

The Impact of Brexit on EU-NATO Relations

Gulay MUTLU

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University of Sussex

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List of Abbreviations

CARD: Coordinated Annual Review on Defence

CFSP: Common Foreign and Security Policy

CSDP: Common Security and Defence Policy

EDF: European Defence Fund

EEAS: European External Action Service

ESDP: European Security and Defence Policy

EU: European Union

EUFOR: European Union Force

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

IFOR: The Implementation Force

IMF: International Monetary Fund

KFOR: Kosovo Force

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

PESCO: Permanent Structured Cooperation

SFOR: The Stabilisation Force

SHAPE: Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe

UK: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

UN: United Nations

US: United States of America

WEU: Western European Union

WTO: World Trade Organization



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Abstract

The United Kingdom is a significant country for both the European Union and NATO. While in the EU, the UK played an essential role in establishing the CSDP and made the Union stand out in the field of security and defence. In addition, being a member of both NATO and the EU, it acted as a bridge between the two organizations and contributed to developing relations. Therefore, Brexit has the potential to impact relations between the EU and NATO significantly. This study aims to examine this effect through the engagement with the theoretical framework of neorealism, multi-level analysis, overlap approach and resource dependence theory. In order to do so, I will examine first the relationship between the EU and NATO, then the UK's role in this relationship and the implication of Brexit for CSDP and lastly, the impact of Brexit on EU-NATO relations. After Brexit, CSDP gained momentum, resulting in the implementation of numerous initiatives such as the PESCO and the EDF. These actions have taken significant strides towards establishing an independent EU in security and defence. I argue that the relations between the EU and NATO will be positively affected by Brexit as the CSDP policies, freed from the UK's veto, gradually gain functionality as the EU becomes more vital in this area and shares the burden of NATO.

Chapter I: Introduction

The United Kingdom is one of the founders of NATO and has also played a vital role in shaping the EU's foreign, defence, and security policy since it joined the Union. Despite being labelled the "awkward partner" (George,1994, p.1) due to its stance on the European Monetary Union and relations with the US, the UK has substantially contributed to Europe's security and defence by collaborating with France to establish the foundations of CSDP. However, British policymakers and strategists have consistently referred to NATO as the cornerstone and paramount assurance for the security and defence of the UK and Europe while regarding the EU as the preeminent entity for economic and trade matters or as a significant soft power player concentrating on post-conflict stabilization and crisis management (Mills and Smith, 2021, p.3).

The United Kingdom's significance for both organizations lies in its robust military power, solid diplomatic relations, and considerable political influence. Additionally, the UK's contributions to the relationship between the EU and NATO have been noteworthy. Therefore, Brexit has raised concerns about how the relationship between the EU and NATO will be affected. As a vital connector between the two organizations, the UK's place within the European security structure is now ambiguous, and it must reassess its ties with the EU and other member states (Ewers-Peters, 2021, p.576). After Brexit, the EU has taken necessary steps to minimize the effects of this loss and enhance integration among its members. Freed from the UK's veto, the EU has achieved crucial advancements in security and defence. Brexit has acted as a catalyst for these innovations to emerge. As the EU progresses in security and defence, it becomes a strong, complementary, and essential partner for NATO.

Upon examining the literature, it can readily be observed that there has been a comprehensive investigation of the connections between Brexit and the EU. However, the impact of the UK's departure from the Union on EU-NATO relations has not been extensively studied. That is why I chose to research this topic. This study aims to examine in detail the effects of Brexit on EU-NATO relations.

In this context, I will try to find valid answers following questions:

- What was the state of relations between the EU and NATO?
- What was the role of the UK in the relations between the EU and NATO until Brexit?
- How did Brexit impact the CSDP?
- What will be the impact of Brexit on EU-NATO relations?

With the aim of achieving its objective, this dissertation is organized as follows. The third chapter addresses significant cornerstones and explains the historical development and reasons behind the relationship between the EU and NATO. In doing so, it lays the groundwork for answering the study's main question. The fourth chapter examines the contributions made by the UK to the relationship between the two organizations, both at the institutional and operational levels, in order to investigate the country's role in the relationship between the two organizations. The fifth chapter reveals the impact of Brexit on the CSDP, which is the essential instrument of the EU in the field of security and defence. Consequently, the sixth chapter delves into the implications of the United Kingdom's departure from the Union on the relationship between the EU and NATO.

Chapter II: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1. Literature Review

The UK was the most powerful member of the EU regarding military strength, ammunition, number of soldiers, intelligence, and defence industry. As such, a fundamental disagreement in the literature focuses on Brexit's impact on the CSDP, which is the most crucial element of EU-NATO relations on the EU side. For some scholars, Brexit represents a setback for EU security and defence policies (Whitman, 2016; Sweeney and Winn, 2020; Ewers-Peters, 2021). However, according to many scholars, after Brexit, the EU gained momentum in its CSDP policies (Martill and Sus, 2018; Svendsen, 2019; Howorth, 2019; Cladi and Locatelli, 2020). Concerning CSDP decisions, the UK generally exercised its veto power and prevented the adoption of many decisions. After Brexit, this situation was eliminated, and many initiatives in CSDP policies, such as PESCO, CARD, and EDF, were put into action. This is important since an autonomous EU in the field of defence and security can benefit NATO's defence capacity and development of relations. There is a growing consensus among many scholars that an independent EU could contribute positively to the enhancement of NATO's defence capabilities. Such a move would enable a fairer distribution of the current defence burden on NATO's shoulders (Locatelli and Testoni, 2009; Howorth, 2017; Cladi and Locatelli, 2020; Borell, 2020; Tangör, 2021; Cladi, 2023).

On the other hand, the US wanted the EU to strengthen its security and defence fields and supported the EU in this regard (Watts, 2008; Koppa, 2019; Howorth, 2019; Tangör, 2021). Besides, some authors think that the US should withdraw from NATO. They argue that NATO has outlived its usefulness and unnecessarily burdens it with its security responsibilities (Posen, 2014; Mearsheimer and Walt, 2018). After Brexit, as a stronger Europe in CSDP will share the burden of NATO, such negative criticisms will be prevented.

Although the EU is becoming an independent actor in security and defence, NATO will always remain the main collective defence actor in the region (Howorth, 2017; Blocmans et al., 2019; Biscop, 2021; Tangör, 2021). The United Kingdom also drew attention to

this issue when it established the foundations of the CSDP with France. Moreover, the EU does not make such a claim.

The UK has played a bridging role (Oliver and William, 2016; Whitman,2016; Ewers-Peters,2021) between the EU and NATO, making significant contributions to the development of relations between these two organizations. Therefore, the impact of Brexit on EU-NATO relations is a topic of discussion, with several possible scenarios presented in existing literature (Martill and Sus, 2018; Ewers-Peters, 2021). In these scenarios, one key determining factor of the relationship is how the UK would continue its relationship with the EU. If the UK would continue to work collaboratively with the EU on security and defence policy, it could continue to serve as a crucial link between NATO and the EU, ultimately aiding the relationship's development. However, it is unlikely that the EU would extend any privileges to the UK concerning CSDP and allow it to participate in decision-making post-Brexit (Martill and Sus, 2018; Koppa, 2019; Ewers-Peters, 2021). This is due to the EU's *acquis*. As per the regulations, non-member states have no say in CSDP decisions (Watts,2008, p.235). Moreover, any privilege given to the UK could pave the way for similar advantages for other non-EU countries. Additionally, if the UK faces no drawbacks and gains a favourable position after exiting the EU, it may prompt other countries to follow suit and leave the Union. To avoid this, the EU would not offer the UK any favourable standing in CSDP (Koppa, 2019). If the UK's participation in CSDP policies remained limited, it would have no sway over CSDP decisions, thereby failing to protect NATO and US interests in EU decision-making. If the UK would not actively participate in CSDP decision-making, this would result in CSDP becoming more independent.

A prevailing viewpoint among numerous scholars (Von Voss and Schütz, 2018; Mills and Smith,2021; Sweeney and Win,2022; Cladi,2023) is that the UK will undertake its engagement with the EU on security and defence issues through the framework of NATO. Furthermore, post-Brexit, the UK aspires to enhance its global influence within the understanding of the "Global Britain", seeking to exert a substantial presence across various world regions through the consolidation of bilateral ties with many states

(Whitman,2020; Cabinet Office, 2021; Von Ondarza and Intel, 2022; Sweeney and Win,2022).

While the worst-case scenario is that the EU gradually separates itself from both NATO and the UK to concentrate on its defence and security policies and create its army, it is unlikely to happen (Martill and Sus, 2018; Ewers-Peters, 2021). The West's shared values, history, interests, and emerging threats necessitate increased cooperation between the EU and NATO.

In summary, Brexit has already paved the way for the EU to take essential steps in the field of defence and security. The EU has made significant progress in this field. Enhancing its capabilities has bolstered the EU's collaborative position within EU-NATO relations.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

This dissertation will benefit from neorealism to understand in a better way relations between the EU and NATO and Brexit's implication on this relation. Neorealism primarily centres around states (Waltz, 1979), making it initially appear unsuitable for analyzing the relationship between the EU and NATO. However, states' behaviour is shaped by international structure (Waltz, 2000). Therefore, by focusing on the international structure, neorealism can provide valuable insight into their collaboration. While NATO prioritizes security and defence, the EU is primarily an economic-based organization. Nonetheless, both groups share the overarching goal of preventing large-scale conflicts, like the devastation experienced during World War II. Therefore, maintaining a balance of power is crucial to achieving this objective. The EU and NATO members have collaborated through these two crucial organizations to safeguard their interests against emerging threats resulting from the changing international structure.

Amidst the ongoing global shifts in the balance of power from a single dominant order since 1989 to a more diverse one, accompanied by changes in how major players like the US and Russia conduct themselves, and in the midst of a less stable regional security situation, the repercussions of Brexit, and the upsurge of Euroscepticism with a populist-

nationalist flavour, a noticeable drive has emerged for increased defence cooperation within the European Union. With these circumstances in place, the decision of European states to engage in NATO cooperation and bolster their role in security and defence affairs aligns with the expectations of neorealism since this theory posits that when international systemic changes occur, they significantly influence the conduct of states and shape outcomes on the global stage (Baun and Marek, 2019, p.40). Despite neorealism's insufficient arguments for European affairs analysis (Hyde-Price,2011), it can provide a helpful framework for understanding EU-NATO relations and Brexit's implication on this relation due to its emphasis on the international structure.

Also, neorealism, on its own, does not offer the necessary instruments for comprehending the stages, outputs, and dynamics of the interactions between NATO and the EU (Simon, 2013). Therefore, I will also benefit from the multi-level analysis approach, overlap approach and resource dependence theory. These approaches centring around the factors that led to the formation of this relationship, the nature of their interactions (whether cooperative or competitive) and the distribution of their roles and responsibilities. They also examine the extent to which the organizations influence each other's institutional developments, policies, identities and their collective impact and effectiveness in their respective fields (Koops, 2017a).

With the multi-level analysis approach, which derives from neorealism (Koops, 2017a, p.322), by examining the varying impacts and dynamics of bureaucratic officials, individuals, member states, international structure, events, and norms, it is possible to delve into the specifics and reduce some of the analytical complexities associated with the EU-NATO relationship, all while maintaining a nuanced perspective. This approach makes a substantial contribution to understanding, especially the role of the UK, between the two organizations since both British bureaucrats and influential politicians such as Tony Blair have significantly impacted the development of relations (Koops,2017a). During the Tony Blair government, the EU witnessed significant security and defence policy advancements. The collaboration between the UK and France played a pivotal role in the establishment of the CSDP.

While a shift in the United Kingdom's perspective paved the way for the inception of the crucial CSDP, another change eventually led the country to part ways with the Union.

Member states constitute the foundational pillars of organizations, wielding significant influence over the capabilities, design, formalization, tasks, and overall structure of organizations (Ewers-Peters, 2023, p.26). A multi-level approach accentuates the significance of influential member states in establishing pivotal strategic choices and framework conditions. As a result, this perspective underscores the member states' viewpoint and the weight of power politics as essential elements when analyzing the evolution and critical shifts within the international order (Koops, 2017a; Koops, 2017b, p.189).

Besides, according to the overlap approach, interaction is only necessary with any overlap in goals or policies, as there would be no foundation for engagement. For Hofmann (2009), it involves a comprehensive three-pronged approach to comprehending membership, mandate, and resource overlap.

Lastly, the fundamental principle of resource dependence theory is that organizations engage in cooperation as they require access to the resources of other organizations that they do not possess (Koops, 2017a). It is built upon the foundation that organizations exist within their environments and rely on external resources for their functioning and sustenance (Biermann and Harsch, 2017, p.138). Alliances represent intricate webs of resource sharing and consolidation. They offer crucial support to partners who encounter formidable challenges that they either lack the desire or capability to confront alone (Biermann, 2008, p.160).

Thanks to these theories, which will provide me with a better understanding of the reason, process and structure behind the relations between the EU and NATO, I will be able to analyze both this relationship and the possible effects of Brexit on this relationship elaborately.

2.3. Research Design and Method

This dissertation is desk-based and utilizes the qualitative research method, which is well-suited for generating in-depth and comprehensive textual responses. Qualitative methods allow for in-depth exploration of complex phenomena. The data collection and analysis are interconnected stages, viewed as a unified process rather than separate phases (Ravitch and Carl, 2021). The systematic approach enables the generation and rigorous testing of meaningful hypotheses throughout the study. This study heavily relies on official documents like press releases, handbooks, statements, and brochures from institutions like the EU, NATO, governments, and think tanks. Publicly accessible popular culture documents, such as books, journals, articles, and newspapers, are also used to supplement the data. Furthermore, media materials, including social media accounts of official institutions and influential political figures, are analyzed to gather relevant insights.

It is crucial to establish connections between various components and aspects of the available data to gain a deeper understanding of a particular topic. The data becomes meaningful only when interpreted (Willig, 2014). I aim to test my hypothesis by thoroughly analyzing and interpreting the information gathered from secondary sources. The study employs three types of logical reasoning—induction, deduction, and abduction—to build a strong foundation for generating new ideas and establishing connections (Reichertz, 2014). Also, it values diverse perspectives and takes a critical approach to analyzing the data, aiming to develop robust arguments based on rigorous resource analysis.

When analyzing the information and understanding cause-and-effect relationships, I will improve the accuracy of my deductions by considering the perspectives of neorealism and other relevant approaches. I will attempt to analyze in detail the historical process of the relationships between the UK, the EU, and NATO, along with the conditions that have influenced significant events, based on the information I have gathered from primary and secondary sources and within the theoretical framework. Through this, I aim to understand the impact of Brexit on the relations between the EU and NATO.

Chapter III: The History of the EU-NATO Relations

Since their establishment, both NATO and the EU have played crucial roles in maintaining and bolstering security and stability in Western Europe. NATO, functioning as a robust and defensive political and military alliance, has pursued this objective by expanding its membership and forging partnerships to extend security across the wider Euro-Atlantic region following the conclusion of the Cold War (NATO,2006). On the other hand, the EU has fostered stability through progressive economic and political integration (Cini and Pérez-Solórzano Borragán, 2019). Consequently, many countries now hold membership in both organizations. With a shared dedication to universal principles such as freedom, democracy, and the rule of law, NATO and the EU are not only aligned in their strategic objectives but also face common security issues. Recognizing this, both organizations acknowledge the growing necessity for broader and more effective collaboration to address emerging strategic challenges (Blocmans et al., 2019, p.412).

Their development during the Cold War era was marked by a distinct segregation of roles and a lack of formal or informal institutional communication. Each organization had clearly defined responsibilities. However, following the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the dynamics between the EU and NATO began to undergo tangible transformations (Ewers-Peters,2021; NATO,2006; Simion, 2018, p.212).

The Treaty of Maastricht in 1992 represented a significant milestone in the advancement of a Common Foreign and Security Policy within the EU. One of the Treaty's pillars established a unified defence policy that could lead to a cohesive defence system. (Ülger, 2002). Moreover, the inclusion of the WEU Petersberg tasks into the EU acquis, encompassing missions such as humanitarian search, crisis management, peacekeeping, and environmental protection, played a vital role in shaping the operational progression of a shared European defence policy during the 1990s.

In December 1998, the British-French summit at St. Malo injected momentum into the development of the EU-NATO partnership. They both agreed that the EU should have its

own capable military forces and be ready to use them in response to global crises (Joint Declaration, 1998; Faleg, 2017). This marked a shift in the EU's traditional civilian identity, bringing it closer to NATO. As their functions started to overlap, the EU and NATO had to explore new ways to cooperate between them (Cladi and Locatelli, 2020, p.6).

Until 2000, NATO and the EU lacked a formal relationship. However, a significant change occurred in 1999 when EU leaders, prompted by the Balkan conflicts, decided to establish a European Security and Defence Policy within the EU in coordination with NATO. ESDP marked a significant milestone as both organizations embraced the established strategic partnership in crisis management (NATO, 2002). This paved the way for the formation of the Berlin Plus arrangements that facilitated also the exchange of classified information. These arrangements granted the EU access to NATO's collective assets and capabilities for military operations led by the EU in order to prevent redundant duplication of resources (NATO, 2006, p.243). In practical terms, these arrangements aimed to ensure that in the event of a crisis where NATO opted not to intervene but the WEU decided to act, the WEU could request the utilization of NATO's assets and capabilities. In that era, the concept of "separable but not separate" was dominant (Blocmans et al., 2019, p.413). In this regard, the Berlin agreements effectively showcase the evolving relationship between the two organizations, aligning with the principles of the resource dependence theory.

As the evolving security landscape compels the EU to assume greater responsibility in security and defence matters, it simultaneously necessitates a transformation of EU-NATO relations. What was once deemed a desirable strategic partnership has now evolved into an essential partnership, as their security interests are intertwined, and neither organization possesses the full range of tools to tackle the emerging security challenges single-handedly (Blocmans et al., 2019, p.415). This revised narrative was articulated in the Joint Declaration on July 8, 2016. The Declaration affirms NATO's position as the foremost authority in defence matters. Simultaneously, it emphasizes that EU endeavours will also fortify NATO, thus enhancing collective security. Each entity maintained its independent decision-making autonomy, while NATO and the EU

promoted active participation of member states in the initiatives of the other. In the pursuit of promoting peace and stability, the 2016 Joint Declaration delineated seven specific domains where bilateral cooperation should be intensified: cybersecurity, strengthening defence capabilities, countering hybrid threats, operational collaboration encompassing maritime operations and migration, fostering advancements in the defence industry and research, conducting joint exercises, and supporting capacity-building efforts for Eastern and Southern partner countries. Consequently, the EU and NATO devised a shared framework consisting of 42 actionable measures to implement cooperation across all seven areas. On December 5, 2017, an additional batch of 34 measures received the endorsement, encompassing three novel subjects: countering terrorism, facilitating military mobility, and advancing women's participation in peace and security. As of the summer of 2018, the number of issues these two entities were collaborating on had reached an impressive count of 74 (NATO,2016; Blocmans et al., 2019, pp. 415).

The 10th of July in 2018 marked the adoption of a second Joint Declaration on NATO-EU cooperation. This Declaration emphasized the imperative development of capabilities that are "coherent, complementary, and interoperable" (NATO,2018). It emphasized the utmost importance of transparency and urged both organizations to fully involve their non-member constituents in each other's initiatives, a matter greatly valued by the United States. PESCO and the EDF received a commendation for their contributions to the safety and stability of the Trans-Atlantic region, contingent upon the condition that the defence initiatives developed by the EU and NATO remained consistent, mutually reinforcing, and capable of operating together seamlessly. The document underscored the significance of the equitable distribution of burdens, benefits, and responsibilities (Blocmans et al., 2019, p.424). It also emphasized the need for swift advancement in four key domains: enhancing military mobility, combating terrorism, bolstering resilience against risks associated with nuclear, radiological, biological, and chemical incidents, and promoting women, peace, and security efforts (NATO,2018).

In 2022, a momentous event unfolded, sending shockwaves through the realm of global politics: the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. Promptly responding to this grave situation, the EU and NATO convened high-level meetings from the outset. The culmination of

these deliberations materialized on 10th January 2023 with the publication of the Joint Declaration. Within this Declaration, it was expressed that Russia's violation of international law and its menacing actions posed a direct threat to global peace and security. Russia's aggression against Ukraine was condemned in the strongest possible terms by the EU and NATO, and unwavering support for Ukraine was reiterated. Consequently, a series of new measures were outlined as a response to this dire situation. These measures encompass the following: protection of critical infrastructures, foreign information manipulation and interference, the growing geostrategic competition, the security implications of climate change, resilience issues, emerging and disruptive technologies, and space (NATO,2023b).

In practical terms, EU-NATO cooperation can be observed at three levels. First, a regular political dialogue has been established between key officials from both NATO and the EU, facilitating communication. Secondly, points of contact have been identified, allowing for staff exchanges and information-sharing. Thirdly, operational cooperation has improved in hybrid threats, military mobility, and cyber security. This on-the-ground collaboration is evident in joint missions like those in Iraq and the Mediterranean Sea. This comprehensive cooperation not only prevents conflicts between the institutions but also facilitates information exchange and policy coordination (Tangör, 2021, p. 86).

NATO and the EU have maintained extensive collaboration in crisis management and operations, particularly in the Western Balkans region. In Kosovo, the NATO peacekeeping force known as KFOR closely collaborates with the EU's Rule of Law Mission. Additionally, the EU's Operation EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been and continues to be under the command of the NATO Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe stationed at the SHAPE. This operational partnership extends beyond the Balkans and encompasses Afghanistan as well. Recently, NATO-EU cooperation has expanded to include maritime security efforts. NATO and EU naval forces have joined forces to address the challenges posed by the refugee and migrant crisis (NATO,2021). Furthermore, in the Central Mediterranean Sea, NATO's Operation Sea Guardian (NATO,2023c) continues to provide information and logistical support to the EU's Operation Sophia (Simion, 2018, p.213).

Although many obstacles still need to be overcome, the EU's emerging role as a stronger defence and security actor has the potential to foster further cooperation. Rather than competing or duplicating efforts, the aim is to complement NATO's endeavours (Blocmans et al., 2019, p.417). For collaboration to truly thrive and hold significance, it must undergo a process of deepening. To achieve this desired deepening, it becomes imperative for the EU to establish itself as a formidable presence in the realm of military affairs.

On the other hand, the effectiveness of the international structure in initiating and shaping EU-NATO relations becomes evident upon closer examination. The post-Cold War era brought about a new context with conflicts emerging in the heart of Europe. This compelled the EU to undertake fresh initiatives in defence and security, subsequently prompting a shift in the nature of cooperation between these two pivotal Western organizations. The evolving and diversifying nature of threats has led to a broadening of the cooperation agenda. Furthermore, significant events like the migration crisis in the 2010s and Russia's annexation of Crimea provided renewed impetus for cooperation. Russia's occupation of Ukraine has brought international politics to a profoundly different conjuncture. Naturally, the existing EU and NATO relations will transform as this invasion influences them. Therefore, an analysis of EU-NATO relations benefits from adopting a neo-realist perspective, enabling a more nuanced understanding of these dynamics.

This chapter provides an exploration of the general development of EU-NATO relations. Building upon this foundation, the subsequent section aims to deepen understanding of the impact of Brexit on EU-NATO relations, with a specific focus on the role of the UK in this intricate dynamic.

Chapter IV: The Role of the UK in the EU-NATO Relations

Having maintained long-standing membership in both NATO and the EU, Britain has played a vital role in influencing the abilities and effectiveness of these groups as a key player in defence and security. Reflecting the UK's national security and defence approaches, while NATO has been conventionally the central foundation for security matters, the EU stands as the preferred arena for Britain's foreign policy and international trade (Howorth,2000). Despite initial reservations in the 1990s regarding the establishment of an independent European security and defence capacity and policy, the UK has played a crucial role in advancing CSDP. Serving as an advocate for inter-organizational relations among the EU, the United States, and NATO, Britain has effectively acted as a "transatlantic bridge" on both institutional and operational levels (Ewers-Peters, 2021, pp. 580-1).

Initially, the UK demonstrated hesitance and opposition to the advancement of European military capacities, driven by concerns about potential overlap with NATO structures. Over time, the UK shifted its domestic policy and displayed varying degrees of support for the EU. Eventually, the UK embraced the institutional evolution and integration of a defence aspect into the CSDP. The UK assumed a pivotal role in shaping the institutional framework of the EU-NATO relationship and contributing to the development of ESDP structures. Acting as a vigilant guardian, it ensured the avoidance of redundancy and rivalry while promoting synergy with NATO's command and institutional frameworks. The Franco-British Summit in 1998, spearheaded by Prime Minister Tony Blair, represented a significant milestone in strengthening the EU-NATO relationship. It is crucial to emphasize that the existence of the CSDP owes much to the UK, specifically to the efforts of Tony Blair. Put frankly, without the UK, the CSDP would not have come into being. The UK offered conditional support for the EU's acquisition of independent military capabilities and the establishment of a limited security and defence policy, primarily designed for crisis management tasks referred to as the Petersberg Tasks (Howorth, 2000, pp.383-4).

The UK had a notable impact by facilitating the institutionalization and formalization of the EU-NATO relationship. British officials played a significant role in the negotiations

that led to the Berlin Plus arrangements between the EU and NATO during the Blair government. They actively voiced concerns and highlighted opportunities for collaboration in military capabilities. Their efforts were particularly focused on persuading Turkish officials, who initially opposed the sharing of NATO's military assets and capabilities. Through bilateral negotiations with Turkey and engagement with both organizations, British officials worked to overcome opposition and disagreements, ultimately enabling the signing of the Berlin Plus agreement. Also, the UK took on the role of a mediator, facilitating communication between NATO and the EU in the Chocolate Summit held in Tervuren. This diplomatic intervention established permanent liaison cells at NATO's SHAPE and within the EU Military Staff, facilitating closer cooperation between the two organizations (Ewers-Peters, 2021, p.582).

The UK, renowned for its influential role, also contributes substantially to military operations led by the EU and NATO. Besides, possessing a nuclear deterrent grants the country a distinct position within both organizations (Hill, 2018). Britain has actively participated in every NATO-led mission since the conclusion of the Cold War. These include endeavours in Bosnia and Herzegovina, such as Operation Joint Endeavour, IFOR/SFOR, and Kosovo's KFOR. Furthermore, the UK has been involved in operations in FYRo Macedonia, Afghanistan, Libya, maritime operations in the Mediterranean Sea, and deployments in the Gulf of Aden/Horn of Africa. Concerning EU-led operations, Britain has contributed to all documented missions to date. These involve operations in the Western Balkans, Sahel and Africa, the maritime operation in the Mediterranean Sea, and deployments to Somalia. Additionally, the UK hosted the operational headquarters for both the EU-led Operation Atalanta and the NATO-led Operation Ocean Shield in the Gulf of Aden. By providing the operational headquarters and endorsing deployments, the UK has effectively connected the EU and NATO, nurturing cooperation and harmonization between these entities (Ewers-Peters, 2021, p.584).

The UK is a significant self-reliant military member within NATO, retaining its historical status as one of Europe's key military powers. Official data from NATO revealed that the UK ranked second, following the US, among NATO's 30 allies in terms of absolute defence spending. The UK has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to defence

expenditure since the 2014 Wales summit, which outlined the goal for NATO allies to allocate a minimum of two percent of their GDP to the military by 2024 (see Graph 1-2). Notably, the UK has consistently met this target since 2014 (Cladi, 2023).

During the transition period, the UK actively participated in 7 out of the 16 military operations led by the EU. When assessing military capability, the UK can be regarded as a net contributor to the EU. The UK has provided approximately 2.3% of the total personnel contributions, yet it has accounted for an estimated 20% of the EU's force catalogue. This includes crucial strategic enablers such as airlift, refuelling, intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities. The UK's primary contribution to EU-led operations has primarily been at the strategic command level (Mills and Smith, 2021, p. 4).

As a highly influential global actor, Britain holds the capacity to advance the promotion of inter-organizational cooperation actively. With its critical strategic positioning and a distinct inclination towards effective and proactive collaboration between the EU and NATO, Britain assumed a pivotal role as a connecting force, fostering harmonious coordination among these organizations (Koops,2017b). With its active and impactful membership in numerous international organizations like NATO, UN, IMF, and OSCE, the UK has emerged as a significant nexus bridging these institutions through its well-established diplomatic relations (Ewers-Peters, 2021, p.579). Its strategic position enabled it to act as a significant connection point, facilitating effective communication and cooperation between the EU and NATO.

Chapter V: The Impact of Brexit on CSDP

Given the UK's considerable military power, economic and diplomatic influence, Brexit will undoubtedly have far-reaching consequences, affecting not only its relations with the EU but also its relations with other nations and NATO. Comprehending the implications of Brexit on EU defence and security policies becomes paramount in assessing its profound ramifications for EU-NATO relations.

In the post-Cold War era, the EU's incapacity to intervene and effectively address conflicts highlighted a shared understanding that it must address the disparity between its significant economic influence and limited military capabilities. Many recognized the imperative for a coordinated diplomatic approach, supported by a credible military force if required, to pursue conflict resolution through political means. Moreover, the hesitancy of the United States to intervene in the Balkan crises prompted the UK to reconsider its longstanding stance regarding European defence (Howorth, 2000; NATO, 2006, p.244). During the Franco-British summit in Saint-Malo in December 1998, which served as the birthplace of CSDP, there was a shared belief that true military capability and a strategic approach to regional security challenges could only be achieved through a European power (Howorth, 2017). While the initial impetus for European defence collaboration stemmed from the 1998 Anglo-French St Malo agreement, the UK has progressively reduced its political and military investment in the CSDP over the past decade (Martill and Sus, 2018, p.849). Furthermore, the UK actively opposed numerous EU initiatives in the security and defence context, opting instead to prioritize its involvement in NATO within the security and defence policy framework while also pursuing closer bilateral ties, notably with France (Mills and Smith, 2021, p.6).

Brexit poses significant security and defence challenges for both the EU and the UK. At the beginning of 2020, the EU bid farewell to its second-largest member state in terms of net contribution to the EU budget, GDP, population, and its most formidable military force (Sweeney and Winn, 2020, p.229). The departure of the UK, a member state possessing significant diplomatic and military resources, would inevitably diminish the potential capabilities available for the EU foreign and defence policy initiatives (Whitman,2016). Some of these capabilities represent assets possessed by the UK Armed

Forces that are not present in other EU member states. With close to full-spectrum military capabilities, Britain is one of only two EU countries capable of such deployment, accounting for a significant portion—approximately one-quarter—of the Union's overall defence capabilities (Martill and Sus, 2018, p.848).

Considering these factors, it is likely that future European armed forces will face a deficit in critical assets necessary for high-intensity conflict operations (Koppa,2019, p.20; Cladi and Locatelli,2020, p.9). If CSDP aims to strengthen the EU's defence capabilities, then Brexit undermines this very ambition (Sweeney and Winn, 2022, p.240).

The EU's limited military capabilities could potentially result in increased reliance on NATO's formidable military strength. However, adopting a more optimistic perspective, this circumstance may also incentivize the EU to intensify its efforts in bridging this military gap and bolstering its own defence capabilities. Such a scenario could drive the EU to prioritize the development of its military capacity and take significant strides towards enhancing its self-reliance in the realm of defence. The advancements made within the framework of CSDP further indicate that progress is being made in this scenario.

Due to Brexit, London relinquished its influential position in shaping the EU single market and the chance to shape the course of the EU's development as a security actor. Undeniably, Brexit resulted in a diminished sphere of influence (Cladi, 2023; Sweeney and Winn, 2022, p.242).

The UK is no longer obligated to align with EU foreign policy positions under CFSP. There is no established framework for the UK and the EU to address foreign policy challenges collaboratively. The UK envisions an ad hoc approach, relying on channels of broader dialogue with the EU. In a House of Lords debate on EU-UK cooperation in January 2021, the Government expressed their alignment with the EU in collaborating on worldwide matters of mutual concern, encompassing the harmonization of stances and upholding discussions within multinational institutions. They stated that formal institutional arrangements or a treaty framework within the EU are unnecessary to

continue close cooperation on foreign policy matters with EU member states. Beyond the confines of the EU framework, the UK is expected to leverage its bilateral and multilateral diplomatic networks, as well as its membership in various international forums such as NATO, OECD, UN, and WTO (Mills and Smith, 2021). According to Von Ondarza and Mintel (2022), strengthening bilateral relations has emerged as a pivotal element within the framework of the "Global Britain" agenda. For Martill and Sus (2018), this collaboration serves as a means to restore damaged credibility and compensate for the loss of institutional ties, as it represents the most viable path forward. The UK will endeavour to advance its foreign policy objectives through these channels.

On the other hand, the post-2016 era witnessed a renewed and widespread impetus to revitalize the original CSDP project. Recent developments in EU security and defence have gained significant traction, driven by the combined forces of Brexit and external pressures. Key transformations, long hindered by UK opposition, have now been set in motion. With the risk of a UK veto no longer present, the EU has launched four pivotal security and defence initiatives (Martill and Sus, 2018, p.851). First, the establishment of the EU Military Headquarters -also known as the Military Planning and Conduct Capability - took place in the summer of 2017, assuming command of EU non-executive military missions. Secondly, initiated in December 2017 by the European Council, Permanent Structured Cooperation, often referred to as the sleeping beauty of the Lisbon Treaty (Juncker,2017), presents a chance for capable member states to propel European defence to new heights and put forth ideas for more sophisticated endeavours. Additionally, the European Defence Fund was introduced by the European Commission, allocating funds for defence research and innovation. Last but not least, the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence was launched to oversee domestic defence expenditure, detect opportunities for sharing resources, and expedite the advancement of collaborative abilities (Martill and Sus, 2018). Without British involvement, the European countries appear to be relatively less fragmented than in the past, but they still have a considerable distance to cover before achieving a unified defence policy (Howorth, 2019, p.93). Nevertheless, these advancements mark a significant stride forward in EU security and defence endeavours.

Given the alignment of member state interests with several emerging initiatives at the EU level and the EU's strong desire to maintain existing members and limit access to non-members, it is reasonable to anticipate that "the post-Brexit EU security architecture will be characterized by integration and harmonization, rather than disintegration and differentiation" (Martill and Sus, 2018, p.855). Brexit will foster increased integration within the realm of EU security and defence policy, as evident in the collective direction pursued by member states. Instead of jeopardizing the unity of the Union, the Brexit vote sparked a powerful sense of solidarity, resulting in remarkable progress in CSDP (Martill and Sus, 2018, p.859). Notably, initiatives like PESCO hold the potential for transformative change (Biscop,2018), though their effectiveness relies on the allocation of adequate resources by member states.

It is worth noting that the UK has reservations about participating in PESCO projects due to its desire to maintain control over defence policy and avoid potential restrictions. However, case-by-case evaluations allow for possible participation, as demonstrated by the example of the Military Mobility Project. This project aims to enable seamless movement of military personnel and assets within the EU but does not involve joint military forces or procurement of physical military assets. This project is a substantial outcome of EU-NATO cooperation, as outlined in the 2018 Joint Declaration (Mills,2022). The UK joined the project in 2022. Immediately afterwards, the Ministry of Defence announced they did not intend to participate in another PESCO project (Mills,2022, p.11). The participation of Canada, America, and Norway in the project makes it less surprising that the UK, with its focus on NATO, is also involved. It is essential to bear in mind the ongoing Russian invasion, which adds necessity to the situation. In essence, the UK's involvement in this project does not signify a favourable disposition towards other CSDP projects.

Since the UK's decision of 23 June 2016 to leave the Union, numerous initiatives have been implemented by the EU to enhance European defence capacities and attain heightened consistency and trustworthiness in the realm of security and defence. The ramifications of these institutional advancements remain uncertain; however, the latest

progress suggests that the EU is inclined to fortify the CSDP and establish itself as a more efficient and unified participant on the global stage.



Chapter VI: The Impact of Brexit on EU-NATO Relations

The outcome of the Brexit referendum has paved the way for fresh initiatives in the EU's security and defence policies, which were previously hindered by the UK. Simultaneously, the departure of the UK created a void in the European Union's military capabilities and external relations due to its distinct resources and extensive network of diplomatic ties (Ewers-Peters, 2021). Since the UK is an important ally both for the EU and NATO, it is of utmost importance to evaluate the ramifications of Brexit on the inter-organizational dynamics prevailing within the EU and NATO.

While an argument suggests that a hard Brexit could bolster NATO by maintaining the Alliance's internal operations unaffected, it is also essential to consider the implications of Brexit on Britain's position within the European security framework, which may have a cascading impact on the EU-NATO relationship. According to Ewers-Peters (2021), the impact of Brexit on EU-NATO relations will be shaped by how the relations between the UK and the EU will continue. The UK holds the potential to emerge as a future impediment to this distinctive inter-organizational alliance, contingent upon the consequences of the Brexit negotiations and the nature of Britain's future security and defence agreement as a non-EU member within NATO.

When trying to understand the impact of Brexit on EU-NATO relations, it would be insufficient to focus solely on the relationship between the UK and the EU. Of course, it is essential to consider the nature of the relationship between the EU and the UK. However, the developments occurring in the EU and CSDP as a result of Brexit are also significant. Not only the course of UK-EU relations but also the developments that take place will have a considerable impact on EU-NATO relations. I believe the momentum gained by EU foreign policy following Brexit will determine the future of the relationship between the EU and NATO. However, before delving into the positive scenarios, let us examine the potential adverse outcomes first.

The absence of the UK within the EU will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the overall security and stability of Europe, as it will lose the contributions of one of its most influential member states and direct access to its vast capabilities encompassing

diplomatic services, military assets, human resources, intelligence, and nuclear deterrence (Ewers-Peters, 2021, p.586). The loss of the UK's contributions to military operations is particularly significant. With the UK accounting for 40% of the EU's military-industrial capacity and 20% of its armed forces, any reduction in cooperation would pose challenges to the overall security landscape. Considering the prevailing distribution of capabilities in Europe, it becomes imperative for the EU to maintain a solid and close partnership with the UK, which would be mutually advantageous (Sweeney and Winn, 2020, p.242). Inadequate revision of the partnership with the UK might exacerbate the divergence of opinions between the UK and the EU and jeopardize the integrity of NATO.

Besides, due to Brexit, the UK may find itself excluded from representing American interests in EU security and defence policy, effectively becoming an outsider in European security affairs. This situation could drive the UK and the US closer together, leading to a potential divergence between the EU and NATO. Consequently, the UK will lose its influential position as a transatlantic bridge, risking a decline in international status and financial resources. Additionally, The UK's inclination to prioritize bilateral or NATO-based cooperation may impede future EU-NATO relations, as it limits its ability to mediate between the US-dominated NATO and the French-led EU (Ewers-Peters, 2021). On the other hand, the global landscape is currently undergoing a transformative phase. The invasion of Ukraine by Russia has triggered a reevaluation of security policies. It altered the international structure, prompting the resurgence of security concerns as the foremost priority on the global agenda. Furthermore, it facilitated crucial advancements within the EU's security initiatives and highlighted the significance and indispensability of cooperation. Although the conflict has underscored the significance of the US and NATO in ensuring European security (Dempsey, 2023), it remains imperative for Europe to develop its capabilities to effectively address challenges posed by Russia or any potential conflicts in the region (Howorth,2019, p.101). Ultimately, Europe must strive towards self-sufficiency in handling regional issues, acknowledging the need to navigate and tackle the Russian predicament independently. The European Council approved the EU Strategic Compass in March 2022 and emphasized that the EU's enhanced security and defence capabilities would complement NATO (EEAS,2022). Besides, the invasion has prompted European nations, like Germany, to increase defence spending

(Euronews,2023). This underscored the EU's overdue interest in strengthening security and defence efforts for regional stability (Bell, 2022, p.4).

The experiences in Ukraine and before in Libya emphasized the fact that the EU relies more on NATO infrastructure than it may be willing to admit. These experiences highlighted the imperative of cultivating a shared strategic culture and fostering a common understanding among EU member states. Such unity is indispensable for attaining strategic autonomy (Koppa,2019, p.4). European endeavours to achieve strategic autonomy still face several constraints. These include substantial deficiencies in capabilities such as intelligence and military capacity that will prove challenging to overcome, especially without the UK's involvement (Cladi,2023). Additionally, there are divergent national defence policies across various domains, which create what is referred to as "strategic cacophony" (France and Witney,2013, p.1). The intergovernmental nature of decision-making processes within the CFSP and, consequently, the CSDP, requiring unanimity (Keukeleire and Delreux,2014, p.63; Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union, 2012), constitutes significant points of criticism due to their slow pace (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, 2014). Given that member states have divergent interests, it is possible to encounter different opinions on various issues.

6.1. NATO as a Bridge?

British policymakers and strategists have consistently referred to NATO as the cornerstone and paramount assurance for the security and defence of the UK while regarding the EU as the preeminent entity for economic and trade matters or as a significant soft power player concentrating on crisis management (Ewers-Peters, 2021, p.576; Mills and Smith, 2021, p.3). Hence, after Brexit, the UK will shift its focus towards its participation and commitments within NATO. Its future security relations will be conducted through the framework of the NATO-EU relationship, leveraging the existing cooperation between the two organizations (Von Voss and Schütz, 2018). One of the other factors behind the reason for conducting cooperation between the EU and the UK through NATO is that the EU, like the UK, sees NATO as the primary framework for collective defence (EEAS,2016; EEAS,2022), and the UK's endeavours to enhance the bond between the EU and NATO during its EU membership are also taken into account.

Moreover, the UK is anticipated to expand its already extensive network of bilateral and multilateral security relationships, including those with EU member states (Mills and Smith, 2021; Cabinet Office, 2021). The English government have already declared its intention not to engage in projects conducted under the umbrella of CSDP, emphasizing that its relations with the EU regarding CSDP would be handled on an ad hoc basis, with participation determined by evaluating each project separately (Mills, 2022). Briefly, the UK will conduct its security policies concerning Europe through NATO or bilateral relationships. In this way, the UK will have an indirect influence on the relations between the EU and NATO, both through its bilateral relationships with EU member states and its influence within NATO (Martill and Sus, 2018, p.847).

As stated in the NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, the EU stands as a unique and indispensable ally to NATO. NATO and EU nations share identical principles and values. Both NATO and the EU perform complementary, synchronized, and mutually beneficial roles in bolstering international peace and security. NATO acknowledges the significance of a more robust and proficient European defence, which positively contributes to transatlantic and global security while being compatible with and interoperable alongside NATO. Central to collaborative endeavours in ensuring the safety of the Euro-Atlantic area is the pursuit of initiatives that prioritize bolstering defence expenditure and cultivating harmonious and mutually supportive capabilities while sidestepping unnecessary duplications (NATO, 2022). Also, it is imperative for Europeans to possess enhanced capabilities, comprehensive training, and efficient organization in order to make significant contributions to collective endeavours. The EU should be prepared to take independent action whenever needed (EEAS, 2016, p.19).

NATO can serve as a platform for collaboration, presenting a sophisticated avenue for close cooperation when confronting various security dilemmas. Britain is one of the few NATO members that meet defence spending targets and consistently advocates for NATO's central role as the provider of continental security. Additionally, through NATO mechanisms, the UK and the majority of EU member states can uphold their defence-industrial partnership. This involves supporting domestic initiatives, collaborating on joint equipment projects, and sharing defence technology with both EU and non-EU

NATO allies, with a particular emphasis on the United States (Uttley and Wilkinson, 2016). Besides, the fact that NATO's prominent role as the main provider of European security prevents the occurrence of any sudden and disruptive situation in the field of security and defence resulting from Brexit should not be overlooked. In these new circumstances following Brexit, roles may change, and NATO may become the bridge connecting the EU and the UK (Martill and Sus, 2018, p.857).

On the other hand, Von Voss and Schütz (2018) argue that the UK still has an opportunity to lead in EU-NATO collaboration on security threats by making financial investments and contributions to NATO. Such leadership would showcase the synergistic nature of EU and NATO capabilities and strategically balance the UK's involvement in both organizations for maximum benefits. Despite leaving the EU, the UK recognizes the importance of collaborating with EU member states for citizen security. The UK's formidable intelligence and cyber capabilities position it to lead in addressing emerging security challenges. The UK's leadership role in EU-NATO cooperation would enhance its reputation among allies, demonstrate commitment to a secure Europe, and contribute to its foreign policy objectives (Von Voss and Schütz, 2018). While the initiatives undertaken under the CSDP have propelled capacity building, the UK's military power and intelligence infrastructure hold significant value for the EU's military capabilities. By offering this support, the UK can maintain its role as a vital link between the EU and NATO.

Additionally, the UK can leverage its position within NATO to effectively address the issue of duplication (Cladi, 2023). Upon scrutinizing the converging aspects between the Strategic Compass and the NATO Strategy document, it becomes evident that establishing a well-defined division of labour and roles while avoiding duplication is of utmost importance (Castro and Lobo, 2022, p.129). In this regard, the UK, as a former EU member and a significant NATO participant, possesses the potential to make invaluable contributions towards achieving this objective. The UK has consistently expressed concerns about the potential duplication that could arise from establishing a military framework within the EU. Therefore, the UK can still play a crucial role as a link

between the two organizations, ensuring that duplication is minimized thanks to its diplomatic networks.

6.2. New Impetus

Brexit has ushered in a fresh wave of momentum in the realm of EU foreign, defence, and security policies, giving rise to a redefined division of labour between the EU and NATO that operates more efficiently. Initiatives like PESCO and EDF contribute to the military empowerment of the EU. This can be resulted in a more pronounced and beneficial distribution of responsibilities between the EU and NATO, fostering an environment of enhanced cooperation and effectiveness (Cladi and Locatelli, 2020, p.9). Therefore, EU-NATO collaboration can enhance following Brexit. This outcome hinges largely on the willingness of EU member states to invest in the EU. Essentially, it necessitates a fresh impetus in EU foreign policy integration, along with a shared consensus regarding the practical allocation of responsibilities with NATO. Brexit gave this fresh impetus to the member states.

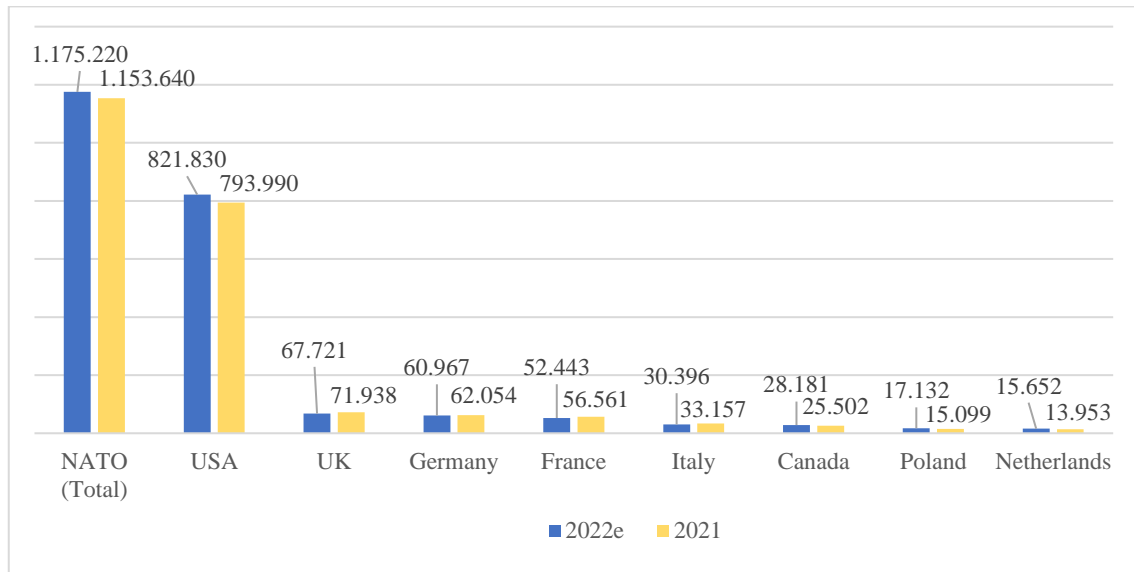
For Howorth (2017), two conditions must be met for deeper cooperation between the EU and NATO. First, the EU and NATO leaders need to actualize their commitment to deeper cooperation in crucial areas. Secondly, Europe should reinforce its strategic autonomy further. If these conditions are fulfilled, the ability to improve EU-NATO cooperation will come to fruition. In essence, if the EU establishes itself as a credible security provider, at least within a specific range of conflicts, it could effectively complement NATO. Following this rationale, the combined impact of intensifying EU-NATO collaboration and an increased European capability would prove advantageous to both organizations by facilitating a more precise division of labour (Cladi and Locatelli, 2020, p.11).

After Brexit, the EU found itself empowered to pursue its revitalized aspirations for strategic autonomy. According to Fiott (2018), pursuing autonomy can be understood as assuming responsibility and burden-sharing within NATO. Hence, an autonomous EU does not hinder NATO; on the contrary, it can fulfil the task of supplementary as a military partner in a better way. European strategic autonomy must not be perceived as

adversarial to the Atlantic alliance. Advancing the European pillar within NATO emerges as a prudent stride, fostering ample consensus between Europeanists and Atlanticists. By doing so, Europe can wield more significant strategic influence (Michaels, 2023). As the EU strengthens itself in security and defence, it will contribute to the overall strength of NATO and foster the growth and deepening of their relations. The foundational treaty of NATO explicitly mentions that member nations shall foster the growth of their respective military capabilities independently or through collaborative support (NATO, 1949). Furthermore, the agreement was solemnized with the vision of cultivating robust and equitable transatlantic relationships (Howorth, 2019, p.91). Hence, the advancement of European defence assumes significant importance in line with these objectives.

Both NATO and the US advocate for a stronger Europe to ensure a fair division of labour and burden sharing (Koppa, 2019; Howorth, 2019; Tangör, 2021). In the event of the EU's weakness, it places a heightened responsibility on both NATO and the United States, leading to increased expenditure. The contentious impact of NATO's financial burden on the US economy, particularly during the Trump era, prompted discussions of a potential US withdrawal from the alliance (Posen, 2014; Mearsheimer and Walt, 2018). Moreover, the disparity in defence spending (see Graph 1-2) between the United States and Europe also holds practical implications. An emerging technology gap poses challenges for US forces to collaborate with other NATO forces effectively. The continuous advancements in US military technology outpace the sluggish pace of defence spending and limited investment in research and development within European NATO forces, including the UK. As a consequence, there is a potential future scenario where European NATO forces may struggle to maintain interoperability with their US counterpart (Oliver and Williams, 2016, p.551).

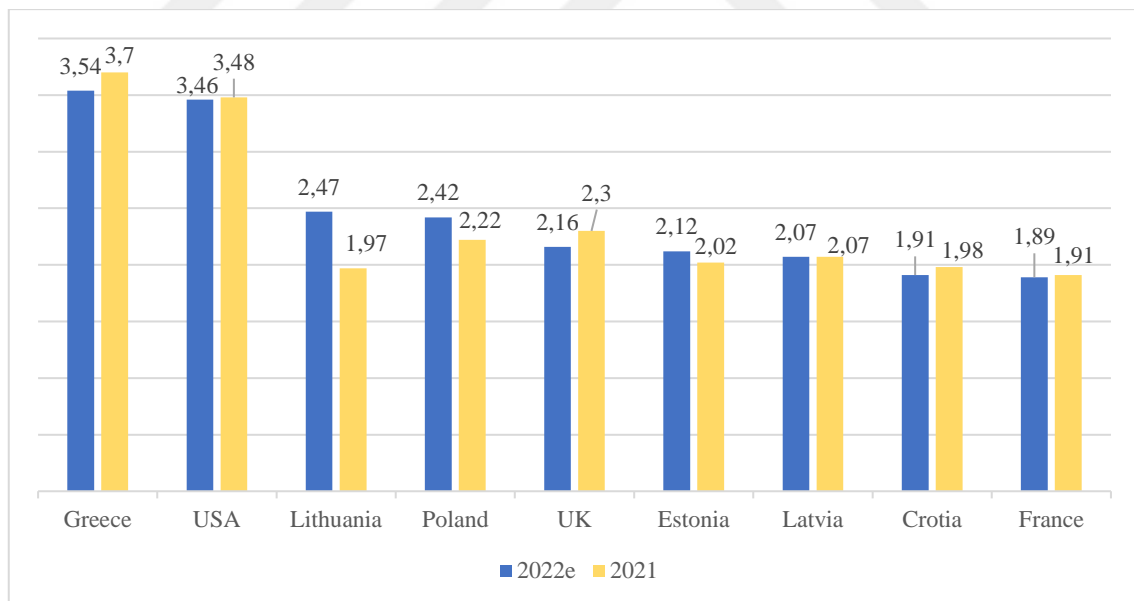
Graph 1: Defence expenditure of NATO members (million US dollars)



Note: Figures for 2022 are estimates.

Source: NATO, (2023a) Defence expenditure of NATO countries (2014-2022).

Graph 2: Defence expenditure of NATO members as a share of GDP (%)



Note: Figures for 2022 are estimates.

Source: NATO, (2023a) Defence expenditure of NATO countries (2014-2022).

A weak EU represents a detrimental circumstance not only for the security of Europe but also for NATO as a whole (Dunn and Weber, 2017, p.6). Projects developed within the

CSDP are crucial measures taken to address and rectify this deficiency. Therefore, Brexit has had significant implications, with PESCO, EDF, and CARD emerging as some of the key outcomes. These initiatives play a crucial role in addressing shortcomings in Europe's defence sector, making them of utmost importance (Sweeney and Winn, 2020, p.241). Reinforcing the EU's defence and security capacities is crucial to ensure a robust, united, and enduring future for NATO. With Brexit enabling a more autonomous EU in the realm of defence and security, it is expected to positively impact the relations between the EU and NATO (Howorth,2019).

If the EU aims to be a strategically autonomous actor and one of the significant global players in the 21st century, it has no choice but to maximize its capabilities in all domains, including security and defence. It appears logical for the EU to progressively assume leadership in addressing its regional challenges. NATO can serve as a vital facilitator in this process of developing genuine leadership. Such a development would significantly serve the best interests of the US and NATO: to have a capable, mature, and self-reliant partner to confront the global challenges of the 21st century jointly (Howorth, 2019, p.102). The actions taken within the CSDP are crucial as they pave the way for the EU to establish itself as a strong partner.

The full consequences of Brexit on EU-NATO relations are yet to unfold. In addition to Brexit, efforts to enhance EU-NATO cooperation have been ongoing since the signing of the Joint Declarations in 2016, 2018 and 2023, resulting in successful actions in areas like political dialogue, hybrid warfare and maritime security. However, various factors impact their relationship, including changes in security conditions, shared views on threats, improvements in capabilities, and the unfolding paths of NATO and the EU in the realm of security and defence matters. The relationship between the UK and Europe, whether within the framework of NATO or through other means, has the potential to maintain its strength due to a multitude of factors (Oliver and Williams,2016, p.549). Historically, it does not seem likely that the UK will remain indifferent to European security. The UK's departure from the EU does not mean it has turned its back on European matters (Martill and Sus, 2018, p.847). Despite Brexit, the UK's networks and military capabilities will

continue to play a significant role in European peace, security, and stability (Ewers-Peters, 2021, p.589).

The EU's recent security and defence initiatives reflect the potential brought about by Brexit and signal a drive towards deeper integration and bolstering of defence capabilities among EU members. Brexit has fostered solidarity among the EU member and sparked a heightened interest in reinforcing security and defence policies (Cini and Verdun, 2018). Brexit has created a significant change in European security with its impact. Undoubtedly, this change will impact the relations between the two important organizations of the region, the EU and NATO. After Brexit, the UK will deal with security and defence issues related to the region through NATO and will proceed based on NATO. It will also try to maintain its influence in European security through bilateral relations. Even though the UK will not establish very close relations with the EU in this area, it has already contributed to the EU's progress in security and defence by leaving the Union and thus ending its obstacles in this area. With the removal of the UK's veto, the EU has been able to carry out numerous projects. By actively engaging in defence matters and expanding its role beyond the economic realm, the EU enhances its significance and strengthens its appeal among member states. With Brexit's impact in mind and a determination not to relinquish its influence, the EU has redirected its focus on defence and security, explicitly expressing its intention to assert itself in these realms. Strengthening the EU in the field of defence is also beneficial for NATO. Through its proactive measures, the EU fortifies its position within NATO, fostering the growth and enhancement of collaboration between these entities. The importance of effective and fair cooperation and burden sharing has found its place in almost every official document and statement (NATO, 2002; EEAS,2022; NATO, 2023d). In order to ensure fair cooperation, it is essential that the EU, if not as much as NATO, is at least strong enough to cope with the problems that may arise within its region. Both NATO's contributions to the EU during the implementation of these policies and the EU's strengthened position resulting from these policies will establish the EU as an equivalent, indispensable, and effective ally. This dynamic will foster more profound and meaningful relations between the EU and NATO. As a result of Brexit's influence, the EU has commenced the development of effective CSDP policies, which, in turn, have positively impacted EU-NATO relations.

Chapter VII: Conclusion

In the post-Cold War era, the conflicts in the Balkans have led to the EU countries taking new steps in the fields of security and defence while also paving the way for cooperation between NATO and the EU and facilitating the first official contacts. The United Kingdom has played a key role in the emergence of the CSDP and has contributed to the institutional and operational development of relations between the EU and NATO. Furthermore, the UK is a significant military and political power for both organizations. Therefore, the UK's departure from the EU holds significance for the course of relations between the EU and NATO.

This study delved into comprehending the impact of Brexit on EU and NATO relations. It primarily scrutinized the historical context of the EU-NATO relationship, aiming to reveal its underlying reasons and the trajectory of its evolution over time. Furthermore, the study sought to gain insight into the specific role of the UK within this relationship. Subsequently, the study focused on the impact of Brexit on CSDP, and it concluded with an analysis of how Brexit affects the relations between the EU and NATO.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has caused changes in the international landscape. While debates continue on whether we are moving from a multipolar world to a bipolar one again, the EU, NATO, and the UK are tightening their ranks, expanding cooperation, and deepening their collaboration. From this perspective, setting Brexit aside, it is easy to speculate that the relations between NATO and the EU will continue positively, and cooperation will persist. Incorporating Brexit into the equation does not yield a negative outcome; rather, it has led to positive developments and effects. After Brexit, the EU, no longer hindered by the UK, has taken significant steps in the field of security and defence and has begun to strengthen itself in this area. A weak EU would be detrimental not only for EU countries but also for the UK and NATO. A stronger EU translates to a more vital partner for NATO and increases NATO's effectiveness. The EU has no intention of competing with NATO; on the contrary, it has consistently expressed support for NATO. Russia's invasion has once again demonstrated the crucial and irreplaceable role of NATO in European security. Initiatives blocked by the UK out of concern for reducing NATO's importance are now making significant contributions to NATO. From this perspective,

Brexit has had a positive impact on the relations between NATO and the EU, as it ignited the first spark towards the EU taking significant steps within the scope of the CSDP and becoming a complementary and robust partner for NATO. Post-Brexit, through various CSDP projects like PESCO and EDF, the EU and NATO can share the burden more fairly, allowing for a more effective sharing of responsibilities within NATO. As a result, the collaboration between the two organizations will have the opportunity to flourish and grow stronger.



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