EUROPEAN IDENTITY IN DEFENSE POLICY

The aim of the article is to analyze the attitude of Europeans to defense as well as to progress in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Is an EU-specific security and common defense identity being created? According to Karl Deutsch's concept, this identity was to lead to the creation of a security community similar to those that function in nation states. It was also intended to pave the way for further progress in European integration. Difficulties in constructing identity in defense policy may hinder further European integration, including federalization and democratization of the European Union. These problems with European identity may also serve to strengthen transatlantic relations and cooperation within NATO.

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Keywords: CSDP, EU, European Security and Defense Identity, NATO, Security Community.

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Spring 2023

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Thae aim of the article is to analyze the attitude of Europeans to defense as well as to progress in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Is an EU-specific security and common defense identity being created? According to Karl Deutsch's concept, this was to lead to the creation of a security community, similar to those that function in nation states.[1] Admittedly, there were many institutional dysfunctions in the EU's defense policy, including competence and budgetary dysfunctions.[2] Nevertheless, the starting point for political mobilization for deepening integration in the field of defense seemed to be the emergence of EU identification in the area of security and a similar perception of strategic threats by European nations.

Common identity was therefore the basis for the progress of integration in the field of foreign policy and defense policy. However, the ambitions were greater and went beyond EU defense policy. It was believed that without European identification there is no demos, and therefore no political community in the EU. Thus, transferring competences to the EU level in terms of key competences of nation states - including those related to defense policy - was undemocratic[3] or burdened with a growing democratic deficit in Europe.[4] Democratic control at the level of nation states was weakened, and at the same time it was not possible to build appropriate institutions of democratic supervision over officials and political decision makers at the EU level. This approach refers to the constructivist assumptions, according to which, for the success of integration, it is necessary to disseminate European identifications.[5]

Thus, the creation of identity in the area of security had a proto-federal dimension, if we assume that the existence of a political community (demos) and a sufficiently strong political identification of Europeans are the prerequisites for the emergence of a federation in Europe.[6] At the same time, difficulties in constructing identity in defense policy have serious consequences for further European integration, as they may hinder the federalization and democratization of the European Union.

1) K.W. Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication. An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality* (MIT Press, John Wiley & Sons, Cambridge - London, 1953).

2) A. Cottey, "Astrategic Europe," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 2, p. 276-291; T.G. Grosse, "Systemowe uwarunkowania slabosci polityki zagranicznej Unii Europejskiej," [Systemic determinants of the weakness of the European Union's foreign policy], *Studia Europejskie*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (2010): p. 33-66.

3) F. Nicoli, "Democratic Legitimacy in the Era of Fiscal Integration," *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (2017): p. 389– 404; J.H.H. Weiler, "Does Europe Need a Constitution? Demos, Telos and the German Maastricht Decision," *European Law Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (1995): p. 219– 258 [particularly 226].

4) W. Wagner, The Democratic Control of Military Power Europe," *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2006): p. 200-216.

5) T. Risse, "Social Constructivism and European Integration," [in:] *European Integration Theory*, eds. A. Wiener, T. Diez (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004): p. 159-176.

6) B. Rosamond, "Conceptualizing the EU Model of Governance in World Politics," *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (2005): p. 463-478; L.E. Cederman, *Constructing Europe's Identities: The External Dimension* (Lynne Rienner: Boulder, 2001).

European Defense Identity

Identity in defense policy has two references in the scientific literature. The first is referred to as the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI). It was aimed at strengthening European cooperation in the field of defense, and thus paving the way for the development of this policy within the EU, and, on the other hand, connecting it with the North Atlantic Alliance. In the institutional dimension, the ESDI concept was, according to the declaration of the NATO summit in Rome (1991), to create the European pillar of this alliance, and thus to combine the activities of the EU with NATO.[7] At the same time, according to the declaration attached to the Maastricht Treaty, it was primarily to strengthen the role of the Western European Union,[8] a military organization in Western Europe which was the precursor of the CSDP. The same declaration ensured close organizational ties between the Western European Union and the EU, as well as recognizing that the ESDI should serve to "increase solidarity within the North Atlantic Alliance".[9]

The concept of the European Security and Defence Identity was therefore intended to constitute a certain compromise between the U.S. expectations regarding the superior role of NATO for European security and the French desire to develop defense potential in the EU. This compromise turned out to be unsatisfactory for both sides. On the one hand, Washington was skeptical of the two-pillar structure within NATO and tried to control and limit the development of ESDI as strictly as possible. On the other hand, France perceived the development of ESDI as the first step towards transferring NATO functions to the EU, and thus promoting strategic autonomy within the EU, which was supposed to mean building an EU defense capability independent of the North Atlantic Alliance.[10] Therefore, under the slogan ESDI, a number of organizational activities were undertaken to ensure the possibility of conducting operational activities independent of NATO.[11]

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7) Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation, Press Communiqué S-1(91)86, 8 November 1991. https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c911108a

8) An international military organization, established under the Paris Agreements of 23 October 1954, which entered into force, after the ratification process, on 5 May 1955. It was dissolved on 31 March 2010, by decision of the Member States, due to the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty.

9) Treaty on European Union, OJ C 191, 29 July 1992: p. 105.

10) M. Dembinski, D. Gaus, "NATO and the European Security and Defence Identity: Complementary or Mutually Exclusive?," in M. Dembinski, K. Gerke (Hg.), *Cooperation or Conflict? Transatlantic Relations in Transition*, Studien der Hessischen Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung Bd. 31, (Frankfurt/M: Campus Verlag, 1998): p. 91-123 [in particular 116-120].

11) G. Messervy-Whiting, "Europe's Security and Defence Identity: The Western European Union's Operational Development," *The RUSI Journal*, (April 1997): p. 48-51.

The French ambitions were continued by actions aimed at establishing the CSDP.[12] Its precursor was the agreement between France and the United Kingdom of Saint Malo (1998), which established the progress of European policy, but on the condition of its complementarity with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Soon after, it was agreed to establish the European Union Rapid Reaction Force, which was supposed to have a strength of 50-60 thousand troops and be ready for deployment within sixty days. The idea was not implemented in practice, and it was not resumed until 2022, although on a smaller scale (the forces were supposed to consist of 5,000 soldiers).[13]

> **"***Among the objectives guiding the construction of identity in defense policy, the pursuit of strategic autonomy in the EU should be mentioned above all, which has been the ambition of the French elites for decades.* "**

The second approach to identity in defense policy has a sociological dimension and is related to changes in the awareness of EU elites and societies in relation to security and common defense. It concerned shared values and principles, goals, and instruments of action in the CSDP, including basic geopolitical assumptions or visions of future strategic relations inside and outside the EU.[14] Identity in defense policy was also linked to this more generalized EU identification. It was difficult to abstract the progress under the CSDP from the broader perspective of EU development, especially since one of the assumptions of the proponents of the defense policy was to deepen integration and bind European societies more closely to it.

Among the objectives guiding the construction of identity in defense policy, the pursuit of strategic autonomy in the EU should be mentioned above all, which has been the ambition of the French elites for decades. It can even be considered that increasing independence from the USA and NATO was to be the most important geopolitical motive for shaping the identity of Europeans in defense policy.[15] As the

12) P. Zurawski vel Grajewski, "Bezpieczenstwo miedzynarodowe. Wymiar military" [International security. Military dimension], *PWN* (Warszawa, 2012): p. 257-295.

13) J. Howorth, "European Integration and Defence: The Ultimate Challenge?" *Chaillot Paper*, No. 43, WEU-ISS, (Paris 2000); D. Mathew, "Europe's Quest for a Security Identity," *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (2000): p. 429-432.

14) T.G. Grosse, "Consequences of the War in Ukraine – the EU Perspective," Strategy & Future, 5 April 2022. https://strategyandfuture.org/en/consequences-of-the-war-in-ukraine-the-eu-perspective/

15) E. Kirchner, J. Sperling, "Will form lead to function? Institutional Enlargement and the Creation of a European

French ambassador to NATO put it, if the North Atlantic Alliance gets too close to the EU, Washington could control the processes of European integration from the back seat.[16] The point was therefore to make Europe independent of the political influence of the U.S., and more precisely to guarantee the largest countries of Western Europe the possibility of freely shaping integration. Moreover, the development of social identification with the defense policy was to support integration processes, especially in the face of numerous disintegration tendencies and increasing divisions in the EU. Supporters of the EU federation believed that building a strong CSDP would facilitate this type of political transformation in Europe.[17] The promoters of such an approach were especially German politicians and experts.[18] Finally, the purpose behind the creation of this identity was to support the development of the European defense industry, primarily corporations from the largest Western European countries.

> ❝*It should be noted that the missions undertaken by the EU and the so-called Civilian CSDP Compact was in line with EU values and a peaceful strategic culture.*❞

The problem was that matters relating to European foreign, or defense policies were generally regarded as unimportant by EU residents. In subsequent studies of the European Commission, the problem of immigration or climate change gained first place, while the issue of the EU's impact on the international scale was only in eighth place.[19] Also, youth surveys showed little interest in defense policy.[20] In other studies, young people's support for building a defense potential and a common EU army was much higher but treated in a rather abstract way. This was an expression of general support for the progress of integration, rather than for a particular policy entailing specific obligations or costs.[21] In these analyses, support for defense policy

Security and Defence Identity," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (2000): p. 23-45 [in particular 25-26, 33].

16) K. -H. Kamp, "Europe's Defence Project – Time for Transatlantic Rearrangement," *Global Affairs*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (2015): p. 186.

17) E. Kirchner, J. Sperling, "Will form lead to function?" op. cit., p. 33; K.-H. Kamp, Europe's defence project… op. cit., p. 183.

18) K.-H. Kamp, Europe's defence project… op. cit., p. 190.

19) Standard Eurobarometer 92. Autumn 2019, European Commission, Brussels 2019, p. 15; Europeans' views on the priorities of the European Union, Standard Eurobarometer 91 (Spring 2019) European Commission (Brussels, 2019): p. 35.

20) Flash Eurobarometer 478, How do we build a stronger, more united Europe? The views of young people, European Commission, Brussels 2019, p. 8.

21) Similar conclusions emerge from the research: B. Bremer, P. Genschel, M. Jachtenfuchs, "Juncker's Curse? Identity, Interest, and Public Support for the Integration of Core State Powers," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 58,

was clearly lower in societies that are net contributors to the EU budget and among people with a stronger attachment to national identity.[22] In the Commission's surveys, many respondents supported the idea of developing the CSDP. Nevertheless, when it was necessary to determine which policy should be developed first and which is less important for Europeans, defense and foreign affairs were invariably in the background.

CSDP had some potential for the future, including building international identification of European residents. The advantage of this policy was that it raised some hopes, probably quite different in varied parts of the EU. For example, it was supported by the societies of the Baltic states, mainly due to the sense of the Russian threat, as well as by the Germans and French, who had dissimilar expectations towards this policy. Neutral states, such as Austria and Sweden, were the most reluctant towards this sphere of integration.[23] What is significant, however, from the point of view of identification in this area - it was not important for Europeans to consider CSDP the highest EU priority. Defense policy aroused much greater ambitions and interest among political elites, especially in Western Europe, which, at least in the second decade of the 21st century, was not reflected in the views of ordinary citizens.

It is worth noting that support for the CSDP was significantly higher than for the project to establish a European army. Here, the societies of neutral countries had a decidedly critical position. They probably feared that this might push them to the margins of the integration processes, i.e., make them second-class Europeans. They could also expect political pressure to abandon their earlier strategic culture. All other nations declared less enthusiasm for the EU army compared to the CSDP, but it was especially visible among the Germans.[24] Perhaps this was due to the very strong culture of pacifism in this society. Unlike the Americans, for example, most Germans did not consider the use of the army to be an important instrument for foreign policy or international order.[25]

In a 2022 poll conducted by the news portal Politico, the highest support for the creation of an EU army was expressed by the Greeks. Roughly half of respondents in France and Spain approved of it, but people in Germany, Italy and the Netherlands were much more skeptical.[26] In the latter case, it could have resulted from the

No. 1 (2020): p. 56-75.

22) B. Bremer, P. Genschel, M. Jachtenfuchs, Juncker's Curse? op. cit.

23) Europeans' views on the priorities of the European Union, op .cit., p. 5.

24) Special Eurobarometer 461, Designing Europe's future Security and Defence, European Commission, (Brussels, 2017): p. 18.

25) "American and Germans Differ In Their Views of Each Other and the World," Pew Research Center, (Washington, March 2020): p. 6.

26) C. Hirsch, "Europeans Support Ukraine Joining the EU — but not yet," Politico, 16 March 2022.

potential costs, which made Dutch voters reluctant to deepen integration projects, especially in the fiscal sphere.

As in the previously cited studies on defense policy, a European army was not a major priority for EU societies. It was listed at the end of the list of matters considered important for the future of the Union.[27] In other studies,[28] the majority of respondents (nearly 60 percent) were in favor of decisions on EU armed forces being taken unanimously or by those countries that are ready to send their soldiers to European missions. Only 7 percent of respondents were in favor of the possibility of a majority vote in order to force all countries to send troops on missions undertaken under the EU banner. In the same study, less than 20 percent of respondents agreed that a European army should replace the armed forces in the Member States.[29] All this proves that the Europeans were thinking of a loose cooperation of national armed forces, and one in which each state would have the final say on the use of its own forces. In the matter of security, which is very important for national sovereignty, the citizens of the Union opted for the voluntary cooperation of national armies, rather than the establishment of a single European army, following the example of solutions practiced in states with a federal system. In this way, the strong attachment of societies to national identification became evident.

Europeans were pacifist in opinion polls. They were also attached to the idea of "peaceful power", "civilian power",[30] and "normative power",[31] which meant that in international relations they put the promotion of peace, human rights, democracy, and other EU values first.[32] This posed a challenge for shaping the identity in defense policy, which naturally used arguments of force and the threat of war.[33]

The consequence of the pacifism of Europeans was the adoption of a strategic culture in the Union, which was based on means of exerting peaceful influence, mainly through international law and economic exchange. Europeans were reluctant to point to their own geopolitical goals, including their biggest rivals posing a security

https://www.politico.eu/article/poll-show-european-back-ukraine-path-to-eu-membership/

27) Special Eurobarometer 467, Future of Europe, European Commission (Brussels, 2017): p. 127.

28) P. Manigart, Public opinion and European defense, European Commission (Brussels, 2001): p. 13.

29) P. Manigart, Public opinion and European defense, op. cit., p. 16.

30) F. Duchêne, "Europe's Role in World Peace," [in:] R. Mayne (ed.), *Europe Tomorrow: Sixteen Europeans Look Ahead* (London: Fontana/Collins, 1972): p. 1–21; H. Bull, "Civilian Power Europe: a Contradiction in Terms?" *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1982): p. 149–64; C. Hill, European foreign policy: power-bloc, civilian model – or flop?, [in:] R. Rummel (ed.), *The Evolution of an International Actor: Western Europe's New Assertiveness* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990): p. 31–55.

31) I. Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?" *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2002): p. 235-258.

32) "Europeans Credit EU with Promoting Peace and Prosperity, but Say Brussels Is Out of Touch With Its Citizens," Pew Research Center (March, 2019): p. 2; Special Eurobarometer 467, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

33) E. Kirchner, J. Sperling, Will form lead to function? op. cit., p. 34.

risk. They also did not allow the use of coercive measures against potential enemies, especially in the military dimension. That is why some researchers evaluating EU strategic documents defined the Union as an a-strategic organization, i.e., not using grand strategy - as other powers do.[34] Others saw the EU as a "small power" in geopolitical terms.[35] Even if more than 30 foreign operations were undertaken under the CSDP, they were small in scale, focused on peacekeeping or on civilian rather than military objectives. The effectiveness of these missions was assessed as "marginal at best".[36] It is difficult not to recognize that the effectiveness of the EU defense policy resulted from the pacifist attitude of Europeans and the strategic culture adopted in Western Europe. Some considered that foreign and defense policies were too dependent on a liberal and left-wing narrative that actually limited the ability to effectively pursue security goals.[37] An example of this tendency was the dissemination of "feminist foreign policy" in Germany, already during the war in Ukraine, which was mainly aimed at supporting minorities and handicapped groups, as well as promoting a healthy lifestyle abroad.[38]

It should be noted that the missions undertaken by the EU and the so-called Civilian CSDP Compact was in line with EU values and a peaceful strategic culture. This dimension focused on peacekeeping, police, training, hybrid threats, including in cyberspace, terrorist, and organized crime.[39] It could potentially become an effective instrument for counteracting illegal immigration, especially that related to terrorist threats. This could introduce a kind of "division of labor" between NATO and the CSDP, leaving the defense of the territory of the member states to the Alliance, and leaving other threats and conducting peacekeeping missions to the Union. However, this was not satisfactory for France, for which much more important than the civilian dimension of the CSDP was the EU's autonomy in the geopolitical sphere, as well as the support provided by EU instruments for the production and export of arms. At the same time, the EU's defense policy had little focus on ensuring common security,[40] at least that was the case until the 2022 war in Ukraine.

Concluding Remarks

34) A. Cottey, Astrategic Europe, op. cit., p. 276-291.

35) A. Toje, "The European Union as a Small Power," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (2011): p. 43-60.

36) A. Cottey, Astrategic Europe, op. cit., p. 286.

37) E.A. Juncos, "Resilience as the New EU Foreign Policy Paradigm: A Pragmatist Turn?" *European Security*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2017): p. 1-18.

38) C. Adebahr, "What Germany's Turning Point Means for its Feminist Foreign Policy," Politico, 21 March 2022, https://www.politico.eu/article/germany-turning-point-feminist-foreign-policy/

39) J. Bergmann, P. Müller, "Failing Forward in the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy: the Integration of EU Crisis Management," *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 28, No. 10 (2021): p. 1669-1687.

40) T.G. Grosse, "Development of Defense Policy and Armaments Industry in the European Union," [in:] *Fuel for Dominance. On the Economic Bases of Geopolitical Supremacy*, ed. T.G. Grosse (Berlin: Peter Lang): p. 189-236.

Summing up the considerations so far, it can be concluded that there were a number of obstacles to building a strong identification in the security sphere. First of all, EU societies were attached to their own national traditions and culture, and national identities played a much stronger role than that of the EU. In addition, European nations were divided. They had different strategic cultures, attitudes to armed forces and readiness to use them, and finally a different perception of threats and geopolitical interests. As Reimund Seidelmann rightly pointed out, the enlargement of NATO and the EU to include Central European countries has fundamentally changed the preferences regarding European security, including the influence of the United States on both organizations, as well as reducing the chances of implementing an autonomous defense policy in the EU.[41] The prospect of expanding the North Atlantic Alliance to include Sweden and Finland in 2023 has further strengthened this geopolitical trend. Intergovernmental governance within the CSDP was a natural thing, i.e., oriented towards national interests.[42] However, in such a situation, building a common identity in defense policy was much more difficult.

Moreover, many Europeans were pacifist, not only those from countries with a long tradition of neutrality. For example, the memory of World War II and German militarism from that period meant that support for the progress of the CSDP was decreasing in many countries.[43] Union citizens associated the ideas of European integration with the international promotion of peace and democracy. The problem was that the ideas of Europe as a "civilian" or "peaceful" power conflicted with the growing militarism of the European project. It was difficult to justify the need to invest from EU funds in the development of the arms industry, and thus increase the export of arms by the largest European corporations. Only to a certain extent could the development of the CSDP be justified by the desire to stimulate integration processes in Europe. What is more, the sphere of defense was in the public opinion a distant place among the tasks that should be dealt with by the Union.

In Western European countries, i.e., leading in integration processes, at the beginning of the 21st century there was no sense of geopolitical threat that could justify the need to develop a defense policy in the EU or to create a European army. Russia has not been perceived as a threat here, at least since the end of the Cold War, and thus has not mobilized any identification in defense policy. The leading motive for the progress of the CSDP was the idea of strategic autonomy from the

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41) R. Seidelmann, "Nato's Enlargement as a Policy of Lost Opportunities," *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 20, No. 2-3 (1997): p. 233-245.

42) A. Menon, "Defence Policy and the Logic of 'High Politics'," [in:] P. Genschel, M. Jachtenfuchs (eds.), *Beyond the Regulatory Polity? The European Integration of Core State Powers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): p. 66–84.

43) C. De Vries, "Don't Mention The War: Second World War Remembrance and Support for European Cooperation," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (2020): p. 138– 154.

U.S. and NATO, which was sometimes proclaimed under the slogan of "European sovereignty". It was mainly related to the strengthening of the arms industry in the EU, which was largely export-oriented.[44] In the countries of Central Europe, these ideas raised serious doubts, because the transatlantic alliance was the foundation of security for these societies. On the other hand, the criticism of the USA visible in Western Europe was based on pacifism and dislike of U.S. militarism. Thus, there was strong resistance in the Union to the advances of the CSDP from the pacifist left, as well as from conservatives and national groups averse to the concept of European sovereignty or strategic autonomy.[45] All this seriously limited the construction of a common identification in defense policy.

The institutional development of the CSDP was quite moderate, far from the expectations of some politicians in Western Europe, especially in Paris or Berlin. They were unable to mobilize European societies to give stronger support to this project. It seems that poor identification of Europeans with defense policy limited the institutionalization of this policy. As a result, Europe's problem was that it did not have sufficient potential to guarantee its own security and had to rely on U.S. support and NATO structures to do so.[46] The best example of this was the helplessness of the European Union in the face of the war in the Balkans in 1992–1995. Later, the same kind of vulnerability of the EU was exposed by Russia's aggression against Ukraine in 2022. Moreover, too strong development of the CSDP became a challenge for Europe's security, as it could lead to the weakening of NATO.[47] For this reason, the countries of the eastern flank of the North Atlantic Alliance, in the face of Russian imperialism, tried to concentrate around NATO, while at the same time they were less willing to look at German and French proposals aimed at building strategic autonomy within the CSDP.

In conclusion, the weakness of the European identity in defense policy may have serious implications for the further development of European integration. Firstly, it may hinder the development of the CSDP and the creation of a European army. Secondly, it may weaken federalist aspirations in the EU. Thirdly, it constitutes a barrier to the geopolitical ambitions of the EU's strategic autonomy and independence from NATO. Fourthly, it enforces the maintenance of transatlantic ties in the field of security.

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44) T.G. Grosse, Development of Defense Policy and Armaments Industry in the European Union, op. cit.

45) A. Herranz-Surrallés, "Paradoxes of Parliamentarization in European Security and Defence: When Politicization and Integration Undercut Parliamentary Capital," *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (2019): p. 29-45.

46) K.-H. Kamp, Europe's defence project… op. cit., p. 185.

47) E. Kirchner, J. Sperling, Will form lead to function? op. cit., p. 32; T.G. Grosse, "The Challenge for the EU's Defence Policy," 18 October 2022, The Sobieski Institute, https://sobieski.org.pl/en/the-challenge-for-the-eus-defence-policy/