



Inter-Parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CFSP/CSDP)

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Background Paper

Workshop B: Facilitating Military Mobility within the Framework of Permanent Structured Cooperation

In light of an ever-changing security environment, the EU Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy initiated a process of closer cooperation in security and defence. In this context, a Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) was officially launched aimed at enhancing the EU's capabilities as an international partner in security matters, maximising the effectiveness of defence spending and thereby contributing to the protection of EU citizens.

A total of 25 Member States¹ participate in PESCO. Each participating Member State submits a plan for its national contributions and efforts in accordance with agreements. The commitments entered into within the framework of PESCO are binding. The participating Member States remain responsible for the military capacities developed within the framework of PESCO and can also make them available in other contexts, e.g. NATO or the United Nations. The specific nature of the security and defence policies of all Member States is taken into account.

The two primary components of PESCO are its more binding commitments and its portfolio of projects. All PESCO participants have undertaken a commitment to achieve an ambitious set of objectives, such as regular increases in defence budgets to reach commonly agreed goals, participation in the EU's capability development mechanisms, notably the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence, and to making forces available for reaching the EU's Level of Ambition.

¹ Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden.

In addition, PESCO's effectiveness is measured by the projects developed within the PESCO framework, which are managed by the participating Member States. The European Defence Agency (EDA) and the EEAS, including the EU Military Staff, jointly provide secretariat functions for PESCO with a single point of contact for participating Member States. As a first step, the participating Member States have agreed on a list of 17 projects, covering training, capability development and operational readiness in defence, to be implemented within the framework of PESCO.

The aim of PESCO is to make European defence more efficient and effective by strengthening coordination and cooperation in investment, capability development and operational readiness. Closer cooperation in this area is aimed at making it possible to reduce the number of various weapon systems in Europe, thereby improving operational cooperation between Member States, interoperability and industrial competitiveness.

PESCO is an important instrument for the security of the EU and its citizens, and constitutes both a permanent framework and a structured process for the gradual deepening of defence cooperation within the framework of the European Union. The objective is to significantly advance integration in defence and contribute to strengthening the EU's strategic autonomy so that it can act unilaterally or together with partners whenever necessary.

In this context, military mobility plays an important role. It forms part of both the more binding commitments and a dedicated PESCO project, which features the highest number of participating Member States among all current projects. The overall goal is to facilitate the movement of troops across the EU, both by improving infrastructure and easing regulatory burdens and legal limitations.

- How are the steps taken so far and the establishment of the PESCO to be assessed against the backdrop of efforts to deepen the Common Security and Defence Policy?
- How should the relationship of the EU with its Common Security and Defence Policy vis-à-vis other actors (US, UK, NATO) be structured if duplication is to be avoided and a competitive relationship forestalled?
- What shape will the Common Security and Defence Policy take in the coming years and what role will the EU with its CSDP play internationally?