Under military operations, the EU deploys armed forces and defence capabilities to third countries to deter, prevent and repress piracy and human and arms trafficking networks, conduct surveillance, train partners' military forces and contribute to safe and secure environments.

Level of ambition
Based on the Petersberg Tasks, the Helsinki European Council in December 1999 agreed that the EU should be able to act autonomously in crisis management; by 2003 the Union should be able to deploy 50,000-60,000 personnel within 60 days and for up to at least one year. Following the EU Global Strategy, the EU reinforced this commitment and pledged to protect Europe.

First EU military operation
In March 2003, Operation Concordia deployed to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as the EU's first military operation.

EU Battlegroups
The Battlegroups are high-readiness force packages consisting of 1,500 personnel that can be deployed within 10 days after an EU decision to launch an operation. They can be sustained for up to 30 days with an extension of up to 120 days with rotation.

Malian armed forces personnel completed training under EUTM Mali since its launch in 2013.

EU command centre
Since 2017, the EU's Military Planning and Conduct Capability in Brussels assumes command of all EU military non-executive missions that support host nations in an advisory role (e.g. EU training missions).

Under civilian operations, the EU deploys unarmed legal experts, police experts and border and customs officials to third countries to contribute to the rule of law, border monitoring, law enforcement capacity-building and training.

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Building on the Feira European Council in June 2000, ministers in 2004 agreed that by 2010 EU member states will provide up to 5,000 police officers for international missions (1,400 of which could be deployed in less than 30 days); 630+ prosecutors, judges and prison officers; 560+ civilian administrators; 570+ civil protection experts and 500+ monitoring personnel.

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European Security and Defence
The basics

#EUDefence
Why does the EU act?

Under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), the EU plans for and responds to international crises. The EU seeks to manage crises, build the capacity of partners and protect Europe through military and civilian means. Working alongside international partners, the EU deploys with the consent of a host nation and/or under a United Nations mandate. The EU deploys to monitor borders, provide police and judicial expertise, dismantle human trafficking networks, disrupt flows of weapons and train partners’ security services.

5,200+

people deployed worldwide under the CSDP in 2017:
approximately 3,300 in military operations and 2,019 in civilian missions.

Who does what?

EU governments play a key role as national finances, personnel, expertise and capabilities form the basis for any EU deployment. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP) steers the policy. She/he is supported by a range of bodies located in the Council of the EU, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission. The European Defence Agency (EDA), Satellite Centre (SatCen), Security and Defence College (ESDC) and Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) also support the policy.

34

missions to over 20 different countries/regions since 2003.

Who pays?

While civilian missions are directly financed from the EU budget, military operations are largely funded by those governments that participate in a given operation. However, a common funding pool based on national contributions called Athena is used to cover 10-15% of costs for transport, infrastructure, medical services, lodging and fuel.

€259

million combined budget allocations for ten CSDP civilian missions in 2017.
HOW DID WE GET HERE?

PETERSBERG TASKS
Jun 1993

Ministers of the Western European Union agree on the need to undertake peacekeeping, peace-making, humanitarian, rescue and post-conflict stabilisation missions.

DEFENCE AGENCY
Jul 2004

Governments establish the European Defence Agency to enhance capability development and industrial cooperation.

EU DEFENCE PACKAGE
Jul 2009

Member states and the European Parliament adopt a legislative package to support the European defence market.

EU GLOBAL STRATEGY
Jun 2016

The High Representative/Vice-President sets out strategic priorities for the EU including the protection of Europe.

EU-NATO DECLARATION
Jul 2016

The EU and NATO sign a joint declaration for deeper cooperation in 42 key areas.

SECURITY AND DEFENCE PLAN
Nov 2016

To implement the security and defence aspects of the Global Strategy, the EU launches a plan to synchronise defence planning and it creates an EU Military Planning and Conduct Capability.

EUROPEAN DEFENCE FUND
Jun 2017

The European Commission officially launches a fund to support EU defence research and capability development.

PERMANENT STRUCTURED COOPERATION (PeSCo)
Dec 2017

A group of willing governments embark on a long-term and binding political cooperation on capabilities and operations.

EU GLOBAL STRATEGY

Strategies
Treaties/declarations
Initiatives/new bodies

1992

AMSTERDAM TREATY
Oct 1997


ST MALO DECLARATION
Dec 1998

France and the UK sign a declaration on the need for the EU to act autonomously in military operations. Following the declaration, the 1999 Cologne European Council endorses the idea for an autonomous EU military capacity.

LAENKEN DECLARATION
Dec 2001

Following the 1999 Cologne European Council’s request to establish a range of politico-military bodies and resources at the EU level, ministers formally operationalise the European Security and Defence Policy in Brussels.

BERLIN PLUS AGREEMENT
Dec 2002

Ministers sign an agreement to allow the EU to use select NATO structures for its operations and missions.

EUROPEAN SECURITY STRATEGY
Dec 2003

The European Council adopts the first EU document spelling out strategic priorities for the Union.

LISBON TREATY
Dec 2007

Introduces a range of defence-relevant clauses including Permanent Structured Cooperation, mutual assistance, solidarity and the establishment of the European External Action Service.

MUTUAL ASSISTANCE
Nov 2015

France activates the mutual assistance clause following terrorist attacks in Paris.

GHENT INITIATIVE
Nov 2010

EU defence ministers launch a ‘pooling and sharing’ initiative to improve the availability of defence capabilities.

Why does the EU act?

COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

EU governments play a key role as national finances, personnel, expertise and capabilities form the basis of the EU’s military operations as it seeks to deepen defence cooperation.

Who does what?

The High Representative/Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP) steers the policy. She/he is supported by a range of politico-military bodies and resources.

How many people?

5,200+ people deployed worldwide under the CSDP in 2017:
- 3,300 in the European Union
- 1,919 in international missions
- 981 in civilian missions

Why is the EU doing this?

The EU plans for and responds to threats and crises in the world and alongside international partners, the EU deploys through military and civilian means. It undertakes peacekeeping, peacemaking, humanitarian, assistance, solidarity and the establishment of the European External Action Service.

1992

1999

2003

2007

2009

2015

2020

2016

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022
MILITARY OPERATIONS

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41,000+

lives saved since June 2015 under EUNAVFOR Sophia in the Mediterranean.

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EU command centre

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ONE

pirate attack in 2016, down from 176 incidents at its peak in 2011, in waters patrolled by EUNAVFOR Atalanta.
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Since 2017, the EU’s Military Planning and Conduct Capability in Brussels assumes command of all EU military non-executive missions that support host nations in an advisory role (e.g. EU training missions).

Integrated and comprehensive
The EU responds to conflicts and crises through the coherent use of all policies at the EU's disposal. The EU acts through diplomatic, security, defence, financial, trade, development and humanitarian means at all stages of the conflict cycle, acting promptly on prevention, stabilisation and avoiding premature disengagement when a new crisis erupts.

EUAM = Advisory Mission, EUBAM = Border Assistance Mission, EUCAP = Capacity-building, EUFOR = Force, EULEX = Rule of Law, EUMM = Monitoring Mission, EUNAVFOR = Naval force, EUPOL = Police, EUTM = Training Mission
CIVILIAN MISSIONS

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700

criminal cases (war crimes and organised crime) investigated, prosecuted and adjudicated by EULEX Kosovo.

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2,000+

persons trained by EUAM Ukraine in 2016.

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The EU acts through diplomatic, security, defence, financial, trade, development and humanitarian means at all stages of the conflict cycle, acting promptly on prevention, stabilisation and avoiding premature disengagement when a new crisis erupts.

3,500

persons trained by EUCAP Sahel Mali since 2014.
The EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) is the Union’s agency dealing with the analysis of foreign, security and defence policy issues. The Institute became an autonomous agency of the EU in January 2002, under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), to foster a common security culture for the EU, support the elaboration and projection of its foreign policy, and enrich the strategic debate inside and outside Europe.

Based in Paris, with a Liaison Office in Brussels, the EUISS is now an integral part of the new structures that underpin the further development of the CFSP/CSDP. The Institute’s core mission is to provide analyses and fora for discussion that can be of use and relevance to the formulation of EU policy. In carrying out that mission, it also acts as an interface between European experts and decision-makers at all levels.

Publications

The Institute’s flagship publication is its series of Chaillot Papers, which are based on focused, in-depth research. The EUISS also publishes a Yearbook (YES), reports and shorter analyses.