AT A GI ANCE

Plenary – June I 2022



The EU's foreign, security and defence policy after Russia's invasion of Ukraine

The Russian invasion of Ukraine shattered Europe's peace and altered its security situation. This change requires EU foreign, security and defence policy, including its tools, to adapt appropriately. The European Parliament is expected to vote on a draft recommendation in this regard during its June plenary session.

Background

Russia <u>started</u> its unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine on 24 February 2022. In 2014 it had <u>annexed Crimea</u>, then supported pro-Russian separatists controlling parts of the Donbas region, and waged <u>hybrid warfare</u> against Ukraine. The aggression aims not only to subordinate Ukraine but also to <u>revise</u> the entire European security order and undermine the democratic order. In response, the EU has provided Ukraine with broad-ranging <u>support</u>, including <u>military</u>. Moreover, it has adopted sweeping <u>sanctions</u> against Russia and is adapting its foreign, security and defence policy to the new situation.

EU actions

The EU leaders' <u>Versailles Declaration</u> of 10-11 March 2022 reiterated the EU's <u>commitment</u> to 'take more responsibility for its own security' and increase its 'capacity to act autonomously' while recognising the importance of EU-NATO cooperation. The EU Member States agreed to invest more in defence capabilities and innovative technologies by increasing their defence expenditure; making collaborative investments, including joint procurement; investing in military capabilities, including strategic enablers; strengthening synergies in research and innovation; and developing the EU's defence industry.

On 21 March, the EU leaders endorsed the <u>Strategic Compass</u>, 'an ambitious plan of action for strengthening the EU's security and defence policy by 2030'. The Strategic Compass qualifies Russia's aggression against Ukraine as a 'major geopolitical shift' that challenges EU interests. It commits the EU-27 to investing and developing defence capabilities, working with partners, honing crisis management and enhancing resilience, so as to achieve a 'quantum leap forward' in security and defence, increase the EU's capacity and willingness to act, strengthen its resilience and ensure <u>solidarity and mutual defence</u>. A <u>joint communication</u> on the defence investment gaps (DIG) analysis and way forward was published on 18 May, implementing the Strategic Compass and Versailles Declaration. It proposes inter alia setting up a defence joint procurement task force – a short-term EU instrument of €500 million to reinforce defence industrial capabilities through joint procurement – and adopting a European defence investment programme regulation. In its <u>conclusions of 30-31 May</u>, the European Council confirmed the EU's strong resolve to implement the strategic compass and asked the Council to examine the five issues identified by the DIG analysis.

European Parliament position

On 11 May, the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) adopted a <u>report</u> with recommendations on EU foreign, security and defence policy after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It recommends making swift progress in establishing a defence union by implementing the actions under the Strategic Compass; which would serve as a foundation for common EU defence. The report calls for regular EU Defence Ministers Council meetings and making <u>strategic autonomy</u> an overarching aim on the way to ensuring a holistic approach to EU foreign, security and defence policy. AFET also calls for the unilateral declaration on political accountability to be replaced with a bilateral agreement with the HR/VP and for the Parliament to be involved in further implementation and scrutiny of the European Peace Facility and the Strategic Compass.

Recommendation (Rule 118): 2022/2039(INI); Committee responsible: AFET; Rapporteurs: David McAllister (EPP, Germany) and Nathalie Loiseau (Renew, France).

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