

DIFFGOV Workshop Presentation
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Europe as a Strong Actor in a More Complex World Order
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Introduction

The debate on EU foreign policy and the EU as a Global Actor has been part of the evolution of EU integration following the end of the Cold War with moments of particular interest always coinciding with crises which led to heightened awareness of the inherent weakness of the EU - due to its nature - to act as effectively (rapidly, precisely, with one voice) as other actors (Balkan wars, Iraq war). It has also been a discussion parallel to the institutional evolution of the EU and the expansion of its competences accompanying successive treaty reforms. Most notably, the Lisbon Treaty equipped the EU with substantially more tools for its “Global Actor” role - to assert itself as a foreign policy actor and project power in international relations (beyond trade).

- Today’s geostrategic environment is markedly different from 2009 (Lisbon) and 2003 (European Security Strategy). Why?
 1. Debates on nature of peace and power have shifted : great power rivalry & new arms race threatening the post- Cold War order.
 2. Emerging and reemerging actors with competing worldviews - and different from that of the EU.
 3. A crisis of multilateralism is in the making, made particularly pronounced following the election of Donald Trump but also other phenomena closer to the EU such as Brexit.
 4. Protracted and unresolved crises in the EU’s Eastern and Southern periphery/neighbourhood.
 5. Internal/external nexus of security crisis has politicised foreign policy to a much larger degree and made it salient for public.
 6. Competing visions about the Future of Europe within the EU and (at times) between bureaucrats and politicians.
- These changes lead to different assumptions about the role the EU should and could be playing as a global actor, thus to the state of play as of 2014/2016. Which includes:
 1. The Global Strategy and **its implementation**:
 - Strategic Autonomy
 - Level of Ambition
 - Emphasis on capacity building in security and defence (PESCO, EDF, Military Mobility)
 - Departure from European Security Strategy (2003) and adaptation of assumptions
 - Still the implementation relies primarily on the Member States in spite of Commission/EEAS “grand strategy”.
 2. A time of institutional rethinking
 - Future of Europe (White Papers and National perspectives)
 - Lack of implementation in full of Lisbon Treaty CFSP provisions
 3. The crisis of Multilateralism and a need to rethink Strategic Partners leading to a focus on understanding and (re)forming **external perceptions** of the EU.

4. Recognition of the ad hoc nature of CFSP so far and of its weaknesses and efforts by the Juncker Commission and member states to propose actions to counterbalance them.
Examples include:
 - Extension of qualified majority voting.
 - European Security Council? (France and Germany, June 2018/ Merkel in speech to Parliament): potentially a mechanism for closer coordination/legitimacy of coalitions of the willing/emergency response mechanism for crises management/but problematic in terms of the treaty and open ended with respect to membership
 - Common strategic culture.
 - Increased common budget for CFSP.
 - Creation of a DG Defence and of a SEDE Committee for security and defence issues.
5. Different degrees and nature of geostrategic concerns by member states leading to debates about flexible integration: coalitions of the willing (and/or able) or QMV? A big challenge in the different salience of the same issues for different EU member states, as well as the use of foreign policy to advance populist discourse and objectives thus accentuating those divergences intra-EU.
 - Thoughts looking forward:
 1. How can the EU be fit for its role as a global actor?
 2. Fundamental need for a **common** assessment of threats and threat perceptions - how to streamline (educated about issues that are global). Need to understand which strategic interests divide and which ones unite the Member States.
 3. What should be the role of EU level diplomacy vis a vis member states?
 4. How can the EU achieve domestic and EU-level legitimacy for EU foreign policy – is there need for more cooperation between the Council and Parliaments?
 5. How will Brexit affect EU unity in foreign policy?
 6. Does the EU still hold is normative power?
 7. Can a common strategic culture derive from the Global Strategy and its method?

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