

EU Strategic Autonomy after the Russian Invasion of Ukraine: Europe's Capacity to Act in Times of War

NIKLAS HELWIG^{1,2} ¹The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Helsinki ²Tampere University, Tampere

Introduction

Only a few concepts in the debate on the European Union's (EU's) foreign and security policy manage to evoke as many passionate reactions as the notion of strategic autonomy. For some, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, it represents a futile and ill-guided ambition of the EU to follow a third way, independent of the United States, in an emerging multipolar order – futile because the EU is missing by a long shot the military capacities to deter aggression without US support and ill-guided because the strength of the EU in global affairs is the close partnership with the United States. For others, such as France and with reservations Germany, strategic autonomy is a necessary agenda for the EU to develop its own voice in international affairs and to hedge its bets in an international environment of growing uncertainty.

Since 24 February 2022, the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine provides a new turn in the debate on strategic autonomy. Lingering questions on US commitment to European security are – at least for the time being – muted, as the United States considerably stepped up its deterrence efforts on European soil and provided essential military and intelligence support to Ukraine. On military questions, the war showcases the gulf between ambitions and realities of European strategic autonomy. It also confirms and elevates critical voices that have been sceptical of the French-led aspirations to make the EU an independent power centre.

Whether one leans more towards Europeanism or Atlanticism, the concept of strategic autonomy remains relevant as both a frame in the policy debates and a prism to study the EU's capacity and role in international relations (Helwig and Sinkkonen, 2022). The reason for the persistence of the term is not only that one can always rely on the French President Emmanuel Macron to stir up the debate on strategic autonomy once more after everyone thought that it was settled.¹ The concept of strategic autonomy remains central because it has managed to 'travel' and 'stretch' (Csernaton, 2023) in ways that it now covers a broad scope of the security and economic policy debate, from the EU's industrial strategy (Tagliapietra, 2023) to health (Bayerlein, 2023) and cyber (Calderaro and Blumfelde, 2023). The term is also 'ambiguous' enough that it can serve as a rhetorical device for calls for a more value-oriented, security focused or economically resilient EU (Helwig, 2022).

The debate on strategic autonomy can be conceptionally divided into separate dimensions based on Isaiah Berlin's (1969) two concepts of liberty. His concept of 'negative

¹He did just that with his US critical remarks in April 2023 when returning from a state visit from China (Politico, 2023).

liberty’ describes a state in which a person frees itself from external constraints. The idea of freedom as the absence of obstacles can be detected in the strategic autonomy *from* debate with calls for decoupling from the United States or China. However, the debate often hits a dead end, as sceptics are quick to point out that the United States is an “indispensable” (Morawiecki, 2023) military partner and that the EU relies on China to sustain its economic model (Seaman et al., 2022).

An interpretation of freedom as the absence of interference is widely seen as too simplistic (Taylor, 1985). A positive account of liberty also considers the agency of the individual and its ability to act within the constraints of its environment. This idea is captured in the debate on strategic autonomy *to*, which focuses on the various capacities of the EU to act in a competitive global arena and to manage its interdependencies. Rather than focusing on the competitive elements in the interaction between actors, the focus is on the mutually supportive elements of relationships (Ojanen, 2021). In other words, the EU gains strategic autonomy on global issues not necessarily by reducing dependencies on the United States or China, but primarily through investments in the transatlantic partnership and the effective management of the risks of economic ties.

This article argues that the focus of the EU’s activities is on this positive agenda of strategic autonomy, which has emerged in three dimensions – with regard to the capacities *to protect* the EU from foreign aggression or influence, *to provide* the economic basis amidst a more competitive environment and *to project* norms and values in global co-operation (Helwig, 2021). The remainder of the article will analyse to what extent the EU’s capacities for joint and autonomous action have lived up to the challenges of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in the first year of the war. Capacities here are not understood as material factors, such as defence spending or economic indicators. The focus is on the EU’s ability for collective and impactful decision-making. Laffan (2023) recently argued that through past crises, such as Brexit and COVID, ‘the EU has gained the capacity to mobilize resources and get things done – in other words to display “collective power”’. However, the question remains how this collective power is used and to what extent it enables the EU to influence global developments based on its own preferences.

In the following, the focus will be on co-ordinative, political and legislative capacities of the EU to generate strategic autonomy. Co-ordinative capacity refers to the ability and resources to align the activities horizontally between various EU actors and vertically between the EU and member-state governments. Political capacity is conceptualised here as the ability to collectively take decisions that guide and predetermine the further strategies and choices of EU actors on certain policies. Finally, the EU’s ability to legislate refers to the appropriate regulatory and budgetary framework to address challenges and support global activities.

I. Strategic Autonomy to Protect: More Capacity, but Limited Agency

The invasion of Ukraine and Europe’s initially sluggish military response raised questions in the expert community whether European strategic autonomy is over (Dempsey, 2023). Indeed, the war underlines the dependence on US security guarantees and drives EU members to go on a buying spree for ‘off the shelf’ (often American) military technology. Politically, Europe tied itself consciously to the United States, as shown by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz’ decision in early 2023 to deliver ‘Leopard’ battle tanks only if

the Biden administration promises equivalent US-made ‘Abrahams’ tanks. Given the EU’s military dependence, it is hard to reject that strategic autonomy *from* the United States is anything but a ‘perennial pipe dream’ (Cameron, 2022).

At the same time, one cannot deny the growing capacity – in some respects even a potential ‘quantum leap’ (Koenig, 2022) – of the EU on defence issues. A growing political capacity to deal with the crisis of this magnitude could be witnessed from day 1 of the invasion. The declaration by the heads of state and government on 24 February placed the full responsibility on Russia, declared solidarity with Ukraine and underlined the historic proportion of the aggression (European Council, 2022). This triad predetermined the building blocks of the EU’s future strategy, which was further developed in subsequent leader summits. In the Versailles declaration, leaders acknowledged Ukraine’s EU membership aspirations for the first time and tasked the European Commission to form a respective opinion (European Union, 2022). The summit also underlined the need to ‘substantially’ and ‘in a collaborative way’ invest in defence capabilities. This line was echoed in the hastily rewritten ‘Strategic Compass’, which underlined defence capability-related commitments and counter-hybrid warfare policies in response to the crisis. However, preparations were too far along to make any bigger changes to the strategic document, and the strong focus on external crisis management activities remained (Koenig, 2022).

The challenge for the EU’s response to the crisis is that its authority in the field of security and defence is limited (Costa and Barbé, 2023). On the legislative side, the EU has no option to amend its budget to provide military aid, given that the treaties exclude EU budget expenditures with military or defence implications [Art. 41 (2) TEU]. The EU had to geopolitically repurpose its existing instruments and deploy the off-budget European Peace Facility (EPF). Created a year earlier to streamline financing of joint crisis management operations and to allow, for the first time, lethal support to third parties, the EPF provided a ready framework to finance member states’ military support to Ukraine (Karjalainen and Mustasilta, 2023). The use of the EPF would once have tested the political capacities to align diverse national security cultures. However, Austria, Ireland and Malta, all militarily neutral countries, applied the rarely used treaty option of ‘constructive abstention’ and cleared the way for lethal military aid. The EU also started to contribute to the training of Ukrainian military with the first military training mission on its own territory. From the perspective of the EU defence integration process, The EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine) can be interpreted as a qualitative change in the EU’s military role, as it prepares soldiers for ongoing warfighting with the largest country in its neighbourhood.

Despite disbelief in how much the EU can adapt in a crisis, strategic autonomy is only useful to evaluate in relation to how it meets the challenges of its environment. Given the seismic shifts in Europe’s security architecture, ‘the goal-posts themselves of what is required for the EU to retain its actorness are moving’ (Costa and Barbé, 2023, p. 442). After all, it is not only the EU but also the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that undergoes a sizable transformation. NATO significantly enhanced its deterrence efforts on Europe’s eastern flank with additional battalions in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia and upgrades in size and readiness of existing forces. Finland’s NATO membership and Sweden’s imminent application (at the time of writing) bring consequential changes to alliance politics and reduce organisational fragmentation in the Nordic-Baltic region (Pesu and Iso-Markku, 2022). As Denmark decided to abolish

the opt-out from the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), all eight Baltic EU member states belong now to NATO and take part in EU defence co-operation.

Given the increasing membership overlap and lingering questions of the extent of future military support to Europe, EU-NATO relations could become a decisive factor for EU strategic autonomy. Whilst the January 2023 EU-NATO declaration did not provide a new momentum in the co-operation, the joint work intensified on practical level to the extent possible given the remaining tensions between Turkey and Cyprus, which block any deepening of formal relations (Clapp, 2023). The declaration underlined once more in clear terms that 'NATO remains the foundation of collective defence for its allies and essential for Euro Atlantic security' (EU-NATO, 2023), giving tailwind to arguments for a stricter division of labour in which the EU should focus on 'soft' security issues, capability development and crisis management. Thardy (2021, p. 4) argues that the division would 'not imply that the EU would no longer aspire to become strategically autonomous', albeit he concedes that the agency would rather rest with member states that operate freely in both organisations and in coalitions of the willing. Others disagree with the idea of downgrading EU ambition (Ojanen, 2022). According to this view, the list of functional overlaps between the two organisations is long – ranging from defence planning and hybrid threats to questions of military mobility – making calls for a strict division of labour unrealistic. Strategic autonomy of the EU will unlikely be developed independently from NATO, but by contributing and shaping the course of the alliance.

Despite the political capacity to formulate a strong response in the first phase of war, questions linger with regard to the long-term alignment of visions of European security across the EU. For Baltic and Central and Eastern European countries, the prospect of agency of the EU on security and defence other than supporting national and NATO efforts remains very limited. For them, the risk of decoupling from the United States – and with that from the only security guarantor that they trust – is too high that they would willingly sign up for an aspirational French-led agenda. On the other hand, France appears to have a limited understanding of why a more self-reliant defence planning and industrial policy is difficult to square with the deep security ties that most other European NATO member have built with the United States. Consequently, the lingering Europeanism-Atlanticism divide remains the main obstacle for a more proactive European security and defence policy that would be able to set – at least in parts – the transatlantic agenda.

II. Strategic Autonomy to Provide: Decoupling from Russia, De-risking from China

On the one hand, the EU's vast competences over the single market and trade policy, as well as sizeable financial instruments, put it in an excellent position to initiate a bold agenda in support for the EU's economy. The EU's response to the economic fallout of COVID-19 represented an active approach of the EU in applying its economic firepower. On the other hand, the EU's general neoliberal economic orientation as a 'market power' (Damro, 2012) means that more proactive industrial policies or protectionist trade measures do not come easily to the Brussels policy machinery and to market-oriented member states such as the Nordics, Germany or Netherlands. The conflicting pressures led the EU to adopt a new doctrine of 'qualified openness' (Schmitz and Seidl, 2022) in recent years.

The EU is focusing increasingly on the risks of its global economic entanglement and is more willing to use economic and technological policies in promotion of its geopolitical agenda (Broeders et al., 2023).

One of the key questions in international trade has been for centuries whether economic interdependence is beneficial or risky (Gehrke, 2022). Do tight connections increase wealth and lower the risk of violent conflict, or can they become a powerful weapon if the economic relationship turns asymmetric? The Russian invasion of Ukraine seemingly delivered the clearest answer to this question in recent history. The German-led idea of preventing war by deepening economic interdependence through energy imports did not stop Russia from invading Ukraine. On the contrary, Russia halted its gas supplies in September 2022 in response to EU sanctions and to put pressure on member states that already faced high energy prices. The Russian invasion of Ukraine highlights the risks of economic interdependence, not its promises. Whether the same risks exist regarding the more complex economic interdependence with China is hotly debated (Seaman et al., 2022).

The EU's sanctions policy is its most prominent way of actively engaging economic ties for political objectives. In normal times, the decision-making procedure is a very slow bottom-up deliberation process between member states, working its way steadily through the hierarchy of the Council of the EU. The 2014 Ukraine crisis showed that the process tends to highlight veto-positions, is prone to leaks that expose and amplify EU internal divisions and fails to generate the political momentum needed for swift action (Portela et al., 2021). In reaction to the Russian invasion, the EU showed its ability to adjust its political and co-ordinative capacities, and the European Commission took over the lead in the sanctions process. Through a new system of 'confessionals', the president's Cabinet hammers out details of the sanction packages in confidential meetings with groups of member-state ambassadors (Politico, 2022). The measures are regularly announced before adoption in the Council, which increases the political pressure on possible defectors. This way the EU managed to decide on 11 sanction packages by May 2023.

The EU's sanctions policy benefitted from close international co-ordination, for example, within the G7. Whilst the United States displayed strong leadership on this matter, the EU forged a regional leadership role for itself on sanction amongst non-EU states (Cardwell and Moret, 2023) and crucially influenced at times the global economic response to the war. Based on the need to find solutions that work EU-internally and do not wreak havoc to Europe's economies, the EU repeatedly helped fine-tune Western restrictions, whether it concerned financial sanctions, the price-cap on crude oil or the sectorial technological export restrictions. For example, European G7 members, Germany, France and Italy, successfully pushed back against an US proposal to ban nearly all exports to Russia in spring 2023, as a reopening of the sanction regime would have been an internally painful political process (Financial Times, 2023). However, the current sector-by-sector approach is not flawless, and the EU is now facing the challenge to gear up its co-ordinative capacities to avoid sanctions circumvention by EU or third state entities.

The war also highlighted the EU's dependence on energy imports. Pre-invasion, the EU's energy transition was motivated by the goal to replace fossil fuels with carbon-neutral alternatives. The war added a geopolitical dimension to the energy transition (Siddi, 2023). Russian crude oil and coal imports were largely phased out over the course of 2022 and Moscow stopped its gas deliveries to Europe. The EU reacted with

the RePowerEU plan that included more ambitious goals for renewable energy and hydrogen, energy saving measures and diversification of liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports. Without a doubt, the war generated the political capacity to approach head on the issue of Europe's energy dependency. However, the result on the EU's strategic autonomy can be seen as mixed. LNG imports from the United States or potential alternative pipeline imports from Algeria and Azerbaijan come with their own environmental and political concerns attached. The technology of the energy transition ties the EU to imports of critical minerals and rare earth elements and Chinese controlled supply chains (Siddi, 2023).

Is the dependence on Russian energy imports being replaced by a growing dependence on Chinese technology? Given the Chinese reluctance to pressure or condemn Russia for its invasion of Ukraine, the EU's definition of China as a 'negotiation partner, economic competitor and systemic rival' is increasingly questioned and seen as too lenient. Even German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who is known for a pragmatic approach to Beijing, admits that 'rivalry and competition have certainly increased on China's part' (Scholz, 2023). However, the belief that China can be an important partner on various global challenges and is difficult to replace in the EU's value chains prevents the EU from a more competitive stance. Von der Leyen introduced the concept of 'de-risking' (European Commission, 2023a) as a frame through which to approach China trade relations in a more nuanced way with a focus on trade diversification. In a sign of influence, the US administration started to prefer the concept over its harsher de-coupling approach (White House, 2023).

The war's negative effects on the global economy also accelerate protectionist tendencies in the United States. The US Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and other spending packages risk putting the EU economy at a competitive disadvantage as it includes special subsidies for US-made goods, such as tax exemptions for US-made electric vehicles. The debate on the EU response is divided between those that saw the need for developing a European style IRA that would support the EU's industry, in particular on green technologies and electric vehicles, and others that warn of a global subsidy race in which the EU would likely be outspent (Wright, 2022). Whilst the EU continues to support its industrial base in strategically important sectors, Ursula von der Leyen started to work closely with US President Biden in early 2023 to find amicable solutions in the IRA implementation that would not discriminate against European businesses.

The difficulties that the EU is facing with China and the United States on trade underline that the time for blind faith into the virtues of interdependence has passed. However, the political capacities for strategic engagement in the global economy are limited. Member states politically aligned behind the goal of a more sovereign EU economy and – under pressure – made progress regarding the energy transition. However, differing political economies within the EU obstruct a clear path towards more strategic autonomy. Whilst France – and to some extent Germany – feel more comfortable in an active industrial strategy that stands to benefit the industrial core of the EU, smaller and more peripheral economies fear that their innovative small- and medium-sized businesses will be squeezed to the sidelines in a skewed single market.

III. Strategic Autonomy to Project: The Need to Be More Than a 'Majority Whip'

The EU stepped up its diplomatic efforts right after the Russian invasion of Ukraine as the international community was formulating responses to the war. On 2 March 2022, the UN

General Assembly condemned the invasion of Ukraine and called for Russia to withdraw its troops. The resolution was adopted with an overwhelming majority of 141 votes with 5 against and 35 abstentions. On 7 April, following reports of Russian war crimes targeting civilians in Bucha and other Ukrainian cities, the UN General Assembly voted to expel Russia from the Human Rights Council (HRC) with a smaller majority of 93 votes with 24 against and 58 abstentions. These two major votes in the first months of the war can be seen as representative of the larger diplomatic challenge that the EU is facing.

On the one hand, the votes represented a success for the EU diplomatic machinery. The multilateral and bilateral delegations of the European External Action Service (alongside EU member state delegations) had been working hard together with the United States and other partners to secure as many votes as possible to ensure broad condemnation of Russia. Most countries with less of a stake in the conflict and a general neutral stance in the great power competition, including the majority of countries in the so-called Global South, condemned the invasion. However, when it came to concrete penalties, such as the expulsion from the HRC, major players were more resistant, including, for example, Brazil and Mexico (Gowan et al., 2023).

The mixed reactions to the war of governments in the Global South once more underlined the need for the EU to enhance its political and co-ordinative diplomatic capacities. Efforts by the EU to salvage the multilateral system are not new. Since the 2016 election of Donald Trump, the EU together with its member states had been focused on ensuring the functioning of the rules-based co-operation in a more contested environment (Schuette and Dijkstra, 2023). The High Representative and the European Commission (2021) outlined in a joint communication how the EU should ‘leverage the EU’s collective strength’ by better co-ordinating the EU’s and member states’ activities. After the Russian invasion, the EU’s concerted diplomatic efforts somewhat benefitted from the fact that there was already a momentum towards joined diplomatic engagement.

However, questions remain on the long-term approach towards countries in the Global South. They seem to hedge their bets in the global competition, unwilling to prematurely sign up to either a US-led or Chinese-led vision of the global order. Whilst the EU has shown some successes to ‘win the vote’ of middle powers on a case-by-case basis, the ‘fence-sitters’ (Spektor, 2023) see their neutral position as a virtue to navigate the uncertainties of a shifting world order. From their perspective, a strategically autonomous EU that does not ‘ride the coattails of the US’ but speaks with its own voice might be an attractive proposition.² However, a strong EU voice entails that Europe has more to offer for the Global South than its usual talking points on the need to condemn Russia or on other issues, such as migration. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that the EU can make an attractive offer to global partners independent from the United States and China, as the EU was instrumental in setting up a global alliance on vaccines and increased its support for the World Health Organization (WHO) (Jokela et al., 2023).

The Russian invasion revealed the potential strength of the EU’s diplomatic capacities in multilateral fora. In organisations such as the UN and the WHO, the EU can leverage its sizeable co-ordinative capacities. The EU’s recent successes in the UN General Assembly pay testament to that. However, in order to count as a strategically autonomous actor in the

²Expert interview, Brussels, 4 May 2023.

current context of growing strategic competition, the EU is in need of more political capacity to become not only a 'majority whip' of the Global South but also its partner.

Conclusions

No one can deny the structural constraints of the international system that position the EU and its member states strongly in the 'West' and under a firm lead of the United States. The Russian war of aggression underlined that the EU and its member states need global partners and allies. Strategic autonomy *from* the rest of the world is even less of an option than before. Instead, the question for the EU is whether it can display agency within the system of its US security alliance and global economic dependencies and thereby exercise strategic autonomy *to* accomplish its aims. In other words, does the EU merely have capacity to implement decisions set by others, or does it have capacity to act based on its own preferences and politics and thereby the power to influence global politics on its own terms?

The EU shows signs of increased agency on some matters in the context of the Russian war of aggression. The historic decisions in the first months of the war to decouple energy relations with Russia, to provide membership prospects to Ukraine and to invest more in European defence had to be done under the pressure of the crisis. However, they were not dictated by the United States or pre-agreed on in NATO and instead showed the political capacity of the EU to act and the 'transformative force' (Wessels, 2021) of the European Council. In the response to the war thereafter, the EU showed that it is more than just a simple regional implementation body of policies set by the United States or the G7. The initially close economic ties between EU members with Russia and the sectorial competences of the European Commission put the EU in a favourable position to actively shape the complex economic response. The EU also influenced the global diplomatic response to Russia's war, because it benefitted from the diverse member-state diplomatic ties and from the fact that it is not the United States, which has its own controversial history of military engagement.

A similar influence over global policies can be identified in the debate on how to handle security challenges relating to China. The EU's economic security strategy from June (European Commission, 2023b) embodies its approach to strategic autonomy, which is not focused on decoupling from global economic flows, and instead seeks a better management of related risks. Whether this more nuanced de-risking approach to containing China will prevail over the more hard-nosed decoupling strategy, which is favoured by many in Washington DC, will also depend on China's policy choices regarding support for the Russian regime and conceivable military actions against Taiwan.

Even a nuanced reading of strategic autonomy cannot conceal the shortcomings that the EU is facing in its defence policy. The military support that the EU and its member states are providing to Ukraine is substantial. However, the war underlined the scepticism in Central and Eastern Europe against ideas of strategic autonomy that go beyond EU efforts in support of member-state and alliance policies. Whilst EU member states are increasing their joint co-ordinative and political capacity, they also link their security more closely to the United States, as the decisions of Sweden and Finland to join NATO exemplify. Growing EU agency on traditional security and defence matters

remains an unfulfilled ambition. Short of a transformational crisis in the transatlantic alliance, the EU's role on security and defence is set to become that of a muscled-up junior partner to the United States and NATO.

References

- Bayerlein, M. (2023) *The EU's Open Strategic Autonomy in the Field of Pharmaceuticals* SWP Comment (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik).
- Berlin, I. (1969) *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Broeders, D., Cristiano, F. and Kaminska, M. (2023) 'In Search of Digital Sovereignty and Strategic Autonomy: Normative Power Europe to the Test of its Geopolitical Ambitions'. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13462>
- Calderaro, A. and Blumfelde, S. (2023) 'Artificial Intelligence and EU Security: The False Promise of Digital Sovereignty'. *European Security*, Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 415–434. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2022.2101885>
- Cameron, F. (2022) 'EU Strategic Autonomy – A Perennial Pipe Dream?' *EPC Commentary*, Available at <https://www.epc.eu/en/publications/EU-strategic-autonomy-A-perennial-pipe-dream~4565a0> [Accessed 15th May 2023].
- Cardwell, P.J. and Moret, E. (2023) 'The EU, Sanctions and Regional Leadership'. *European Security*, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2022.2085997>
- Clapp, S. (2023) 'The Third Joint EU-NATO Declaration' (Brussels: European Parliament Research Service). Available at [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_ATA\(2023\)739333](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_ATA(2023)739333) [Accessed 16th May 2023].
- Costa, O. and Barbé, E. (2023) 'A Moving Target. EU Actorness and the Russian Invasion of Ukraine'. *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 45, No. 3, pp. 431–446.
- Csernaton, R. (2023) 'The EU's Hegemonic Imaginaries: From European Strategic Autonomy in Defence to Technological Sovereignty'. *European Security*, Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 395–414. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2022.2101885>
- Damro, C. (2012) 'Market Power Europe'. *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 19, No. 5, pp. 682–699.
- Dempsey, J. (ed.) (2023), Judy Asks: Is European Strategic Autonomy Over?, *Strategic Europe*, January 2023, Available at <https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/88838>
- EU-NATO (2023) 'Joint Declaration on EU-NATO Cooperation'. Available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_210549.htm [Accessed 15th May 2023].
- European Commission (2023a) Speech by President von der Leyen on EU-China Relations to the Mercator Institute for China Studies and the European Policy Centre, 20 March. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_23_2063 [Accessed 14th May 2023].
- European Commission (2023b) European Economic Security Strategy, 20 June, Available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52023JC0020&qid=1687525961309> [Accessed 29th June 2023].
- European Commission/High Representative of the EU (2021) Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on Strengthening the EU's Contribution to Rules-Based Multilateralism. Brussels, 17 February.
- European Council (2022) European Council Conclusions on Russia's Unprovoked and Unjustified Military Aggression against Ukraine. 24 February. Available at <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/02/24/european-council-conclusions-24-february-2022/> [Accessed 15th May 2023].

- European Union (2022) Versailles Declaration. 10 and 11 March 2022. Available at <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/54773/20220311-versailles-declaration-en.pdf> [Accessed 15th May 2023].
- Financial Times (2023) Allies Resist US Plan to Ban All G7 Exports to Russia, 24 April. Available at <https://www.ft.com/content/ee8c2ade-4f94-426f-881b-d6f9621231b8> [Accessed 14th June 2023].
- Gehrke, T. (2022) 'EU Open Strategic Autonomy and the Trappings of Geoeconomics'. *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 27, No. SI, pp. 61–78.
- Gowan, R., Gibson, T. and de la Fuente, R.A. (2023) 'U.N. Votes Reveal a Lot about Global Opinion on the War in Ukraine'. *World Politics Review*, 21 February. Available at <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/un-ukraine-resolution-russia-united-nations-vote-putin-war/?share=email&messages%5B0%5D=one-time-read-success> [Accessed 15th May 2023].
- Helwig, N. (ed.) (2021) *Strategic Autonomy and the Transformation of the EU: New Agendas for Security, Diplomacy, Trade and Technology* (The Finnish Institute of International Affairs: Helsinki).
- Helwig, N. (2022) 'The Ambiguity of the EU's Global Role: A Social Explanation of the Term "Strategic Autonomy"'. *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 27, No. SI, pp. 21–38.
- Helwig, N. and Sinkkonen, V. (2022) 'Strategic Autonomy and the EU as a Global Actor: The Evolution, Debate and Theory of a Contested Term'. *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 27, No. SI, pp. 1–20.
- Jokela, J., Creutz, K., Saul, A., Helwig, N., Sinkkonen, V., Kronlund, A., Kallio, J., Nizhnikau, R. and Ketola, J., (2023) Multilateral Cooperation in an Era of Strategic Competition, *Publications of the Finnish Government's analysis, assessment and research activities*, 2023:9, Available at <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/164671>
- Karjalainen, T. and Mustasilta, K. (2023) 'European Peace Facility: from a conflict prevention tool to a defender of security and geopolitical interests' TEPSA Briefs 05/2023. Available at <https://www.tepsa.eu/tepsa-brief-european-peace-facility-from-a-conflict-prevention-tool-to-a-defender-of-security-and-geopolitical-interests-tyne-karjalainen-and-katariina-mustasilta/> [Accessed 31st July 2023].
- Koenig, N. (2022) 'Putin's war and the Strategic Compass: A quantum leap for the EU's security and defence policy?' Jacques Delors Centre Policy Brief. Available at <https://www.delorscentre.eu/en/publications/detail/publication/putins-war-and-the-strategic-compass-a-quantum-leap-for-the-eus-security-and-defence-policy> [Accessed 2nd July 2023].
- Laffan, B. (2023) *Collective Power Europe? (The Government and Opposition/Leonard Schapiro Lecture 2022)* (Government and Opposition), 1–18.
- Morawiecki, M. (2023) 'A Conversation with Prime Minister of Poland Mateusz Morawiecki', 13 April, Atlantic Council. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/event/a-conversation-with-prime-minister-of-poland-mateusz-morawiecki/> [Accessed 19th May 2023].
- Ojanen, H. (2021) 'The EU's Engagement with International Organisations: NATO's Impact on the Making of EU Security Policy'. In Haar, R., Christiansen, T., Lange, S. and Vanhoonacker, S. (eds) *The Making of European Security Policy: Between Institutional Dynamics and Global Challenges* (London: Routledge), pp. 83–103.
- Ojanen, H. (2022) NATO and the EU's Strength Lies in Their Unity, *Strategic Europe*, June 2022, *Strategic Europe*, Available at <https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/87403>
- Pesu, M. and Iso-Markku, T. (2022) 'Finland as a NATO ally: First Insights into Finnish Alliance Policy'. *Finnish Foreign Policy Paper*, No. 9 (Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs).
- Politico (2022). 'Brussels Playbook'. 22 September. Available at <https://www.politico.eu/newsletter/brussels-playbook/camino-espanol-russia-sanctions-british-pressure/> [Accessed 15th May 2023].

- Politico (2023) 'Europe Must Resist Pressure to Become "America's Followers," says Macron'. 9 April. Available online <https://www.politico.eu/article/emmanuel-macron-china-america-pressure-interview/> [Accessed 15th May 2023].
- Portela, C., Pospieszna, P., Skrzypczyńska, J. and Walentek, D. (2021) 'Consensus against All Odds: Explaining the Persistence of EU Sanctions on Russia'. *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 43, No. 6, pp. 683–699. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2020.1803854>
- Schmitz, L. and Seidl, T. (2022) 'As Open as Possible, as Autonomous as Necessary: Understanding the Rise of Open Strategic Autonomy in EU Trade Policy'. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 61, No. 3, p. 834.
- Scholz, O. (2023) 'Address by Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany as Part of the European Parliament's Series of Plenary Debates'. 9 May. Available at: <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/news/address-by-olaf-scholz-2189412> [Accessed 16th May 2023].
- Schuette, L. and Dijkstra, H. (2023) 'The Show Must Go On: The EU's Quest to Sustain Multilateral Institutions Since 2016'. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13466>
- Seaman, J., Krpata, M., Ghiretti, F., Erlbacher, L., Martin, X. and Otero-Iglesias, M. (2022) 'Dependence in Europe's Relations with China: Weighing Perceptions and Reality' The European Think-Tank Network on China. Available at <https://www.ifri.org/en/publications/publications-ifri/ouvrages-ifri/dependance-europes-relations-china-weighing-perceptions> [Accessed 15th May 2023].
- Siddi, M. (2023) 'Europe's Energy Dilemma: War and the Green Transition'. *Current History*, Vol. 122, No. 842, pp. 83–88.
- Spektor, M. (2023) 'In Defense of the Fence Sitters'. *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 102, No. 3, pp. 8–16. <https://doi.org/10.1525/curh.2023.122.842.83>
- Tagliapietra, S. (2023) 'Economic Efficiency Versus Geopolitical Resilience: Strategic Autonomy's Difficult Balancing Act'. First glance (Brussels: Bruegel). Available online: <https://www.bruegel.org/first-glance/economic-efficiency-versus-geopolitical-resilience-strategic-autonomys-difficult> [Accessed 15th May 2023].
- Tardy, T. (2021) 'For a New NATO-EU Bargain'. Egmont Security Policy Brief, No. 138.
- Taylor, C. (1985) 'What's Wrong with Negative Liberty'. *Philosophy and the Human Sciences: Philosophical Papers* (Vol. 2) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 211–229.
- Wessels, W. (2021) 'The European Council as a Transformative Force'. In Wallace, H., Koutsiaras, N. and Pagoulatos, G. (eds) *Europe's Transformations: Essays in Honour of Loukas Tsoukalis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- White House (2023) Remarks by National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan on Renewing American Economic Leadership at the Brookings Institution, 27 April. Available at https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2023/04/27/remarks-by-national-security-advisor-jake-sullivan-on-renewing-american-economic-leadership-at-the-brookings-institution/?utm_source=link [Accessed 14th June 2023].
- Wright, G. (2022) 'The Real Reasons Why Europe Is Concerned by the US Inflation Reduction Act' Institut Montaigne, 15 December. Available at <https://www.institutmontaigne.org/en/expressions/real-reasons-why-europe-concerned-us-inflation-reduction-act> [Accessed 17th May 2023].