

# **Common European defence policy: the discussion on the European army**

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## **1 Introduction**

“EU army is inevitable says senior German official (The Telegraph, 2017)” this quotes the topic of this essay. The discussion on the European army is a topic that is already playing in the EU history since the beginning of the creation of a common Europe. In the view of these recent statements and the fact that the UK is leaving the EU, this debate has never been higher on the agenda than ever. Even though this policy field still stays a sensitive point when it comes to national sovereignty. A lot member states realise that with the current geopolitical climate the need for a strong European Defence and Security policy is necessary to show the EU as a strong global actor.

The structure of the paper is starting with a historical sketch on the evolution of the Security and Defence policy of the EU. After that the current Common Defence and Security Policy will be discussed. Following the future of this policy field will be analysed and possible scenarios will be sketched. After this large introduction, the analyses on the EU army will be made. And the possible challenges that it brings with it, as well why it is a topic that is already so long talked about but still not been created? In the end this all will be discussed and concluded.

## **2 History of European Defence policy**

To introduce the debate on the common army for the European Union is it important to state how the development of the European Security and Defence Policy developed starting from the beginning.

It all started in May 1945, after six years of war was the European continent completely destroyed which made it a weak and defenceless region. The Soviet Union had during the WWII begun to exercise territorial occupation. A lot of countries were turning into communists. The west was not open for these ideas and with the nuclear threat also made by the Soviet Union, Winston Churchill referred in 1946 to the iron curtain. Greece and Turkey were creating problems as well (Ramiro, 2013). The greatest powers in Europe were not the only ones anymore. There were two new powers in Europe. This resulted that they had to look at the USA for help. This has resulted in a discussion and topic that is still going on until today on the subject of European security and defence. Western Europeans needed to take actions to help themselves. But on the other had they were relying upon the United States. Another factor that played a role in the creation of defence policy cooperation was the Marshall plan. This was launched in 1947 by the USA. They gave financial aid to Europe, this plan made for a recovery of Europe and made the way for European economical integration (Salmon & Sheperd, 2003).

This was all before there was a real cooperation or even an agreement signed in Europe or between some European countries with the view on a common defence and security policy. A chance came when in 1948, UK, France and the Benelux had signed the **Treaty of Brussels** (EEAS, 2016). This was important to help each other against the still constant threat of Germany and its aggression. The title of the treaty was the Treaty of Economic, Social and Cultural Collaboration and Collective Self-Defence. Important on this treaty was that they had stated that if one of the countries should be a victim of an armed attack that the other countries would offer the attacked country the military support and aid that it needed. They also agreed upon to consult each other in the regard to any situation which may result to a threat of the peace, nomatter in what area this threat would be situated (Salmon & Sheperd, 2003).

### **2.1 First attempt: the European Defence Community**

Thus it all started in the first attempt in the security and defence policy: the European Defence Community. This was in general one of the first steps in the history of the integration of the European union. Even though this project never succeeded and was doomed from the beginning is it important to mention this. In general the EDC was about the integration of defence. It was originally a French proposal by the French Prime Minister René Pleven in September **1952**. It was signed by the founding member states of the European integration, these were: Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg (Färber, 2017).

Four of them had ratified this treaty; the French Parliament rejected it in 1954. The fact that this project in the end did not succeed is not a reason to not mention it. It is important to see the whole context of this failure.

The concrete treaty of the European Defence Community was about a supranational European organization with: common institutions, common armed forces, and a common budget. Thus there were already ideas and even almost a ratified treaty on the fact to have common armed forces; this shows how long this debate is already going on. The EDC would have an exclusive defensive access, within the NATO framework (Salmon & Sheperd, 2003). The concrete institutional framework was planned to follow the same structure as the European Coal and Steel Community, thus with a council, an independent board of commissioners and a court of justice.

This plan was really far-reaching and maybe that is why it had such difficulties to ratify and failed in the end. The policy and competence on defence was a bridge too far to already give out of hands of the states. "such an express acknowledgement of transfer of sovereignty for the member states to an independent and autonomous authority is rare." (Koutrakus, 2013, p. 6) But in the end this was not the main reason on why this treaty had failed to be approved by the participating member states. The political change in France at the end of 1953 has led to serious mistrust about the provisions of the treaty and the extent to which they would be able to control the German participation. Interesting to say though is the fact that this failure thus has led to an integration of Europe in the end. But it is fascinating that the founders of the treaty already wanted to integrate defence and security so early on. Not only because this is one of the core areas of the national sovereignty but as well because this is still an issue even today and still not completely at the supranational level but much more in a slow way with intergovernmental approaches and agreements (Koutrakus, 2013).

## **2.2 Petersberg Tasks**

Following the end of the cold war and the subsequent conflicts in the Balkans, it became clear that the EU needed to assume its responsibilities in the field of conflict prevention and crisis management. The WEU Council already agreed upon the conditions under which military units could be deployed in **1992**, this was the Petersberg Tasks (EEAS, 2016).

The WEU itself had no standing army but depended on cooperation between its members, the declaration outlined the following purposes for which military intervention could be used:

- Humanitarian and rescue tasks
- Peacekeeping tasks
- Tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking (EEAS, 2016).

## **2.3 Treaty of Amsterdam**

In **1999** the Petersberg tasks were integrated in the Treaty of Amsterdam. In general this treaty codified a number of new structures and tasks for the EU's Common Foreign and Security policy (CFSP). And even though it did not create a common defence policy, it did increase responsibilities in the realms of peacekeeping and humanitarian work, this by creating closer links with the WEU.

These were the main lines that were set in the Treaty concerning CFSP:

- Codified new structures and tasks for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy
- Defined the range of military tasks which the EU could undertake
- Indicated the possibility of developing a future common defence policy for the EU (EEAS, 2016).

## **2.4 Berlin plus agreement**

There were concerns that an independent European security pillar might result in a declining importance of NATO as a transatlantic forum. This was by the creation of what would become the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) reinforces the need to establish a formal agreement between the EU and NATO, building on the previous arrangements between the WEU and the Alliance inaugurated in Berlin in 1996 (Chochia, 2015). In the end the Berlin plus agreement is about a comprehensive list of arrangements finalized in **2003** between the EU and the NATO, it allows the EU to make use of NATO's assets and capabilities for EU-led crisis management operations. This included:

- A NATO-EU Security Agreement that covers the exchange of classified information under reciprocal security protection rules;
- Assured access to NATO planning capabilities for EU-led operations;
- Availability of NATO assets and capabilities for EU-led civil-military operations;
- Procedures for release, monitoring, return and recall of NATO assets and capabilities;
- Terms of reference for using NATO's DSACEUR (Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe) for commanding EU-led operations;

- EU-NATO consultation arrangements in the context of an EU-led operations making use of NATO assets and capabilities;
- Arrangements for coherent and mutually reinforcing capability requirements, in particular the incorporation within NATO's defence planning of the military needs and capabilities that may be required for EU-led military operations.

This resulted in the launch of the first EU's military operation, this in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) in December of 2003. Thus there was a certain effect of this agreement (EEAS, 2016).

## **2.5 Security Strategy for Europe**

This was written in the year of **2003**, it provides the conceptual framework for the CFSP, including what would later become the Common Security and Defence policy (CSDP). The dispute of the EU member states over the invasion of the USA in Iraq in 2003 made clear that there was a need for a common strategic vision to improve the internal cohesion at the EU level. Because of that the high representative for the common foreign and security policy Javier Solana drafted a framework (EEAS, 2016).

The headline of the draft was "a secure Europe in a better world", with the emergence of the ESDP, was it the first time that Europe has formulated a joint security strategy (Ballesteros, 2017). It argues that in order to ensure security for Europe in a globalizing world, multilateral cooperation within Europe and abroad is to be imperative, because as quoted in the strategy: "not single nation is able to tackle today's complex challenges" (Solana, 2003).

In this strategy there was an identification of five key threats:

1. Terrorism
2. Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction
3. Regional conflicts
4. State failure
5. Organized crime

In the ESS there was also a call for the engagement to prevention of certain conflicts or crises, this by building security in the EU's neighbourhood for example in the Balkans, Southern Caucasus, and the Mediterranean. Another thing is that in the ESS there is acknowledgement of the interdependence of various global security challenges, this by linking security and development issues and highlighting the possible interaction between the key threats which are formulated above.

## **2.6 The Lisbon Treaty**

The Treaty of Lisbon came into force in **2009** and was a keystone in the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). It renamed the ESDP to the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Apart from that it also contains a number of important new provisions related to the CSDP, this was a mutual assistance and a solidarity clause, the creation of a framework for Permanent structured cooperation, the expansion of the Petersberg tasks and the creation of the European External Action Security and Policy Service (EEAS) this under the authority of the High representative for foreign affairs and security policy (EEAS, 2016).

## **2.7 Global strategy for the European Union's foreign and security policy**

In **2016** was there the global strategy for the European Union's foreign and security policy, presented by the current high representative of the Union for foreign affairs and Security Policy/Vice-president of the European Commission (HR/VP). A comprehensive package of measures in the areas of security and defence, this was defined at the end of 2016. It contains three major pillars:

- New political goals and ambitions for European to take more responsibility for their own security and defence
- New financial tools to help Member states and the European defence industry to develop defence capabilities ("European defence action plan")
- A set of concrete actions as follow up to the EU-NATO joint Declaration which identified areas of cooperation (Mogherini, 2017).

Following in the essay will I discuss more about the current situation of the CDSP and the possible future evolution of this policy.

### 3 Today's CDSF

#### 3.1 The current situation CDSF

As already said in the part above, there is last year a Global Strategy presented on the Foreign and Security Policy of the EU. On the other hand there has been a NATO summit in Warsaw as well in the views of the security policy, they signed a joint declaration on EU-NATO cooperation. It can be said that the last year of 2016 was a big development in the security and foreign policy of the EU (Consilium, 2017). It can be said that all these factors are leading towards deeper defence cooperation (Kerikmae, 2001).

Concrete stresses the European council by the end of 2016 that Europe's security and defence should be strengthened. This commitment is set in the European Union Internal Strategy. It also mentions the strengthening of EU cooperation on external security and defence. The focus is on these three priorities:

- The EU global strategy in the area of security and defence
- The European defence action plan
- Implementation of the common set of proposals that follows up on the EU-NATO joint declaration signed in Warsaw in July 2016 (Consilium, 2017).

During 2017 are these priorities further debated and negotiated on. First the EU-NATO cooperation has seen a progress during these negotiations, this towards further steps in the same direction. Later this year there has been in the beginning of December a new set of proposals launched in this cooperation. These are concrete actions in several areas:

- Counter-terrorism
- Women
- Peace and security
- Military mobility

In the field of the priority of the global strategy of the EU is there several conclusions made by the council, the areas on what will be covered are about:

- Improving CSDP crisis management structures, in particular the establishment of a military planning and conduct capability
- Strengthening CSDP cooperation with partner countries
- Capacity building for security and development
- Developing civilian capabilities and enhancing the responsiveness of civilian crisis management
- Reinforcing military rapid response
- Deepening European defence cooperation

Another factor towards a greater cooperation in the defence policy is the creation of the European Defence fund. This will allocate €5.5 billion per year to defence research and capability development. This fund has been agreed upon but it will not entail any new money and it has not been decided where the money will be taken from. So it has to come from the EU budget and not extra from the member states' contribution (Grip, 2017).

The last priority that is high on the agenda of the CFSP is about a Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) this in order to strengthen Europe's security and defence. In a press conference in June said the European president of the Council Donald Tusk about this project that: "it is a historic step, because such cooperation will allow the EU to move towards deeper integration in defence. Our aim is for it to be ambitious and inclusive, so every EU country is invited to join." In November has been several steps taken in this project. 25 member states have signed a notification, this making a first step in the establishment of a Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). The aim is to develop together defence capabilities, invest in shared projects, and enhance the operational readiness of their armed forces. This is a project where the member states can choose if they participate or not (Fischer, 2011). Currently only Malta and Denmark have chosen to use the opt-out status, thus not to join this project. And the UK as well but they are leaving the EU in 2019.

It is possible for other member states to join at a later stage (Consilium, 2017). It can be said that this is one of the major working projects in the field of CDSF for the moment.

Another important feature of the greater cooperation is the reflection paper of the Commission that will be discussed later in part about the future of the CSDP. Here the Commission has laid out three possible future scenarios of EU CSDP depending on the level of ambition of the member states. These different scenarios are: defence & security cooperation; shared security & defence; and common defence & security (Grip, 2017).

### **3.2 Framework CSDP**

To make it more clear on how this policy field actually works in the EU and how the decision-making is made. Will this be sketched in this part, this to give a broader view when I will discuss the European army later on.

#### **3.2.1 The Common Security and Defence Policy within the framework of Common Foreign and Security Policy**

As already said before that there is a difference in the policy domains, meaning that the CSDP and the CFSP are not the same, this because one is a part of the other. But how these are put in the framework that will be explained here.

The Treaty of Lisbon set out the current framework of the CFSP in 2009. To make the history on the eventually ratification and implementation of the framework short is it important to note that the Treaty of Lisbon can be seen as the constitution of the EU. Though that it is not called that, the initial proposal was the Constitution of the EU, this had been voted away in Ireland after a referendum and had to make several adjustments, which led to the Treaty of Lisbon (Nyman-Metcalf, 2010). Important to know in the view of the CFSP that this treaty set out the current framework and constitutional structure on how it functions nowadays. The treaty removed the pillar structure that was created after the treaty of Maastricht but will not be further explained here. So the pillar structure was abolished and subsumes all three legal frameworks (EC, CFSP, PJCCM) in the EU, which resulted in a single and unitary structure. This is important to make the Union and its structure more clear and simple. It was also seen as a unified system of external policies. This because they placed the Common Security and Defence Policy as a part of the CFSP, this within the common set of rules, this treaty created a unified legal system whose external policies are not governed by disparate set of principles and rules (Koutrakos, 2013).

So the Lisbon treaty changed the name from European Security and Defence policy (ESDP) to the Common Security and Defence policy. To replace the European with Common was the aim to ensure that the policy field would have a higher status of the policy within the Union's policy framework (Kerikmae, 1997). The name is in line with the Common Foreign and Security Policy, which it has emerged in and grown towards in the last years. This is stated in article 42(1) TEU, this says that: "the common security and defence policy shall be an integral part of the common foreign and security policy", (Koutrakos, 2013).

It is also clear when it comes to the competences in this area of the Union that it has different and specific procedures. This is set out in Article 24(1) subparagraph 2 TEU states that the common foreign and security policy is 'subject to specific rules and procedures'. This leads in general to the fact that for example the decision-making process is still in the hands of the European council, and not like in most policy fields of the EU in the hands of the Commission (Troitiño, 2008).

#### **3.2.2 The Common Security and Defence policy framework**

To frame the CSDP is it important to set out what the objectives and tasks are forms this policy fields. First of all the objectives are set out in article 42(1) TEU. These are defined as 'peace-keeping conflict prevention and strengthening international security in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter'. This foundation also refers more specifically to the missions outside the EU.

The tasks flowing from the objectives on the other of the CSDP are set to be:

- Joint disarmament operations
- Humanitarian and rescue tasks
- Military advice and assistance tasks
- Conflict prevention and peacekeeping tasks
- Conflict prevention and peacekeeping tasks
- Tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilization (Koutrakos, 2013).

These tasks are quite fluent and in a certain way vague. This is a good thing for the member states, because of that they have the chance to act in an adjusted way to each challenge and conflict.

The most important actors in this policy field are:

- The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (nowadays Federica Mogherini)
- The European Council: representatives of the member states

### **3.2.3 Decision-making process**

In the area of the CFSP and thus in CSDP, the rule of unanimity is at force. This means that every member states should be satisfied with the decision that has been made. If one member state puts his veto then this decision is not going to be implemented. As said in the TEU, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy makes a proposal to the Council, which then adopts the relevant decisions unanimously. Any member state has the right as well to take the initiative for the adoption of a Council decision. A proposal of the High Representative may endorse the use of both national resources and EU instruments (Koutrakos, 2013).

There are several exceptions to the unanimity rule in the CFSP; nevertheless does this not apply to the CSDP. The exception of this rule is then that they use the qualified majority to make decision. But because the defence and security policy is such a national matter, this does not apply in a lot of cases in the CSDP. This is set out in the article 31(4)TEU, the rule of exclusion: the exceptions regarding implementing, measures, the appointment of special representatives, and the possibility of extension of qualified majority decision-making by the European Council shall not apply to decision having military or defence implication. Thus never on these policy fields shall be a decision taken without unanimity (Morawa, 2016).

### **3.3 Why is the EU security and defence policy important?**

For several years the European Union and before that the European commission has strived for a prominent role on the international stage. The Union has become in the field of economy a giant, the Union is the biggest economy in the world. And has resulted in a big influence in the global economic, financial, trade and aid issues. But this influence did not spilled over in the field of influence in politics and diplomatic issues. However this changed when the Union entered the twenty-first century, this with the development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) (Salmon & Sheperd, 2003). With the development of ESDP it appears that the EU states, which have consistently argued that they have a significant role to play in security affairs, are finally admitting that they need improved military capabilities to support their political declarations if they are to be taken seriously in international security affairs (Troitiño, 2013). It is quoted by Mark Eyskens, then the Belgium's foreign minister in 1991 very well; according to him the EU is an economic giant, a political dwarf and a military worm (The economist, 2017).

So this was more on the importance of the ESDP in the recent history. Now we look at the importance for the current geopolitical and international relation.

The focus on economy worked fine as long as the European countries are able to rely on their security by the NATO and the further protection of the USA. But now with Russia led by Vladimir Putin, Turkey under an increasingly distant RecepTayyip Erdogan, the Middle East a more violent mess than ever, Britain preparing to leave the EU and an apparently more isolationist America, is it no longer enough. The Union needs to focus more on strengthening its common foreign and security policy (CFSP) (The economist, 2017).

## **4 The future of the European defence**

In the line of the sketch of the European defence policy is it important to look at what the future will bring and how it is seen. In the fact sheet of the European commission on the future of the European defence are several things and scenarios sketched on how this policy can evolve and more integrate in the EU. Especially if we look at the statements above in the current geopolitical climate is it important to evolve more (Hamulak2016)

There is a reflection paper written in June 2017 about the future of the European defence. This reflection paper is written in the view of the white paper that was launched by the Commission in March of the same year. It is stated on how the main trends and challenges will be shaped in the future of the security and defence of the union. There are three scenarios in this field:

1. **Security and defence cooperation:** the EU27 Member states would cooperate on security and defence more frequently, on a largely voluntary basis, depending on ad-hoc decisions when need arises, and rely on initial economies of scale.
2. **Shared security and defence:** the EU27 member states would move towards shared security and defence, showing greater financial and operational solidarity and would enhance their ability to project military power, fully engaging in external crisis management and building partners' security and defence capacities. Considerable economies of scale in the defence market at European scale would be in place, with favourable financing conditions across the defence supply chain.

- 3. Common defence and security:** the EU27 member states would deepen cooperation and integration towards a common defence and security. Solidarity and mutual assistance would become the norm, underpinned by a certain level of integration of Member states' defence forces. Member states would have more efficient defence spending through more economies of scale, specialization, sharing of expensive military assets and technological innovation aimed at reducing defence costs, and would be better equipped to face international competition (European commission, 2017)

The enhancement of the European security is a pressing need in the Union. The member states will be the driving forces in this project, they have to define and implement on the European level of ambition with the support of EU institutions. Looking towards the future, they will decide the path they want to take and the speed they want to go at to protect our citizens (European Commission, 2017).

These scenarios are very important if it comes to this paper. I will write further here on the fact if the common EU army is a possibility and how the scholars and literature see this. The fact that there is a possible scenario written by the Commission on this matter is proving the need for an enhanced cooperation in this policy (Troitiño, 2014). The three scenarios go from a medium cooperation to a deep and enhanced cooperation; the most integrated scenario is about the fact that there is a common defence and security. Here the phrase with the view of this paper is important: "a certain level of integration of Member states' defence forces". In more simple words, a common EU army or an extensive integration which can result in a common European army. But it is important to note that this is only a scenario made by the Commission, meaning that there is no consensus on how they will approach the future of this policy. There are scenarios but not yet concrete plans. In the following time though there will come more and more debate and thinking on this subject.

## **5 Research/analysis: European army**

### **5.1 Forms of military cooperation already in the EU**

In the framework of CSDP are the functioning forms of military cooperation are:

- European Military Committee
- European Union Military Staff
- European Defence Agency
- EUROCORPS
- EU Battle Groups

A brief explanation of every form of cooperation will be given. Starting with the European Military Staff is providing command and control assets and military advice to the EU institutions. It has to define defence capabilities requirements for the EU military structures. This can be considered as a permanent military planning component, in the view of a EU army it can be further developed if the member states agree upon the creation of the European Army or just a more deep military cooperation (Eindbaum, 2016).

Further the European Defence Agency has several ambitious goals but due to budgetary limitations it only concentrates for the biggest part on coordinating and assisting the member states common military procurements. More specific means this that the EDA acts as a part of the logistic pillar of armed forces development (Eindbaum, 2016).

EUROCORPS and EU battle groups are the physical components of military forces able to be deployed and to be self-sustainable for limited period. EUROCORPS is a unique project. There are for the moment five framework nations: Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and Spain. This unit has the maximum capacity of 1,500 troops. On the other hand you have the EU battle groups, this system consists of 18 battle groups with ca 1,500 troops each. Two Battle groups at a time have to be available for half a year; it is on a rotational base. Important to note that the Battle groups until now only acted in accordance with Petersberg tasks and thus only used outside the EU territory. The main difference between these two EU military cooperation is that EUROCORPS focuses on NATO operations while EU battle Groups act in the function of the EU (Eindbaum, 2016).

Nowadays for the most part the EU member states rely on the protection of NATO. The 28-country alliance that is formed in 1949, this with the view on safeguarding the freedom and security of its members by either political or military means. NATO is a combination of countries from Europe and North America; this represents the world's premier military coalition (Winkfield, 2015).

A strong case can be made that between the assortment of soldiers provided by multiple nations under the EU battlegroups program and the provision of military equipment and funding by the combined efforts of EDA members, that a unified EU army is technically already in place. What remains for full implementation is to combine the capabilities of each program into a single entity (Winkfield, 2015).

Problematic is that EU has two military structures which are able to respond to the crisis taking place outside of the EU. At the same time EU does not have an agreed procedure and/or common military force which could take action of a crisis taking place in a territory of any EU member state.

### **5.2 Steps that are already taken in the view of a European army**

The EU took 17 years ago in the Nice summit the decision on joint EU defence policies. Even though the planned Union does not immediately include a unified integrated European army but there are some aspects that have been taken in the way towards a European army (Riegert, 2017).

In essence a European army would make sense and in further discussion several benefits will be drawn. This will be explained in the next title of the paper.

The first steps that already been taken towards a European army is the fact that they improved the coordination, this in the field of the development and purchase of weapons, vehicles and equipment. This was a good step, if only in the practical point of view, it is for example more efficient and cheaper to build a truck for 23 armies than to reinvent the hot water every time. However this decision took decades for the Union to achieve such coordination. This shows the troubles around this policy field. This due to the fact that the industrial policy related interest plays a large role. Every country wants to hold its own army industry, this because a lot of countries have a large veritable export of weapons and thus an economical interest in the weapon industry. So the problem here is if the countries are willing to give up their complete power on the army market in the eye to have a more efficient and cooperated use of army and equipment (Riegert, 2017).

### **5.3 Why need of European army**

There are several arguments why the EU would need a European army, in an interview in 2015 with the German newspaper, Welt am Sonntag, the president of the European Commission had made some statements as well about this debate topic.

His arguments concerning this topic are:

- NATO is not enough: this because not all member of the transatlantic defence alliance are in the EU
- A common EU army would send important signals to the rest of the world: it would show the world that there would never be a war again between EU member states
- A common army would also help to form a real common foreign and security policy; and in response of this to be a global actor and take responsibility in the world
- The EU army could also function as a deterrent: for example this could have been useful in the Ukraine crisis
- Towards Russia could a common army show the strength of the EU and the seriousness of defending the European values (Euractiv, 2016)

These arguments are important and make a point, but the president of the European Commission can say this but because the CSDP is in the hands for the biggest part of the member states, there should be unanimity about this topic and how they will enforce this. This is until now still not the case. In the further discussion several countries and their point of view will come across and thus if there is no consensus then the European army will never be able to create (Euractiv, 2016).

Nowadays there have been more reasons than ever to have the debate on the European army, and the need for an army. There are next to the arguments that Juncker draws other reasons why there is a need for a European army. Conflicts and destabilization in the area of the EU are a threat to spill over in the EU territory. These threats are: the fact that the EU is surrounded by a ring of fire stretching from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa, through the Middle East, the Caucasus and up to the new frontlines in Eastern Europe. Another argument is the Russian threat, that is already drawn by Juncker. Another problem is the extremism and the terrorist attacks inside of the EU territory (Winkfield, 2015).

With all these problems to face it is expected of the EU to have a strong defence and security policy. But on the contrary, according to a Wall street journal article is shown that the security and defence are the "weakest link" in the entire EU project (Winkfield, 2015).

Another argument on the fact why there should be a European army is the problem that the current format of the EU battle groups is based on temporary contributions provided by member states. In case of a real-life crisis and activation of NATO article 5 operation, it may occur that EU NATO members will not be able to send promised troops to the EU Battle Groups, because they are required to keep armed forces in homeland combat ready; at the same time, they need to contribute to NATO operation and additionally they should sent troops to Battle Groups. The consequence can then be that the member states will prioritize their own defence and the troops to the NATO, at the last place will the battle group troops come. This can then lead to the loss of

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international credibility of the European battle groups, because in the end they agreed to gather 60,000 troops in times of need (Eindbaum, 2016).

All these arguments are reasons to create a European army, but why has this project never been achieved then?

#### **5.4 Discussion European army**

The discussion of the European army is a topic that is already going on since the beginning of the European Community. Even in 1950 the EU founders had a plan for a so-called European Defence Community. The idea was to have a European military force after the WWII to unify Europe and to protect them against the powerful Soviet Union. However this project never succeeded, this due to national sovereignty concerns and the fading Soviet threat. The debate never went away but the priority faded out (Winkfield, 2015).

Now, to come back to the question on why this project never been achieved. The main reason of this is because of the lack of consensus on this topic by the member states. This on matters such as which outside nations should be considered an enemy to the power bloc, how would a common defence project be structured, and which EU nation should take the lead (Winkfield, 2015).

Another reason is about the fact that member states are not ready to give up another piece of their sovereignty. The national army/ defence force is one of the most important pillars in any national state (Eindbaum, 2016). Just looking on the decision-making procedure can see this. Normally the Commission has the sole right for proposals and to make decisions. Not in the field of the CSDP, here the European council has the decision-making power, as well that there has to be unanimity. It shows that this governmental approach was needed to be able to decide on the EU level over this policy field. The link with the national level stays strong and the member states have a direct say in it.

#### **5.5 Challenges towards a common European army**

In the section before, there were the troubles described on why a common European army cannot be created. Here the challenges of towards this common army are set out.

The first one is the fact that the EU, and more specific the CSDP need a 'grand strategy'. This meaning that the national interest should be set aside and the EU member states should create a more common and strategically approach on how they handle problems and crisis, this with thinking about the values and goals of the EU. In this manner they should then find another way to make decision in this policy field. But then again that is maybe a bridge too far because this field is worked with in an intergovernmental manner. The three biggest military powers, the UK, France and Germany will have to be on the same line in this aspect (Peferoen & Orbie, 2011). Now with the Brexit could this be a more possible scenario. This because the UK was one of the countries that did not want a common EU army force. Germany is a big fan for a common army. And the French say that they cannot be the only country that leads all the military missions (Winkfield, 2015). So in that view the big powers of the EU should not be a problem anymore (Troitiño, 2017).

Another challenge is the fact that the CSDP should be strengthened of the EU towards the rest of the world. If they can show that the EU is a stronger actor in the international policy. Thus to be a competitor with the USA and not only work together with them in NATO but be equally as strong (Peferoen & Orbie, 2011).

Some countries are the challenge that needs to be overcome to create a common EU army. More specific can be said from France and the UK. They have fundamental different point of view on how the CSDP should be handled. The UK sees the USA as an ally and wants to stay as close as possible to it. While France wants the EU to be an independent superpower in the defence and security policy as well (Peferoen & Orbie, 2011). Thus it can be said with the UK leaving the EU that this will help towards the creation of a strong defence and security policy if France is one of the main drivers of the project.

There is still no European expenditure or European defence budget. The crisis in public spending induced cuts in national defence budgets. The challenges created by shrinking defence budgets are aggravated by the fragmentation that leads to unnecessary duplication of capabilities, organisations and expenditures. Studies on the added value of EU spending show that by integrating European land forces, EU countries would be able to save substantial resources (Euractiv, 2016).

It can be said that if these main challenges are toppled and handled or in best case found a solution for. Then the reality of the EU army can be made real. This is a difficult project due to the sensitivity. But there is as well the acknowledgement of the need for the stronger Common Defence and Security Policy.

## 6 Discussion- conclusion

And now what can be concluded from this paper? In the end this does not give a nice solution on how to solve the problem of the European army nor gives it a framework on how to create this army. Here in this paper the recent events of the foreign policy has been discussed and it shows clearly that there is a will to create an army and to say it in the words of Winkfield (2015) "all signs point to a soon-coming EU army, bible prophecy confirms that it is simple a matter of when." The fact is that in this current climate the EU nations will have in the end not a lot of choice. There has to come an army. Personally I think that this army shall have to be created. But as stated in this paper, it has taken a long time to come to the CSDP that it is for the moment. There has been several reasons why there have to be one created. As stated by France and by Juncker, the EU is relying too much on NATO and thus USA. Another reason is the current threat around the continent of Europe, from all angles there are crises and threats. The closest threat is for the moment Russia, that is a military superpower. So in order of all these arguments you could conclude as well that the EU needs to make a stronger signal in the Defence and Security Policy by creating a strong common EU army that can act fast and effective. Then it could compete with the current military superpowers, USA and Russia.

The main challenges that are said in the paper are in the main line that the problem is the member states self. They need to be able to create a common army only if they can make a common strong policy, so if all the ideas of policy are in the same direction. Because the European council need to be anonymous about the decision, and with the big differences between the member states in the EU. But now with the leaving of the UK this can maybe make it easier. This because the UK was never a fan of the EU army and just wanted to rely on the NATO and thus the USA. There is already an enhanced cooperation in equipment and now recently the PESCO project is launched as well. These are several elements towards an evolution of the EDSP.

So the conditions are right, the cooperation is growing, and to repeat the words of Winkfield (2017), it will only be a matter of time before we have a common EU army.

## 7 Bibliography

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