

Towards a Strategic Compass: Where is the EU heading on security and defence?



An online seminar co-organised by the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) and the Direction générale des relations internationales et de la stratégie (DGRIS), French Ministry for the Armed Forces.

10:00-12:00 CET - 18 December 2020, Online, via Zoom

CONCEPT

Over the past four years, much has been said and written about the EU as a security and defence actor. **New and old concepts have been given life and renewed meaning as the EU has developed a range of initiatives designed to enhance its ability to act in a geopolitically intense world.** The Union has developed mechanisms such as Permanent Structured Cooperation and the European Defence Fund to help it plan and invest more coherently for defence capabilities. New operational tools have been put in place to bring strategic coherence to EU missions and operations too.

For all of the energy put into these initiatives over the past four years, however, fundamental questions continue to face the EU as it strives to ensure that it can be taken as a credible defence actor and partner. **Enter the Strategic Compass and its promise to bring clarity to the threats the EU should respond to, detail what actions the Union should prepare for and what means it requires to meet these objectives.** Given the turbulence of the past few years and the strategic challenges confronting the EU, the Compass arrives at an opportune time but getting the content right is essential for the future of EU security and defence.

Ensuring that the Strategic Compass meets expectations will be a joint EU endeavour. The process has already begun under the German Presidency of the Council of the EU, but it will be sustained by Portugal and Slovenia and the process will be finalised and delivered during the French Presidency in 2022. Over the forthcoming months a number of pertinent questions will present themselves:

- What should the strategic compass deliver in terms of priorities to guide EU security and defence?
- What is the best way to bring together the four baskets of crisis management, resilience, capability development and partnerships?
- How will it cover existing EU treaty obligations and could it lead to greater strategic solidarity?
- What comes after the Compass is delivered? How will the member states be incentivised any targets set by the Compass?

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PROGRAMME

10:00-10:10

Welcome address

Gustav LINDSTROM

Director, EU Institute for Security Studies

10:10-10:25

Keynote address

Arnout MOLENAAR

Head, Security and Defence Policy Division, European External Action Service

10:25-11:10

Main session - Where should the Strategic Compass take the EU?

Moderator

Daniel FIOTT

Security and Defence Editor, EU Institute for Security Studies

Speakers

Dunja BUJAN

Acting Head, Defence Policy Directorate, Croatian Ministry of Defence

Bruno CARDOSO REIS

Special Advisor to the Portuguese Minister of Defence

Olivier LANDOUR

Director European, North American and Multilateral Affairs, DGRIS, Ministry for the Armed Forces, France

Stefan SCHULZ

Brigadier-General, Division Chief for Security and Defence Policy Matters, German Federal Ministry of Defence

Jean-Pierre VAN AUBEL

Expert on Defence Policy and Strategy, Security and Defence Policy Division, European External Action Service

Think Tank Discussants

Elena LAZAROU

Acting Head, External Policies Unit, European Parliamentary Research Service

Jana PUGLIERIN

Head of Office and Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations

11:10-11:50

Audience debate and exchange

11:50-12:00

Concluding remarks

Alice GUITTON

Director-General, DGRIS, Ministry for the Armed Forces, France