://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/>

Participating Countries' Strategic Documents

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Annex Comparative Defence Indicators

	Austria	Czech Republic	Italy	Poland	Portugal	Romania
<i>Defence spending (US dollars) (2021; 2022; 2023)</i>	4.20bn	3.91bn	33.2bn	15.1bn	3.90bn	5.29bn
	3.64bn	3.90bn	30.3bn	16.6bn	3.57bn	5.20bn
	4.44bn	5.11bn	32.3bn	32.2bn	4.27bn	8.66bn
<i>Defence spending (% GDP) (2021; 2022; 2023)</i>	0,87	1,4	1,58	1,97	1,15	1,95
	0,77	1,35	1,54	1,92	1,02	1,86
	0,84	1,52	1,50	2,78	1,02	2,44
<i>No. of active military personnel (2021; 2022; 2023)</i>	22.050	24.900	165.500	114.050	27.250	68.500
	23.300	26.600	161.550	114.050	27.250	71.500
	23.300	26.600	161.050	114.050	26.700	71.500
<i>No. of reserves (2021; 2022; 2023)</i>	125.600		18.300		211.700	53.000
	115.950	(a)	17.900	(a)	211.700	55.000
	112.250		17.900		23.500	55.000
<i>Deployments in international missions</i>	Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cyprus, Kosovo, Lebanon, Mali, Middle East, Western Sahara.	Bosnia-Herzegovina, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Iraq, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Syria/Israel.	Baltic Sea, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Djibouti, Egypt, Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean, Gulf of Guinea, India/Pakistan, Iraq, Kosovo, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Mediterranean Sea, Mozambique, Persian Gulf, Poland, Slovakia, Somalia, Western Sahara.	Bosnia-Herzegovina, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Kosovo, Latvia, Lebanon, Middle East, North Sea.	Central African Republic, Iraq, Mali, Mozambique, Romania, Somalia.	Bosnia-Herzegovina, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, India/Pakistan, Iraq, Kosovo, Mali, Mozambique, Poland, Somalia, South Sudan
<i>Membership (security and defence)</i>	UN EU OSCE	UN EU NATO OSCE	UN EU NATO OSCE	UN EU NATO OSCE	UN EU NATO OSCE	UN EU NATO OSCE
<i>Military conscription</i>	6 months (compulsory for men, voluntary for women)	No military conscription	No military conscription	No military conscription	No military conscription	No military conscription

(a) Data not available in the source.

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