

Making the Strategic Compass work: How to embed EU ambitions in national defence planning?



A webinar co-organised by the Croatian Ministry of Defence and the EU Institute for Security Studies (EU ISS).

(09:30-11:30), Monday 26 April 2021

CONCEPT

In recent years, the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence and Permanent Structured Cooperation have worked towards the better synchronisation of national defence plans and joint capability development. However, ensuring that EU security and defence initiatives are **embedded in national defence planning processes** is challenging, and there is a need to ensure complementarity with NATO processes. National planners can be unaware of the full relevance and scope of EU initiatives and capability development timelines may not always align.

EU security and defence initiatives can therefore only be **credibly implemented if they are reflected in national defence planning**. The Strategic Compass also requires a strong connection with national defence planning, which rests with the member states. Ensuring such a connection means that the Strategic Compass can be properly implemented after 2022, and this will avoid the need for follow-on initiatives or the risk that the EU fails to move from words to deeds.

Following an earlier initiative by Croatia and the European Defence Agency in February 2020, there remains an essential need to embed EU defence initiatives in national defence planning. Although many EU defence initiatives are still young, the **forthcoming Strategic Compass provides a further opportunity** to reflect on and pursue ways to ensure that EU defence ambitions and priorities are embedded in national defence planning processes. Without buy-in from the national level, it will be challenging to meet the full promise of the Strategic Compass' eventual conclusions.

To this end, the purpose of this event is to focus **on practical ways to embed EU defence initiatives in national defence planning processes**.

Accordingly, the expert discussion will focus on the following questions:

- > How far have existing EU defence initiatives been embedded in national defence planning processes? What do the national experiences tell us so far, and how can the current situation be enhanced in practical terms through the Strategic Compass process?
- > What are the major impediments and enablers for stronger interconnections between national defence and EU defence? How can the Strategic Compass be viewed as relevant by national defence planners and how can it lead to practical outcomes?
- > In what ways can the Strategic Compass be used to strongly affirm and embed EU defence initiatives into national defence priority processes? What incentives are there for EU Member States to feel greater ownership for EU defence?

PROGRAMME

09:30-09:35

Welcome address

Gustav LINDSTROM

Director, EU Institute for Security Studies

09:35-09:50

Keynote speech

Dunja BUJAN

Director, Defence Policy Directorate, Ministry of Defence, Croatia

09:50-10:50

Main session – Views on ownership

Moderator and facilitator

Daniel FIOTT

Security and Defence Editor, EU Institute for Security Studies

Speakers

Bastian GIEGERICH

Director, Defence and Military Analysis, International Institute for Strategic Studies

Christian MÖLLING

Research Director, German Council on Foreign Relations

Olli RUUTU

Deputy Chief Executive, European Defence Agency

Jean-Pierre VAN AUBEL

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

Lars WALRAVE

Director, International Affairs and Operations, Ministry of Defence, Netherlands

10:50-11:30

Debate and Q&A