

BACKGROUND NOTE



INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE FOR THE COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY AND THE COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

SESSION II: PRIORITIES AND CURRENT ISSUES OF THE COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY AND THE COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

The articles of the Treaty on European Union set out the provisions of the Union's common foreign and security policy (CFSP). The CFSP aims to preserve peace, strengthen international cooperation and security, and consolidate democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the principles of international law ([Article 21 TEU](#)). The common security and defence policy (CSDP) is part of the CFSP, as the Treaty states that the CFSP “shall cover all areas of foreign policy and all questions relating to the Union’s security, including the progressive framing of a common defence policy that may lead to a common defence” ([Article 24 TEU](#)). The CSDP “shall provide the Union with an operational capacity drawing on civilian and military assets”, taking into account the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States ([Article 42 TEU](#)).

In response to the threats of the changing geopolitical and security environment in the 2020s, the EU has launched six civilian and military CSDP missions between 2021 and 2024, and adopted the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence in 2022. This aims to make the EU stronger and more capable of action by 2030, both continentally and globally ([7371/2022](#)). In this context, the Strategic Compass refers, inter alia, to the strengthening of the European Peace Facility, the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) and the Defence Fund. Several defence policies have been developed or updated in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine and new threats, including the EU Policy on Cyber Defence [[JOIN\(2022\) 49 final](#)], the Action plan on military mobility 2.0 [[JOIN\(2022\) 48 final](#)], the Maritime Security Strategy [[JOIN\(2023\) 8 final](#)], the EU's first Space Strategy for Security and Defence [[JOIN\(2023\)9 final](#)], or the Civilian CSDP Compact ([9588/23](#)). The EU has also increasingly strengthened its cooperation with NATO, with the latest progress report being published by the EU Council in June 2024 ([10471/24](#)).

In recent years, the EU has also taken a number of measures to reduce military capability shortfalls and to promote defence cooperation and procurement. The most important of these are the launch of PESCO, i.e. the Permanent Structured Cooperation [[CFSP 2017/2315](#)], the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence from 2017 ([9178/17](#)), and the establishment of the European Defence Fund [[EU 2021/697](#)].

Despite these achievements, the war in Ukraine has revealed further weaknesses in Europe’s defence industry. In response, the leaders of the Member States have pledged in several fora to increase their defence spending and procurement. In addition, the EU has adopted the Regulation on establishing a short-term instrument for the reinforcement of the European defence industry and capabilities through common procurement [EDIRPA, ([EU 2023/2418](#)) and the Regulation on supporting ammunition production [ASAP, ([EU 2023/1525](#))]. To strengthen the EU's technological and industrial competitiveness, the Commission has published a European Defence Industrial Strategy [EDIS, [JOIN\(2024\) 10 final](#)] and presented its proposal for a European Defence Industry Programme [EDIP, [COM\(2024\) 150 final](#)].

In its 2023 report on the implementation of the CFSP, the European Parliament underlined that the war in Ukraine and the growing instability in the Middle East, in the EU's southern neighbourhood and in the Mediterranean region, as well as in the Sahel and sub-Saharan Africa, pose a serious challenge to the security of the Union. To achieve a defence union that is both coordinated with NATO and capable of acting independently, the European Parliament has proposed, among other things, increasing collective defence investment and implementing the Strategic Compass integrating the lessons learnt of war as soon as possible ([P9_TA\(2024\)0104](#)).

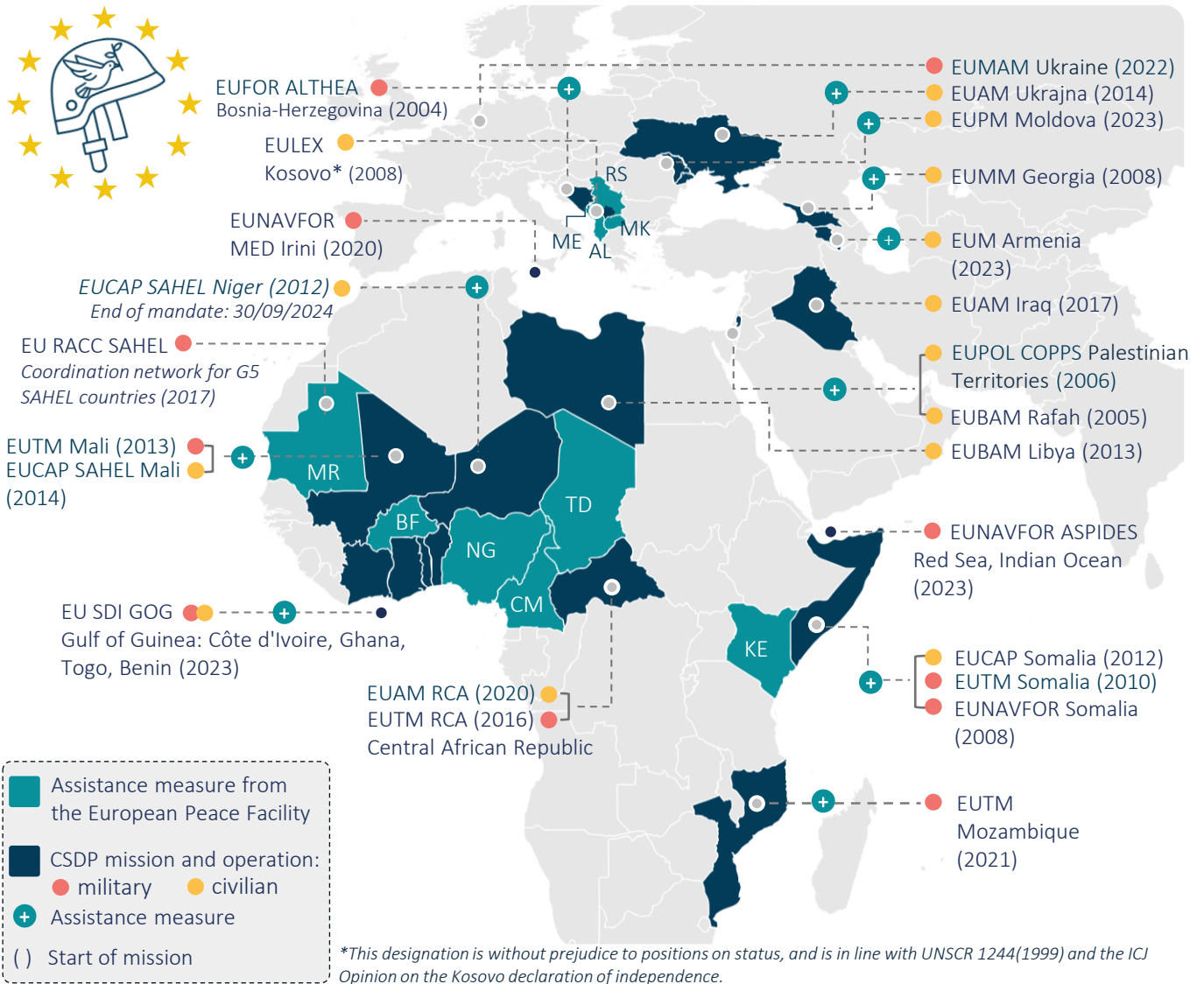
According to the EU Council Conclusions on EU Security and Defence of May 2024, the EU should strengthen its defence readiness and sovereignty along five priorities:

- unwavering support to Ukraine,
- increase the ability to act,
- strengthen the Defence Technological and Industrial Base,
- strengthen the EU's resilience to hybrid and cyber threats and secure access to strategic domains,
- develop and strengthen partnerships ([9225/24](#)).

In June 2024, the European Council set as a priority, in addition to achieving the EU's global ambitions, the enhancement of defence readiness and critical capabilities, while strengthening the defence industrial and technological base ([EUCO 15/24](#)). ♦



CURRENT SECURITY AND DEFENCE ENGAGEMENT OF THE EU



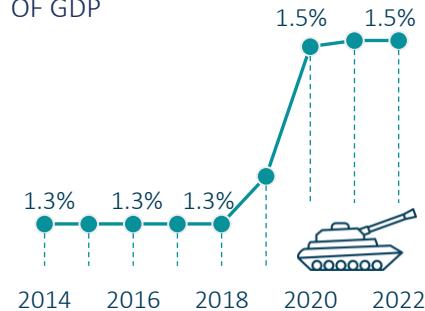
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FINANCIAL CEILING AND MOBILISED ITEMS OF THE EUROPEAN PEACE FACILITY, 2021–2024



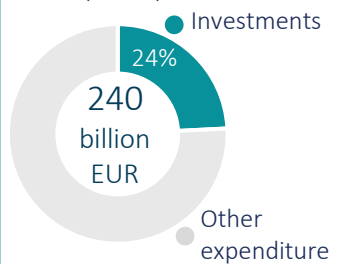
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EU MEMBER STATES' DEFENCE EXPENDITURE AS A PERCENTAGE OF GDP



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DEFENCE INVESTMENTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF DEFENCE EXPENDITURE, 2024 (EU27)



SOURCES

1 | 2 | [EEAS: Missions and Operations](#); [EU FPI, 2024](#); [Council of the EU, 2024](#) | 3 | 4 | [EDA: Defence Data Portal](#)