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YEARBOOK OF EUROPEAN SECURITY

2020

by

Daniel Fiott and Vassilis Theodosopoulos

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European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)

100, avenue de Suffren
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<http://www.iss.europa.eu>
Director: Gustav Lindstrom

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print

ISBN 978-92-9198-967-6
CATALOGUE NUMBER QN-AJ-20-001-EN-C
DOI 10.2815/93292

online

ISBN 978-92-9198-968-3
CATALOGUE NUMBER QN-AJ-20-001-EN-N
DOI 10.2815/93118

Published by the EU Institute for Security Studies and printed in Belgium by Bietlot.
Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2020.
Cover image credit: Julius Drost/unsplash

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% of GDP, 2019

Abbreviations

ACLED

Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project

ACP

Africa, Caribbean, Pacific

ADB

Asian Development Bank

AFET

Foreign Affairs Committee

ACFTA

African Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement

AI

Artificial Intelligence

ALECA

Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement

AMISOM

African Union Mission to Somalia

ANC

African National Congress

APF

African Peace Facility

ASEAN

Association of Southeast Asian Nations

ASEM

Asia-Europe Meeting

ATT

Arms Trade Treaty

AU

African Union

BOMCA

Border Management Programme in Central Asia

CARD

Coordinated Annual Review on Defence

CARPHA

Caribbean Public Health Agency

CBRN

Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear

CDP

Capability Development Plan

CEFTA

Central European Free Trade Agreement

CEPA

Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

CETA

Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement

CFM

Cooperative Financial Mechanism

CFSP

Common Foreign and Security Policy

CIU

Crime Information Unit

CMX

Crisis Management Exercise

COP

Conference of the Parties

COMESA

Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

COTER

Council of the EU's Working Party on Terrorism

COVID-19

Coronavirus disease 2019

CSDP

Common Security and Defence Policy

DCFTA

Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement

DCI

Development Cooperation Instrument

DoD

Department of Defense

DRC

Democratic Republic of Congo

E3

European three

E4

European four

EaP

Eastern Partnership

EDA

European Defence Agency

EDF

European Defence Fund

EDIDP

European Defence Industrial Development Programme

EEAS

European External Action Service

EEZ

Exclusive Economic Zone

EFM

Electoral Follow-up Mission

EGNOS

European Geostationary Navigation Overlay System

EIB

European Investment Bank

EIP

External Investment Plan

ENI

European Neighbourhood Instrument

EOM

Election Observation Mission

EPA

Economic Partnership Agreement

EPCA

Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

EPF

European Peace Facility

ERCC

Emergency Response Coordination Centre

ESA

European Space Agency

ETM

Emergency Transit Mechanism

EU

European Union

EUAM

EU Advisory Mission

EUBAM

EU Border Assistance Mission

EUCAP

EU Capacity Building Mission

EUCTG

EU Civilian Training Group

EUTF

EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa

EUFOR

EU Force

EUISS

EU Institute for Security Studies

EULEX

EU Rule of Law Mission

EUMM

EU Monitoring Mission

EUMS

EU Military Staff

EUNAVFOR

EU Naval Force

EUPOL

EU Police Mission

EUSATCEN

EU Satellite Centre

EUTM

EU Training Mission

FAMA

Malian Armed Forces

FFC

Forces for Freedom and Change

FHQ

Force Headquarters

FPA

Framework Partnership Agreement

FRELIMO

Mozambique Liberation Front

FTA

Free Trade Agreement

G5

Group of Five

G7

Group of Seven

GDP

Gross Domestic Product

GNI

Gross National Income

GRU

Military Foreign Intelligence Service, Russia

GSA

European GNSS Agency

GSP+

Generalised Scheme of Preferences

HR/VP

High Representative of the Union's Foreign and Security Policy / Vice-President of the European Commission

IAEA

International Atomic Energy Agency

ICC

International Criminal Court

ICG

International Contact Group

IDPs

Internally Displaced Persons

IED

Improvised Explosive Device

IISS

International Institute for Strategic Studies

INF

Intermediate Nuclear Forces

INSTEK

Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges

IOM

International Organisation for Migration

IPCR

Integrated Political Crisis Response

IRGC

Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps

JCC

Joint Cooperation Committee

JCC

Joint Coordination Center

JCPoA

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

LAC

Latin America and Caribbean

LAS

League of Arab States

LGBTI

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex

LPA

Libya Political Agreement

KSA

Key Strategic Activities

MEP

Member of the European Parliament

MFF

Multiannual Financial Framework

MPCC

Military Planning and Conduct Capability

MRTTF

Multi-Role Transport Tanker Fleet

NATO

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

NDPP

NATO Defence Planning Process

NGO

Non-Governmental Organisation

NIP

National Implementation Plan

NMI

NATO Mission Iraq

OAS

Organization of American States

OCT

Overseas Countries and Territories

ODIHR

Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

OHQ

Operational Headquarters

OPCW

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

OSCE

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

OSRA

Overarching Strategic Research Agenda

P3S

Partnership for Security and Stability in the Sahel

PACE

Parallel and Coordinated Exercises

PADR

Preparatory Action on Defence Research

PASSEX

Passing Exercise

PCAPartnership and
Cooperation Agreement**PDCA**Political Dialogue and
Cooperation Agreement**PDVSA**

Petroleum of Venezuela

PESCO

Permanent Structured Cooperation

PIC SBAPeace Implementation Council
Steering Board**PMS**

Participating Member States

PNR

Passenger Name Record

PSC

Political and Security Committee

PYD

Democratic Union Party

R&T

Research and Technology

RACCRegional Advisory and
Coordination Cell**RAS**

Rapid Alert System

R-ARCSSRevitalised Agreement for
the Resolution of Conflict in
South Sudan**RCA**

Central African Republic

RENAMO

Mozambican National Resistance

SACStabilisation and
Association Council**SADC**Southern African
Development Community**SALW**

Small Arms and Light Weapons

SAR

Search and Rescue

SBI

State Bureau of Investigations

SDGs

Sustainable Development Goals

SHADE MEDShared Awareness and
De-confliction for the
Mediterranean Sea**SIPRI**Stockholm International Peace
Research Institute**SMEs**Small and medium-sized
enterprises**SNA**

Somali National Army

SPA

Strategic Partnership Agreement

SPLM-iOSudan People's Liberation
Movement-in-Opposition**TMC**

Transitional Military Council

UAE

United Arab Emirates

UCPM

Union Civil Protection Mechanism

UK

United Kingdom

UN

United Nations

UNCAT

UN Convention Against Torture

UNCLOSUN Convention on the Law
of the Sea**UNDP**

UN Development Programme

UNESCOUN Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organisation**UNGA**

UN General Assembly

UNHCRUN High Commissioner
for Refugees**UNHRC**

UN Human Rights Council

UNICEF

UN Children's Fund

UNRWAUN Relief and Works Agency
for Palestine Refugees in
the Near East**UNSC**

UN Security Council

UNSCR

UN Security Council Resolution

UNSMIL

UN Support Mission in Libya

UNVIM

UN Verification and
Inspection Mechanism

US

United States

USSR

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WFP

World Food Programme

WTO

World Trade Organisation

Country codes

AT

Austria

BE

Belgium

BG

Bulgaria

CY

Cyprus

CZ

Czechia

DK

Denmark

DE

Germany

EE

Estonia

EL

Greece

ES

Spain

FI

Finland

FR

France

HR

Croatia

HU

Hungary

IE

Ireland

IT

Italy

LV

Latvia

LT

Lithuania

LU

Luxembourg

MT

Malta

NL

Netherlands

PL

Poland

PT

Portugal

RO

Romania

SE

Sweden

SL

Slovenia

SK

Slovakia

Introduction

The European Union (EU) continued to face a number of region-specific and global challenges in 2019. The health of the transatlantic relationship and the United States' (US) confrontation with China continued to stoke EU security fears, giving rise to geopolitical and geoeconomic concerns in areas such as trade and technology. The trade conflict between the US and China served to undermine multilateralism and the erosion of arms control in Europe intensified following the demise of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. On top of these security concerns, instability in places such as Iran, Libya, Syria, Ukraine and the Western Balkans persisted, while political unrest in Venezuela created a large number of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs). With the Brexit negotiations, the continuing debate over the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and migration pressures emanating from Syria, the EU's internal cohesion and resilience was yet again tested in 2019.

The year also brought about institutional and political change for the EU with the new European Parliament and European Commission, plus a new President of the European Council, European Central Bank and High Representative for the Union's Foreign and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP). The European Parliamentary elections took place between 23–26 May across the Union with an average voter turnout of 50.66%.¹ This was the highest turnout since 1994 due to a surge in the participation of

¹ European Parliament, "European Parliament 2019–2024: Constitutive Session", July 2, 2019, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/election-results-2019/en>.

young people.² Most parliamentary candidates stood on a platform of enhancing the EU's global role, although traditional parties lost votes to liberal, green and eurosceptic ones. With the new legislature in place, the European Parliament set about selecting a new European Commission for the period 2019 to 2024. Although not a *Spitzenkandidat*, the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) eventually elected Ursula von der Leyen – a former German defence minister – as President of the Commission. In parallel, Charles Michel – a former Belgian Prime Minister – was elected to the post of President of the European Council and Josep Borrell Fontelles – a former President of the European Parliament and Spanish foreign minister – was designated HR/VP.

At her first hearing as candidate for Commission President on 16 July, von der Leyen spelled out the need for the EU to have a stronger and more united voice in the world. She invoked the possibility of qualified majority voting in foreign policy, as well as calling for the creation of a European Defence Union. The President also stressed the importance of a comprehensive approach to EU security and defence.³ Building on these views directly before she was approved as Commission President with 461 votes (to 157 against and with 89 abstentions) on 27 November, von der Leyen called for a more geopolitical Commission and a Union that can shape a better global order by harnessing the 'transformative power of the twin climate and digital transition'.⁴ These were sentiments echoed by Josep Borrell while he was HR/VP-designate. During his hearing with the European Parliament on 7 October, he stated that the Union is faced with mounting geopolitical pressures that require the EU to 'learn the

The Union is faced with mounting geopolitical pressures that require the EU to 'learn the use of the language of power'.

2 European Parliament, "2019 European Elections: Record Turnout Driven by Young People", September 24, 2019, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20190923IPR61602/2019-european-elections-record-turnout-driven-by-young-people>.

3 European Commission, "Opening Statement on the European Parliament Plenary Session by Ursula von der Leyen, Candidate for President of the European Commission", Strasbourg, July 16, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_19_4230.

4 European Commission, "Speech in the European Parliament Plenary Session by Ursula von der Leyen", Strasbourg, November 27, 2019, p. 7 and p. 10, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/president-elect-speech-original_en.pdf.

use of the language of power’ so that it could support multilateralism while avoiding being squeezed ‘in the growing confrontation between the US and China’.⁵ Speaking at the handover ceremony on 29 November, President Michel similarly underlined the need for the Union to ‘be at the table’ to ‘influence global events and protect our interests’. He even stressed the importance of doing more for the EU’s common defence and security.⁶

The European Council called for the EU to better defend its interests and values and help shape the new global environment.

Such ideas were echoed by the European Council, which released its Strategic Agenda 2019–2024 on 20 June 2019.⁷ In addition to outlining the European Council’s economic and climate-related objectives, plus its focus on protecting citizens and freedoms, the Agenda also called for the promotion of European interests and values on the global stage. The Council stressed the need for

the EU to be able to act autonomously in international affairs in support of multilateralism. Here, it made a point of working with partners, developing cooperation with Africa and pursuing an ambitious neighbourhood policy. There was also a call by the European Council to better defend its interests and values and help shape the new global environment. Underlining the importance of the transatlantic relationship and a robust trade policy, the European Council made clear that the EU had to take on more ‘responsibility for its own security and defence’ and to do so in the areas of defence investment, capability development and operational readiness.

Despite this political transition, however, events at home and abroad continued to test the EU’s credibility and resilience. The United

5 European Parliament, “Hearing of Josep Borrell: A Stronger Europe in the World”, Brussels, October 7, 2019, p. 6, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/resources/library/media/20191008RES63704/20191008RES63704.pdf>.

6 European Council, “Speech by incoming European Council President Charles Michel at the handover ceremony with the outgoing President Donald Tusk”, November 29, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/11/29/speech-by-next-european-council-president-charles-michel-at-the-handover-ceremony-with-the-outgoing-president-donald-tusk/>.

7 European Council, “A New Strategic Agenda 2019–2024”, June 20, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/20/a-new-strategic-agenda-2019-2024/>.

Kingdom⁸ (UK) was supposed to leave the EU on 29 March but a series of votes in the House of Commons over the year saw the British ask for multiple extensions to Article 50 (first until 22 May, then 31 October and finally until 31 January 2021). Replacing Theresa May at the end of July, Prime Minister Boris Johnson took a harder line on the UK's future relationship with the EU: negotiations continued to centre on the Ireland–Northern Ireland border, and there was little space to advance discussions on the future foreign, security and defence relationship between London and Brussels. In fact, the frustration emerging out of the uncertainty in London in 2019 was probably best expressed by the EU's lead negotiator, Michel Barnier, who, in speeches delivered in Natolin⁹ (Poland) in March and Leuven¹⁰ (Belgium) in April, argued that there were more urgent issues for the EU to tackle than Brexit.

Among such issues was the ongoing crisis in transatlantic affairs. The relationship revolved around four key challenges in 2019. First, the extent to which the US would continue to underwrite European security. Second, whether Washington would serve as a hindrance to (and possibly a competitor against) the Union's foreign policy objectives and interests. Third, the degree to which the US and the EU share a common strategy for upholding the multilateral order. Finally, the extent to which the EU is expected to follow the US' emerging geopolitical strategy towards China. These challenges occurred in a period of political turbulence for President Trump – the year ended with the House of Representatives approving articles of impeachment for the 45th President. Strains in the EU–North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) relationship also began to show when French President Emmanuel Macron sparked a debate about European defence and NATO during an interview with *The Economist*

There were more urgent issues for the EU to tackle than Brexit.

8 This Yearbook was drafted in 2020 but the UK was still an EU member state in 2019. Therefore, for this edition we continue to refer to the EU-28 and the UK is included in references to the EU.

9 College of Europe, "Speech by Michel Barnier at the College of Europe, 'Europe after Brexit'", Natolin, March 29, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/speech_-_college_of_europe_natolin.pdf.

10 Catholic University of Leuven, "Wilfried Martens Future of Europe Lecture by Michel Barnier", Leuven, April 29, 2019, <https://nieuws.kuleuven.be/en/content/2019/michel-barniers-future-of-europe-lecture-at-ku-leuven-2019-full-text>.

in November. During the interview President Macron referred to NATO as being ‘brain dead’ on account of its lack of leadership.¹¹

Although President Macron’s interview was recorded on 21 October (at the time that the US unilaterally and abruptly decided to leave the Syrian theatre), his remarks stoked a political debate during the NATO London Summit on 4 December 2019. Other than his specific remarks about NATO, the French President also spoke about the need for European citizens to think of the EU as a community rather than a market, and he invited Europeans to think about what more the Union should do for its defence and security in case the US abandons its security guarantee. President Macron also name-checked the ‘un-coordinated aggressive action’ by Turkey as a problem for European interests.¹² The French President’s remarks were not left unchallenged, however, as German Chancellor Angela Merkel disagreed with the idea that NATO was rudderless¹³ and in November the German Foreign Minister, Heiko Maas, called for the creation of a committee to look at the alliance’s strategic and political thinking.¹⁴

Arms control returned as a European security concern following the US’ decision to withdraw from the INF Treaty.

Arms control returned as a European security concern following the US’ decision to withdraw from the INF Treaty because of Russia’s production and deployment of SSC-8/9M729 missiles and violation of the treaty. The INF Treaty, which eliminated certain nuclear weapons, was seen as a key part of the arms control system in Europe yet the US’ decision to withdraw on 2

August was supported by NATO allies.¹⁵ Before its demise, the EU had warned that Russia’s failure to comply with the Treaty would have a negative effect on the European security architecture and

11 “Emmanuel Macron in his own words (English)”, *The Economist*, November 7, 2019, <https://www.economist.com/europe/2019/11/07/emmanuel-macron-in-his-own-words-english>.

12 Ibid.

13 “Macron claims NATO is ‘brain-dead’, Merkel disagrees”, *RFI*, November 8, 2019, <http://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20191108-macron-nato-brain-dead-merkel-europe-usa-trump-syria-kurds>.

14 NATO, “Press conference by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg following the meeting of the North Atlantic Council at the level of Foreign Ministers”, November 20, 2019, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_171022.htm.

15 NATO, “NATO and the INF Treaty”, August 2, 2019, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_166100.htm.

international security more broadly.¹⁶ In addition, tensions continued in Ukraine in a year where Volodymyr Zelensky was elected President of the country. On 7 September, Russia and Ukraine agreed to a prisoner exchange for 35 individuals, including the 24 Ukrainian sailors seized by Moscow during the Kerch Strait incident in 2018. Despite this, conflict in the east of the country continued.

Throughout 2019, EU member states continued to be the targets of cyber-attacks and disinformation campaigns. Only a few months after the EU adopted measures to be able to impose ‘cyber sanctions’ for malicious attacks on the Union and its member states, a cyber-attack on Bulgaria’s tax authorities resulted in the theft of the personal data of 5 million citizens. Earlier in the year, the Spanish and Lithuanian Ministries of Defence plus the Finnish Ministry of Justice were victims of cyber-attacks, too.¹⁷ Additionally, there were widespread fears that the European Parliament elections would be subject to disinformation campaigns aimed at swaying voters in EU member states.

EU member states continued to be the targets of cyber-attacks and disinformation campaigns.

Earlier in the year, the Spanish and Lithuanian Ministries of Defence plus the Finnish Ministry of Justice were victims of cyber-attacks, too.¹⁷ Additionally, there were widespread fears that the European Parliament elections would be subject to disinformation campaigns aimed at swaying voters in EU member states.

A higher rate of Russian sources of disinformation targeting the EU was documented in the early half of 2019.¹⁸ During the year, Russian disinformation targeted the Gilet Jaunes protests¹⁹ in France and the fire at the Notre Dame cathedral in Paris, for instance.²⁰ It was for such reasons that both the Romanian and Finnish Presidencies of the Council of the EU stressed the importance of countering hybrid threats in their respective programmes with a specific focus on

16 Council of the EU, “Declaration by the High Representative on Behalf of the EU on the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty”, Statement, July 14, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/07/14/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-european-union-on-the-intermediate-range-nuclear-forces-inf-treaty/>.

17 Maria Demertzis and Guntram Wolff, “Hybrid and Cybersecurity Threats and the EU’s Financial System”, Bruegel Policy Contribution, no. 10, September, 2019, https://www.bruegel.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/PC-10_2019.pdf.

18 European Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, “Joint Communication on the Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan Against Disinformation”, *JOIN(2019) 12 final*, Brussels, June 14, 2019.

19 EUvsDisinfo, “A Sunday Night on Russian TV”, April 1, 2019, <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/a-sunday-night-on-russian-tv/?highlight=yellow%20vest>.

20 EUvsDisinfo, “Building Blocks of Disinformation: Case of Notre Dame”, April 18, 2019, <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/building-blocks-of-disinformation-case-notre-dame/?highlight=yellow%20vest>.

strategic communication, preparedness and critical infrastructure protection.²¹ Following the release of the Action Plan on Disinformation in 2018, the EU established a Rapid Alert System in March 2019. The system not only created a network of national contact points, but it set up a dedicated digital platform to help with information exchange and response. Furthermore, in 2019 the budget of the East StratCom Task Force was increased by €2 million to assist with countering Russian disinformation campaigns against the Union.²² Indeed, the European Parliament observed that the cases of disinformation had more than doubled in 2019, an election year, when compared to the previous year.²³

Tit-for-tat tariffs between Beijing and Washington during 2019 greatly dented free trade.

The continued conflict over trade between the US and China also spilled over into European efforts to sustain multilateralism and global trade. A round of tit-for-tat tariffs between Beijing and Washington during 2019 greatly dented free trade and it led to strains at the World

Trade Organisation (WTO). The US simultaneously imposed tariffs for goods coming into America and it blocked the appointment of members to the WTO's Appellate Body on dispute settlement. EU-US trade relations were strained during 2019: although the Council of the EU gave the green light to the Commission to begin trade talks with the US in April to help eliminate tariffs on industrial products,²⁴ by October the US was seeking to impose tariffs on the EU's aerospace and agricultural industries. Although the WTO had ruled against both

-
- 21 See EUISS, "Facing Hybrid Threats through Consolidated Resilience and Enhanced StratCom", Final Report, February 28–March 1, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Event%20Report%20-%20HRS.pdf> and EUISS, "Critical Connections, Continuity and Supply: Assessing the Security of European Critical Infrastructure and Functions in a Hybrid Threat Context", Final Report, November 6, 2019, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Critical%20Infrastructure%20-%20Report_0.pdf.
 - 22 EEAS, "Questions and Answers about the East StratCom Task Force", December 5, 2018, <https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/2116/-questions-and-answers-about-the-east->.
 - 23 European Parliament, "EU to take action against fake news and foreign electoral interference", October 10, 2019, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20191007IPR63550/eu-to-take-action-against-fake-news-and-foreign-electoral-interference>.
 - 24 European Commission, "EU-US Trade: Commission welcomes Council's green light to start negotiations with the United States", Press Release, April 15, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_2148.

the EU and US on practices in the aerospace sector, the decision by the US government to retaliate by imposing tariffs on agricultural goods such as cheese and wine on 18 October left the EU with ‘no alternative’ but to follow through with its own tariffs.²⁵

EU-China relations were occasionally tense, too. First, the EU watched with concern the mass protests that broke out in Hong Kong in June 2019 following the government’s proposed extradition reforms.²⁶ Violence nevertheless escalated in October and then HR/VP Mogherini stressed that ‘the right of assembly of Hong Kongers

must continue to be upheld and the possibility to hold peaceful demonstrations must be ensured’.²⁷ In addition to the situation in Hong Kong, a growing issue for the EU related to security concerns about 5G technologies and networks. A number of EU member states were worried about the security aspects of 5G core network equipment,²⁸ especially with regard to the role of companies such as Huawei. As a Joint Communication on EU-China relations published in March 2019 stated, ‘[a]ny vulnerability in 5G networks could be exploited in order to compromise such systems and digital infrastructure’.²⁹ The pressure on EU member states to reject integrating 5G technologies from Huawei into European infrastructure became more intense in

A number of EU member states were worried about the security aspects of 5G core network equipment.

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- 25 European Commission, “Statement by Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmström on the U.S. countermeasures in the Airbus dispute”, *Statement*, October 18, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_19_6132.
- 26 “Statement by the Spokesperson on the ongoing protests against the proposed extradition reforms in Hong Kong”, *Statement by the Spokesperson*, Brussels, June 12, 2019, https://eas.europa.eu/delegations/sierra-leone/64020/statement-spokesperson-ongoing-protests-against-proposed-extradition-reforms-hong-kong_en.
- 27 Council of the EU, “Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on Hong Kong”, Press Release, October 2, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/02/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-hong-kong/>.
- 28 Colin Blackman and Simon Forge, “5G Deployment: State of Play in Europe, USA and Asia”, in-depth analysis, European Parliament, April, 2019, p. 16, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2019/631060/IPOL_IDA\(2019\)631060_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2019/631060/IPOL_IDA(2019)631060_EN.pdf).
- 29 High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and European Commission, “Joint Communication on the EU-China – A Strategic Outlook”, *JOIN(2019) 5 final*, Strasbourg, March 12, 2019, p. 9.

mid-May following a US Presidential executive order³⁰ that severely limited access to American Information and Communications Technology (ICT) supply chains by Chinese telecom vendors.³¹

The EU continued to stress the importance of multilateralism in 2019, even as President Trump announced on 26 April that the US would never ratify the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).³² In 2019, the Union and its partners took a number of tangible measures to support the global multilateral order in line with Council Conclusions adopted on 17 June to support and reform multilateral institutions.³³ First, the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) entered into force on 1 February, which opened up a trading area of over 600 million people representing one-third of the world's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP).³⁴ Likewise, the EU-Singapore trade and investment protection agreements entered into force on 21 November. Furthermore, on 28 June the EU and Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay (the founding members of Mercosur) reached an agreement on a free trade pact. This last agreement, however, took on greater salience following the large-scale forest fires that engulfed the Amazon rainforest in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Peru. Claims that the fires were related to economic activity rather than natural causes³⁵ created tense diplomatic relations, and, while Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro insisted that the fires were a domestic issue, a plan to stop the environmental disaster on the basis that the fires were a problem of the global commons was devised by the G7 countries at their

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- 30 Whitehouse, "Executive Order on Securing the Information and Communications Technology and Services Supply Chain", May 15, 2019, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-securing-information-communications-technology-services-supply-chain/>.
- 31 Gisela Grieger, "5G in the EU and Chinese Telecoms Suppliers", European Parliamentary Research Service, April, 2019, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2019/637912/EPRS_ATA\(2019\)637912_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2019/637912/EPRS_ATA(2019)637912_EN.pdf).
- 32 Whitehouse, "Defending Our Sovereignty and Constitutional Rights from the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty", April 26, 2019, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-is-defending-our-sovereignty-and-constitutional-rights-from-the-united-nations-arms-trade-treaty/>.
- 33 Council of the EU, "Council Conclusions - EU Action to Strengthen Rules-Based Multilateralism", 10341/19, Brussels, June 17, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10341-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- 34 Council of the EU, "EU-Japan Trade Agreement will Enter into Force on 1 February 2019", Press Release, December 21, 2018, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/12/21/eu-japan-trade-agreement-will-enter-into-force-on-1-february-2019/>.
- 35 Enrique Gómez Ramírez, "Amazon Wildfire Crisis: Need for an International Response", European Parliamentary Research Service, November, 2019, p. 4, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/644198/EPRS_BRI\(2019\)644198_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/644198/EPRS_BRI(2019)644198_EN.pdf).

summit in Biarritz, France, on 24–26 August.³⁶ Climate change would feature as a key issue in 2019, and masses of young people joined climate protests across the globe in what became known as the September ‘Climate Strikes’. Hundreds of thousands of young people boycotted school and marched in major cities such as Berlin, Brussels, New York, Manila and Rio de Janeiro.

A number of long-standing conflicts in the EU’s near and wider neighbourhoods continued to test the Union’s resilience. In Libya, planned presidential and parliamentary elections were marred by a military offensive that began on 4 April against

The presence of Turkey and Russia in Libya did little for reconciliation efforts.

forces in the west of the country, which resulted in conflict between the Government of National Accord (GNA) and the forces under the control of Khalifa Haftar. Although the presence of Turkey and Russia in Libya did little for reconciliation efforts, the EU voiced its concerns that the LNA’s attacks on Tripoli endangered the lives of ‘civilians, including migrants and refugees’.³⁷ In Syria, the regime in Damascus launched further military offences against the province of Idlib in April, which not only endangered civilians but created border tensions as people moved to the frontier with Turkey. These strikes would continue throughout the year with the support of Russia and Iran, causing Ankara to militarily intervene in Syria in October following the US’ decision to withdraw its troops from the northeast of the country in the same month. Violence escalated in December, taking the total number of people displaced in the country in 2019 to over 800,000.³⁸

In the Gulf region, a crisis emerged in the Strait of Hormuz when Iran began to seize foreign-owned oil tankers. In July, Iranian authorities seized a British tanker named *Stena Impero* and boarded a second vessel, too. These seizures took place in a broader context of

36 Élysée, “The G7 Summit in Biarritz: Key Decisions”, August 28, 2019, <https://www.elysee.fr/en/emmanuel-macron/2019/08/28/the-g7-summit-in-biarritz-key-decisions>.

37 Council of the EU, “Declaration by the High Representative Federica Mogherini on Behalf of the EU on the Situation in Libya”, Press Release, April 11, 2019 <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/04/11/declaration-by-the-high-representative-federica-mogherini-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-situation-in-libya/>.

38 EEAS, “Syria: Statement by the Spokesperson on the Latest Developments”, Brussels, December 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/72623/syria-statement-spokesperson-latest-developments_en.

A crisis emerged in the Strait of Hormuz when Iran began to seize foreign-owned oil tankers.

tensions involving the shooting down of a US drone by Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in June, suspected Iranian attacks on two oil tankers in June and the destruction of an Iranian drone by US forces in July. The tensions led a number of European governments to plan for a naval mission³⁹ to the Strait of Hormuz to safeguard shipping lanes and maritime vessels. In relation to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), France, Germany, the UK and the European External Action Service (EEAS) released a joint statement on 2 July expressing their concern at Iran's announcement that it exceeded the stockpile limit for low enriched uranium.⁴⁰ A conference between the parties was held on 28 June in Vienna to take stock of these developments. 2019 had begun with the creation of the Instrument for Supporting Trade Exchanges (INSTEX) to facilitate legitimate trade with Iran in the context of US sanctions on Iran, and the threat of sanctions against any country that trades with Tehran.⁴¹

In 2019, violence escalated in the Sahelian countries of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger where the EU has deployed a number of its civilian and military Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations. During the year there was an increase of more than 550,000 internally displaced people in the region, taking the total to 5.18 million people.⁴² In Burkina Faso, the year was marked by violence as more than 60 people lost their lives in April⁴³ and 37 people were killed in a terrorist attack in November.⁴⁴ The second half of

39 First labelled the European-led Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz mission (EMASOH), but then renamed Operation Agénor in 2020.

40 "E3 and EEAS Joint Statement on Iran: 2 July", Press Release, July 2, 2019, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/e3-and-eeas-joint-statement-on-iran-2-july>.

41 EEAS, "Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the creation of INSTEX, Instrument for Supporting Trade Exchanges", Brussels, January 31, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/57475/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-creation-instex-instrument_en.

42 European Commission, "Sahel", November 13, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/africa/sahel_en.

43 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the attacks in Mali and Burkina Faso", Brussels, June 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/canada/64109/statement-spokesperson-attacks-mali-and-burkina-faso_ga.

44 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the Attacks in Burkina Faso", Brussels, November 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burkina-faso/70585/node/70585_sk.

2019 also witnessed a worsening of the military situation in Mali, with 13 French soldiers losing their lives in November while combatting Islamic State fighters.⁴⁵ Fighters loyal to the Islamic State were responsible for a number of attacks in the Sahel region throughout 2019, and a planned meeting of the G5 Sahel in December was postponed after an attack on a Nigerien military camp that killed 71 soldiers.⁴⁶

The crisis in Sudan continued with the ousting of Omar al-Bashir in April and the ensuing violent clashes throughout the year. There were also tensions in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) following presidential elections that took place in December 2018. The election re-

Fighters loyal to the Islamic State were responsible for a number of attacks in the Sahel.

sults were contested by opposition parties and the country experienced violence in several towns.⁴⁷ Furthermore, the DRC experienced further cases of Ebola during the year, which saw the EU dedicate €50 million in December to improve health, sanitation and nutrition in the affected regions and localities.⁴⁸ The African continent also witnessed a number of positive developments, however, including the entering into force of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) on 30 May and the continued commitment to the 2018 Eritrean–Ethiopian peace agreement.

In Venezuela, tensions continued during the year following President Nicolás Maduro’s new mandate based on non-democratic elections. The elections were widely disputed and they led to mass demonstrations and violence. In January, the EU reiterated its support for the Venezuelan National Assembly and it established an

45 Armée de Terre, “Message du CEMAT à l’armée de Terre en hommage à nos 13 soldats morts au Mali le lundi 25 novembre 2019”, November 29, 2019, <https://www.defense.gouv.fr/terre/actu-terre/message-du-cemat-a-l-armee-de-terre-en-hommage-a-nos-13-soldats-morts-au-mali-le-lundi-25-novembre-2019>.

46 “France postpones G5 Sahel meeting after deadly Niger attack”, December 12, 2019, *France 24*, <https://www.france24.com/en/20191212-france-postpones-g5-sahel-meeting-after-deadly-niger-attack>.

47 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo”, January 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/venezuela/56474/statement-spokesperson-situation-democratic-republic-congo_en.

48 European Commission, “EU allocates €50 million to fight Ebola and malnutrition in the Democratic Republic of Congo”, December 2, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_6653.

International Contact Group (ICG) with a number of Latin American countries to try and resolve the conflict and deal with the humanitarian crisis. In February, the EU was yet again moved to denounce the escalation of tensions and violence in the country following a refusal by Maduro's government to recognise the humanitarian situation. By the middle of the year, however, the EU responded to threats against Juan Guaidó, the self-declared interim President, with sanctions against security and intelligence services. In February, European countries including Denmark, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden and the UK recognised Guaidó as the interim President and the European Parliament soon followed suit.⁴⁹

There was no agreement on whether to begin the accession process with Albania and North Macedonia.

There was discontent over the EU's enlargement policy at the end of year following a European Council meeting on 17-18 October in which there was no agreement on whether to begin the accession process with Albania and North Macedonia. A 'non-paper' by France and others on reforming the EU accession process⁵⁰ was put

forward in November with ideas such as the introduction of new stages to the process, but the document was met with concern by countries in the Western Balkans given the steps taken towards reconciliation in the region (e.g. the 2018 Prespa Agreement). Nevertheless, the 'non-paper' would spark a debate between EU member states and ultimately the European Commission was tasked to find a compromise through a proposal that would go on to be published in early 2020.

Despite the crises and tensions affecting the Union, 2019 was another positive year for EU security and defence. In June, then HR/VP Mogherini released the third progress report on the implementation of the EU Global Strategy. The report detailed the EU's action in various areas of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and CSDP, while recognising that the world had not markedly improved

49 European Parliament, "Venezuela: Parliament recognises Guaidó, urges EU to follow suit", January 31, 2019, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20190125IPR24303/venezuela-parliament-recognises-guaido-urges-eu-to-follow-suit>.

50 "Non-Paper Reforming the European Union Accession Process", November, 2019, <https://g8fip1kplyr33r3krz5b97d1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Enlargement-nonpaper.pdf>.

since the Global Strategy was first published in 2016.⁵¹ On its 16 CSDP missions and operations, the EU continued to deploy approximately 5,000 people to 11 different countries. In December, the EU even announced the creation of a new civilian advisory mission to the Central African Republic, EU Advisory Mission (EUAM) RCA. As far as the EU's naval operation in the Mediterranean Sea was concerned, however, a six-month extension agreed in September was not enough to stop the operation from being politically deadlocked and wound down.

The EU took more steps forward for civilian and military capability development. A Joint Action Plan on civilian CSDP was published on 30 April that detailed concrete steps towards fulfilling the 'Civilian CSDP Compact' that was agreed in 2018. Furthermore, in a year marking the 15th

The EU continued to deploy approximately 5,000 people to 11 different countries.

anniversary of the creation of the European Defence Agency (EDA), November saw 13 new Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) projects agreed to covering cyber, air, sea and space – the new projects took the total number of PESCO projects to 47.⁵² The European Commission also launched a call in March for more defence research proposals under the Preparatory Action on Defence Research (PADR), as well as announcing new grants to defence consortia. What is more, one of the EU projects designed to enhance maritime surveillance ran a live demonstration in November in the Mediterranean Sea. Despite these successes, however, there was disappointment at the end of 2019 when the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the EU announced that proposed financial envelopes under the MFF for the European Defence Fund (EDF), Space Programme, Military Mobility and the off-budget European Peace Facility (EPF) would be drastically reduced under their agreed negotiating boxes (e.g. the EDF was reduced from a request of €13 billion to €6 billion). The MFF negotiations were still ongoing in 2019.

51 "The EU's Global Strategy: Three Years on, Looking Forward", June 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/64034/vision-action-eu-global-strategy-practice-three-years-looking-forward_en.

52 Council of the EU, "Defence Cooperation: Council Launches 13 New PESCO Projects", November 12, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/11/12/defence-cooperation-council-launches-13-new-pesco-projects/>.

The 2020 yearbook

The task of the EUISS Yearbook of European Security is quite simple: it aims to provide an analytical overview of events that were significant for European security. The Yearbook's principle objective is to frame the major events of the year and to document what the EU did to meet the security challenges it faces. In essence, therefore, the core focus is on actions taken under the CFSP and CSDP but the Yearbook also engages with the broader diplomatic and political endeavours of the Union beyond these two policies. In this sense, the term 'security' is used flexibly to denote the EU's broader toolbox including trade, climate diplomacy, cybersecurity, hybrid threats, internal security and border management as well as the traditional areas of focus of CFSP and CSDP. To achieve its task, the Yearbook alternates between broad analytical brush strokes that look at major trends and more specific security issues at the regional or national level that need to be magnified. The book is structured into two major parts. Part one is dedicated to EU external action and this is where the geographical focus of the Yearbook can be found, along with specific details about the CFSP and other areas of the EU's international efforts. This part includes details on the use of the EU financial instruments, restrictive measures and its partnerships. Part two looks specifically at European security and defence. Here, one can find information on the major developments of the CSDP, especially with regard to military and civilian missions and operations, capability development, cybersecurity and hybrid threats, internal security and border management and space.

Like last year's edition, the 2019 Yearbook is structured around region- and issue-specific sections covering every continent in the world. It also benefits from data visuals that are designed as easy-to-use references for more specific EU actions. The Yearbook makes use of visuals to highlight geographical areas of focus through maps, key events through the use of timelines and financial investments through visually attractive bar graphs. All of the data used in this book can be found listed in the annex and the data sources will be uploaded to the EU's Open Data Portal. We continue the recently introduced tradition of compiling an index, too, which will ease and encourage use of the Yearbook.

Unlike last year's edition, however, this book was written during the Covid-19 pandemic – completing the accounts for events in 2019 thus seemed rather odd given what we now know was awaiting to greet us in early 2020. In these challenging circumstances, we should principally like to thank John-Joseph Wilkins for editing the entire text and Christian Dietrich has excelled in his creative work designing the visuals in the book. As ever, to ensure the overall analytical rigour of the Yearbook we have consulted the small army of analysts based at the EUISS for input on their key areas of expertise and/or interest. We should like to single out Gustav Lindstrom for his encouragement during the writing process and Florence Gaub for patiently reviewing the Yearbook before it went to print.

Beyond the EUISS, however, this Yearbook would simply not have been possible without the cooperation of colleagues in other EU institutions, agencies and bodies. Colleagues at the EEAS, the EU Military Staff (EUMS), the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU and the EDA have been exceptionally helpful. We should like to specifically thank Jan Joel Andersson, Lavinia Baciú, Mikko Harjulehto, Damien Power and Valentina Stylianou for their dedicated support with quantitative and qualitative information and data. As ever, the Yearbook draws on existing databases and we want to express our gratitude to the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), NATO, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) for making their databases available for use. Finally, it goes without saying that all faults lie with the authors.



Image: Free-Photos/pixabay

A satellite view of Earth at night, showing city lights and a white rectangular area. The image is dominated by a dark blue and black background, with bright white and yellow lights representing cities and urban areas. A large, solid white rectangle is positioned in the upper half of the image, partially obscuring the satellite view. The text "EXTERNAL ACTION" is centered within this white rectangle.

EXTERNAL ACTION

Multilateralism

2019 was another important year for the EU in its pursuit of supporting multilateral solutions to international crises. In particular, the Union continued to push for efforts on human rights and climate change in international fora such as the United Nations (UN). At the 63rd Session

The Union continued to push for efforts on human rights and climate change in international fora such as the United Nations.

of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, then HR/VP Mogherini stressed the importance of promoting the human rights of women and girls on a global basis. The Commission meeting was a first in that the focus turned to exploring the linkage between gender equality and social protection, and the HR/VP underlined that for the EU gender equality is a fundamental value.¹ In September, EU and UN partners met in the margins of the UN General Assembly

(UNGA) to discuss progress on the ‘Spotlight Initiative’, which provides seed money to support health services and economic empowerment, in order to end violence against women and girls.

¹ EEAS, “Time for Action: the EU at the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women”, March 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/59242/time-action-eu-63rd-session-commission-status-women_en.

EU and human rights

Throughout 2019, the EU continued to promote human rights on a worldwide basis. As its annual report on human rights and democracy attests, in many part of the world ‘human rights defenders, journalists and media workers are under threat and attack because of their daily work, civic and democratic space continues to be restricted, women’s and girls’ human rights are being violated, and vulnerable groups are often left behind and exposed to further discrimination and inequality’.² The EU also continued to advance human rights through various UN fora and it raised awareness about human rights abuses in Bangladesh, Myanmar/Burma, North Korea, Syria, Iran and Crimea and Sevastopol. Overall, 2019 was an important anniversary year for key human rights bodies and frameworks. For example, 2019 was the 10th anniversary of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe and the 100th anniversary of the International Labour Organisation. In 2019, the EU also adopted the Human Rights Guidelines on safe drinking water and sanitation.

Appointed on 28 February, the EU’s new Special Representative for Human Rights Eamon Gilmore had a busy year of bilateral meetings and he was present a various UN fora on human rights. Finally, at the 74th session of the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly in October and November, EU human rights priorities were advanced and 62 Resolutions on the Union’s agenda were adopted. The EU also engaged in 76 interactive dialogues with UN mandate holders and during the 2019 sessions of the UN Human Rights Council the EU stressed long-standing positions on gender equality and female genital mutilation.

2 EEAS, “EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2019”, 2020, p. 7, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/annual_report_e-version.pdf.

The EU continued to promote and support human rights in 2019. During the 41st session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) from June to July, the EU stressed its concern at the human rights situation in countries such as Belarus, Syria, Eritrea, Ukraine, Sudan and the DRC. EU officials at the UNHRC meeting also underlined the need to ensure the protection of migrants and to stop sexual violence. A key part of the EU's efforts on human rights during 2019 centred on democracy and fundamental freedoms. A major concern was the increasing attempts to curb or reign in the free media in many countries across the globe, and the Union used World Press Freedom Day in May to stress the importance of a free press in the context of greater use of disinformation.³ These points were again taken up at the World Forum for Democracy in November, which dedicated its discussions to upholding democracy in the information age.

A major concern was the increasing attempts to curb or reign in the free media in many countries.

Three-year review of the EU Global Strategy

On 14 June, then HR/VP Mogherini released the third progress report on the implementation of the EU Global Strategy. The Strategy focuses on five priority areas including the 1) security of the Union; 2) state and social resilience; 3) the integrated approach to crises; 4) cooperative regional orders; and 5) global governance. The third progress report took stock of the EU's achievements in the field of security and defence, and it underlined the steps to increase coordination between all of the new tools and capacities (e.g. Civilian Compact, MPCC, PESCO, CARD, etc.). The report also acknowledged the progress made on EU enlargement to the Western Balkans and it stressed the importance of the Union's External Investment Plan (EIP) and its use in Africa and the wider EU neighbourhood.

3 EEAS, "With free journalism under increasing pressure, the EU reaffirms determination to defence press freedom worldwide", March 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/61764/free-journalism-under-increasing-pressure-eu-reaffirms-determination-defend-press-freedom_en.

The then HR/VP also used the third progress report to outline the EU's comprehensive support for Colombia, Iraq, Ukraine, the Sahel and Syria. The progress report also highlighted the EU's efforts in combating hybrid threats and disinformation and it stressed the importance of strategic relationships with Africa, the League of Arab States (LAS) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Finally, the report showed the Union's increased efforts to support the UN and its agencies and bodies in the face of an erosion of multilateralism.⁴

Climate change was also high on the EU's agenda during the year. At the UN Climate Action Summit on 23 September in New York, the EU underlined its efforts to combat climate change and it reiterated that it was 'the first major economy to put in place a legally binding framework to deliver on its pledges under the Paris Agreement'.⁵ In fact, at the Climate Action Summit the EU showcased its strategic long-term vision for a climate neutral economy by 2050 and it reminded participants that it is the largest contributor to international climate finance.⁶ The EU was also present at the UN Summit on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in late September to underline its efforts in ensuring biodiversity protection, sustainable food production and zero pollution, among other things. Finally, HR/VP Borrell represented the EU at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP25) on 13 December, where he underlined the EU's commitment to implementing the voluntary cooperation mechanism of the Paris Agreement.

In September, the EU was present at the start of the 74th UN General Assembly to not only stress its commitment to multilateralism but also to discuss crises in Syria and Venezuela. Back on 15 July, EU foreign ministers had agreed that EU priorities at the UNGA should focus on supporting the UN system in a more fragile world and on helping

4 EEAS, "The EU's Global Strategy: Three Years On, Looking Forward", 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_global_strategy_2019.pdf.

5 EEAS, "EU leads global fight against climate change", September 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/67215/eu-leads-global-fight-against-climate-change_en.

6 EEAS, "EU at the UN for a healthy planet", September 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/67906/eu-un-healthy-planet_en.

buttress the rules-based international order. Global fragility and the erosion of the multilateral order was certainly a cause of concern for EU governments in 2019.

On preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons

‘Since the Chemical Weapons Convention’s opening for signature in 1993, there have been several incidents exploiting the toxic properties of chemicals to harm humans. They include acts of terrorism, as well as targeted assassination and executions. Toxic chemicals also reappeared in warfare with both state and non-state actors resorting to them. While some incidents retained certain characteristics of past warfare scenarios, the substances also began to serve different purposes. Finally, actors have not relied on traditional warfare agents in all incidents; rather they have turned to commercially or industrially available toxicants in support of their goals. Several incidents also combine the characteristics of the different new uses of chemical weapons.’

- > Jean Pascal Zanders, “Preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons: The evolution of chemical weapon use since 1990”, *EUISS Brief*, no. 3, April, 2019, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief%203%20Chemical%20Weapons_0.pdf.

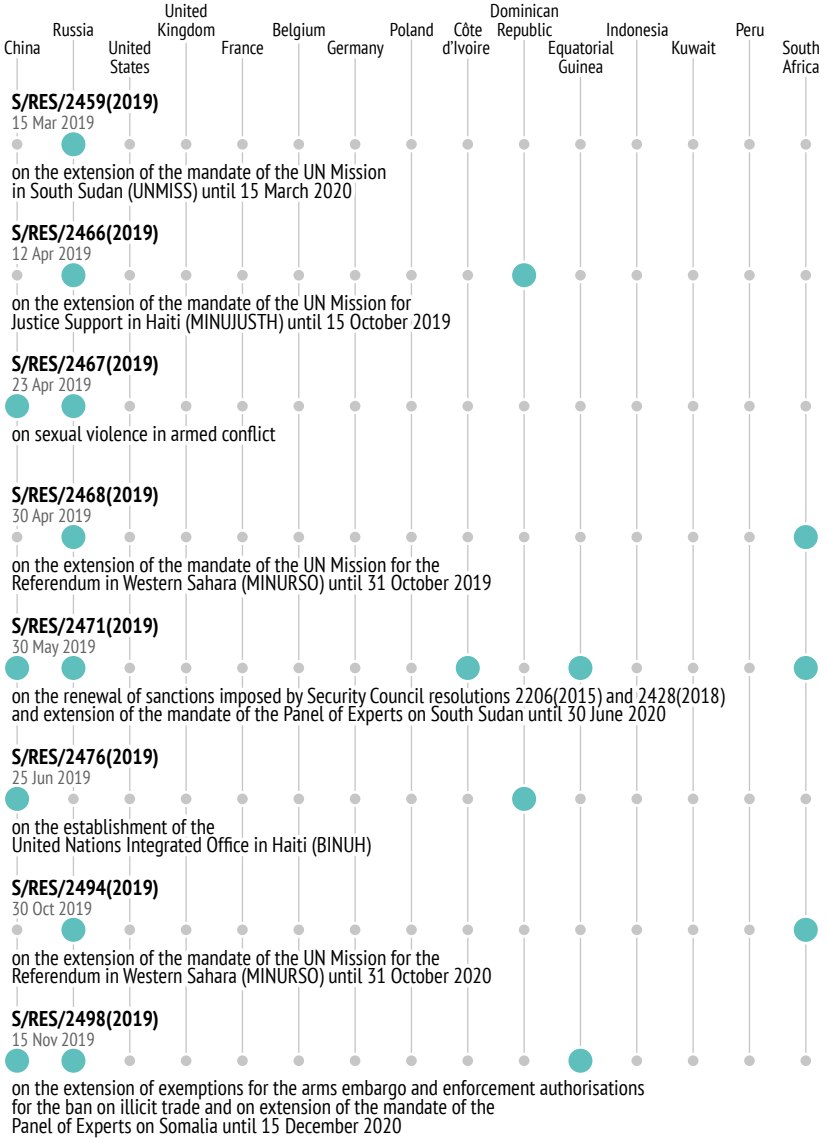
EU voting at the United Nations

In March, then HR/VP Mogherini addressed the UN Security Council (UNSC) calling for greater political investment in multilateralism and the UN. She underlined the importance the EU attaches to multilateral solutions for crises in Syria, Africa and Ukraine, as well as global challenges such as climate change and the Sustainable Development

UN Security Council voting

By permanent and non-permanent members, 2019

● Yes vote ● Abstention



Goals.⁷ EU statements made at the UNSC highlighted the Union's concerns in relation to Iran, peace and reconciliation, radicalisation in prisons, Bosnia and Herzegovina and many other issues. In 2019, the EU made a total of 37 statements at the Security Council.⁸ In 2019, the

The Security Council member with the highest number of abstentions in 2019 was Russia (with 6 abstentions), followed by China (4 abstentions).

UNSC adopted 52 Resolutions and 44 (approximately 84%) of these were adopted unanimously by Security Council members. The remaining 8 Resolutions were subject to cases of abstentions and/or non-voting.⁹ The Security Council member with the highest number of abstentions in 2019 was Russia (with 6 abstentions), followed by China (4 abstentions). A contentious Resolution in 2019 was the one on the ex-

tension of the Panel of Experts on South Sudan (S/RES/2471/2019), which received 5 abstentions from China, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Russia and South Africa. China and Russia also abstained on the Resolution on sexual violence in armed conflict (S/RES/2467/2019). In 2019, three draft Resolutions were vetoed by China and Russia pertaining to the situation in the Middle East (S/2019/961 and S/2019/756) and the situation in Venezuela (S/2019/186).¹⁰

International crises and conflict: strategic foresight

'Reviewing past statements on the future is more than just entertainment: it provides useful insights on how foresight can be improved as it helps us understand the mistakes we can make whenever we try to predict how the future will unfold. And foresight is to decision-making what reconnaissance is to warfare: without it, we stumble ahead rather than follow a strategic

7 EEAS, "Mogherini stresses EU-UN multilateral approach based on common interests and values", March 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/59595/mogherini-stresses-eu-un-multilateral-approach-based-common-interests-and-values_en.

8 EEAS, "EU statements at the United Nations Security Council", 2020, https://eeas.europa.eu/category/tags/un-security-council_sk.

9 UN, "Voting Data", UN Digital Library, September, 2020, https://digitallibrary.un.org/search?ln=en&cc=Voting+Data&p=&f=&rm=&ln=en&sf=&so=d&rg=50&c=Voting+Data&c=&of=hb&fti=0&fct__2=Security+Council&fct__3=2019&fti=0&fct__2=Security+Council.

10 UN, "Security Council – Veto List", 2019, <https://research.un.org/en/docs/sc/quick>.

vision. This is particularly true in today's complex and high-speed world. As a result, foresight activities are on the rise not just in European Union institutions but also in EU member states – but they can improve in terms of frequency, quality, and self-assessment. It is important to note two things at the outset: firstly, the vast majority of predictions do not fall into one of the two extremes of being entirely right or entirely wrong, but in-between. Secondly, to conclude from erroneous predictions that the entire exercise is futile would clearly be to misconstrue what foresight is about: it is a creative exercise, and as such it does not have to be 100% accurate to be useful. Instead, it has to be stimulating, open new doors of thinking, show different ways in which the future can unfold – and perhaps even lead to a change in policy.'

- > Florence Gaub (ed.) "What if...? Scanning the horizon: 12 scenarios for 2021", *Chaillot Paper*, no. 150, January, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/what-if-scanning-horizon-12-scenarios-2021>.
- > Florence Gaub, "The benefit of hindsight: what we got wrong – and why", *EUISS Brief*, no. 1, February, 2019, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief%201_Hindsight.pdf.

European Parliament Annual Report on the CFSP

Adopted on 15 January, the European Parliament made clear that the EU faces a challenge in ensuring the multilateral order and members called on the EU to remain strong and united and to keep multilateralism at the core of its international work. It regretted the current state of the transatlantic relationship and thus called on the EU to ensure the credibility of its soft and hard power. The Parliament also stressed that foreign interference in EU affairs is a great risk to the Union's security and it called on the HR/VP to turn the EEAS Strategic Communications Division into a fully-fledged unit within the EEAS with 'proper staffing

and adequate budgetary resources'. It noted that Russia is the most imminent source of hybrid and conventional threats and it called on the Council to adopt a 'Magnitsky Act'-type regime to accompany the EU's existing sanctions regime.¹¹

EU Delegations and global presence

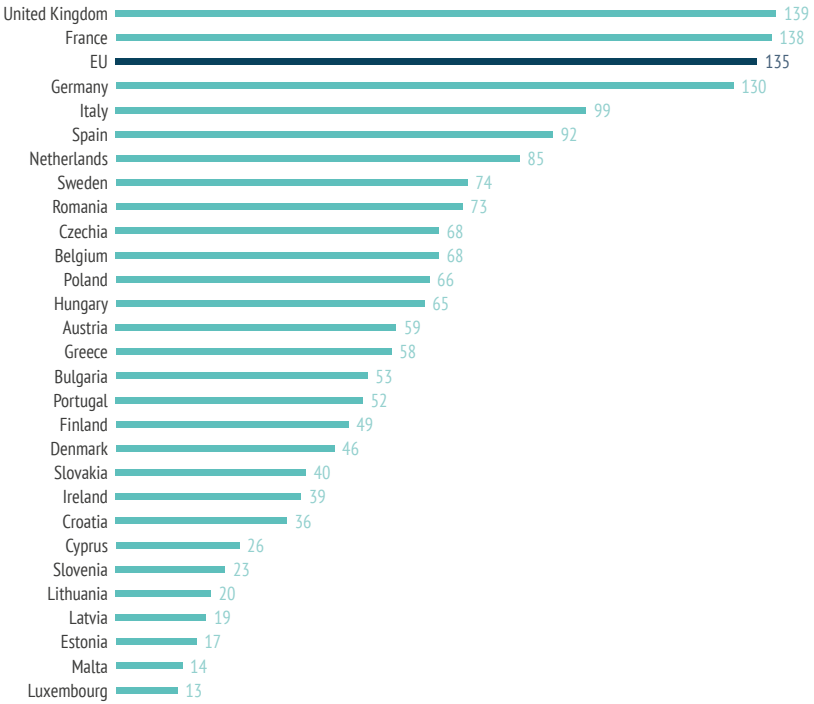
The EU and its member states continued to benefit from a wide global presence through EU Delegations and EU member state diplomatic missions. EU Delegations and national diplomatic missions were mainly concentrated in the Americas, Asia and Russia with less representation in Africa (although it should be noted that many EU member states rely on EU Delegations for diplomatic representation, especially in crisis-hit areas). The data confirms the fact that the EU institutions and EU member states still seek to use diplomatic missions in larger or more powerful countries such as China, India, Russia and the US. There is also a high level of EU diplomatic presence in key neighbourhood regions such as the Middle East and Central Asia, and the EU maintains a strong diplomatic presence in Australia, South East Asia and the Americas.

Owing to size and resources, there is a clear difference in the level of diplomatic presence across the globe per EU member state. In 2019, France, Germany and UK had the highest number of diplomatic missions across the world (with 130 or over each). Member states such as Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Sweden and Romania also maintained a global diplomatic presence with more than 70 diplomatic missions worldwide each.

¹¹ European Parliament, "Annual Report on the Implementation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy", Strasbourg, A9-0054/2019, January 15, 2020, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0008_EN.html.

Delegations and embassies

Number of member states' diplomatic missions, 2019

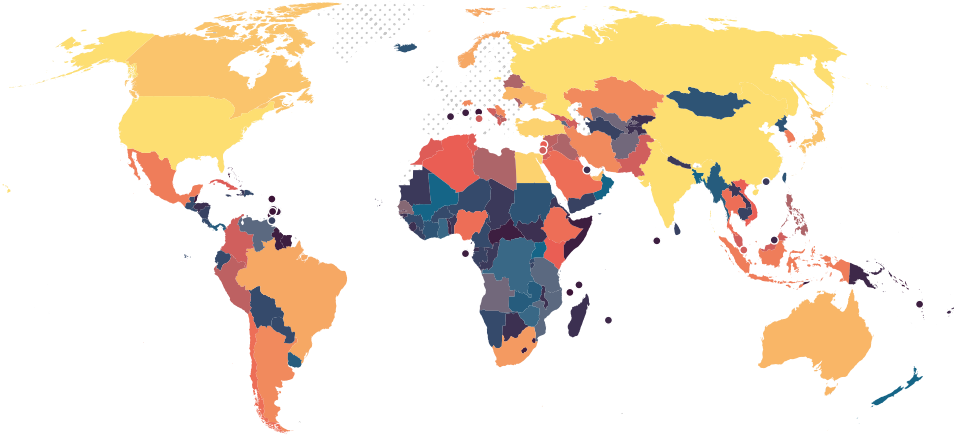


Data: European External Action Service, Member States' Ministries of Foreign Affairs, 2020

The EU also had 135 Delegations abroad in 2019, which is a level comparable with the larger EU member states. As of December 2019, the EU Delegations were composed of a balance of European Commission and EEAS officials, seconded national experts, contract agents and local agents. In 2019, local agents comprised the highest level of staff contracts, followed by contract agents and permanent officials.

EU Delegations

Member States' Diplomatic Missions (in countries with EU Delegations, Offices), 2019



Data: European External Action Service, Member States' Ministries of Foreign Affairs, 2020

EU Delegations around the world

Staff levels by contractual status, December 2019



Data: European External Action Service, 2020

Southern neighbourhood

North Africa

The conflict in Libya continued to dominate the EU's relations with North Africa in 2019, especially given that a September 2018 brokered ceasefire was broken in January 2019 after the resumption of fighting in Tripoli. In May, there was major EU concern when fighters under the command of Marshal Khalifa Haftar attacked Tripoli and the Union urged for an immediate ceasefire during the Foreign Affairs Council held on 13-14 May.¹ The attack on Tripoli by the LNA took place on the same day that UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres was visiting the country and on the eve of the Libyan National Conference. The conference had been prepared for 18 months and it was designed to bring together various political actions with a view to holding democratic elections in the future. At the Council, EU member states also expressed deep concern at the loss of life and humanitarian situation in the country.² Indeed, the UN reported that 3,400 people had fled during the attack, but 47 died and a further 181 were wounded – 500,000 children were also reported

¹ EEAS, "Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the plenary session of the European Parliament on the situation in Libya", Strasbourg, April 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61128/speech-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-plenary-session-european_en.

² Council of the EU, "Outcome of the Council Meeting – Foreign Affairs (including Defence)", 9207/19, Brussels, May 13-14, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/40396/st09207-en19.pdf>.

to be at direct risk from the fighting in and around Tripoli.³ The UN Special Representative for Libya and head of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Ghassan Salamé, was present at the Council meeting when the EU reiterated its support for his work and for a UN-facilitated political dialogue in the country.

Driving elements of the conflict in Libya

‘Eight years after the revolution, Libya is in the middle of a civil war. For more than four years, international conflict resolution efforts have centred on the UN-sponsored Libya Political Agreement (LPA) process, unfortunately without achieving any break-through. In fact, the situation has even deteriorated since the onset of Marshal Haftar’s attack on Tripoli on 4 April 2019. An unstable Libya has wide-ranging impacts: as a safe haven for terrorists, it endangers its north African neighbours, as well as the wider Sahara region. But terrorists originating from or trained in Libya are also a threat to Europe, also through the radicalisation of the Libyan expatriate community (such as the Manchester Arena bombing in 2017). Furthermore, it is one of the most important transit countries for migrants on their way to Europe. Through its vast oil wealth, Libya is also of significant economic relevance for its neighbours and several European countries.’

- > Wolfgang Pusztai, “Libya’s conflict: a very short introduction”, *EUISS Brief*, no. 12, November, 2019, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief%2012%20Libya_0.pdf.

In light of the conflict in Libya, the EU continued to support Libyan authorities with migration, stabilisation and border management. Since 2015, the EU’s Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa has dedicated €408 million to projects in Libya to deal with refugees and

³ United Nations, “Libyan national conference postponed, nearly 500,000 children at ‘direct risk’ from fighting around Tripoli”, April 9, 2019, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/04/1036371>.

internally displaced people and integrated border management. In addition to this amount, the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) has been mobilised to provide €98 million in assistance to Libya for governance, public administration, civil society, health, youth and education between 2014–2020. To date, the European Commission reports that its assistance to Libya has resulted in the evacuation of more than 5,000 refugees and asylum-seekers out of Libya and more than 60,000 medical consultations for vulnerable people, among other benefits. In addition, EU assistance has led to the provision of teaching and learning materials for approximately 15,000 children and over 1.7 million people have experienced improved access to basic services.⁴

Third powers in Libya

The conflict in Libya has been made more complex because of the presence of third powers, which have aligned with either Marshal Haftar or the GNA. Most notably, Russia is supporting the LNA with financial support and hundreds of sniper mercenaries and paramilitaries reportedly fighting on behalf of a Russian organisation called the ‘Wagner Group’.⁵ Russian support has been deployed alongside military assistance from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt and Saudi Arabia, which have supplied weapons to Haftar and launched drone strikes on key GNA installations.⁶ By contrast, the GNA can claim the support of Turkey which has also supported the GNA fighters with military capabilities and expertise. The Libyan Prime Minister and leader of the GNA, Fayeze al-Sarraj, and the Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, announced a highly disputed

4 European Commission, “EU Support on Migration in Libya: EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa – North of Africa Window”, December, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/sites/euetfa/files/eutf-factsheet_libya_dec_2019_1.pdf.

5 Lillo Montalto Monella and Luke Hurst, “Who are the Russian mercenaries waging war in Libya?”, *Euronews*, December 18, 2019, <https://www.euronews.com/2019/12/18/who-are-the-russian-mercenaries-waging-war-in-libya>.

6 David D. Kirkpatrick, “Russian Snipers, Missiles and Warplanes Try to Tilt Libyan War”, *The New York Times*, November 5, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/05/world/middleeast/russia-libya-mercenaries.html>.

maritime boundary deal in November 2019⁷ the and President Erdogan went on record in December to pledge troops and advanced weapons for the GNA should the government request them.⁸ Finally, it should also be recognised that a number of EU member states have considerable interests in the country which also affects the conflict dynamic: France, in particular, has a large stake in the conflict but other member states such as Italy also do as well.

In 2019, the EU continued to pursue a constructive and positive relationship with Tunisia and the Union particularly stressed the need to engage with the youth of Tunisia and to support democratic rule of law and prosperity. In terms of its engagement with young Tunisians,

The EU and Tunisia continued to develop their economic relations.

the EU continued to award a record number of Erasmus+ scholarships to students and researchers and €60 million was made available to support disadvantaged and/or excluded youth under the ‘EU4Youth’ programme. This financial support dovetailed with the EU’s broader financial assistance to the country, with €305 million made available in 2019 for economic development and support for transport, environment, research and innovation and civil protection. In this respect, the EU and Tunisia continued to develop their economic relations and they announced their willingness to continue negotiating a Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (ALECA).⁹ Overall, the EU stressed the progress made in Tunisia and at the EU-Tunisia Association Council held on 17 May the partners agreed to continue supporting democratic efforts and trade relations.¹⁰

7 Daren Butler and Tuvan Gumrukcu, “Turkey signs maritime boundaries deal with Libya amid exploration row”, *Reuters*, November 28, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-libya/turkey-signs-maritime-boundaries-deal-with-libya-amid-exploration-row-idUSKBN1Y213I>.

8 Chase Winter, “Turkey poised to send troops to Libya, ratcheting up tensions in Eastern Mediterranean”, *DW News*, December 26, 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/turkey-poised-to-send-troops-to-libya-ratcheting-up-tensions-in-e-mediterranean/a-51802553>.

9 EEAS, “UE-Tunisie: La jeunesse plus que jamais une priorité du partenariat”, May 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/62705/ue-tunisie-la-jeunesse-plus-que-jamais-une-priorite-du-partenariat_en.

10 European Commission, “EU and Tunisia work to strengthen their Privileged Partnership”, May 15, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_2498.

Getting to grips with conflict prevention

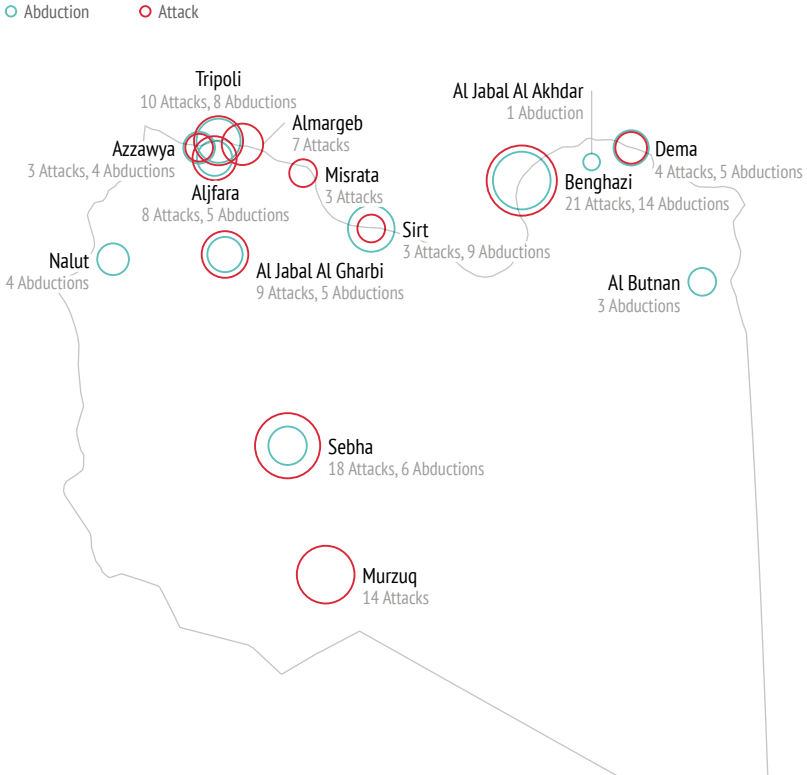
‘The costs of violent conflict are high and keep rising. The most visible cost is human life and health: the number of civilians dying directly from conflict doubled between 2005 and 2016 and the number of forcibly displaced persons increased fivefold between 2010 and 2016. While numbers are down again in 2017 (they stood at 90,000 direct deaths as a result of civil wars, a 31% decrease compared to 2014), they are still high in absolute numbers: 560,000 dead in Syria since the beginning of the war, more than 200,000 dead in Iraq since the invasion of 2003, and 60,000 dead in Yemen. And the list goes on: 19,000 in Afghanistan and 2,000 in both the Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria last year alone. Even larger is the number of victims dying indirectly from conflict; due to preventable infectious diseases, malnutrition, and neo-natal- and pregnancy-related conditions which result from conflict, for instance. It is estimated that for every direct war victim, between 3 and 15 more die indirectly without ever appearing in conflict death statistics.’

- > Giovanni Faleg and Florence Gaub, “Iceberg ahead! rethinking conflict prevention”, *EUISS Brief*, no. 4, March, 2020, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief%204%20Conflict_1.pdf.

At the start of the year, Algeria witnessed nation-wide demonstrations (called ‘*Hirak*’) as the news broke that incumbent President Abdelaziz Bouteflika had decided to run for a fifth term – attempting to build on his 20-year rule. In April, Bouteflika dropped his plans for a fifth term and announced his retirement from politics, but only because of the widespread demonstrations that called for reform of Algeria’s political system. Bouteflika was replaced by a military leadership under an acting Head of State, Lieutenant General Ahmed Gaïd Salah. The protests were largely peaceful, with security services remaining calm. That said, the European Parliament adopted a joint motion for a resolution on the situation of freedoms in the country in November, owing to numerous reports of human rights abuses in

Libya

Violence against civilians, 2019



Data: The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, 2020

Algeria.¹¹ In 2019, the European Commission continued to support the country through the ENI and €35 million was dedicated for economic development and peace and justice.¹²

¹¹ European Parliament, “Joint Motion for a Resolution”, P9-TA(2019)0072, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/RC-9-2019-0193_EN.html.

¹² European Commission, “Décision d’exécution de la Commission du 17.10.2019 relative au programme d’action annuel en faveur de l’Algérie pour 2019”, C(2019) 7497 final, Brussels, October 17, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/c_2019_7497_fr_algeria_aap2019_merge.pdf.

The EU sought to relaunch its relations with Morocco in 2019 and early in the year then HR/VP Mogherini visited Rabat to discuss the EU–Morocco bilateral relationship, as well as to take stock of mutual interests on politics, economics, security and migration.¹³

HR/VP Mogherini stressed the importance of Morocco for the Union and she recalled that the country is already a strategic partner of the EU. Of course, relations between the EU and Morocco continued to be coloured by the issue of Western Sahara, which the Union classifies as a non-self-governing territory, and recent efforts to enhance trade in agriculture and fisheries in the region. Nevertheless, the 27 June Joint Declaration by the EU and Morocco for the 14th Association Council meeting underlined the ambition to relaunch negotiations for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) and to continue working closely on migration and mobility and on sustainable development and climate change. Building on Morocco's 2017 return to the African Union (AU), the EU also stated that it looks to enhance its relationship with Morocco on peace and security, with a particular focus on the Sahel.¹⁴

On 24 April, following the adoption through a referendum of constitutional amendments that included new provisions on the role of the armed forces, the use of military courts and the appointments of the judiciary, the EEAS spokesperson released a statement calling on the Egyptian government to adhere to its international commitments with respect to the rule of law and an independent judiciary, freedom of assembly and expression, and the rights of participation of its citizens.¹⁵ On 5 August, following a terrorist attack in Cairo that left at least 20 people dead and many injured, the EU extended condolences to the victims and their families.¹⁶ On 24 November, the EEAS spokes-

13 EEAS, "Visit to Rabat by High Representative/Vice President Federica Mogherini on 16 and 17 January", January 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/56676/visit-rabat-highrepresentativevice-president-federica-mogherini-16-and-17-january_en.

14 Council of the EU, "Joint declaration by the European Union and Morocco for the fourteenth meeting of the Association Council", June 27, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/27/joint-declaration-by-the-european-union-and-the-kingdom-of-morocco-for-the-fourteenth-meeting-of-the-association-council/>.

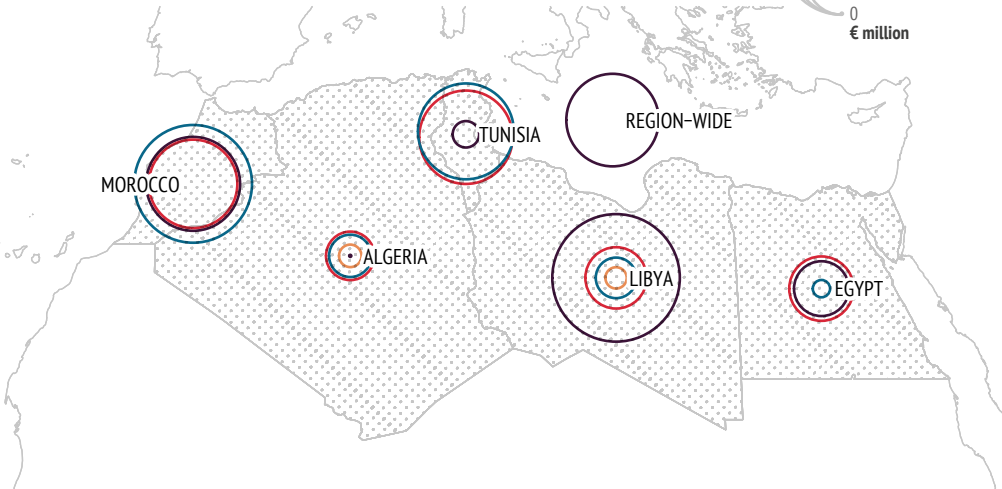
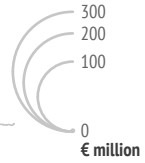
15 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the constitutional amendments in Egypt", April 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61375/statement-spokesperson-constitutional-amendments-egypt_en.

16 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on a car bomb attack in Cairo, Egypt", August 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/66201/statement-spokesperson-car-bomb-attack-cairo-egypt_en.

North Africa

EU Integrated Approach, 2015-2020

- Development assistance disbursements (2019)
- EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (2015-)
- European Neighbourhood Instrument (2019-2020)
- Humanitarian assistance (2019-2020)



Data: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European External Action Service, 2020

person released a statement expressing its concern over the raid of the independent media outlet *Mada Masr* and the detention of some of its journalists for several hours without access to communication or legal representation.¹⁷ Despite these concerns, the EU stated its ambition to work with Egypt as it holds the chair of the AU until January 2020.

17 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the raid of Mada Masr media in Egypt”, November 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/70891/statement-spokesperson-raid-mada-masr-media-egypt_en.

Middle East

On 15 March, the EU and Turkey held their 54th Association Council, four years after the last round took place. The two sides discussed bilateral relations and exchanged views on a range of issues, including the deteriorating situation on rule of law and human rights in Turkey, the conflict in Syria and the refugees hosted by the country and the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea.¹⁸ These issues dominated the bilateral relations throughout the year. They featured prominently in the Council Conclusions of 18 June, in which the Ministers expressed concern about Turkey's economic governance and called on Ankara to stop its illegal actions in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea. While reaffirming Turkey's status as a key EU partner in many areas, including migration, counter-terrorism, economy and trade, the Council also noted that it continued to move further away from the EU and that no further progress on accession negotiations or work towards modernising the EU-Turkey Customs Union were therefore possible.¹⁹

Ministers expressed concern about Turkey's economic governance and called on Ankara to stop its illegal actions in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea.

The EU consistently engaged Turkey with regard to the rule of law and human rights situation in the country. At various points throughout the year, the EU condemned the arrests of and indictments against multiple individuals, including human rights defenders and civil society activists, members of parliament, journalists and academics, which ran counter to Turkey's international commitments, including

¹⁸ Council of the EU, "Press statement following the 54th meeting of the Association Council between the European Union and Turkey, Brussels, 15 March 2019", March 15, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/15/press-statement-following-the-54th-meeting-of-the-association-council-between-the-european-union-and-turkey-brussels-15-march-2019/>.

¹⁹ Council of the EU, "Council conclusions on enlargement and stabilisation and association process", June 18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/18/council-conclusions-on-enlargement-and-stabilisation-and-association-process/>.

as a candidate country.²⁰ Following the suspensions of elected mayors and detainment of hundreds of people in southeast Turkey in August, the Union also called on the government to repeal all measures that inhibit the functioning of local democracy under the guise of broad anti-terror or criminal legislation.²¹ The EU also continued to provide vital and tangible support for refugees and their host communities in the country through the €6 billion EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey. The third annual report on its implementation, released in April, showed that it had led to concrete results, including the monthly transfers to 1.5 million refugees for their basic needs, 5 million primary health care consultations and access to school for 470,000 children.²²

In the second half of the year, the EU stepped up its response to Turkey's disruptive actions in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea. In June, the EU adopted Conclusions that strongly condemned Turkey's illegal drilling activities in Cyprus' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and called on its government to end such activities and respect the sovereign rights of Cyprus. The European Council also instructed the Commission and the EEAS to present options of measures.²³ Following Turkey's launch of a second illegal operation in July, the Council decided to suspend negotiations on the Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement and further meetings of the Association Council and the EU-Turkey high-level dialogues and to

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- 20 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the latest developments on human rights in Turkey", February 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/58532/statement-spokesperson-latest-developments-human-rights-turkey_en; EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on human rights in Turkey", June 26, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/64642/statement-spokesperson-human-rights-turkey_en; EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the case of Turkish journalist Ahmet Altan", November 13, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/70375/statement-spokesperson-case-turkish-journalist-ahmet-altan_en; EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson following European Court of Human Rights' verdict on Mr Kavala, still detained in Turkey", December 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/71927/statement-spokesperson-following-european-court-human-rights%E2%80%99-verdict-mr-kavala-still-detained_en.
- 21 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the suspensions of elected mayors and detainment of hundreds of people in south-east Turkey", August 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/66539/statement-spokesperson-suspensions-elected-mayors-and-detainment-hundreds-people-south-east_en.
- 22 European Commission, "EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey: third annual report shows continued vital and tangible support for refugees and their host communities", April 12, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_2091.
- 23 European Council, "European Council meeting (20 June 2019) – Conclusions", June 20, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39922/20-21-euco-final-conclusions-en.pdf>.

reduce the pre-accession assistance to Turkey for 2020. The Ministers also invited the European Investment Bank (EIB) to review its lending activities in Turkey.²⁴ On 14 October, in response to Turkey's continuation with its illegal activities, the European Council endorsed the Council decision to put in place a framework regime of restrictive measures in response targeting natural and legal persons responsible for or involved in them.²⁵ The framework was adopted on 11 November.²⁶ The Union also responded to a Turkey-Libya bilateral 'Memorandum of Understanding' on maritime delimitation at the end November. In its Conclusions of 12 December, the European Council agreed that the memorandum infringes upon the sovereign rights of third states, does not comply with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and cannot produce any legal consequences for third states, while unequivocally reaffirming its solidarity with Greece and Cyprus.²⁷

Throughout the year, the EU remained closely engaged with the conflict in Syria, now in its eighth year, which entered a new phase, particularly after the partial US troop withdrawal. The EU continued its full support for the Geneva UN-led peace process and the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2254 for a credible transition in Syria as the only sustainable solution to the conflict. Between 12 and 14 March, the Union organised the 3rd Brussels Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region, with the aim to address the most critical humanitarian and resilience issues affecting Syrians and communities hosting Syrian refugees inside the country and in the region, as well as to reaffirm the international community's political

The Union reaffirmed its readiness to support the developing peace process in Syria.

24 Council of the EU, "Turkish drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean: Council adopts conclusions", July 15, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/07/15/council-drilling-activities-in-the-eastern-mediterranean-council-adopts-conclusions/>.

25 Council of the EU, "Turkey's illegal drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean: Council adopts conclusions", October 14, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/14/council-conclusions-on-turkey-s-illegal-drilling-activities-in-the-eastern-mediterranean/>.

26 Ibid.

27 European Council, "European Council meeting (12 December 2019) – Conclusions", December 12, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41768/12-euco-final-conclusions-en.pdf>.

and financial support for Syria's neighbours. The conference was the main pledging event for Syria and the region this year, mobilising pledges totalling €8.3 billion for 2019–2020 and beyond, with the EU providing almost two-thirds of the total amount.²⁸ A report published in September by the EU on progress against the pledges made at the conference showed that donors had already contributed 92% of the pledges made for 2019 and made available 32% of those announced for the period 2020 and beyond.²⁹ In September, the EU welcomed the announcement made by the UN Secretary General on 23 September of agreement on the formation of a constitutional committee. The Union reaffirmed its readiness to support the developing peace process in Syria and to assist in the country's reconstruction when a comprehensive and genuine political transition, in the framework of UNSCR 2254 and the Geneva process, is firmly under way.³⁰

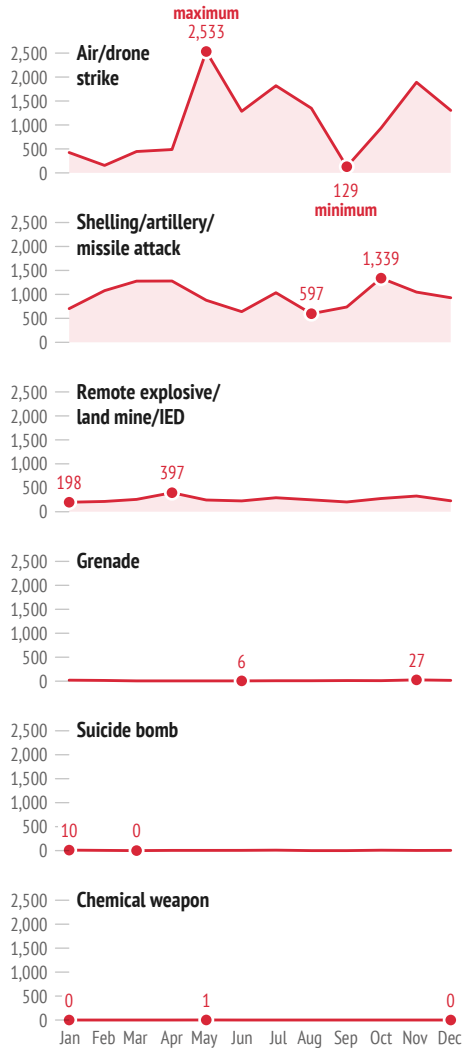
Over the course of the year, the situation in northwest Syria kept deteriorating. In May, as air strikes and artillery shelling targeting densely-populated areas, homes, schools and medical facilities increased markedly, the EU repeatedly called on all involved parties to respect international humanitarian law and on the Astana guarantors, in particular, to fulfil their responsibilities under the agreement and ensure its implementation.³¹ In June, with no sign of the situation improving, the Union repeated its call on all sides to restore an

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- 28 EEAS, "Record pledge at Brussels III Conference, EU supports future of Syria and the region", March 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59618/record-pledge-brussels-iii-conference-eu-supports-future-syria-and-region_en; Council of the EU, "Brussels III Conference on 'Supporting the future of Syria and the region': co-chairs declaration", March 14, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/14/brussels-iii-conference-on-supporting-the-future-of-syria-and-the-region-co-chairs-declaration/>.
- 29 Council of the EU, "'Supporting the future of Syria and the region' conference: new financial tracking report published", September 23, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/09/23/supporting-the-future-of-syria-and-the-region-conference-new-financial-tracking-report-published/>.
- 30 Council of the EU, "Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on Syria", September 26, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/09/26/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-syria/>.
- 31 EEAS, "Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the escalation in Northwest Syria", May 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/62082/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-escalation-northwest-syria_en; EEAS, "Statement by High Representative Mogherini and Commissioner Stylianides on the latest developments around Idlib, Syria", May 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/63422/statement-high-representative-mogherini-and-commissioner-stylianides-latest-developments_en.

immediate cease fire and demanded that all sides abide by it.³² After a brief lull, violence escalated again in November. The EU again demanded that the Syrian regime and its allies immediately cease their indiscriminate attacks on critical civilian infrastructure and called for the examination of these attacks by the newly set up UN Board of Inquiry for north-west Syria.³³ These calls were repeated at the end of the year, when the regime and its allies launched another offensive in north-west Syria, leading to many civilian deaths and

Syria

Violence by category, 2019



Data: The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, 2020

32 Council of the EU, “Syria: Declaration by the High Representative Federica Mogherini on behalf of the EU”, June 27, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/27/syria-declaration-by-the-high-representative-federica-mogherini-on-behalf-of-the-eu/>.

33 Council of the EU, “Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the recent deterioration of the situation in north-west Syria”, November 22, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/11/22/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-recent-deterioration-of-the-situation-in-north-west-syria/>.

the displacement of a further 80,000 people, bring the total since February to almost 800,000.³⁴

In October, encouraged by the US decision to withdraw its military forces from the Turkish-Syrian border, Turkey launched a new military operation in north-east Syria against the Syrian Kurds of the Democratic Union Party (PYD). Concerned about further destabilisation of the area and the prospect of another humanitarian catastrophe, the EU called on Ankara to cease its unilateral military action. It also reaffirmed that a sustainable solution to the Syrian conflict cannot be achieved militarily and that Turkey's security concerns should be addressed through political and diplomatic means.³⁵ On 14 October, the Council adopted Conclusions condemning Turkey's military action and urging Ankara to cease its operation, withdraw its forces and respect international humanitarian law. The Conclusions also recalled the decision taken by some member states to immediately halt arms exports licensing to Turkey.³⁶ These decisions were endorsed by the European Council on 17 October.³⁷

The EU maintained its robust regime of restrictive measures against the Syrian regime and its supporters. In January, eleven individuals and five entities were added to the sanctions list.³⁸ In March, another eleven persons were added to the list,³⁹ while a further seven

34 EEAS, "Syria: Statement by the Spokesperson on the latest developments", December 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-Homepage_en/72623/Syria:%20Statement%20by%20the%20Spokesperson%20on%20the%20latest%20developments.

35 Council of the EU, "Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on recent developments in north-east Syria", October 9, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/09/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-recent-developments-in-north-east-syria/>.

36 Council of the EU, "North East Syria: Council adopts conclusions", October 14, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/14/council-conclusions-on-north-east-syria/>.

37 European Council, "European Council conclusions on Turkey, illegal drilling activities and MH17", October 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/17/european-council-conclusions-on-turkey-illegal-drilling-activities-and-mh17/>.

38 Council of the EU, "Syria: EU adds eleven businessmen and five entities to sanctions list", January 21, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/01/21/syria-eu-adds-eleven-businessmen-and-five-entities-to-sanctions-list/>.

39 Council of the EU, "Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain third countries concerning restrictive measures against Syria", March 26, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/26/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-alignment-of-certain-third-countries-concerning-restrictive-measures-against-syria/>.

were added in April.⁴⁰ On 17 May, the Council extended its sanctions targeting the regime and its supporters for the violent repression of the country's civilian population for another year.⁴¹ On 14 October, the Council also renewed for a year its sanctions addressing the use and proliferation of chemical weapons.⁴²

EU-League of Arab States

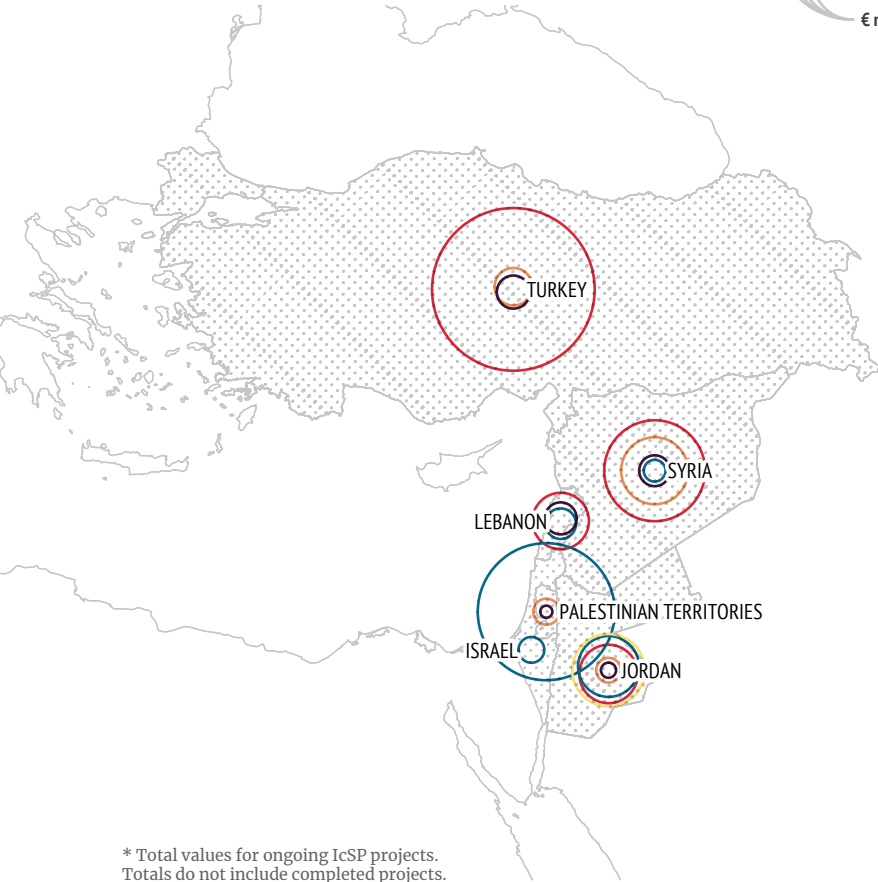
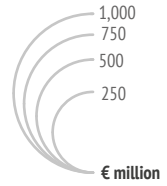
On 5 February, the EU and the LAS held their 5th Joint Ministerial Meeting in Brussels.⁴³ The meeting was in preparation of the first ever EU-LAS Summit, which took place on 24–25 February in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. During the summit, leaders agreed to deepen Arab–European ties to enhance the stability and prosperity of the two regions and to address common challenges, such as counter-terrorism and migration. The two sides also discussed the latest developments in the region. On the Middle East Peace Process, they reaffirmed their common positions and reiterated their commitment to reaching a two-state solution on the basis of all relevant UN resolutions, as the only way to achieve a just and lasting peace. The two sides also discussed recent developments in Libya, Yemen and Syria, as well as ways to make progress towards reconciliation and sustainable and peaceful political solutions, in accordance with international law.⁴⁴

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- 40 Council of the EU, “Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain countries concerning restrictive measures against Syria”, April 16, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/04/16/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-alignment-of-certain-countries-concerning-restrictive-measures-against-syria/>.
- 41 Council of the EU, “Syria: EU renews sanctions against the regime by one year”, May 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/05/17/syria-eu-renews-sanctions-against-the-regime-by-one-year/>.
- 42 Council of the EU, “Chemical weapons: Council renews EU sanctions regime for one year”, October 14, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/14/chemical-weapons-council-renews-eu-sanctions-regime-for-one-year/>.
- 43 Council of the EU, “EU-League of Arab States ministerial meeting, 4 February 2019”, February 4, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-ministerial-meetings/2019/02/04/>.
- 44 European Council, “Joint declaration of the EU-League of Arab States Summit (Sharm El-Sheikh, 24–25 February 2019)”, February 26, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6863-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.

Middle East

EU Integrated Approach, 2019-2020

- Development assistance disbursements (2019)
- European Neighbourhood Instrument (2019-2020)
- Humanitarian assistance (2019-2020)
- Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (2019)*
- Macro-Financial Assistance (2020)



* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects.
Totals do not include completed projects.

Data: European Commission, 2019 and 2020;
European External Action Service, 2020

The EU also continued supporting the achievement of a just and comprehensive resolution of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, based on the two–state solution. In March, the heads of the EU Delegations to Jerusalem and Ramallah met with members of the Jerusalem Islamic Waqf Council, to encourage continued dialogue between the parties to ease the tensions at the Haram al–Sharif / Temple Mount.⁴⁵ As the situation escalated, with indiscriminate rocket attacks from Gaza targeting Israeli communities, the EU reiterated its commitment to the security of Israel and its support to the Egyptian–UN efforts towards de–escalation, and called on Palestinian militants to stop their violent actions and provocations immediately.⁴⁶ Throughout the year, the EU maintained its role as key provider of humanitarian aid to Palestinians. In January, the EU made a new contribution of €2.37 million to support Palestinian farmers and agri–businesses in the West Bank.⁴⁷ In April, coinciding with the annual spring meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, the international donor coordination group in support of the Palestinian economy, the EU announced it would mobilise an additional €22 million in humanitarian aid in support of the most vulnerable people in Gaza and in the West Bank.⁴⁸ In May, the EU provided €20 million for the payment of social allowances to vulnerable families in Palestine.⁴⁹ At the same time, the EU continued providing political and financial support to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), against the background of the Agency’s ongoing financial challenges

45 EEAS, “EU Heads of Mission meet the Jerusalem Islamic Waqf Council”, March 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60012/eu-heads-mission-meet-jerusalem-islamic-waqf-council_en.

46 EEAS, “Statement by High Representative/Vice–President Federica Mogherini on the continuing Gaza escalation”, May 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61860/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-continuing-gaza-escalation_en.

47 EEAS, “The European Union provides €2.37 million to support Palestinian farmers”, January 31, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/57442/european-union-provides-%E2%82%AC237-million-support-palestinian-farmers_en.

48 EEAS, “Remarks by High Representative/Vice–President Federica Mogherini at the joint press point ahead of the annual spring meeting of the International Donor Group for Palestine (Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, AHLC)”, April 30, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61633/remarks-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-joint-press-point-ahead_en.

49 EEAS, “The European Union provides over €20 million for the payment of social allowances to vulnerable families in Palestine”, May 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/62298/european-union-provides-over-%E2%82%AC20-million-payment-social-allowances-vulnerable-families_en.

stemming from the US decision to cut all funding to the body. On 27 February, the Union announced an €82 million contribution to its 2019 budget, helping preserve access to education for 532,000 children, provide primary health care for more than 3.5 million patients and assistance to over 250,000 Palestine refugees, among others.⁵⁰

The EU continued supporting human rights in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

In January, the EU noted with concern the dissolution of the Palestinian Legislative Council in December, which formally ended the mandate of the only elected governing body of the Palestinian Authority. In light of the announced decision to hold legislative elections within six months, the Union called on the Palestinian leadership to work towards building strong democratic institutions for all Palestinians and urged all Palestinian factions to engage in good faith in the reconciliation process.⁵¹ As of the end of 2019, the elections had not taken place. The EU continued supporting human rights in Israel and the Palestinian territories. In January, the Union condemned the death sentence issued in the Gaza Strip and called on its *de facto* authorities to comply with the moratorium on executions put in place by the Palestinian Authority.⁵² In March, the EU expressed its concern about the arrests and violence used by Hamas security forces against protesters in Gaza and called for stopping the violent suppression of the demonstrations.⁵³ In November, the EU called on the Israeli government to reverse its decision to revoke of the work visa of US citizen Omar Shakir, the Israel

50 EEAS, “The European Union Announces a Vital EUR 82 Million Contribution to UNRWA”, February 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/58840/european-union-announces-vital-eur-82-million-contribution-unrwa_en.

51 EEAS, “Local EU statement on the dissolution of the Palestinian Legislative Council”, January 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/56860/local-eu-statement-dissolution-palestinian-legislative-council_en.

52 EEAS, “The EU Missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah condemn death sentence issued in Gaza”, January 31, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/57438/eu-missions-jerusalem-and-ramallah-condemn-death-sentence-issued-gaza_en.

53 EEAS, “Local EU statement on the arrests and violence used by Hamas security forces against protesters in Gaza”, March 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60007/local-eu-statement-arrests-and-violence-used-hamas-security-forces-against-protesters-gaza_en.

and Palestine director of Human Rights Watch, which the Israeli Supreme Court had just upheld.⁵⁴

The EU maintained its strong opposition to Israel's settlement policy in the West Bank, which continued at a high rate in 2019.⁵⁵ In response to Israeli actions throughout the year, the Union maintained its clear position that the establishment and expansion of settlements on Palestinian territory is illegal under international law and erodes the viability of the two-state solution and a lasting peace, as reaffirmed by UNSCR 2334. Furthermore, the Union called on Israel to end all settlement activity, in line with its obligations as an occupying power.⁵⁶ In a significant development, on 25 March, the US proclaimed its recognition of the occupied Golan Heights as part of the Israeli state. The EU responded by declaring unequivocally that its position of not recognising Israeli sovereignty over the occupied territory remained unchanged, in line with international law and with UNSCRs 242 and 497.⁵⁷ The Union also expressed its opposition to policies of the Israeli government that undermined the political, security, economic and social conditions in the Palestinian territories. Such policies include the decision not to renew the mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron,⁵⁸ the extension of the

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- 54 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the case of Human Rights Watch director Omar Shakir", November 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/70214/statement-spokesperson-case-human-rights-watch-director-omar-shakir_en.
- 55 EEAS, "Six-Month Report on Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, (reporting period January–June 2019)", September 30, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/palestine-occupied-palestinian-territory-west-bank-and-gaza-strip/68152/six-month-report-israeli-settlements-occupied-west-bank-including-east-jerusalem-reporting_en.
- 56 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the latest settlements' announcements by the Israeli authorities", April 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60970/statement-spokesperson-latest-settlements%E2%80%99-announcements-israeli-authorities_en; EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on publication by the Israeli authorities of new tenders for over 800 settlement units", June 1, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/63534/statement-spokesperson-publication-israeli-authorities-new-tenders-over-800-settlement-units_en; EEAS, "Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on Israeli settlement policy", November 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/70610/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-israeli-settlement-policy_en.
- 57 Council of the EU, "Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the Golan Heights", March 27, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/27/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-golan-heights/>.
- 58 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the Israeli Government's decision not to renew the mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron", February 1, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/57554/statement-spokesperson-israeli-government%E2%80%99s-decision-not-renew-mandate-temporary-international_en.

ban on Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem⁵⁹ and the destruction and seizure of Palestinian property in the West Bank, including of EU-funded structures.⁶⁰

Arab futures out to 2030

‘The next decade in the Middle East and North Africa offers many opportunities, but poses just as many challenges. Regional decision-makers will have to face a geostrategic environment shaped by climate change, energy diversification, a growing and young population, rapid urbanisation, digitalisation, food insecurity and a gradual shift of its export base from Europe to Asia. Leaders in the region – and those wishing to assist them – will face uncertainty in a number of areas: some of these they will have to manage, but others they will simply be exposed to. This includes the management of climate change (which will hit the region hard), the possible emergence of mega-slums and a global shift towards economies based on advanced technology. Matters will be made worse by the four ongoing conflicts in Yemen, Libya, Iraq and Syria: without regional stability, progress will be exceedingly slow – and more policy challenges will emerge. All this is compounded by unstable and/or hostile regional relations, which block advances in a number of areas. Conflict probability remains high for the region in the next decade. The young generation that will reach political maturity between today and 2030 is unlikely to make matters easier for the region’s leaders: although socially conservative, they display an appetite for disobedience and high levels of expectation *vis-à-vis* their governments.

59 EEAS, “Local EU statement on the extension of the ban on Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem”, February 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/58002/local-eu-statement-extension-ban-palestinian-institutions-east-jerusalem_en.

60 EEAS, “Six-Month Report on Demolitions and Confiscations of EU funded structures in the West Bank including East Jerusalem”, March 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59155/six-month-report-demolitions-and-confiscations-eu-funded-structures-west-bank-including-east_en.

That said, there are many opportunities to grasp: states could choose to diversify their energy production and move towards renewables today rather than wait until forced to do so; climate change scenarios can help prepare the region for what it will have to handle; a demographic dividend could be used to reap economic benefits; and an active civil society, whether in a democratic system or not, can contribute to a more dynamic exchange between leaders and their populations. The global embrace of technological innovation, too, could have many benefits for the region – if its leaders choose to act now. Similarly, the reduced role of the United States in the MENA we expect in the future means that there is perhaps now more room for cooperation as states will no longer be able to rely on outsiders to solve their bilateral issues. The coming decade has many challenges, but just as many opportunities for the region – as well as its neighbours.’

- > Florence Gaub, “Arab futures 2.0: The road to 2030”, *Chaillot Paper*, no. 154, September, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/arab-futures-20>.

The EU’s relations with Lebanon were further strengthened in 2019. On 31 January, the Union welcomed the formation of a new Lebanese government, following the May 2018 elections, hailing it as a crucial step for the country’s stability.⁶¹ On 26 February, the EU inaugurated its new Delegation building in Beirut, reflecting the Union’s enduring commitment to the country.⁶² The EU also welcomed Lebanon’s ratification of the ATT on 9 May as an important contribution to the prevention and eradication of the illicit trade in conventional arms

61 EEAS, “Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the newly formed government in Lebanon”, January 31, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/57485/stat%E2%80%8Bement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-newly-formed-government_en.

62 EEAS, “Remarks by HR/VP Federica Mogherini at the official opening of the European Union Delegation in Beirut, Lebanon”, February 26, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/58725/remarks-hrvp-federica-mogherini-official-opening-european-union-delegation-beirut-lebanon_en.

and ammunition.⁶³ On 27 June, the EU adopted a €100 million new assistance package to support the resilience of refugees and communities hosting internally displaced persons in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq.⁶⁴ On 27 August, the EU reacted to the tensions that resulted from reports of a drone incident south of Beirut, calling on all parties in the region to comply with international law and to avoid further escalation.⁶⁵ On 25 October, following the eruption of wide-spread and intensifying protests across the country, the EU called on the authorities to respond to the Lebanese people's legitimate aspirations by implementing a comprehensive reform programme and to continue their policy of restraint and non-violence.⁶⁶ These protests would continue throughout the year and eventually result in the resignation of Prime Minister Saad Hariri and the fall of his government at the end of October.⁶⁷

On 17 June, the 13th meeting of the Association Council of the EU and Jordan took place in Luxembourg. The Association Council confirmed the solid partnership between the two sides, as well as their shared views on key regional matters, including the Middle East Peace Process, and the Syria conflict. The EU and Jordan agreed to further deepen their dialogue on issues of mutual interest, including security, counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism, integrated border management, the rule of law, human rights and democratic governance. On the margins of the Council, the two parties also signed a Framework Participation Agreement (FPA) on Jordan's participation in EU Crisis Management Operations, allowing

63 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty by Lebanon and Palau", May 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/62295/statement-spokesperson-ratification-arms-trade-treaty-lebanon-and-palau_en.

64 European Commission, "EU adopts new €100 million assistance package to benefit refugees and local communities in Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq", June 27, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_3391.

65 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the latest tensions in the Middle East region", August 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/66717/statement-spokesperson-latest-tensions-middle-east-region_en.

66 Council of the EU, "Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the latest developments in Lebanon", October 25, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/25/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-lebanon/>.

67 Martin Chulov, "Lebanon's PM Saad Hariri resigns as protesters come under attack", *The Guardian*, October 29, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/29/lebanons-pm-saad-hariri-resigns-amid-angry-protests>.

the secondment of Jordanian personnel to CSDP missions and operations.⁶⁸ Furthermore, the EU continued supporting Jordan's efforts on its comprehensive reform agenda. On 19 December, the Council adopted a decision to provide up to 500 million euros of additional macro-financial assistance to the country, to support the sustainability of its external financing situation.⁶⁹

Gulf Region

Against the backdrop of domestic crises, regional turmoil and deteriorating US-Iran relations, the EU continued to pursue constructive engagement with Iran in 2019. One of the Union's key objectives has been to preserve the JCPoA. Throughout the year, the Joint Commission of the JCPoA, chaired by the EU, welcomed Iran's continued implementation of its nuclear-related commitments, as confirmed by the IAEA, as well as called for the lifting of related sanctions.⁷⁰ On 31 January, the EU/E3 established INSTEX, a special purpose vehicle aimed at facilitating non-USD, non-SWIFT transactions between European and Iranian companies, in order to work around US extra-territorial sanctions.⁷¹ The trade channel would be used for essential goods such as humanitarian, medical and farm products. By the end of the year, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway had also joined INSTEX. In May, then HR/VP Mogherini and the EU3

68 Council of the EU, "Joint press statement following the 13th Association Council meeting between the EU and Jordan", June 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/17/joint-press-statement-following-the-13th-association-council-meeting-between-the-eu-and-jordan/>.

69 Council of the EU, "Jordan: EU approves further assistance of €500 million in loans", December 19, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/12/19/jordan-eu-approves-further-assistance-of-500-million-in-loans/>.

70 EEAS, "Chair's statement following the 6 March 2019 meeting of the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action", March 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59179/chairs-statement-following-6-march-2019-meeting-joint-commission-joint-comprehensive-plan_en; EEAS, "Joint Commission of the JCPoA to meet in Vienna on 28 June 2019", EEAS, "Joint Commission of the JCPoA to meet in Vienna on 28 June 2019", June 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/64448/joint-commission-jcpoa-meet-vienna-28-june-2019_en.

71 EEAS, "Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the creation of INSTEX, Instrument for Supporting Trade Exchanges", January 31, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/57475/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-creation-instex-instrument_en.

Foreign Ministers expressed their regret and concern over the US decision not to extend waivers with regard to trade in oil with Iran and not to fully renew waivers for nuclear non-proliferation projects in the framework of the JCPOA.⁷² In response, Iran announced on 7 May that it would progressively scale back the implementation of its commitments under the JCPOA. The EU voiced its regret and concern over Tehran's actions, too, and called both parties to return to full compliance with the Agreement, first in May⁷³ and subsequently in September⁷⁴ and December.⁷⁵

The EU also engaged Tehran on broader regional issues. On 18 March, the EU/E4 held political consultations with Iran, which focused on the situation in Yemen and in Syria.⁷⁶ Against the backdrop of a US campaign of 'maximum pressure' and growing regional tensions, the HR/VP called on Tehran to display restraint and avoid escalation, particularly in the military dimension.⁷⁷ The EU renewed its calls for regional dialogue and restraint following the attacks against oil tankers in the Sea of Oman in May and in June,⁷⁸ and the seizure by Iranian authorities of two ships in the Gulf in July.⁷⁹ On 14 September,

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- 72 EEAS, "Statement on the JCPOA by the High Representative of the European Union and the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany and the United Kingdom", May 4, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61840/statement-jcpoa-high-representative-european-union-and-foreign-ministers-france-germany-and_en.
- 73 EEAS, "Joint statement by High Representative of the European Union and the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany and the United Kingdom on the JCPOA", May 9, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/62093/joint-statement-high-representative-european-union-and-foreign-ministers-france-germany-and_en.
- 74 EEAS, "Joint statement by spokespersons of the High Representative of the European Union and the foreign ministries of France, Germany and the United Kingdom on the JCPOA", September 13, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/67334/joint-statement-spokespersons-high-representative-european-union-and-foreign-ministries-france_en.
- 75 EEAS, "Chair's statement following the 6 December meeting of the Joint Commission of the JCPOA", December 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/71644/chairs-statement-following-6-december-meeting-joint-commission-jcpoa_en.
- 76 EEAS, "EU/E4 hold political consultations on regional issues with Iran", March 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59807/eue4-hold-political-consultations-regional-issues-iran_en.
- 77 EEAS, "Iran: 'Maximum restraint and avoiding any escalation on a military side' Mogherini says", May 13, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/62266/iran-maximum-restraint-and-avoiding-any-escalation-military-side-mogherini-says_en.
- 78 EEAS, "Secretary General of the European External Action Service concludes the visit in the Gulf and Iran", June 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/64182/secretary-general-european-external-action-service-concludes-visit-gulf-and-iran_en.
- 79 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the seizure of two ships by Iranian authorities in the Gulf", July 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/65683/statement-spokesperson-seizure-two-ships-iranian-authorities-gulf_en.

a missile attack targeted the state-owned oil processing facilities at Abqaiq and Khurais in Saudi Arabia. While the Yemeni Houthis claimed responsibility for the attack, France, Germany and the UK released a joint statement blaming Iran for the attack and called for diplomacy in order to resolve regional tensions.⁸⁰

The EU continued supporting human rights in the country. In March, the Union called on Iran's authorities to review the harsh sentencing of human rights lawyer and Shakharov prize-laureate Nasrin Sotoudeh, in a trial that violated her rights to due process.⁸¹ On 8 April, the Council decided to renew its sanctions responding to serious human rights violations in Iran.⁸² On 3 May, following the executions of two juvenile offenders in the country, the Union reiterated its opposition and its commitment to continue advocating for its abolition in Iran and worldwide.⁸³ In late November, following weeks-long protests across the country over various socio-economic grievances, which had led to many injuries and loss of life, the EU called on Iran's authorities to abstain from violence and to respect Iranians' freedom of expression and assembly.⁸⁴ With its calls going unheeded and the government opting for a disproportionate and violent response, which led to even more injuries and deaths, the EU continued urging Tehran to hold the perpetrators of violence accountable, free all non-violent protesters and provide due process to all detainees, as well as condemned the government's decision to shut down internet

80 "Germany, France and Britain blame Iran for Saudi oil attack", *Deutsche Welle*, September 23, 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-france-and-britain-blame-iran-for-saudi-oil-attack/a-50554985>.

81 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the conviction of Iranian human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh", March 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59465/statement-spokesperson-conviction-iranian-human-rights-lawyer-nasrin-sotoudeh_en.

82 Council of the EU, "Iran: Council extends by one year sanctions responding to serious human rights violation", April 8, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/04/08/iran-council-extends-by-one-year-sanctions-responding-to-serious-human-rights-violation/>.

83 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the recent executions of two juvenile offenders in Iran", May 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61815/statement-spokesperson-recent-executions-two-juvenile-offenders-iran_en.

84 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the developments in Iran", November 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/70754/statement-spokesperson-developments-iran_en.

access to global networks for over a week, in violation of the right to freedom of speech.⁸⁵

The EU continued supporting stability and security in Iraq throughout the year. On 28 March, an EU-funded programme to support recovery and stability through local development was launched in Basra.⁸⁶ On 31 March, then HR/VP Mogherini met with the Iraqi President on the margins of the LAS Summit in Tunis. The two sides discussed recent developments in the country, current security and migratory challenges and Iraq's engagement with regional states and agreed to work on deepening their cooperation.⁸⁷ On 15 July, the Council adopted Conclusions on Iraq, reiterating the Union's support for its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the importance of Iraqi ownership of the country's reform processes. The Ministers welcomed the formation of a federal government and reaffirmed the EU's readiness to assist in the implementation of its reform programme.⁸⁸ On 7 November, following the loss of lives in the course month-long protests in Iraq, the HR/VP called for respecting Iraqi citizens' right to assembly and freedom of expression and for the perpetrators to be held accountable.⁸⁹ The EEAS spokesperson repeated those calls on 29 November, as the spiral of deadly violence continued across Iraq, and condemned Iraqi authorities' decision to suspend the license of several television channels for their coverage of the protests.⁹⁰

85 Council of the EU, "Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the recent protests in Iran", December 8, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/12/08/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-recent-protests-in-iran/>.

86 EEAS, "EU-funded programme launched in Iraq to support recovery and stability through local development", March 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60315/eu-funded-programme-launched-iraq-support-recovery-and-stability-through-local-development_en.

87 EEAS, "Federica Mogherini meets with President of the Republic of Iraq Salih", March 31, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60415/federica-mogherini-meets-president-republic-iraq-salih_en.

88 Council of the EU, "Iraq: Council adopts conclusions", July 15, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/07/15/iraq-council-adopts-conclusions/>.

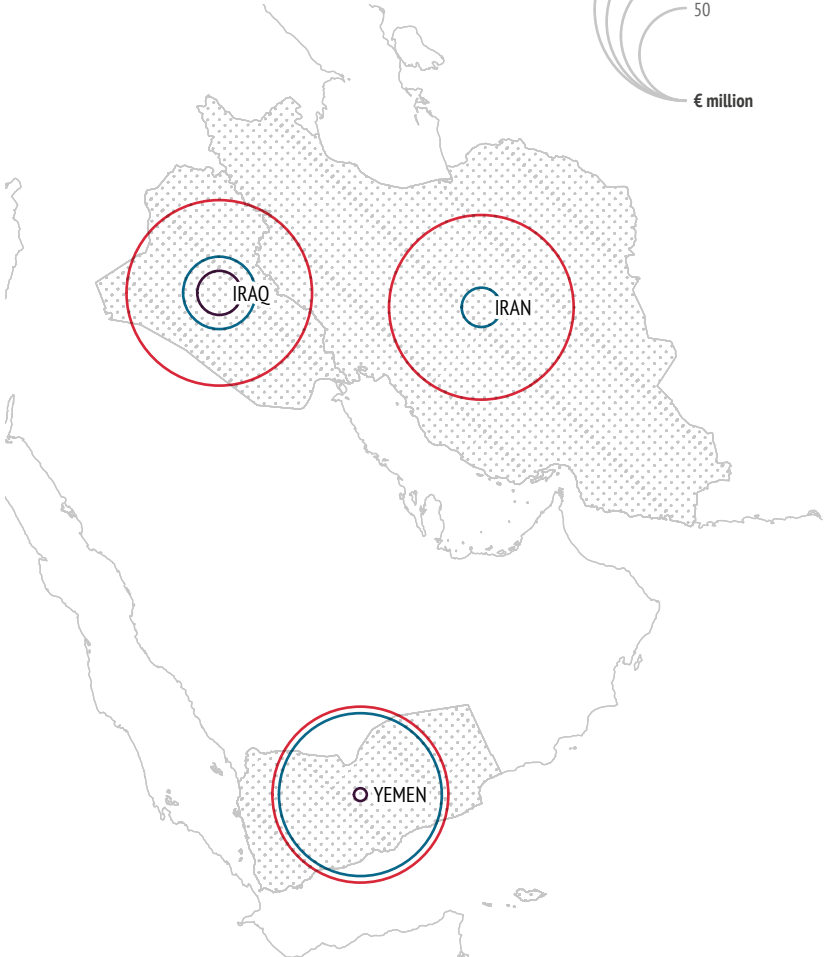
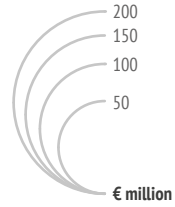
89 Council of the EU, "Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on ongoing protests in Iraq", November 7, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/11/07/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-european-union-on-ongoing-protests-in-iraq/>.

90 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the situation in Iraq", November 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/71233/statement-spokesperson-situation-iraq_en.

Gulf Region

EU Integrated Approach, 2015-2020

- Development cooperation disbursements (2019)
- Humanitarian assistance (2019-2020)
- Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (2019)*



* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

In 2019, issues related to human rights were at the top of the agenda of the EU's relations with Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain. In January, the EEAS spokesperson made a statement on the case of Ahmed Mansoor in Bahrain, noting the absence of any information on the appeals process, its timing, and the possibility to observe the trial. The statement further underscored that that no one should be detained merely on the grounds of peacefully expressing one's opinions, in line with the rights to freedom of opinion and freedom of expression, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.⁹¹ In the same month, the Union also released a statement on the sentencing of opposition leaders in Bahrain to life imprisonment, noting that the verdict undermined the residual chances for an inclusive political dialogue in the country. The Union further called on the government to fulfil its international and national human rights obligations, including guaranteeing the right to a fair trial.⁹² In July, following the executions of three individuals, which took place despite reported concerns that the convictions were based on confessions extracted under torture, the Union called on Bahrain to introduce a moratorium on executions as a first step towards abolition, in line with its policy of unequivocal opposition to the use of capital punishment in all circumstances.⁹³ The EU had adopted a similar stance towards Saudi Arabia in April, following the executions of four people convicted for drug trafficking offenses, also releasing a statement by the EEAS spokesperson, where it reiterated its principled position against the death penalty and advocating for its abolition.⁹⁴ In late December, the

91 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the case of Ahmed Mansoor", January 1, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/56111/statement-spokesperson-case-ahmed-mansoor_en.

92 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the life sentencing of opposition leaders in Bahrain", January 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/57287/statement-spokesperson-life-sentencing-opposition-leaders-bahrain_en.

93 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on executions in Bahrain", July 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/65918/statement-spokeperson-executions-bahrain_en.

94 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the recent executions carried out in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia", April 2, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60542/statement-spokesperson-recent-executions-carried-out-kingdom-saudi-arabia_en.

kingdom nevertheless proceeded with sentencing five people to death over the killing of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi the previous year.⁹⁵

The EU's relations with Qatar continued improving in the course of the year. On 4 July, the EU and Qatar held their first Senior Officials' Meeting, launching the implementation of the 2018 Cooperation Arrangement between the EEAS and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁹⁶ The consultations focused on EU-Qatar bilateral relations and recent developments in the Gulf, with both sides stressing the need to defuse tensions and avoid escalation. Discussions also addressed issues in the broader region, including Yemen, Syria, Libya and the Middle East Peace Process. Moreover, the two sides discussed ways to enhance cooperation and coordination on issues such as the fields of counter-terrorism, including the exchange of information and financing of terrorism, cybersecurity, conflict prevention and mediation.

The increasing closeness of EU-Kuwait bilateral relations was reflected in the inauguration of the EU Delegation in Kuwait City on 14 July.

Relations between the EU and Kuwait continued their upward trajectory in 2019. The increasing closeness of EU-Kuwait bilateral relations was reflected in the inauguration of the EU Delegation in Kuwait City on 14 July.⁹⁷ The Delegation, which will also be responsible for the EU's relations with Qatar, will contribute to strengthening bilateral relations through enhanced political dialogue and economic and sectoral cooperation, as well as reinforce the EU's regional presence at a time of mounting challenges to peace and security.

Relations with Oman continued to be cordial in 2019. In February, the HR/VP met with the Omani foreign minister and discussed regional issues, including the rift in the Gulf and the conflict in Yemen.⁹⁸

95 "Five sentenced to death over Jamal Khashoggi's murder", *Al Jazeera*, December 23, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/12/sentenced-death-jamal-khashoggi-murder-191223093827391.html>.

96 EEAS, "The EU and Qatar hold their first Senior Officials' Meeting", July 4, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/65040/eu-and-qatar-hold-their-first-senior-officials%E2%80%99-meeting_el.

97 EEAS, "European Union opens a new Delegation in Kuwait City", July 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kuwait/65425/european-union-opens-new-delegation-kuwait-city_en.

98 EEAS, "Federica Mogherini meets with Omani Foreign Minister Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah", February 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/58396/federica-mogherini-meets-omani-foreign-minister-yusuf-bin-alawi-bin-abdullah_en.

On the latter, both sides noted progress by the parties in implementing the Hodeidah Agreement and reiterated their full support to the UN-led peace process. The two sides also discussed ways to deepen the bilateral relationship, including through the implementation of the 2018 Cooperation Arrangement signed between the EEAS and the Omani Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Against the background of the continuing conflict in Yemen, the EU continued to support peace-building efforts in the country by providing political and security support, as well as humanitarian and development assistance. In this context, on 12 February, the Council adopted Conclusions on Yemen, welcoming the ‘Stockholm Agreement’ reached between representatives of the Yemeni parties under the auspices of the UN in December 2018.⁹⁹ In addition, the EU reaffirmed its commitment to the country’s unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, as well as the need for a negotiated and inclusive political solution to end the conflict, and it called on all parties to maintain their commitment to the UN-led process. Ministers discussed Yemen again on 18 March, when they underlined the need to push the parties to urgently fulfil their commitments under the agreement.¹⁰⁰ On 4 October, the Council adopted a decision to renew the EU’s support to the UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM), with the aim to facilitate unimpeded commercial cargo flows into the country and enhance the UNVIM’s role in implementing the provisions of the Stockholm Agreement.¹⁰¹

99 Council of the EU, “Yemen: Council adopts conclusions”, February 18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/02/18/yemen-council-adopts-conclusions/>.

100 Council of the EU, “Outcome of the Council meeting – Foreign Affairs”, March 18, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7600-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.

101 Council of the EU, “Council decision on a European Union action in support of the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism in Yemen”, (CFSP) 2019/1672, Brussels, October 4, 2019.

The conflict in Yemen

The EU has consistently engaged with Yemen since formal relations were established in 1998, and it has provided development and humanitarian assistance to the country as it struggles with conflict. Even before the surge in the conflict, close to 50% of the population were living in poverty and suffering from malnutrition. Today, with the effects of the conflict, approximately 24.4 million people (or 80% of the population) are in need of humanitarian assistance and 20 million people are food insecure. 2.5 million Yemenis are internally displaced. The Yemeni people still suffer from a lack of access to humanitarian relief, and the EU has contributed €439.2 million in humanitarian funding since 2015. In 2019, the EU reinforced its humanitarian contribution by committing an additional €80 million in assistance to take the year's overall total to €115 million. Additionally, the EU also assists with the development of Yemen as it struggles with basic services such as health and education. From 2018-2020 the EU has dedicated a total of €150 million under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI).¹⁰²

Core documents

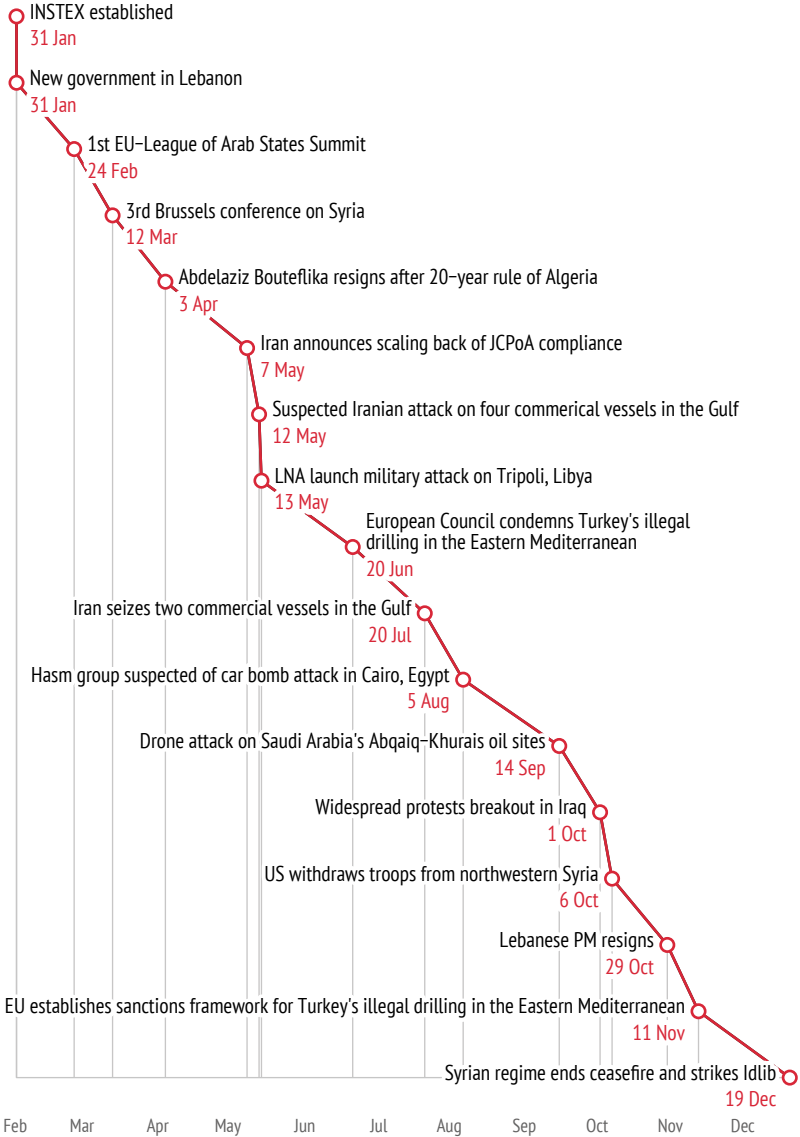
- > “Joint declaration of the EU-League of Arab States Summit (Sharm El-Sheikh, 24-25 February 2019)”, February 26, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6863-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > “Outcome of the Council meeting – Foreign Affairs”, March 18, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7600-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.

¹⁰²EEAS, “Yemen and the EU”, May, 16, 2016, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/yemen/1877/yemen-and-eu_en.

- > “Outcome of the Council Meeting – Foreign Affairs (including Defence”, 9207/19, Brussels, May 13-14, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/40396/st09207-en19.pdf>.
- > “Rapport sur l'état des relations UE - Tunisie dans le cadre de la Politique européenne de voisinage révisée”, SWD(2019) 185 final, Brussels, May 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/swd_2019_185_f1_joint_staff_working_paper_fr_v3_p1_1023657.pdf.
- > “European Council meeting (20 June 2019) – Conclusions”, June 20, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39922/20-21-euco-final-conclusions-en.pdf>.
- > “Joint declaration by the European Union and Morocco for the fourteenth meeting of the Association Council”, June 27, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/27/joint-declaration-by-the-european-union-and-the-kingdom-of-morocco-for-the-fourteenth-meeting-of-the-association-council/>.
- > “Décision d'exécution de la Commission du 17.10.2019 relative au programme d'action annuel en faveur de l'Algérie pour 2019”, C(2019) 7497 final, Brussels, October 17, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/c_2019_7497_fr_algeria_aap2019_merge.pdf.
- > “European Council conclusions on Turkey, illegal drilling activities and MH17”, October 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/17/european-council-conclusions-on-turkey-illegal-drilling-activities-and-mh17/>.
- > “European Parliament Joint Motion for a Resolution on Algeria”, P9-TA(2019)0072, November 27, 2019, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/RC-9-2019-0193_EN.html.
- > “European Council meeting (12 December 2019) – Conclusions”, December 12, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41768/12-euco-final-conclusions-en.pdf>.

Key events

MENA and Gulf



Sub-Saharan Africa

Although the EU was preparing a more comprehensive strategy towards Africa for 2020, the Sahel region continued to be the main security focus for the Union in 2019, with the region experiencing the effects of terrorism, organised crime and state fragility. Along with its three CSDP missions to the region, the EU was keen to enhance cross-border cooperation and national capacities during the year. To this end, the Council of the EU agreed in February to enhance the regional presence of the EU through the CSDP, as it reinforced its Regional Advisory and Coordination Cell (RACC) by enlarging the number of security and defence experts embedded in the EU delegations in the five Sahel countries. The Council also enhanced the flexibility of EUCAP Sahel Mali, EUCAP Sahel Niger and EUTM Mali in order to allow for training and targeted activities in a more timely manner.¹⁰³ In particular, EUCAP Sahel Niger and EUCAP Sahel Mali had their areas of operation extended to include counter-terrorism and anti-crime efforts in Burkina Faso and Chad.¹⁰⁴ The Council also extended the mandate of EUCAP Sahel Mali until 14 January 2021 and it adopted a budget of almost €67 million in order to support security sector reform measures and to provide training and strategic advice to the Malian police, gendarmerie and national guard.¹⁰⁵ The mission marked its fourth anniversary in 2019.

The Council met yet again on 13 May in the context of an increase in terrorist and inter-community violence in Mali and Burkina Faso, which resulted in the loss of innocent life and an increased number of IDPs. In its Conclusions, the Council stressed its solidarity with the region and it called for greater efforts to meet the region's security

103 Council of the EU, "Sahel: EU takes further steps to better support the security of the region", February 18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/02/18/sahel-eu-takes-further-steps-to-better-support-the-security-of-the-region/>.

104 EEAS, "Burkina Faso and Chad: two new theatres of action for the two civilian CSDP Missions in the Sahel: EUCAP Sahel Niger and Mali", July 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/65562/burkina-faso-and-chad-two-new-theatres-action-two-civilian-csdp-missions-sahel-eucap-sahel_en.

105 EEAS, "EUCAP Sahel Mali: mission extended until 14 January 2021, €67 million budget adopted", February 21, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/02/21/eucap-sahel-mali-mission-extended-until-14-january-2021-budget-of-67-million-adopted/>.

and development challenges.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, the European Commission estimates that 4.4 million people are in forced displacement in the region and 10.45 million people were in need of emergency food assistance in 2019. It was for this reason that the Commission reiterated its financial support to the region with €152 million in humanitarian aid allocated in June for food security, healthcare and preparedness for food crises, people displacement, natural disasters and epidemics.¹⁰⁷ A further €35 million was dedicated by the Commission in November.¹⁰⁸ A number of other regional initiatives took off in 2019. In August, a French-German-led initiative called the Partnership for Security and Stability in the Sahel (P3S) was presented at the G7 Summit in Biarritz, France. The aim of the P3S is to support government institutions in the region, such as internal security forces and the criminal justice system.¹⁰⁹

The region received increased political attention during the year, with a number of EU leaders and high-level decision-makers visiting the region. In February, the EU's Special Advisor on the Sahel, Angel Losada, visited the region for discussions with the G5 Sahel at a summit organised on 5 February in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. In May, German Chancellor Angela Merkel visited the region and she visited EUCAP Sahel Niger on 3 May as part of a 60-strong delegation to assess EU and German efforts. On 10 July, HR/VP Mogherini met for the 5th time with the ministers of foreign affairs of the Sahel G5, where she stressed the need to overcome inter-community tensions and to tackle abuses committed by so-called self-defence groups in the region and it was announced that the EU would dedicate €138 million for the Joint Force.¹¹⁰ French President Emmanuel Macron also visited

106 Council of the EU, "Sahel – Council Conclusions", 9103/19, Brussels, May 13, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9103-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.

107 European Commission, "Humanitarian Aid: over €152 million for Africa's Sahel region", June 11, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_2830.

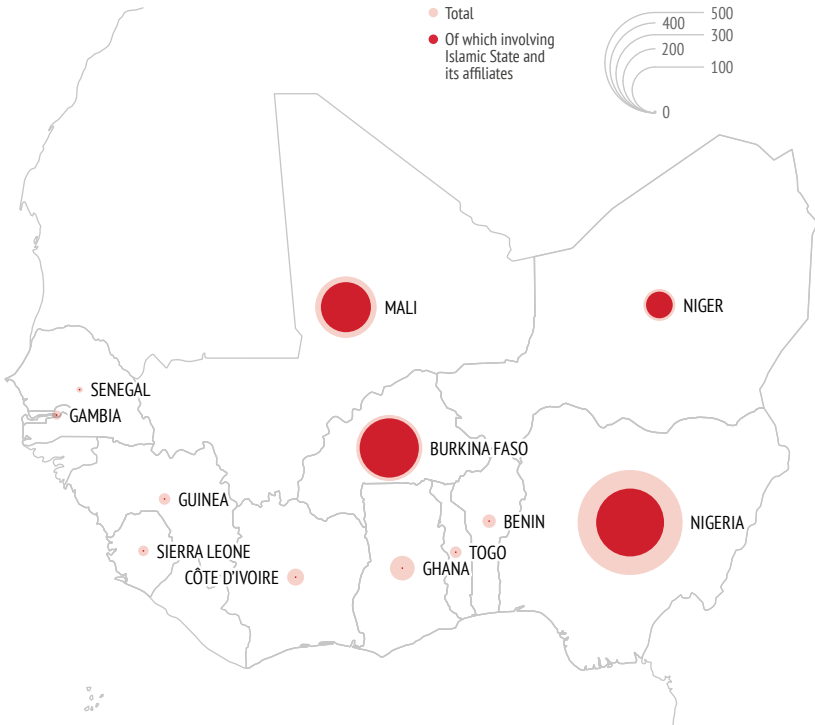
108 European Commission, "EU commits additional €35 million for Africa's Sahel region", November 13, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/news/eu-commits-additional-35-million-africa-s-sahel-region_en.

109 Ministère de l'Europe et des affaires étrangères, "France's action in the Sahel", April, 2020, <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/security-disarmament-and-non-proliferation/terrorism-france-s-international-action/article/france-s-action-in-the-sahel>.

110 EEAS, "Fifth ministerial meeting between the High Representative of the European Union and the Sahel G5 Ministers for Foreign Affairs", July 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/65464/fifth-ministerial-meeting-between-high-representative-european-union-and-sahel-g5-ministers_en.

West Africa and the Sahel

Armed clashes and Islamic State, 2019



Data: The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Projects, 2020

the region in December in the context of the tragic loss of 13 French servicemen killed during action in the Sahel.¹¹¹ The year ended with an announcement by the EU that it would dedicate a further €70.23 million in funding under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for the Sahel and Lake Chad regions to assist with migration management and resilience.¹¹²

¹¹¹EEAS, “Thirteen French servicemen killed fighting for peace and stability in the Sahel”, December 4, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/72089/thirteen-french-servicemen-killed-fighting-peace-and-stability-sahel_en.

¹¹²EEAS, “EU provides additional €70.23 m funding from the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa for countries of the Sahel and Lake Chad region”, December 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/72252/eu-provides-additional-€7023-m-funding-eu-emergency-trust-fund-africa-countries-sahel-and-lake_en.

In its relations with Burkina Faso, the Union voiced its concern about the security situation in the country. Since the beginning of 2019, the EU had noted with concern that there was a higher occurrence of violence in the country, with more than 100 dead and 40,000 IDPs in January alone.¹¹³ In April, there were more attacks on civilians, as more than 60 people lost their lives to terrorist attacks in the north of the country.¹¹⁴ Further loss of life was recorded in June, when approximately 20 people were killed in an attack in Arbinda in the north of Burkina Faso.¹¹⁵ HR/VP Mogherini outlined the seriousness of the situation in Burkina Faso during a speech to a plenary debate of the European Parliament in September, where she informed parliamentarians that 200 people had lost their lives since the beginning of the year and 300,000 people had been internally displaced.¹¹⁶ A further terrorist attack that claimed the lives of 37 people occurred on 6 November in the east of the country.¹¹⁷ Finally, at the end of the year, the HR/VP explained to parliamentarians at a plenary session of the European Parliament that the situation in Burkina Faso was worsening.¹¹⁸

200 people had lost their lives since the beginning of the year and **300,000** people had been internally displaced.

In Chad, the EU continued to support the country with its food and nutrition challenges and it readied support for IDPs and refugees. The European Commission estimates that 4.3 million people in the

¹¹³EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the security situation in Burkina Faso”, January 30, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burkina-faso/57515/statement-spokesperson-security-situation-burkina-faso_en.

¹¹⁴EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the attacks in Burkina Faso”, April 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burkina-faso/60760/statement-spokesperson-attacks-burkina-faso_en.

¹¹⁵EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the attacks in Mali and Burkina Faso”, June 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burkina-faso/64109/statement-spokesperson-attacks-mali-and-burkina-faso_en.

¹¹⁶EEAS, “Speech on behalf of High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary debate on the security situation in Burkina Faso”, September 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burkina-faso/67724/speech-behalf-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-european-parliament-plenary_en.

¹¹⁷EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the attacks in Burkina Faso”, November 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burkina-faso/70585/statement-spokesperson-attacks-burkina-faso_en.

¹¹⁸EEAS, “Burkina Faso: remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the European Parliament Plenary session debate on violations of human rights including religious freedoms”, December 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burkina-faso/72395/burkina-faso-remarks-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-european-parliament_en.

country are in need of humanitarian assistance, which amounts to 27% of the population. What is more, 2.1 million people are without access to basic health services in Chad. The country is prone to heavy rains and natural disasters, plus it is suffering a measles epidemic which started in May 2018. It is for these reasons that the EU provided €31.5 million in 2019 to support Chad with its humanitarian challenges and in November an additional €35 million was made available to manage the ill effects of conflict in the Lake Chad region.¹¹⁹ The security situation in Chad also remained frail in 2019, especially given that Chadian rebel groups – residing across the border in Libya – have threatened to topple the government.¹²⁰

Mali was racked by instability during the year, experiencing a number of terrorist attacks. At the start of the year in January, there was a terrorist attack in the north of the country on UN peacekeepers operating as part of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and several soldiers were killed.¹²¹ In mid-March, there was another terrorist attack on Malian armed forces leading to dozens of deaths and many more wounded.¹²² In June, 100 civilians were killed by armed groups in the village of Sobane, which is located in central Mali.¹²³ November was a particularly tragic month in terms of attacks: on 1 November, a terror attack killed 53 soldiers from the Malian armed forces and 1 civilian. The attack took place in the northeast of the country, in Indelimane.¹²⁴ On

119European Commission, “Chad”, December 23, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/africa/chad_en.

120Richard Moncrieff and Thibaud Lesueur, “Rebel Incursion Exposes Chad’s Weaknesses”, International Crisis Group, February 13, 2019, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/chad/au-tchad-lincursion-des-rebelles-devoile-les-fragilites-du-pouvoir>.

121EEAS, “Déclaration de la Porte-parole sur l’attaque au Mali”, January 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mali/56832/déclaration-de-la-porte-parole-sur-l’attaque-au-mali_fr.

122EEAS, “Déclaration du porte-parole sur l’attaque terroriste au Mali”, March 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mali/59788/déclaration-du-porte-parole-sur-l’attaque-terroriste-au-mali_fr.

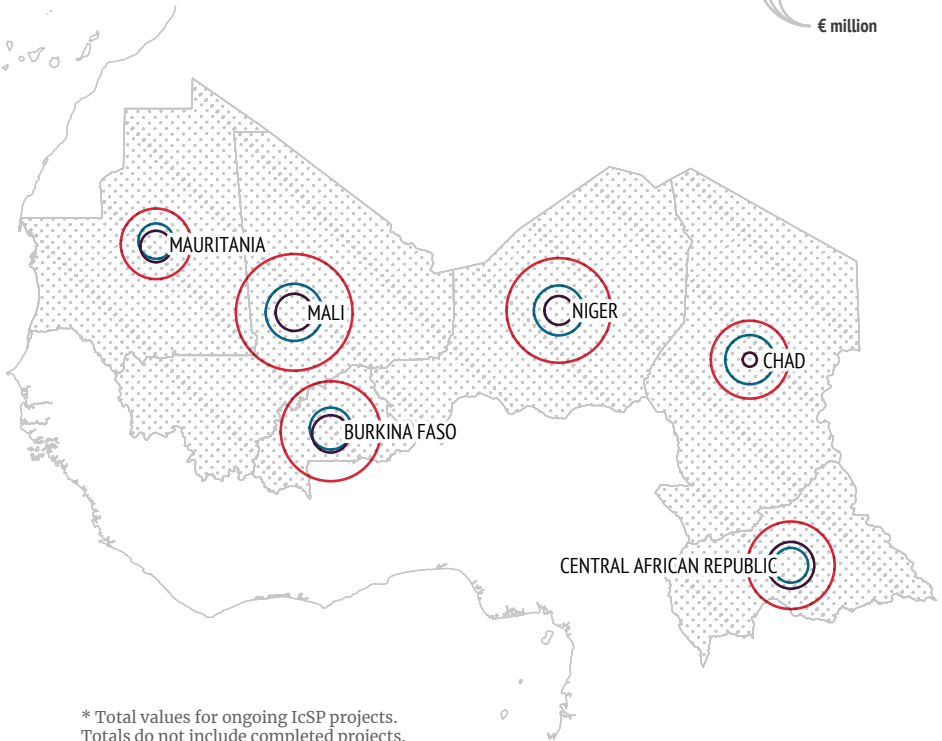
123EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the attacks in Mali and Burkina Faso”, June 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burkina-faso/64109/statement-spokesperson-attacks-mali-and-burkina-faso_en.

124EEAS, “Déclaration de la porte-parole sur les attaques au Mali”, November 2, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mali/69827/déclaration-de-la-porte-parole-sur-les-attaques-au-mali_fr.

Sahel

EU Integrated Approach, 2019-2020

- Development cooperation disbursements (2019) (EUR millions)
- Humanitarian assistance (2019-2020) (EUR millions)
- Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (2019) (EUR millions)*



* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Data: European Commission, 2019; European External Action Service, 2020

25 November, 6 French military officers that were part of Operation Barkhane were killed during a counter-terrorist operation in Mali.¹²⁵

In addition to the security situation, Mali also continued to suffer from a number of humanitarian challenges. The European Commission

¹²⁵EEAS, “Statement by the spokesperson following the accident during a combat operation in Mali”, November 26, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burkina-faso/71192/statement-spokesperson-following-accident-during-combat-operation-mali_en.

estimates that 3.9 million people, or 19.5% of the population in Mali, are affected by food shortages, armed conflicts and inter-community clashes. Approximately 254,000 people were newly displaced in the country in 2019 and Mali is host to 26,800 refugees. To this end, in 2019 the EU made available €23.5 million in humanitarian aid for the country and an additional €19.5 million was dedicated to assist the nearly 138,000 Malian refugees living in three neighbouring countries.¹²⁶

The EU provided €32.4 million to assist with conflict-affected areas suffering from food shortages and violence.

The conflict in Mali continued to spill over into Mauritania in 2019, as the country is home to the second largest camp for Malian refugees with more than 3,800 new arrivals from January to August 2019. The European Commission also estimates that in 2019 approximately 2.3 million were at risk from food shortages and needed humanitarian assistance. On this basis, in

2019 the EU dedicated more than €15.7 million in humanitarian assistance to Mauritania and a further €90,000 in emergency funding was made ready for the country following the floods that hit the south east of the country in August.¹²⁷ 2019 was also an election year in Mauritania and presidential elections were held on 22 June. The EU noted the high voter turnout and the atmosphere of calm that the elections took place under, even if the Union was concerned at certain statements made by some of the candidates.¹²⁸ Nevertheless, on 1 July, the EU welcomed the election of Mohamed Cheikh Mohamed Ahmed Ould Ghazounani as President and it congratulated the country for the first constitutional transition between two elected Presidents in the country, especially in the context of post-election tensions.¹²⁹

¹²⁶European Commission, “Mali”, December 23, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/africa/mali_en.

¹²⁷European Commission, “Mauritania”, December 23, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/africa/mauritania_en.

¹²⁸EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the presidential elections in Mauritania”, June 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mauritania/64592/statement-spokesperson-presidential-elections-mauritania_en.

¹²⁹EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the elections in Mauritania”, July 1, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mauritania/64972/statement-spokesperson-elections-mauritania_en.

In Niger, terrorism also struck the country with a particularly tragic attack in December, when around 100 people (including 70 Nigerien soldiers) lost their lives.¹³⁰ The attack was perpetrated by an Islamic State affiliate and it struck in Inates, a particularly vulnerable region where terrorist groups exploit ‘longstanding grievances among and within nomadic communities that straddle the Mali–Niger border’.¹³¹ In addition, the country continues to suffer from a humanitarian crisis. The European Commission estimates that in May 2019 about 42,000 Nigerian refugees sought refuge in Niger. The delivery of humanitarian aid was disrupted in May and October due to measures imposed by Nigerien authorities that made military escorts mandatory, thus challenging established humanitarian principles. To meet the humanitarian challenges in the country, the EU provided €32.4 million to assist with conflict-affected areas suffering from food shortages and violence.¹³²

In the Central African Republic, the EU played a supporting role for the peace negotiations that took place in Khartoum between the government and 14 major armed groups on 24 January.¹³³ The peace agreement was signed on 6 February in Bangui, and the EU stated that the move ‘demonstrates the sense of responsibility of the government and the armed groups’ as well as particularly thanking the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smail Chergui, for his efforts.¹³⁴ Throughout the year, and in support of the peace accord, the EU continued to support core state bodies in Central African Republic

130EEAS, “Declaration from HR/VP Josep Borrell on the terrorist attack in Niger”, December 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/niger/72207/declaration-hrvp-josep-borrell-terrorist-attack-niger_en.

131Hannah Armstrong, “Behind the Jihadist Attack in Niger’s Inates”, International Crisis Group, December 13, 2019, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/sahel/niger/behind-jihadist-attack-inates>.

132European Commission, “Niger”, December 18, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/africa/niger_en.

133EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the Central African Republic peace talks”, January 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/central-african-republic/57271/statement-spokesperson-central-african-republic-peace-talks_en.

134EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the occasion of the signing of a peace and reconciliation agreement in the Central African Republic”, February 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/central-african-republic/57976/statement-spokesperson-occasion-signing-peace-and-reconciliation-agreement-central-african_en.

including internal security services¹³⁵ and in September the EU dedicated an additional €60 million to support the country with the consolidation of peace.¹³⁶ During the year, the EU continued to support the peace process and a visit by HR/VP Mogherini to the country in mid-July¹³⁷ emphasised the importance of peace and reconciliation, especially in the context of the attacks against civilians at the end of May.¹³⁸ Finally, as a further sign of the EU's support to the Central African Republic, the Union announced that it would deploy a new CSDP civilian mission (EUAM RCA) to the country in 2020 to support the reform of the internal security forces.¹³⁹

The EU's engagement with Nigeria in 2019 was largely framed in the context of the country's general elections. The Union deployed an Election Observation Mission (EOM) to Nigeria on 4 January and the observation mission began its work on 22 January with a 50-strong team.¹⁴⁰ When the elections did take place on 23 February they did so after being postponed for a week and there were delays at many poll stations, as well as violent incidents resulting in loss of life. Despite these conditions, the EU EOM noted that the elections took place in a competitive environment.¹⁴¹ Following the elections, incumbent president Muhammadu Buhari was declared the winner by the Independent National Electoral Commission in March. The EU noted

135 EEAS, "L'Union européenne contribue à la restauration de l'Autorité de l'État le long du corridor Beloko-Bangui", September 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/central-african-republic/67904/lunion-europeenne-contribue-a-la-restauration-de-l'autorite-de-l-etat-le-long-du-corridor_en.

136 EEAS, "L'UE consacre €60 millions supplémentaires pour soutenir la consolidation de la paix et le relèvement en République Centrafricaine", September 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/central-african-republic/68033/lue-consacre-€60-millions-supplementaires-pour-soutenir-la-consolidation-de-la-paix-et-le_en.

137 EEAS, "Federica Mogherini meets the President of the Central African Republic, Faustin-Archange Touadéra", July 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/central-african-republic/65543/federica-mogherini-meets-president-central-african-republic-faustin-archange-touadera_en.

138 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the attacks against civilians in the Central African Republic", May 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/central-african-republic/63305/statement-spokesperson-attacks-against-civilians-central-african-republic_en.

139 EEAS, "Central African Republic: Council establishes a civilian advisory mission", December 9, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/12/09/central-african-republic-council-establishes-a-civilian-advisory-mission/>.

140 EEAS, "Chief Observer launches EU Election Observation Mission to Nigeria", January 22, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nigeria/56944/chief-observer-launches-eu-election-observation-mission-nigeria_en.

141 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the general elections in Nigeria", February 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nigeria/58678/statement-spokesperson-general-elections-nigeria_en.

that there were important lessons to be learned from the elections for the state elections that took place on 9 March.¹⁴² During the state elections, there were numerous incidents of violence that resulted in loss of life. In June, the EU EOM released its report on the general elections and it argued that there was a case for fundamental electoral reform in Nigeria given the low voter turnout and the systemic failings related to transparency and security.¹⁴³ There was further alarm in November when, during elections in Bayelsa and Kogi, EU observers noted ballot box snatching, intimidation, violence and fatalities.¹⁴⁴

In addition to electoral concerns, however, Nigeria was home to humanitarian crises and it was the victim of terrorist attacks during the year. Not only did the EU warn that the country remained a source, transit and destination point for sex trafficking and human organ trafficking, but also that the Union wanted to work with Nigeria to better manage migration.¹⁴⁵ In June, the EU dedicated €28 million to Nigeria as part of a wider €152 million package to address climate, food and conflict vulnerabilities in the region.¹⁴⁶ In particular, the EU directed its financial support during the year to undernourished children in Sokoto and Zamfara states¹⁴⁷ and to help contain yellow fever in the states of Bauchi and Katsina.¹⁴⁸ Yet, aside from humanitarian

142 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the re-election of Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari”, March 1, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nigeria/58934/statement-spokesperson-re-election-nigerian-president-muhammadu-buhari_en.

143 EEAS, “EU election observation mission presents final report with recommendations for electoral reform”, June 15, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/04_eu_eom_presents_final_report_on_the_general_elections_with_recommendations_for_reform_15_june2019_final.pdf.

144 EEAS, “Diplomatic Watch statement on Bayelsa and Kogi elections”, November 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nigeria/70578/diplomatic-watch-statement-bayelsa-and-kogi-elections_en.

145 EEAS, “Nigeria source, transit, destination point for sex, human organ trafficking — EU ambassador”, April 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nigeria/60598/nigeria-source-transit-destination-point-sex-human-organ-trafficking—eu-ambassador_en.

146 EEAS, “Nigeria, six other Sahel countries receive fresh €152 million humanitarian aid from EU”, June 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nigeria/63953/nigeria-six-other-sahel-countries-receive-fresh-€152-million-humanitarian-aid-eu_en.

147 EEAS, “EU provides N102m in emergency humanitarian aid to tackle child undernutrition in Sokoto and Zamfara States”, September 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nigeria/67162/eu-provides-n102m-emergency-humanitarian-aid-tackle-child-undernutrition-sokoto-and-zamfara_en.

148 EEAS, “European Union allocates NGN 31.8 million in aid to contain yellow fever in Nigeria’s two most affected states”, October 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nigeria/68324/european-union-allocates-ngn-318-million-aid-contain-yellow-fever-nigeria’s-two-most-affected_en.

assistance, the EU also wanted to stimulate economic development in the country and it was for this reason that it dedicated €30 million for sustainable energy investment in the country.¹⁴⁹ Finally, Nigeria was also the victim of numerous terrorist attacks during the year, including an attack at the end of July by Boko Haram that left at least 65 people dead.¹⁵⁰

Can peace become affordable in West Africa?

‘West Africa and the Sahel continue to be plagued by fragility, conflict and violence. Faced with challenges ranging from the spread of Boko Haram to persisting food insecurity, forced displacement, and youth un-employment, the region needs help. In response, the international community has marshalled significant resources to support governments in fostering the essential preconditions for peace – inclusive security and sustainable development. Such tasks can devour the funds of even the most ambitious aid programmes, while the reality of budgetary constraints calls for a constant search for efficiency. The EU’s engagement in Security Sector Reform is a case in point. Transforming security and justice systems in fragile states is one of the top priorities of the EU’s external action. According to its 2016 SSR framework, the EU will help partner countries put the military under civilian oversight and provide effective, legitimate and accountable security and justice services to their citizens. EU programmes will apply a comprehensive approach aimed at: 1) formulating integrated security and justice policies and setting up national coordination mechanisms; 2) providing training and non-lethal equipment to defence and security forces; and 3) building internal accountability mechanisms and

¹⁴⁹EEAS, “EU launches €30 million renewable energy support to Nigeria”, April 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nigeria/61223/eu-launches-€30-million-renewable-energy-support-nigeria_en.

¹⁵⁰EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the Boko Haram terrorist attack in Borno, North East Nigeria”, July 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nigeria/65968/statement-spokesperson-boko-haram-terrorist-attack-borno-north-east-nigeria_en.

systems for human resources planning, budgeting, and financial management.’

- > Paul M. Bisca, “Can Peace become affordable? Lessons from security sector expenditure reviews in West Africa”, *EUISS Brief*, no. 2, March, 2019, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief%202%20West%20Africa_0.pdf.

Elsewhere in West Africa, there were legislative elections in Benin on 28 April, but the EU noted that the new electoral law adopted in the country – which resulted in a boycott of opposition parties – led to a historically low turnout, violence and the first uncompetitive elections in Benin since the 1990 national conference.¹⁵¹ At the end of the year, the EU and Benin signed a range of agreements to boost competitiveness, energy access and counter violent extremism worth €47 million.¹⁵² The EU welcomed Togo’s announcement in May that it would adhere to The Hague Code of Conduct against the proliferation of ballistic missiles, becoming the 140th state to do so. In its relations with Ghana, the EU continued to support investment and job creation in the country. In February, the EU allocated €40 million to Ghana¹⁵³ and in June then Vice-President of the European Commission Jyrki Katainen visited the country on a two-day official visit to Ghana and Togo to discuss sustainable investment and jobs.¹⁵⁴

The EU mobilised €50,000 in emergency funding for Ghana following torrential rains in the country.

151 EEAS, “Déclaration de la porte-parole sur la situation au Bénin”, May 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/benin/61780/déclaration-de-la-porte-parole-sur-la-situation-au-bénin_fr.

152 European Commission, “EU and Government of Benin sign agreements to boost competitiveness, energy access and action against violent extremism”, November 13, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/news/eu-and-government-benin-sign-agreements-boost-competitiveness-energy-access-and-action-against_en.

153 EEAS, “Africa - Europe Alliance: EU supports investment and job creation in Ghana with €40 million”, February 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ghana/58896/africa-europe-alliance-eu-supports-investment-and-job-creation-ghana-€40-million_en.

154 EEAS, “EU Commission Vice-President Katainen in Ghana for the first Ghana-EU Business Forum”, June 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ghana/64010/eu-commission-vice-president-katainen-ghana-first-ghana-eu-business-forum_en.

Furthermore, in November, the EU mobilised €50,000 in emergency funding for Ghana following torrential rains in the country.¹⁵⁵

In Côte d'Ivoire, the EU continued to focus efforts on strengthening the rule of law, national reconciliation and good governance. The country benefits from a €273 million allocation under the European Development Fund from 2014 to 2020.¹⁵⁶ In the Gambia, €244 million has been made available under the European Development Fund from 2015 to 2020 and support centres on rule of law, urban sanitation and health.¹⁵⁷ Financial assistance was also provided to the Gambia and Liberia during 2019.

2019 was a year of political tension for Sierra Leone as a state of national emergency was declared in February following a doubling of rape and sexual assault cases in the country.¹⁵⁸ The EU and partners called for calm in June when protests occurred.¹⁵⁹ To this end, in October, the EU enhanced its support for civil society in the country by dedicating €2.2 million towards the elimination of sexual and gender-based violence.¹⁶⁰ In Guinea-Bissau, the year was marked by elections. Legislative elections were held on 10 March in a peaceful and orderly manner,¹⁶¹ but three months later no government was in place and the economic situation had deteriorated, leading to political tensions in the country.¹⁶² However, after appointing Aristides Gomes as Prime Minister in June, President Jose Mario Vaz attempted

155 EEAS, "European Union allocates over GHS 306 000 in urgent aid to communities affected by floods in Ghana", November 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ghana/70455/european-union-allocates-over-ghs-306-000-urgent-aid-communities-affected-floods-ghana_en.

156 European Commission, "Côte d'Ivoire", 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/where-we-work/cote-divoire_en.

157 European Commission, "Guinea", 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/where-we-work/guinea_en.

158 "Sierra Leone declares emergency over rape and sexual assault", BBC News, February 8, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-47169729>.

159 EU, "Statement on political tensions", June 4, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/joint_statement_us_uk_ir_eu_de_-_4_june_2019.pdf.

160 EEAS, "EU announces new grant funding to four local civil society organisations", October 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sierra-leone/68807/eu-announces-new-grant-funding-four-local-civil-society-organisations_en.

161 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the Legislative Elections in Guinea-Bissau", March 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/guinea-bissau/59818/statement-spokesperson-legislative-elections-guinea-bissau_en.

162 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the political situation in Guinea Bissau", June 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/guinea-bissau/63814/statement-spokesperson-political%C2%A0situation-guinea-bissau_en.

to illegally fire him in October. The EU expressed its concern given that it was seen as a destabilising move in advance of the presidential elections that took place on 24 November.¹⁶³ The elections were held in a peaceful manner¹⁶⁴ and President Vaz failed to win a majority, precipitating a second round of elections on 29 December.

There were elections on 24 February in Senegal, which saw incumbent President Macky Sall obtain a second term even though four opposition candidates rejected the results. The EU deployed an EOM to the country on 15 January with over 60 electoral analysts and observers (100 observers were present on the day of the vote).¹⁶⁵ In June, the EOM published their observation report and they indicated that, while the counting of votes and results was successful, it was clear that candidates had a lack of confidence in the electoral process and there were certain practices that did not always favour transparency. The EU EOM also noted that, while the electoral campaign was active and free, there was a great disparity in resources between the candidates.¹⁶⁶

Three scenarios for Sudan

‘the non-violent campaign in Sudan has managed to attract support across wide segments of society – not only in terms of drawing large numbers of demonstrators but also pooling these from different societal groups. The participation of politically marginalised groups, e.g. women and ethnic groups suffering discrimination in Darfur, was particularly visible during the first phase of the uprising. The slogan ‘We are all Darfur!’ chanted by

¹⁶³EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the political situation in Guinea-Bissau”, October 30, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/guinea-bissau/69661/statement-spokesperson-political-situation-guinea-bissau_en.

¹⁶⁴EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the presidential elections in Guinea-Bissau”, November 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/guinea-bissau/71112/statement-spokesperson-presidential-elections-guinea-bissau_en.

¹⁶⁵EEAS, “EU deploys an Election Observation Mission to Senegal”, January 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/senegal/57023/eu-deploys-election-observation-mission-senegal_en.

¹⁶⁶EEAS, “Election présidentielle au Sénégal : la Mission d’observation électorale de l’Union européenne présente son rapport final”, June 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/senegal/64290/election-presidentielle-au-senegal-la-mission-d-observation-electorale-de-l-union-europeenne_en.

demonstrators in Khartoum signalled the extent to which the civil resistance movement had galvanised support across different levels of society. This ability to mobilise a broad spectrum of citizens demanding political change contributed to the strength and appeal of the civil movement. It also made it difficult for the regime to dismiss the civil resistance as extremist agitators and to marginalise the protestors. This differentiates the Sudanese crisis from some other recent non-violent campaigns, most infamously in Syria, where the regime was able to portray the opposition movement as a Sunni insurrection and scare off minority groups from participating en masse in the non-violent uprising.⁷

- > Katariina Mustasilta, “Three Scenarios for Sudan: From Non-Violent Revolution to Democratic Reform?”, *EUISS Brief*, no. 10, September, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief%2010%20Sudan.pdf>.

Sudan continued to be a major focus for the EU’s Africa policy. There were protests throughout the year, and the EU raised its concerns about the government’s response to civilian protestors with the use of tear gas and live ammunition. In January, the EU voiced its concern about the reported use of tear gas against medical personnel and patients in Omdurman hospital.¹⁶⁷ In February, the government declared a state of emergency which led to the curtailing of fundamental freedoms and an increased use of the military in the country.¹⁶⁸ In April, peaceful demonstrations continued calling for political change in the country, and a military council was installed, which breached the principles of the AU Charter.¹⁶⁹ On 5 April, the country’s long-stand-

¹⁶⁷EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the ongoing protests in Sudan”, January 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sudan/56405/statement-spokesperson-ongoing-protests-sudan_en.

¹⁶⁸Council of the EU, “Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the situation in Sudan”, February 28, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/02/28/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-situation-in-sudan/>.

¹⁶⁹EEAS, “Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the situation in Sudan”, April 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sudan/60957/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-situation-sudan_en.

ing President, Omar al-Bashir, was ousted from office and thus came to an end the rule of a controversial figure wanted for crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide by the International Criminal Court (ICC). In the aftermath of this development, there were attacks on protestors in mid-May in Khartoum and the EU stressed the importance of moving to a civilian political transition.¹⁷⁰

In May, tensions were on the rise in Sudan as the political negotiations stalled and further violence was used by government authorities against civilians in June. The EU called on the Transitional Military Council (TMC) to act with restraint and not to use unjustifiable force against peaceful protests.¹⁷¹ Due to the violent actions by the TMC and violent attacks on civilians on 3 June, the AU Peace and Security Council decided to suspend Sudan from the AU until peace was restored to the country.¹⁷² A breakthrough was reached at the beginning of July when the TMC and the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) in Sudan reached an agreement to begin negotiations for a civilian-led three-year transition to a peaceful settlement for the country.¹⁷³ Despite this positive development, the TMC and FFC continued to dispute the way ahead even in the face of further tragic killings in the country – five schoolchildren were killed at the end of July during peaceful demonstrations in El Obeid.¹⁷⁴ A constitutional declaration was agreed to on 4 August between the TMC and FFC and the EU was present as an international witness on 18 August when the declaration was signed.¹⁷⁵ Finally, in addition to its political support for the peace settlement in Sudan, the EU dedicated €55 million in 2019 for

170EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the current situation in Sudan”, May 15, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sudan/62452/statement-spokesperson-current-situation-sudan_en.

171EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the current situation in Sudan”, June 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sudan/63595/statement-spokesperson-current-situation-sudan_en.

172EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the political situation in Sudan”, June 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sudan/63765/statement-spokesperson-political-situation-sudan_en.

173EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the situation in Sudan”, July 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sudan/65096/statement-spokesperson-situation-sudan_en.

174EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the situation in Sudan”, July 31, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sudan/66074/statement-spokesperson-situation-sudan_en.

175EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the conclusion of the transitional agreement in Sudan”, August 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sudan/66479/statement-spokesperson-conclusion-transitional-agreement-sudan_en.

the country's humanitarian needs,¹⁷⁶ and the Council of the EU reiterated its intention to support Sudan as it transitions to an effective civilian-led government.¹⁷⁷

The EU also continued to support the peace efforts in South Sudan throughout the year. 2019 began with a continuation of peace efforts and a commitment by the South Sudanese parties to extend the pre-transitional period for a further six months. In September, further commitments were taken between President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, leader of the SPLM-iO and the EU urged the two sides to continue to show resolute leadership in taking the peace process forward.¹⁷⁸ EU and international support helped the process given that on 8 October a Revitalised Agreement for the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) was agreed and signed as a step towards long-standing peace and the maintenance of the ceasefire which had been in place since September 2018. The R-ARCSS was a monumental step forward and it set the groundwork for the formation of a Revitalised Transitional Government of National Unity on 12 November.¹⁷⁹ Throughout the year, the EU supported the country with its humanitarian needs and in May it released €30 million for education, health services and nutrition.¹⁸⁰ A further €48.5 million was dedicated to humanitarian aid in support of the nearly 2 million IDPs and the 7 million people in need of emergency food aid.¹⁸¹

The EU's relations with Eritrea were framed in the context of the ongoing peace process with Ethiopia. For example, in February, the EU launched a €20 million project to rebuild a major road connector

176 European Commission, "Humanitarian Aid: EU allocates €55 million in Sudan", November 11, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_19_6233.

177 Council of the EU, "Sudan: Council adopts conclusions", December 9, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/12/09/sudan-council-adopts-conclusions/>.

178 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the Peace Process in South Sudan", September 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/south-sudan/67283/statement-spokesperson-peace-process-south-sudan_en.

179 EEAS, "Joint Statement on the South Sudanese Peace Process 28th October 2019", October 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/south-sudan/69539/joint-statement-south-sudanese-peace-process-28th-october-2019_en and EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the peace process in South Sudan", November 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/south-sudan/70064/statement-spokesperson-peace-process-south-sudan_en.

180 EEAS, "European Union approves €30 million for South Sudan", May 31, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/south-sudan/63497/european-union-approves-€30-million-south-sudan_en.

181 EEAS, "South Sudan: The European Union provides €48.5 million in EU humanitarian aid", June 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/south-sudan/64403/south-sudan-european-union-provides-€485-million-eu-humanitarian-aid_en.

between the Ethiopian border and ports in Eritrea (including Massawa port). The EU project and other efforts were seen as a response to the July 2018 peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia, which ended 20 years of conflict.¹⁸² The investment project was announced during an official visit to the country by former European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica. The EU and Eritrea also continued to develop their political dialogue during the year, with an 'Article 8' political dialogue taking place in Asmara on 4 November. The meeting helped both sides gauge how the EU can support the country in terms of its economy and human rights.¹⁸³

Cooperation between the EU and Djibouti continued to be important in 2019, not least because the country houses the EU's naval operation EUNAVFOR Atalanta. HR/VP Mogherini embarked on a tour of the Horn of Africa in February and in May and she stopped in Djibouti on both occasions to meet President Ismail Omar Guelleh, as well as other dignitaries in the country. While in Djibouti, the HR/VP visited EU member states' military bases that are housing EUNAVFOR Atalanta and in May she paid a visit to Italian vessel ITS Carlo Margottini and met with Operation Commander, Rear Admiral Antonio Martorell Lacave.¹⁸⁴

Relations with Ethiopia were largely framed by the peace deal struck by the country and Eritrea in 2018. In January, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed was in Brussels to meet with then Presidents Juncker and Tusk, as well as HR/VP Mogherini, to discuss the situation in Ethiopia and the progress being made on the implementation of the EU-Ethiopia Strategic Engagement that was signed in 2016.¹⁸⁵ HR/VP Mogherini visited the country in February as part of a boarder official visit to the Horn of Africa, where she took part in the African Union

182 European Commission, "Roads to peace: EU supports reconnecting Eritrea and Ethiopia", February 8, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_868.

183 EEAS, "EU-Eritrea Article 8 Political Dialogue in Asmara", November 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mexico/69912/eu-eritrea-article-8-political-dialogue-asmara_lo.

184 EEAS, "High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini Visits ITS Carlo Margottini", May 23, 2019, <https://eunavfor.eu/high-representative-vice-president-visits-its-carlo-margottini/>.

185 EEAS, "High Representative / Vice President Federica Mogherini meets with Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed", January 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ethiopia/57102/high-representative-vice-president-federica-mogherini-meets-ethiopian-prime-minister-dr-abiy_en.

Summit and met with Ethiopian officials.¹⁸⁶ In March, the Union made available €10 million to support the country with social accountability,¹⁸⁷ a further €36 million was unlocked in July to help the country reduce its greenhouse gas emissions¹⁸⁸ and in November €20 million was provided to assist with refugees.¹⁸⁹

Fragility in Ethiopia

‘While democratic reforms should in principle promote peace and stability, to what extent can they also exacerbate political violence? Although the academic debate is controversial with regard to this question, Ethiopia provides a good test case to look at conflict prevention from the perspective of a country that recently experienced a peaceful transfer of power, followed by fast-paced reformism, and can as a result either stabilise or fall back into conflict. Since the appointment of Abiy Ahmed Ali as prime minister in April 2018, Ethiopia has undergone a profound transformation. These changes are the result of the peaceful stepping down of Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn in January 2018 in response to severe societal turmoil. In an attempt to mitigate conflict and avoid extreme fragility, the new leadership sought to accelerate its progress towards democratisation, expanded political freedoms, introduced market liberalisation and developed a new approach to foreign policy, which led, inter alia, to the peace deal between Ethiopia and Eritrea.’

¹⁸⁶EEAS, “High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini to visit Horn of Africa”, February 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ethiopia/57835/media-advisory-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-visit-horn-africa_en.

¹⁸⁷EEAS, “The European Union contributes EUR 10 million to the Ethiopian Social Accountability Program 3”, April 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ethiopia/60862/european-union-contributes-eur-10-million-ethiopian-social-accountability-program-3_en.

¹⁸⁸EEAS, “EU contributes 36 million Euro (1.15 billion Birr) to make Ethiopia’s economy grow greener”, July 22, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ethiopia/65705/eu-contributes-36-million-euro-115-billion-birr-make-ethiopias-economy-grow-greener_en.

¹⁸⁹EEAS, “EU funded Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) programme launched”, November 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ethiopia/71159/eu-funded-comprehensive-refugee-response-framework-crrf-programme-launched_en.

- > Giovanni Faleg, “Resetting Ethiopia: Will the State Heal or Fail?”, *EUISS Brief*, no. 11, October, 2019, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief%2011%20Ethiopia_0.pdf.

The security situation in Ethiopia was still fragile in 2019, however. On 22 June, General Seare Mekonnen – the Chief of Staff of the Ethiopian Army – and Amharan Regional State President Ambachew Mekonnen was shot dead. It was claimed by senior leaders in Ethiopia that this attack was part of an attempted *coup d’Etat* in the Amhara region. The EU voiced its concern at the deplorable acts and it called for all sides of the political spectrum to adhere to peaceful and democratic reforms.¹⁹⁰ Despite this situation, in October Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and the EU stated that it supports the positive change brought about by Prime Minister Abiy and Ethiopia.¹⁹¹ The current President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, visited the country in December and announced a €170 million package for the country to support its economic reforms, health, business climate and ensuring transparency ahead of the 2020 elections.¹⁹²

Somalia was again struck by terrorist attacks during 2019. In March, an attack in Mogadishu led to multiple civilian casualties and on 12 July a further attack rocked the city of Kismayo. In September, the EU sent its condolences to the victims of a terror attack on Burundian soldiers that were serving as part of the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) in the Hirshabelle region of the country.¹⁹³ The EU also supported Somalia during the year with a number of humanitarian issues. In April, the Union provided €125,000 for those most

¹⁹⁰EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the latest events in Ethiopia”, June 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ethiopia/64526/statement-spokesperson-latest-events-ethiopia_en.

¹⁹¹EEAS, “Statement by High Representative/Vice President Federica Mogherini on the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed”, October 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ethiopia/68752/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-nobel-peace-prize-awarded_en.

¹⁹²European Commission, “EU strengthens cooperation with Ethiopia”, December 7, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_19_6679.

¹⁹³EEAS, “Local EU Statement on the attack on Burundian soldiers under AMISOM”, September 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/somalia/67480/local-eu-statement-attack-burundian-soldiers-under-amisom_en.

affected by food shortages following the drought caused by insufficient seasonal rainfall.¹⁹⁴ In mid-July, the EU and partners also provided resources to house more than 7,000 displaced families that were previously living in 54 camps in Baidoa.¹⁹⁵ At the end of the year, the EU and partners voiced concerns about delays to parliamentary and local council elections in the country and they called for elections to be held by the end of 2020 as a way to maintain democratic progress.¹⁹⁶

Kenya was also the victim of a terrorist attack in January and al-Shabaab struck the Dusit complex in Nairobi, killing about 21 people.¹⁹⁷ As a sign of the EU's support, HR/VP Mogherini visited the country as part of a wider tour of the Horn of Africa in February. The HR/VP met with President Kenyatta and members of the government and they discussed how the EU can support the country. The HR/VP was in Kenya again in May on an official visit, where she inaugurated a new EU Delegation – the Union's second largest embassy in the world – and reiterated the Union's commitment to supporting AMISOM, as well as to contributing to stability in Somalia. During the official visit, HR/VP Mogherini met with Kenyan Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Monica Juma.¹⁹⁸

Human rights considerations were a core part of the EU's relations with Uganda in 2019. In May, the EU stated that the decision to suspend staff members of radio and television stations on 30 April was a worrying development and so was 'the excessive use of force by Ugandan police and security services against peaceful protesters

194EEAS, "European Union supports families severely hit by drought in Somalia", April 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/somalia/61590/european-union-supports-families-severely-hit-drought-somalia_en.

195EEAS, "7,000 Displaced Families in Baidoa Have a New Home", July 13, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/somalia/65413/7000-displaced-families-baidoa-have-new-home_en.

196EEAS, "Joint Statement on Delays to Somaliland Parliamentary and Local Council Elections", November 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/somalia/71087/joint-statement-delays-somaliland-parliamentary-and-local-council-elections_en.

197EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the terrorist attack against the Dusit complex in Nairobi, Kenya", January 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kenya/56569/statement-spokesperson-terrorist-attack-against-dusit-complex-nairobi-kenya_en.

198EEAS, "Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the press point with Monica Juma, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Kenya", May 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kenya/62864/remarks-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-press-point-monica-juma-minister_en.

and political opposition' at the same time.¹⁹⁹ Such issues were also flagged in the EU's annual report on human rights and democracy, which stated that Uganda is marked by violent arrests, alleged acts of torture, the targeting of opposition activists and parliamentarians and 'increasing government violation of free association, expression, and assembly rights'. The EU also pointed to the endemic corruption in the country and the fact that Uganda 'loses about €7 billion each year in illicit financial flows through tax avoidance and evasions, money laundering and bribery'.²⁰⁰ The EU also provided financial assistance of €27 million to the country to boost accountability of local governments, to improve food security and to ensure maternal and child nutrition.²⁰¹

2019 was a year of political tensions for Cameroon where repression of demonstrations was now commonplace, especially in the so-called 'Anglophone regions'. In a speech to the European Parliament on 18 April, HR/VP Mogherini voiced concern that key opposition figures were still under arrest or facing military trials and protestors were also being detained. HR/VP Mogherini also stated that 'unlawful killings and atrocities' continued in Cameroon during the year and that over 32,000 IDPs and refugees had left the country because of the political crisis.²⁰² The country was also the victim of terror attacks by Boko Haram in its northern regions. There was positive news in September, when President Paul Biya announced the convening of a national dialogue to overcome the political impasse, and the EU welcomed the October decision by the President to stop military court proceedings against several opposition leaders and activities.²⁰³ In

199EEAS, "Joint local statement on restrictions to freedom of expression and assembly in Uganda", May 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uganda/61758/joint-local-statement-restrictions-freedom-expression-and-assembly-uganda_en.

200EEAS, "EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2018 – Uganda", May 13, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uganda/62277/eu-annual-report-human-rights-and-democracy-world-2018---uganda_en.

201EEAS, "Government to award Shs114.5 billion in grants to implement projects in Northern Uganda", May 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uganda/62656/government-award-shs1145-billion-grants-implement-projects-northern-uganda_en.

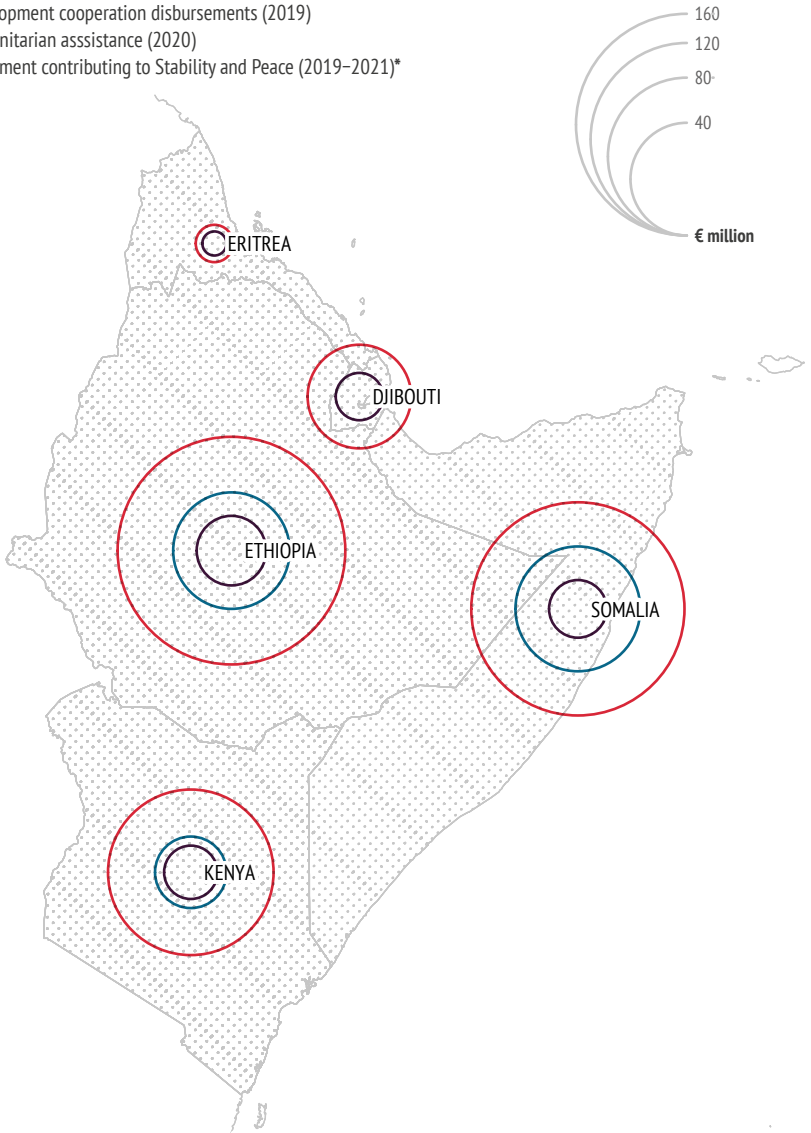
202EEAS, "Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Mogherini at the European Parliament urgency debate on Cameroon", April 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/djibouti/61228/speech-high-representativevice-president-mogherini-european-parliament-urgency-debate-cameroon_be.

203EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the latest developments in Cameroon", October 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/cameroon/68433/statement-spokesperson-latest-developments-cameroon%C2%A0_en.

Horn of Africa

EU Integrated Approach, 2019-2021

- Development cooperation disbursements (2019)
- Humanitarian assistance (2020)
- Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (2019-2021)*



* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

its Conclusions on the country on 14 October, the Council of the EU called on Cameroon to continue to ‘meet the population’s legitimate expectations’ with regard to fundamental freedoms and human rights, as enshrined in Cameroon’s constitution.²⁰⁴

Relations with Gabon were overshadowed by the attempted *coup d’état* on 7 January, with members of the armed forces claiming that they had ousted President Ali Bongo. The EU condemned the coup attempt and it rejected the use of force in the country, instead calling for ‘an open and inclusive’ framework for dialogue.²⁰⁵ Furthermore, in São Tomé and Príncipe, the EU dedicated €7 million in February for water and sanitation and to counter gender violence.²⁰⁶ Finally, in Congo (Brazzaville) the EU continued to pursue its objectives of helping the country diversify its economy and to create jobs, dealing with forest governance and biodiversity and fostering local services such as water and sanitation.²⁰⁷ Relations with Equatorial Guinea in 2019 continued to be coloured by its non-participation in the European Development Fund and the Cotonou Agreement.²⁰⁸

The EU and regional organisations

In 2019, the EU continued to develop relations with a host of regional organisations in Africa. Overall, the Union and African partners developed the scope to enhance bilateral economic partnerships but to also leverage regional initiatives in order to regionalise trade efforts. So, for example, the EU continued to develop relations with the Economic and Monetary Community

²⁰⁴Council of the EU, “Cameroon: Council adopts conclusions”, October 14, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/14/cameroon-council-adopts-conclusions/>.

²⁰⁵EEAS, “Déclaration de la porte-parole suite aux événements au Gabon”, January 9, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/gabon/56306/déclaration-de-la-porte-parole-suite-aux-événements-au-gabon_en.

²⁰⁶EEAS, “The European Union boosts cooperation with São Tomé-and-Príncipe”, February 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/gabon/57891/european-union-boosts-cooperation-são-tomé-and-pr%C3%ADncipe_en.

²⁰⁷European Commission, “Republic of Congo”, https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/where-we-work/congo-republic_en.

²⁰⁸EEAS, “Equatorial Guinea and the EU”, May 17, 2016, https://eeas.europa.eu/diplomatic-network/equatorial-guinea/12286/equatorial-guinea-and-eu_en.

of Central Africa (CEMAC) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) on a comprehensive economic partnership. The Union also continued its support for and dialogue with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). This not only took the form of dialogue through the ministerial troika but also through specific EU-funded projects such as efforts to counter illicit drug trafficking and abuse in West Africa.²⁰⁹ In terms of the economic partnership with the East African Community (EAC), the European Commission continued to await the finalisation of the full EPA with the EAC countries.²¹⁰ Relations with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) centred on supporting economic integration through the European Development Fund, of which €1.5 billion has been dedicated to the region over the 2014–2020 period.²¹¹ Finally, in its relations with the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) the EU continued to develop economic relations but it also assisted with agricultural strains in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region. Furthermore, the EU worked towards peace in South Sudan by cooperating closely with IGAD and it also worked with the organisation on early warning for droughts in Africa.²¹²

In the DRC, relations with the EU were placed in the context of elections where Felix Tshisekedi was eventually announced as President. In January, the EU expressed its condolences to the victims of violence in several towns in the DRC and the Union joined the AU Commission and the AU EOM in calling for ‘the official results [to] reflect the votes

209 ECOWAS, “ECOWAS, EU and UNODC release WENDU Report”, November 12, 2019, <https://edup.ecowas.int/events/ecowas-eu-unodc-release-wendu-report-the-first-ever-regional-report-on-illicit-drug-trafficking-and-drug-abuse-in-west-africa/>.

210 European Commission, “East African Community”, May 5, 2020, <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/eac/>.

211 EEAS, “Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)”, December, 31, 2016, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zambia/2071/common-market-eastern-and-southern-africa-comesa_en.

212 European Commission, “Intergovernmental Authority on Development”, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/knowledge4policy/organisation/intergovernmental-authority-development_en.

cast by the Congolese people'.²¹³ To support the country, in November the EU dedicated €27.5 million for three projects aimed at supporting civil society, enhancing the business climate, strengthening democracy and fighting poverty.²¹⁴ During 2019, the EU also monitored the human rights situation in the country and in November it welcomed the news that the Bukavu Military Garrison Tribunal had ruled against warlord Frédéric Masudi (alias Koko di Koko).²¹⁵ Masudi was sentenced to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity, murder and sexual violence.²¹⁶ In December, the Council of the EU maintained individual restrictive measures against individuals in the DRC and it underlined its willingness to engage with the government on a reform agenda should stability and inclusive development prevail.²¹⁷

Another major challenge facing DRC in 2019 was Ebola, as the deadly disease continued to affect the country and spill over into neighbouring states, such as Uganda and South Sudan. The year marked the 10th outbreak of the disease and in August 2019 alone there were 2,000 reported deaths and a further 3,000 cases of infection.²¹⁸ In June, the EU signed off on emergency funding of €3.5 million for the region for rapid detection and reaction to Ebola cases – EU support in the fight against the disease has totalled €17 million since 2018.²¹⁹ In September, the European Commission announced that it

213 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo”, January 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/dr-congo-kinshasa/56474/statement-spokesperson-situation-democratic-republic-congo_en.

214 EEAS, “L’Union européenne octroie 27,5 millions d’euros pour appuyer la Société civile, mettre en place une Facilité de coopération technique et soutenir l’Ordonnateur national du FED”, November 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/dr-congo-kinshasa/71118/lunion-europeenne-octroie-275-millions-d-euros-pour-appuyer-la-societe-civile-mettre-en-place_en.

215 EEAS, “Déclaration de la Délégation de l’UE en accord avec les ambassades des Etats membres de l’UE en RDC”, November 22, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/dr-congo-kinshasa/70818/declaration-de-la-delégation-de-lue-en-accord-avec-les-ambassades-des-etats-membres-de-lue-en_en.

216 “Congo court hands life sentence to warlord for murder, sexual violence”, *Reuters*, November 19, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-congo-justice/congo-court-hands-life-sentence-to-warlord-for-murder-sexual-violence-idUSKBN1XT2LQ>.

217 EEAS, “Democratic Republic of the Congo: Council expresses its readiness for a gradual engagement in support of the government’s reform agenda”, December 9, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/12/09/democratic-republic-of-the-congo-council-expresses-its-readiness-for-a-gradual-engagement-in-support-of-the-government-s-reform-agenda/>.

218 EEAS, “When Climate Disasters Strike, the EU is there to Help”, November 25, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/climatecampaign_en.

219 European Commission, “Ebola: EU releases additional €3.5 million to tackle epidemic”, June 13, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_2990.

would dedicate €34.3 million in humanitarian funding for vulnerable people living in the Great Lakes region. In particular, the support is geared towards dealing with the humanitarian situation in the DRC, including conflict in the east of the country, the Ebola epidemic and the Burundian refugees based in the DRC. Overall, the EU dedicated €69.74 million in humanitarian assistance to the region in 2019.²²⁰ Finally, in December, the EU announced that it would allocate a further €50 million to fight Ebola and malnutrition in the DRC.²²¹

Human rights continued to be a focus of the EU's relations with Rwanda. In June, the EU's annual report on human rights and democracy noted that there were persistent human rights abuses in Rwanda with 'excessive use of force, extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances'. The report also highlighted that human rights advocates are still subject to arbitrary detentions by authorities, the use of torture and other degrading treatment in detention. Furthermore, the EU expressed its concern that over an 18-month period several members of opposition movements have either 'disappeared or were killed'.²²² In addition, the refugee crisis in Africa continued to demand EU support and the Union provided €10.3 million to Rwanda in November to support refugees coming out of Libya under the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM).²²³

In its relations with Burundi, the EU continued to focus on effects of violent conflict that began in 2015 and especially on the needs of Burundian refugees located in neighbouring countries, such as the DRC. In 2019, the EU dedicated €6 million in humanitarian assistance to meet the needs of refugees, but also to support the country with epidemics, such as Ebola, and natural disasters.²²⁴ In political terms,

²²⁰European Commission, "Humanitarian aid: over €34 million in African Great Lakes region", September 18, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_5590.

²²¹EEAS, "EU allocates €50 million to fight Ebola and malnutrition in the Democratic Republic of Congo", December 2, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/dr-congo-kinshasa/71326/eu-allocates-€50-million-fight-ebola-and-malnutrition-democratic-republic-congo_en.

²²²EEAS, "EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2019 - Rwanda update", June 30, 2020, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/81826/eu-annual-report-human-rights-and-democracy-world-2019-rwanda-update_en.

²²³European Commission, "Rwanda: the EU provides €10.3 million for life-saving refugee support measures", November 19, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_19_6301.

²²⁴European Commission, "Burundi", May 20, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/africa/burundi_en.

the EU continued to apply restrictive measures on individuals that were involved in undermining democracy and perpetrating human rights violations following the violent conflict and attempted coup that occurred in May 2015. Indeed, on 24 October, the Council of the EU extended these existing restrictive measures until 31 October.²²⁵

EU-Africa economic cooperation

On 30 May 2019, the ACFTA entered into force and, following a summit on 7 July, it started to be an operational reality. The idea for an ACFTA dates back to 2012 and the agreement brings together 54 African countries representing more than 1 billion people and a combined GDP of more than \$3.4 trillion.²²⁶ Building on the 2018 New Africa–Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs, the EU supported the ACFTA as a basis for an eventual ‘comprehensive continent-to-continent FTA between the EU and Africa’.²²⁷ The post-Cotonou agreement negotiations continued throughout the year with a view to negotiating a new partnership agreement for after the expiry of the Cotonou Agreement in 2020. In April, the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries concluded the second round of talks for the new partnership and there were other high-level discussions during the year. Covering 79 countries and representing over 1.5 billion people, the negotiating phase at the start of 2019 focused on the institutional setup of the new partnership.²²⁸

225 Council of the EU, “Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain third countries concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Burundi”, November 29, 2019, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/11/29/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-alignment-of-certain-third-countries-concerning-restrictive-measures-in-view-of-the-situation-in-burundi/#_ftn1.

226 African Union, “CFTA – Continental Free Trade Area”, 2020, <https://au.int/en/ti/cfta/about>.

227 WTO, “Trade Policy Review”, Report WT/TPR/S/395, December 10, 2019, p. 44, https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tptr_e/s395_e.pdf.

228 European Commission, “New ACP-EU Partnership: Chief Negotiators Assess Progress Made and Move Talks on the Next Stage”, May 23, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_2673.

In its relations with Tanzania, the EU focused much of its energies on supporting the country's adaptation to climate change. In April, the EU supported the organisation of the 5th Climate Change Symposium and Expo in Dodoma, where more than 100 stakeholders met to discuss ways to fulfil national climate change objectives.²²⁹ Another EU-funded initiative took place on 13-14 May in Arusha, when more than 70 community, civil society and government groups met to discuss regional wildlife management in Tanzania.²³⁰ A further EU-supported dialogue took place in May, where representatives discussed seed management and agricultural productivity in Morogoro and in September an EU-funded storage facility was inaugurated in Morogoro to enhance with rice harvest management.²³¹ A major EU-funded national conference on climate change adaptation was held in Dodoma on 6 September. On the diplomatic front, the EU welcomed the news that Tanzania ratified its accession to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention on 14 August – the country became the 183rd State Party to the Convention.²³² Finally, the year ended with local elections where the ruling party won a landslide victory in the face of a boycott by the opposition party.

On 11 March, the EU and Angola held their 4th ministerial meeting under the EU-Angola Joint Way Forward agreement. At the meeting, the partners discussed issues such as economic development, governance and human rights and peace, security and climate change. In addition, at a number of side events the EU enhanced its support to the country with a €22 million envelop for dialogue, higher education and public finance management. The EIB also agreed to €100 million

229EEAS, "The 5th Climate Change Symposium and Expo 2019", April 9, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tanzania/60826/5th-climate-change-symposium-and-expo-2019_en.

230EEAS, "EU Funded Conference in Arusha on regional Wildlife Management", May 15, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tanzania/62425/eu-funded-conference-arusha-regional-wildlife-management_en.

231EEAS, "Inauguration of EU funded storage facilities in Morogoro", September 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tanzania/67276/inauguration-eu-funded-storage-facilities-morogoro_en.

232EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the accession of the United Republic of Tanzania to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention", August 22, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tanzania/66629/statement-spokesperson-accession-united-republic-tanzania-biological-and-toxin-weapons_en.

of loan support to Angola for water and sanitation support.²³³ In October, the EU welcomed Angola's decision to become a party to the Optional Protocol aiming to abolish the death penalty, to the Convention against Torture and other cruel inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and to the Convention on the elimination of racial discrimination.²³⁴ This news followed reforms to the country's penal code in January, which reportedly ushered in a number anti-discrimination and rights measures.²³⁵

In 2019, the EU continued to support Zambia and it began in January by providing civil society organisations in the country €5 million for work related to human rights, good governance and humanitarian aid.²³⁶ In March, the EU voiced its concern about the decision by the Independent Broadcasting Authority to revoke the broadcasting licence of Prime TV and the Union recalled the importance of freedom of expression and of the media.²³⁷ In June, the EU deployed an Electoral Follow-up Mission (EFM) to Zambia to establish whether the independent observations made during the 2016 elections had been implemented. The EFM reported that Zambia had made improvements and that the EU was ready to support the country with further reforms to ensure the integrity of the electoral process in advance of the 2021

The EU deployed an Electoral Follow-up Mission (EFM) to Zambia to establish whether the independent observations made during the 2016 elections had been implemented.

²³³EEAS, "Joint Press Statement – 4th Angola-European Union Ministerial Meeting", March 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/angola/59438/joint-press-statement-4th-angola-european-union-ministerial-meeting_en.

²³⁴EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on Angola's accession to key human rights conventions", October 4, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/angola/68407/statement-spokesperson-angola-s-accession-key-human-rights-conventions_en.

²³⁵"Angola decriminalizes same-sex conduct, rights group says", *ABC News*, January 29, 2019, <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/angola-decriminalizes-sex-conduct-rights-group-60590733>.

²³⁶EEAS, "The European Union supports Civil Society Organisations in Zambia (€5 million)", January 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zambia/56675/european-union-supports-civil-society-organisations-zambia-€5-million_en.

²³⁷EEAS, "EU Statement on the Suspension of Prime TV's Broadcasting Licence in Zambia", March 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zambia/59241/eu-statement-suspension-prime-tvs-broadcasting-licence-zambia_en.

elections.²³⁸ Finally, in December the EU signed an agreement worth €26 million to support the commercialisation of smallholder farmers in the country.²³⁹

In Malawi, general elections were held on 21 May which saw the narrow re-election of President Peter Mutharika. The Constitutional Court would go on to annul the elections in 2020, and an EU EOM that had been deployed to Malawi from 4 April to 19 June reported that, while the electoral process was largely well organised, the pre-election period was marked by tensions and an unlevel playing field. The elections were conducted in a context of repeated claims of ‘vote rigging’ and state resources were used in favour of the ruling party.²⁴⁰ On the diplomatic front, Malawi and the EU reaffirmed their partnership during the Political Dialogue that took place on 10 January in Lilongwe. Not only did the partners discuss the elections, but they also addressed human rights, agriculture and food security, among other issues.²⁴¹ As with Zimbabwe and Mozambique, the EU provided €1 million worth of assistance to Malawi following Cyclone Idai, owing to the fact that 85,000 had lost their homes because of the disaster.²⁴² It was also announced in 2019 that Malawi would benefit from a €500 million global grant to end violence against women and girls.²⁴³

In Botswana, the EU supported a number of initiatives designed to enhance the country and the region’s approach to transnational

238EEAS, “European Union Election Follow-up Mission – Zambia – Final report launched”, July 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zambia/65839/european-union-election-follow-up-mission-zambia-final-report-launched_en.

239EEAS, “European Union signs an agreement worth EUR 26 million to support the commercialization of smallholder farmers in Zambia”, December 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zambia/72571/european-union-signs-agreement-worth-eur-26-million-support-commercialization-smallholder_en.

240EEAS, “EU EOM Malawi presents its Preliminary Statement”, May 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/election-observation-missions/eom-malawi-2019/63055/eu-eom-malawi-presents-its-preliminary-statement_en. See also: EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson following the 2019 Tripartite elections in Malawi”, May 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/malawi/63132/statement-spokesperson-following-2019-tripartite-elections-malawi_en.

241EEAS, “Malawi and European Union reaffirm partnership at the Article 8 Political Dialogue”, January 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/malawi/56400/malawi-and-european-union-reaffirm-partnership-article-8-political-dialogue_en.

242EEAS, “Cyclone Idai: €12 million EU assistance in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi”, April 9, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zimbabwe/60804/cyclone-idai-€12-million-eu-assistance-mozambique-zimbabwe-and-malawi_en.

243EEAS, “A new partnership to end violence against women and girls in Malawi”, May 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/malawi/62568/new-partnership-end-violence-against-women-and-girls-malawi_en.

organised crime²⁴⁴ and to boost its cyber resilience by raising awareness with leaders in Botswana, investing in cybersecurity incidence response capabilities and fostering cyber expertise and cooperation. The EU underlined its intention to support Botswana with its national cybersecurity strategy and efforts via the EU's Cyber Resilience for Development Project.²⁴⁵ This was an election year in Botswana and President Mokgweetsi Masisi was re-elected after winning the general elections in October. In terms of human rights, the EU raised its concern on 2 December about the execution of Mr Mooketsi Kgosibodiba and the Union, Australia and Canada called on Botswana to 'initiate a public debate on its use of the death penalty'.²⁴⁶

EU-Southern African Development Community

The EU also maintained relations with southern African countries in 2019. In mid-February, there was the first meeting of the Joint Council of the EU-Southern African Development Community (SADC) EPA. This first meeting, which took place two years after the provisional application of the EPA, focused on enhancing trade relations and recognising the importance of investment and sustainable employment.²⁴⁷ In August, the EU continued to support the SADC industrialisation strategy and at the SADC Industrialisation Week that took place in Tanzania it pledged €14 million to help support the integration of financial markets in the region.²⁴⁸ This was the fourth consecutive year the EU actively participated in the Industrialisation

244EEAS, "Opening remarks by Ambassador Sadek: Training course on criminal intelligence analysis", February 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/botswana/58443/opening-remarks-ambassador-sadek-training-course-criminal-intelligence-analysis_en.

245EEAS, "EU Cyber Resilience for Development Project Launch Address by Ambassador Jan Sadek", February 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/botswana/58445/eu-cyber-resilience-development-project-launch-address-ambassador-jan-sadek_en.

246EEAS, "Local statement on the execution of Mr Mooketsi Kgosibodiba", December 4, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/botswana/71456/local-statement-execution-mr-mooketsi-kgosibodiba_en.

247"Joint Communiqué – 1st meeting of the Joint Council of the EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreement", February 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/190221_final_joint_council_communique_joint_council_19_feb_2019_1_0.pdf.

248EEAS, "EU Supports SADC Industrialisation Strategy", August 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/botswana/66322/eu-supports-sadc-industrialisation-strategy_en.

Week. Furthermore, at the 39th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the SADC the EU signed three development co-operation programmes with the region worth €47 million – the programmes are designed to promote business, trade and industrialisation in the SADC region.²⁴⁹

In terms of its relations with Namibia, the EU continued to support the country with challenges such as adapting to climate change and reducing risk from natural disasters. The Union has recognised that ‘Namibia relies heavily on its fragile natural environment to support economic activity and livelihoods’, and so it is particularly vulnerable to global warming and climate change.²⁵⁰ On this basis, the EU has made support to agriculture and education as two priority areas for its support and an amount of €68 million has been allocated to the country over the 2014–2020 period.²⁵¹

In Zimbabwe, the year began with a worrying escalation of violence and the EU called on the government and security personnel to not use disproportionate force against protestors.²⁵² Nationwide protests had emerged in mid-January in relation to sudden increases in fuel prices. It was reported that demonstrations resulted in the death of 17 people and the rape of at least 17 women at the hands of security forces.²⁵³ In this context, the EU called for a ‘thorough investigation into the deaths and abuses’ that had occurred in the country and it appealed to the government to reverse its decision to shutdown access to the internet.²⁵⁴ There were other human rights concerns, too,

249EEAS, “SADC and the EU sign three new Development Cooperation Programmes”, August 18, 2019, https://eas.europa.eu/delegations/botswana/66481/sadc-and-eu-sign-three-new-development-cooperation-programmes_en.

250European Commission, “Action Document for GCCA+ Support on Coordination and Implementation of the Nationally Determined Contributions for Namibia”, 2019, p. 3, https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/c-2019-7739-annex-6-namibia_en.pdf.

251European Union, “European Union – Republic of Namibia, National Indicative Programme 2014–2020”, 2015, https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/nip-namibia-edf-11-2015_en.pdf.

252EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the situation in Zimbabwe”, January 18, 2019, https://eas.europa.eu/delegations/zimbabwe/56750/statement-spokesperson-situation-zimbabwe_en.

253Human Rights Watch, “Zimbabwe: Excessive Force Used Against Protesters”, March 12, 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/03/12/zimbabwe-excessive-force-used-against-protesters>.

254EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the situation in Zimbabwe”, January 18, 2019, https://eas.europa.eu/delegations/zimbabwe/56750/statement-spokesperson-situation-zimbabwe_en.

with the EU registering its concern at the abduction and torture of Obert Masaraure, President of the Rural Teachers Union on 6 June²⁵⁵ and the intimidation, harassment and physical attacks on human rights defenders, trade union and civil society representatives during demonstrations in Harare on 16 August.²⁵⁶ Such concerns were raised during the political dialogues held by the EU and Zimbabwe during 2019, beginning with the formal launch of the dialogue process under the 2000 Cotonou Agreement on 5 June²⁵⁷ and a second meeting in November in Harare.²⁵⁸

Additionally, the EU provided Zimbabwe with €4 million in humanitarian assistance following Cyclone Idai and the subsequent flooding in the country in April²⁵⁹ and in August the Union made available €10 million for the humanitarian crisis in the country because of critical food shortages and an economic crisis. The EU reported in June 2019 that 5.5 million people in Zimbabwe lacked food to meet nutritional needs and 21% of the country's rural population was suffering from low crop yields, blights and water shortages.²⁶⁰ Overall, in 2019 the EU stepped up its support for Zimbabwe with a package of €53 million to enhance health and resilience building the country.²⁶¹ In particular, the support was earmarked for primary health care and support for households and communities facing environmental, economic and food shocks. Despite this negative news, there were

255EEAS, "EU concerned about abduction and torture of unionist", June 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zimbabwe/63779/eu-concerned-about-abduction-and-torture-unionist_en.

256EEAS, "Joint local statement on respect for human rights and freedom of assembly", August 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zimbabwe/66559/joint-local-statement-respect-human-rights-and-freedom-assembly_en.

257EEAS, "Joint press statement following the launch of the formal political dialogue between the European Union and Zimbabwe", June 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zimbabwe/63686/joint-press-statement-following-launch-formal-political-dialogue-between-european-union-and_en.

258EEAS, "Joint press statement: second formal political dialogue meeting between EU and Zimbabwe", November 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zimbabwe/70809/joint-press-statement-second-formal-political-dialogue-meeting-between-eu-and-zimbabwe_en.

259EEAS, "Cyclone Idai: €12 million EU assistance in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi", April 9, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zimbabwe/60804/cyclone-idai-€12-million-eu-assistance-mozambique-zimbabwe-and-malawi_en.

260EEAS, "EU provides additional USD 11.15 million for humanitarian assistance in Zimbabwe", August 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zimbabwe/66224/eu-provides-additional-usd-1115-million-humanitarian-assistance-zimbabwe_en.

261European Commission, "EU to step up its support to Zimbabwe with a new package of €53 million", October 28, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_19_6170.

positive developments in other areas such as Zimbabwe's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) on 14 February.

Mozambique was an important focus of the EU's Africa policy in 2019. First, in March, Cyclone Idai hit Mozambique causing the injury of 1,600 people and 600 fatalities.²⁶² This is the reason why, in April, the EU announced that it was dedicating €7 million to the country for shelter, water and sanitation, health and food assistance – up to 1.85 million were in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. EU support was urgently needed, given that Cyclone Idai struck during the annual harvest season, which damaged food security and production, as well as leaving the country exposed to disease outbreaks.²⁶³ A peace deal in

The peace deal was seen as an important precondition for the general and provincial assembly elections.

Mozambique between the government and opposition party Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) was signed on 6 August in the presence of HR/VP Mogherini. The peace deal was seen as an important precondition for the general and provincial assembly elections that were held on 15 October. The EU took an active role in the

peace deal as it backed up the process with support worth €60 million for reconciliation and democratic consolidation.²⁶⁴ Despite the peace deal, the country continued to be affected by the presence of Islamist militants in Cabo Delgado which resulted in numerous attacks during 2019 and violent extremism.

²⁶²EEAS, "When Climate Disasters Strike, the EU is there to Help", November 25, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/climatecampaign_en.

²⁶³EEAS, "Cyclone Idai: €12 million EU assistance in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi", April 9, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zimbabwe/60804/cyclone-idai-€12-million-eu-assistance-mozambique-zimbabwe-and-malawi_en.

²⁶⁴EEAS, "Federica Mogherini witnesses the signature of final peace deal in Mozambique", August 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-Homepage/66274/federica-mogherini-witnesses-signature-final-peace-deal-mozambique_nb.

Peace in Africa: the case of Mozambique

‘There is no shortage of difficult cases for conflict prevention around the world, but Mozambique is a particularly interesting one and could mark a defining moment for the international community’s approach to this challenge. Since its independence from Portugal in 1975, Mozambique has alternated two long periods of war and peace: first, a 15 year-long civil war between the ruling party, the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique and the rebel forces of the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, which caused over one million deaths and displaced five million people; then, since the signature of the Rome General Peace Accords in 1992, almost 20 years of peaceful transition to democracy and steady GDP growth, averaging 7% between 2003 and 2013. Just when Mozambique was beginning to be regarded as a successful example of post-conflict peacebuilding, the resurgence of low-intensity armed conflict between RENAMO and FRELIMO in the period 2013–2016 provided an unexpected reality check, revealing the dangers of a flawed democratisation process.

Yet, the sources of instability in today’s Mozambique are no longer limited to the politico-military confrontation between RENAMO and FRELIMO. A dangerous mix of old and new dynamics have been dragging Mozambique into a spiral of fragility and violence; meanwhile, a debt crisis halted the foreign investment bonanza in 2016, as the discovery of undisclosed government loans worth \$2 billion led to the withdrawal of contributions by the International Monetary Fund and Group of 14 budget support donors, a drop of 75% in foreign investments, a currency crisis, and a sharp decline in economic growth which fell from 7.4% in 2014 to 3.4% in 2017.’

- > Giovanni Faleg, “Conflict Prevention in Mozambique: Can there be Peace after the Storm?”, *EUISS Brief*, no. 5, April, 2019, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief%205%20Mozambique_0.pdf.

As far as the October elections were concerned, an EU EOM that was deployed to the country from 31 August to 13 November reported that the electoral process ‘took place in a polarised and challenging environment where inter-party violence was prevalent’. The tensions surrounding the election were not helped by the murder of a prominent national election observer by the police or by the fact that an ‘unlevel playing field was evident throughout the campaign’. On 23 December, the Constitutional Council proclaimed that FRELIMO had won the elections with 73.46% of valid votes, even though the EU EOM noted a number of concerns with the electoral process.²⁶⁵

In its relations with Eswatini, the EU continued to support the country with food security and social protection. During 2019, the country also benefitted from EU support via both the SADC and the COMESA. Under the 11th European Development Fund (2014–2020) Eswatini benefits from a total of €62 million for the two aforementioned priority areas.²⁶⁶

In South Africa, the May 2019 parliamentary and provincial elections saw Cyril Ramaphosa elected President. His party, the African National Congress (ANC), won 57.5% of the vote, albeit with a reduced majority.²⁶⁷ In May, with the publication of the EU’s annual report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, the EU acknowledged that socio-economic rights, discrimination and inequality ‘remain the country’s biggest challenge’. The Union acknowledged the South African government’s steps to combat corruption and it called for less political polarisation, especially ahead of the May general elections.²⁶⁸ Such issues were again taken up after the elections, and following riots in Johannesburg in early September,²⁶⁹ during the 6th meeting of

²⁶⁵EEAS, “Mozambique – Final Report General and Provincial Assembly Elections”, October 15, 2019, pp. 6–7, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eueom_moz2019_final_report_en.pdf.

²⁶⁶European Commission, “11th EDF National Indicative Programme – Swaziland”, June 24, 2014, https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/nip-swaziland-20140619_en.pdf.

²⁶⁷Alexander Winning, “South Africa’s ANC celebrates election win with street party”, *Reuters*, May 12, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-safrica-election-anc-idUSKCN1SIOAW>.

²⁶⁸EEAS, “EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, 2018 Country Update – South Africa”, May 22, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/south-africa/62974/eu-annual-report-human-rights-and-democracy-world-2018-country-update-south-africa_en.

²⁶⁹Onke Ngcuka, “South African police make more arrests as riots spread”, *Reuters*, September 3, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-safrica-violence/south-african-police-make-more-arrests-as-riots-spread-idUSKCN1VO1ZW>.

the EU–South Africa structured dialogue forum on human rights on 26 November.²⁷⁰

The EU deepened its cooperation with Lesotho in 2019 and in March the Union and Lesotho signed three agreements worth €47.5 million to support land and water management, civic education and governance in the country.²⁷¹ The EU’s annual report on Human Rights and Democracy also pointed to worrying trends in the country, despite the fact that there were some notable positive developments, such as the 2017 national assembly elections and a border national reform process that began in 2018. However, the EU report also noted the ‘disturbing escalation in reports of police violence and the mistreatment of detainees’ in Lesotho and that freedom of expression remained restricted in the country, with threats made against journalists.²⁷² Such calls emerged in a context of political turbulence in the country, with calls for Prime Minister Thomas Thabane to leave office.²⁷³

Finally, the EU continued to develop its relations with the island countries in the Indian Ocean. In February, Comoros became the fifth country from the Eastern and Southern Africa region to ratify the EPA with the EU – Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles and Zimbabwe have enjoyed an EPA with the EU since May 2012. Comoros exports more than half of its goods to the EU.²⁷⁴ In the wake of the 24 March elections, the EU condemned the loss of life in Comoros following political unrest and violence. The elections were reportedly blighted by irregularities and the EU supported AU calls for an inclusive dialogue.²⁷⁵ From 16 to 20 October, the Indian Ocean Commission organ-

270EEAS, “The Sixth EU–South Africa Structured Dialogue Forum on Human Rights”, November 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/south-africa/71168/sixth-eu-south-africa-structured-dialogue-forum-human-rights_en.

271EEAS, “EU and the Lesotho Government deepen cooperation by signing 3 financing agreements”, March 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lesotho/60448/eu-and-lesotho-government-deepen-cooperation-signing-3-financing-agreements_en.

272EEAS, “Human rights and democracy in the world: Lesotho chapter”, May 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lesotho/63368/human-rights-and-democracy-world-lesotho-chapter_en.

273Marafaele Mohloboli, “Lesotho parliament moves closer to forcing PM Thabane out of office”, *Reuters*, May 2, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lesotho-politics/lesotho-parliament-moves-closer-to-forcing-pm-thabane-out-of-office-idUSKBN22E0IH>.

274European Commission, “Comoros and Samoa join trade and development agreements with the EU”, February 11, 2019, <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1978>.

275EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the situation in the Comoros”, March 30, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/instrument-cooperation-industrialised-countries/60492/statement-spokesperson-situation-comoros_fr.

ised a first regional maritime exercise involving more than 70 participants. Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Reunion Island (France), Seychelles and others took part in a scenario to combat accidental marine pollution, in order to test regional maritime response mechanisms. The EU has supported the initiative throughout and a representative of the EUNAVFOR Somalia operation was present at the exercise as a watchstander.²⁷⁶

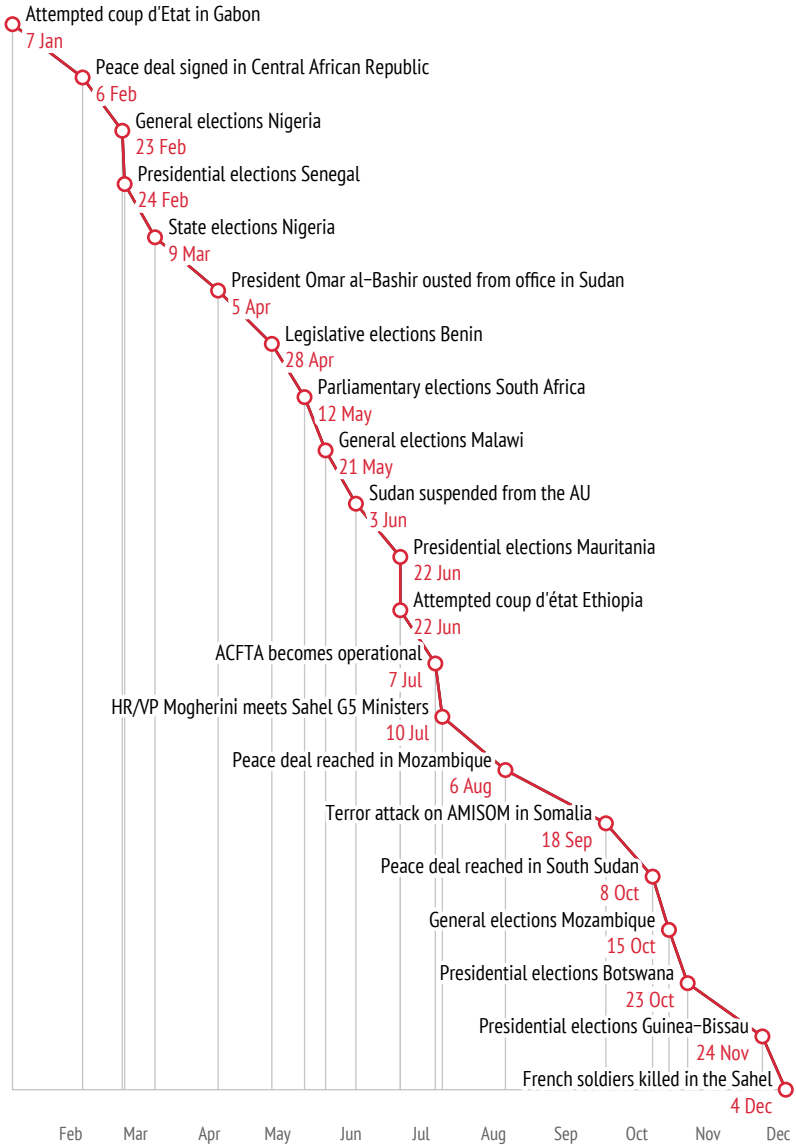
²⁷⁶EEAS, “Maritime security: testing coordination for effective joint actions at sea”, October 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/madagascar/69540/maritime-security-testing-coordination-effective-joint-actions-sea_en.

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- > “Sahel – Council Conclusions”, 9103/19, Brussels, May 13, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9103-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > “Cameroon: Council adopts conclusions”, October 14, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/14/cameroon-council-adopts-conclusions/>.
- > “Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain third countries concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Burundi”, November 29, 2019, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/11/29/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-alignment-of-certain-third-countries-concerning-restrictive-measures-in-view-of-the-situation-in-burundi/#_ftn1.
- > “Sudan: Council adopts conclusions”, December 9, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/12/09/sudan-council-adopts-conclusions/>.

Key events

Sub-Saharan Africa



Eastern neighbourhood and the Western Balkans

Russia

In 2019, the EU's relations with Russia were framed by the latter's involvement in the conflict in Ukraine. Throughout the year, the EU maintained its policy of non-recognition of Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol and condemnation of all Russian actions that violate international law and Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.¹ The European Parliament also agreed on 12 March 2019 to a resolution on the state of EU-Russia relations calling for no gradual return to 'business as usual' with Moscow until Russia ends its violation of the territorial integrity of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.² In its Conclusions of 20 June, the European Council again called on Russia to release the captured Ukrainian sailors unconditionally, return the seized vessels and ensure free passage of all ships through the Kerch Straits. Moreover, it expressed its utmost concern about the Russian presidential decree of 24 April enabling the

1 Council of the EU, "Declaration by the High Representative Federica Mogherini on behalf of the EU on the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol", March 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/17/declaration-by-the-high-representative-federica-mogherini-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-autonomous-republic-of-crimea-and-the-city-of-sevastopol/>.

2 European Parliament, "Resolution on the State of EU-Russia Political Relations", P8_TA(2019)0157, March 12, 2019, Strasbourg, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0157_EN.html.

simplified issuing of passports in the non-government controlled areas of Ukraine's Donetsk and Luhansk regions (in January 2020 it was announced by Moscow that almost 200,000 Russian passports had been issued in the Donbas region),³ as well as its readiness to consider further options, including non-recognition of Russian passports issued in contradiction of the Minsk Agreements.⁴ In this context, in early October, the European Commission and the EEAS sent EU member states and non-EU Schengen countries guidance on how to handle visa applications lodged by residents of these areas.⁵

On 9 September, the EU reiterated its non-recognition of the Russian local elections that were held in Crimea the previous day.⁶ On 10 December, the EU welcomed the measures agreed by the parties under the Normandy format the day before and called for their quick and thorough implementation. The Union also underlined that the new dynamics in the Normandy format talks represented a window of opportunity to move towards the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements and urged Russia to use its influence to that end.⁷ On 23 December, it condemned the opening of the railway section of the Kerch Bridge as another violation of Ukraine's sovereignty.⁸ Another key line of effort for the EU was the trilateral talks with Russia and Ukraine on the future of gas transit to Europe via Ukraine. On 20 December, following multiple rounds of talks at the political level in the course of the year, the three parties agreed on a protocol

3 Toma Istomina, "Moscow says it issued nearly 200,000 Russian passports in Ukraine's Donbas", *Kyiv Post*, January 2, 2020, <https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/moscow-says-it-issued-nearly-200000-russian-passports-in-ukraines-donbas.html>.

4 European Council, "European Council meeting (20 June 2019) – Conclusions", June 20, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39922/20-21-euco-final-conclusions-en.pdf>.

5 European Commission, "EU guidance on the handling of visa applications from residents of Ukraine's Donetsk and Luhansk regions", October 3, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_5975.

6 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the non-recognition of Russian local elections in the Crimean peninsula", September 9, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/russia/67072/statement-spokesperson-non-recognition-russian-local-elections-crimean-peninsula_en.

7 EEAS, "Déclaration du porte-parole sur les résultats du Sommet en format «Normandie»", December 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/71815/d%C3%A9claration-du-porte-parole-sur-les-r%C3%A9sultats-du-sommet-en-format-%C2%AB-normandie-%C2%BB_en.

8 EEAS, "Ukraine: Statement by the Spokesperson on the opening of railway section of the Kerch Bridge", December 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/russia/72572/ukraine-statement-spokesperson-opening-railway-section-kerch-bridge_en.

specifying the arrangements for the long-term transit of Russian gas via Ukraine to Europe as of 1 January 2020.⁹

Pro-Kremlin disinformation and the EU

Disinformation from pro-Kremlin sources continued to be a major problem for the EU in 2019. The EEAS' East StratCom Task Force ('EUvsDisinfo') continued to uncover and refute disinformation in a year marked by the 'mainstreaming of disinformation tactics'.¹⁰ Throughout 2019, pro-Kremlin disinformation focused on the conflict in Ukraine, the shooting down of Flight MH17, accusations of Russophobia, the re-writing of history concerning the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939 and the reframing of how the Baltic States and Poland were brought under the control of the USSR. Pro-Kremlin disinformation also specifically singled out the EU as having Nazi roots and colonising its member states – EUvsDisinfo refuted these false narratives.¹¹ The Task Force reports that, since 2015, it has documented over 7,000 disinformation cases that have been directed against more than 20 countries in the EU and beyond.¹²

The EU was also active in addressing the human rights dimension of the conflict in Ukraine. In January, the Union called on Russia for the immediate and unconditional release of Ukrainian citizens illegally detained by Russia, including Pavlo Hryb and Crimean Tatar activist Edem Bekirov.¹³ The Union again stressed that Mr. Hryb should

9 European Commission, "Statement of Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič on the positive outcome of trilateral gas talks", December 20, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_19_6841.

10 EUvsDisinfo, "Data Analysis and Disinformation – From insight to action in 2020", December 30, 2019, <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/data-analysis-disinformation-from-insight-to-action-in-2020/>.

11 EUvsDisinfo, "2019: The Disinformation Roller Coaster", December 18, 2019, <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/2019-the-disinformation-roller-coaster/>.

12 EUvsDisinfo, "Figure of the week: 7,000", December 10, 2019, <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/figure-of-the-week-7000/>.

13 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the cases of illegally detained Ukrainian citizens", January 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/56358/statement-spokesperson-cases-illegally-detained-ukrainian-citizens_en.

be immediately released following his sentencing in March¹⁴ and the Russian Supreme Court's decision in July to uphold it.¹⁵ The EU also condemned the extension of the detention of the 24 Ukrainian sailors captured by Russia in November near the Kerch Strait and reiterated its demand for their immediate and unconditional release, first in January,¹⁶ and subsequently in April.¹⁷ Moreover, in March, the EU condemned the illegal detention of and human rights violations against Crimean Tatars in the Crimean peninsula, where the EU does not recognise the enforcement of Russian legislation.¹⁸ The second half of the year witnessed some positive developments in this area. On 7 September, the EU welcomed an exchange of prisoners between Ukraine and Russia, which led to the release of the individuals which the EU had repeatedly called for, including Pavlo Hryb, Edem Bekirov and the captured Ukrainian servicemen.¹⁹ Another exchange of detainees took place on 29 December, following the agreement reached by the Trilateral Contact Group, in implementation of one of the measures agreed at the Normandy 4 Summit of 9 December.²⁰ In contrast, several Crimean Tatars were sentenced to lengthy prison terms

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- 14 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the sentencing of Pavlo Hryb", March 22, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60087/statement-spokesperson-sentencing-pavlo-hryb_en.
- 15 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the decision of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation to uphold the sentencing of Pavlo Hryb", July 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/russia/65812/statement-spokesperson-decision-supreme-court-russian-federation-uphold-sentencing-pavlo-hryb_en.
- 16 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the continued illegal detention of Ukrainian servicemen by Russia", January 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/56653/statement-spokesperson-continued-illegal-detention-ukrainian-servicemen-russia_en.
- 17 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the extended illegal detention of Ukrainian servicemen", April 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61202/statement-spokesperson-extended-illegal-detention-ukrainian-servicemen_en.
- 18 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on human rights violations against and the illegal detention of Crimean Tatars by the Russian Federation", March 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60408/statement-spokesperson-human-rights-violations-against-and-illegal-detention-crimean-tatars_en.
- 19 EEAS, "Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the exchange of prisoners between Ukraine and Russia", September 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/russia/67046/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-exchange-prisoners-between_en.
- 20 EEAS, "Ukraine: Statement by the Spokesperson on today's exchange of detainees", December 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/72625/ukraine-statement-spokesperson-today%E2%80%99s-exchange-detainees_en.

on 12 December, a decision which the EU called on Russia to reverse without delay.²¹

EU-Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

The EU also made a number of statements at the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Permanent Council and Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) during 2019, including on the conflict in Georgia, developments in Kosovo, media freedoms in Tajikistan, the security situation in and around Ukraine, small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition and more. For example, during the FSC that took place in Vienna on 6 November, the EU stated its concern that so-called Russian ‘humanitarian convoys’ entered Ukrainian territory without a full inspection by Ukrainian border guards and in violation of the country’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.²² EU member state Slovakia held the OSCE Chairmanship in 2019 and it was keen to promote effective multilateralism, conflict prevention and dialogue and mediation. At the 26th Ministerial Council of the OSCE on 5 December, Miroslav Lajčák – then Slovak Foreign and European Affairs Minister, now EU Special Representative for the Belgrade–Pristina Dialogue and other Western Balkan regional issues, issued his ‘Bratislava Appeal’. The appeal aimed to reinforce the importance of the OSCE in a rapidly shifting political and security landscape.²³

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- 21 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the sentencing of six people from Ukraine’s Crimea and Sevastopol by a Court in the Russian Federation”, November 13, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/70387/statement-spokesperson-sentencing-six-people-ukraine%E2%80%99s-crimea-and-sevastopol-court-russian_en.
 - 22 EU, “EU Statement on the Security Situation in and around Ukraine”, November 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/fsc_no_930_eu_statement_on_ukraine.pdf.
 - 23 OSCE, “OSCE Chair Lajčák kicks off 26th Ministerial Council with his ‘Bratislava Appeal’; calls for increased flexibility and willingness to compromise”, Press Release, December 5, 2019, <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/441173>.

At the same time, the EU also continued to support human rights inside Russia. In January, in the context of the OSCE Permanent Council, the EU expressed its deep concern over the reported persecution, torture and killing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons in Chechnya,²⁴ a set of draft laws that would further restrict freedom of expression in Russia,²⁵ and the continued detention of Oyub Titiev, Director of the Russian Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Memorial Human Rights Centre, based in Grozny.²⁶ Furthermore, the Union demanded the immediate and unconditional release of a Danish citizen who was sentenced to imprisonment on the grounds of his religion as a Jehovah's Witness.²⁷ In July, the EU spoke out against the detention of over a thousand peaceful protesters in Moscow and called on the Russian authorities to protect citizens' fundamental rights.²⁸ In October, also in the context of OSCE, the EU expressed its concern with the deterioration of media freedom in the country, in particular regarding the continued attacks on and harassment and detainment of journalists.²⁹ The situation further worsened in November, following the passage of an amendment widening the scope of the country's 'foreign agents' media law to also include individuals. In response, the EU joined the OSCE Representative for Freedom of the Media in calling on Russian lawmakers to abandon the law.³⁰

24 EEAS, "EU Statement on New Wave of Human Rights Violations against LGBTI Persons in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation", January 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/pc_no_1212_eu_statement_on_lgbti_persecution_in_chechnya.pdf.

25 EEAS, "EU Statement on Freedom of Expression in the Russian Federation", January 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/pc_no_1212_on_foe_in_the_russian_federation.pdf.

26 EEAS, "EU Statement on the continued detention of Oyub Titiev, Director of the Memorial Human Rights Centre, Russian Federation", January 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/pc_no_1212_eu_statement_on_titiev_case.pdf.

27 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the sentencing of Dennis Christensen in Russia", February 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/57728/statement-spokesperson-sentencing-dennis-christensen-russia_en.

28 EEAS, "Statement by the spokesperson on the detention of over a thousand peaceful protesters in Moscow", July 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/russia/65919/statement-spokesperson-detention-over-thousand-peaceful-protesters-moscow_en.

29 EEAS, "EU Statement on recent developments in the Russian Federation regarding Media Freedom", October 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/pc_no_1242_eu_statement_on_recent_developments_in_the_russian_federation_regarding_media_freedom.pdf.

30 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on amendments to the "foreign agents" law in the Russian Federation", November 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/70882/statement-spokesperson-amendments-%E2%80%9Cforeign-agents%E2%80%9D-law-russian-federation_en.

Throughout the year, the EU maintained its robust sanctions on Russia for its violations of international law in Ukraine and elsewhere in Europe. On 21 January, the EU imposed sanctions on the Head, the Deputy Head and two officials of the Russian GRU agency for their role in the possession, transport and use in Salisbury, UK, of the Novichok nerve agent the previous year.³¹ The relevant regime of restrictive measures against the use and proliferation of chemical weapons was extended for another year on 14 October.³² On 15 March, following the Russian escalation and the unjustified use of military force in the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov in November, the EU imposed sanctions on another eight Russian officials for actions against Ukraine's territorial integrity, as well as extended those sanctions for six more months.³³ The regime was extended again on 12 September.³⁴ On 20 June, the EU also extended by a year its sanctions framework in response to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol.³⁵ Furthermore, on 27 June³⁶ and subsequently on 19 December,³⁷ the Council prolonged its targeted sectoral sanctions on Russia's economy, as a consequence of the lack of implementation of the Minsk Agreements.

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- 31 Council of the EU, "Chemical weapons: the EU places nine persons and one entity under new sanctions regime", January 21, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/01/21/chemical-weapons-the-eu-places-nine-persons-and-one-entity-under-new-sanctions-regime/>.
 - 32 Council of the EU, "Chemical weapons: Council renews EU sanctions regime for one year", October 14, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/14/chemical-weapons-council-renews-eu-sanctions-regime-for-one-year/>.
 - 33 Council of the EU, "Ukraine: EU responds to escalation at the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov, and renews sanctions over actions against Ukraine's territorial integrity", March 15, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/15/ukraine-eu-responds-to-escalation-at-the-kerch-straits-and-the-azov-sea-and-renews-sanctions-over-actions-against-ukraine-s-territorial-integrity/>.
 - 34 Council of the EU, "EU extends sanctions over actions against Ukraine's territorial integrity until 15 March 2020", September 12, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/09/12/eu-extends-sanctions-over-actions-against-ukraine-s-territorial-integrity-until-15-march-2020/>.
 - 35 Council of the EU, "Illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol: EU extends sanctions by one year", June 20, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/20/illegal-annexation-of-crimea-and-sevastopol-eu-extends-sanctions-by-one-year/>.
 - 36 Council of the EU, "Russia: EU prolongs economic sanctions by six months", June 27, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/27/russia-eu-prolongs-economic-sanctions-by-six-months/>.
 - 37 Council of the EU, "Russia: EU prolongs economic sanctions by six months", December 19, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/12/19/russia-eu-prolongs-economic-sanctions-by-six-months/>.

Eastern Partnership

On 14 May, the EU, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine marked the 10th anniversary of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) with a High-Level Conference in Brussels. The conference celebrated the partnership's achievements over the past ten years and launched discussions on the future strategic direction of the partnership.³⁸ Additionally, in order to meet the challenges facing the EU and the EaP countries a structured consultation process was initiated by the European Commission from July to October 2019 in order to solicit feedback and contributions from key stakeholders in the region.³⁹ The Conference took place a day after the annual Eastern Partnership Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Brussels.⁴⁰ On 17 June, the Council adopted Conclusions on the EU's engagement with the Black Sea regional cooperation. Emphasising the increasing strategic importance of the Black Sea area for the EU, the Council reaffirmed its commitment to fostering prosperity, stability and resilience in the region and called for enhanced EU involvement in regional cooperation.⁴¹

A decade of the Eastern Partnership

'[T]he eastern neighbourhood is not some retrograde post-Soviet backyard but its states and societies are changing and moving on. Six interlinked megatrends, which manifest with different degrees of intensity throughout the region, shape the present and future trajectories of the countries of the eastern neighbourhood. Since the fall of the USSR there has been

38 European Commission, "Celebrating 10 years of the Eastern Partnership", May 14, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_2489.

39 European Commission, "Eastern Partnership Structured Consultation", July 18, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/tenders/consultation_eap_en.

40 Council of the EU, "Eastern Partnership foreign ministers' meeting: Chair's conclusions on the occasion of the Eastern Partnership 10th Anniversary", May 13, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/05/13/eastern-partnership-foreign-ministers-meeting-chair-s-conclusions-on-the-occasion-of-the-eastern-partnership-10th-anniversary/>.

41 Council of the EU, "Black Sea: Council adopts conclusions", June 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/17/black-sea-council-adopts-conclusions/>.

a centrifugal diffusion of power away from Moscow towards the capitals located at the borders of the former Soviet space. This rise of polycentrism gathered pace during the last decade as eastern neighbours diversified their foreign policy options by engaging with other regional powers. Russia first tried to impede this trend and later to reverse it. Its increasingly assertive policy *vis-à-vis* former satellites has fuelled the security deficit in the region. This negative trend, in turn, has led to a bigger demand for the EU and the gradual transformation of the EU into one of the region's security managers.'

> Stanislav Secieru and Sinikukka Saari (eds.)

"The Eastern Partnership a Decade On: Looking Back, Thinking Ahead", *Chaillot Paper*, no. 153, July, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/eastern-partnership-decade-looking-back-thinking-ahead>.

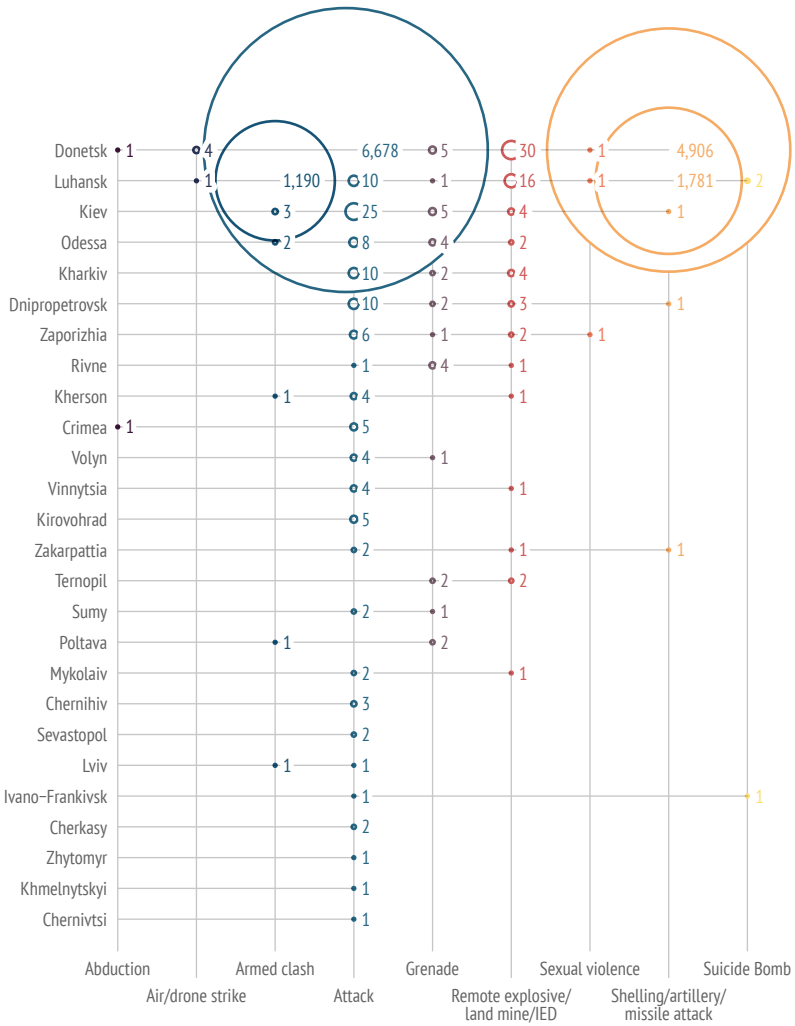
In the EU's relations with Ukraine, the first quarter of the year was marked by the run-up to the country's presidential elections in April. On 22 April, following the second round of elections, the Presidents of the European Council and of the European Commission sent a congratulatory letter to President-elect of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky, in which they expressed their appreciation for the strong attachment to democracy and the rule of law that Ukrainians demonstrated throughout the electoral process. They also reiterated the Union's commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and its readiness to support the country's reform path, including on the rule of law, anti-corruption, macro-financial stability and energy sector reforms.⁴² In this context, on 4 March the EU extended for another year its sanctions against 12 persons responsible for the misappropriation of Ukrainian state funds.⁴³ On 8 July, the 21st EU-Ukraine

42 European Council, "Joint letter of President Tusk and President Juncker to Volodymyr Zelensky, President-elect of Ukraine", April 22, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/04/22/joint-letter-of-president-tusk-and-president-juncker-to-volodymyr-zelensky-president-elect-of-ukraine/>.

43 Council of the EU, "Misappropriation of Ukrainian state funds: Council prolongs EU sanctions for one year", March 4, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/04/misappropriation-of-ukrainian-state-funds-council-prolongs-eu-sanctions-for-one-year/>.

Ukraine

The conflict in numbers, 2019



Data: The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, 2020

Summit took place. In a joint statement, the two parties reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening their political and economic ties. The summit took place a few days before parliamentary elections in Ukraine on 21 July where, according to a preliminary assessment by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), fundamental rights and freedoms were respected – even if there was evidence of vote-buying and other malpractices.⁴⁴ They also reiterated their condemnation of Russia's ongoing violations of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity since 2014 and reaffirmed their support to the efforts of the Normandy format and the Trilateral Contact Group.⁴⁵ Moreover, recognising the progress made by Ukraine in its reform process, the EU announced the provision of €119 million to support the Sea of Azov region and accountable and efficient governance in Ukraine. It also confirmed its readiness to disburse the second €500 million tranche of the fourth Macro-Financial Assistance programme, once the relevant reform measures have been implemented.⁴⁶ Total trade between the EU and Ukraine reached €43.3 billion in 2019.⁴⁷

The first half of the year in EU-Moldovan relations was largely dominated by the country's political crisis. Following the 24 February parliamentary elections, the EU noted the need to address the shortcomings identified by the OSCE-ODIHR Election Observation Mission and reiterated its commitment to support the efforts to strengthen democracy in the country.⁴⁸ The elections were also discussed in the Council of 18 March, where Ministers highlighted the importance of a transparent and free from interference government formation process that respects the election outcome. Ministers also recalled that

44 European Commission, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the parliamentary elections in Ukraine", July 23, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/news_corner/news/statement-spokesperson-parliamentary-elections-ukraine_en.

45 European Council, "Advancing mutual commitment: joint statement following the 21st EU-Ukraine summit", July 8, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/40278/eu-ua-joint-statement-final.pdf>.

46 European Commission, "EU-Ukraine Summit: moving forward together in solidarity", July 8, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_3810.

47 European Commission, "Ukraine", April 22, 2020, <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/ukraine/>.

48 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the parliamentary elections in the Republic of Moldova", February 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/moldova/58674/statement-spokesperson-parliamentary-elections-republic-moldova_en.

the basis for EU–Moldova cooperation is the implementation of the Association Agreement, including a strong commitment to the reform agenda and respect for the rule of law and democratic principles.⁴⁹ On 9 June, in light of the political crisis that emerged following the decisions taken the day before by the Moldovan parliament on the formation of a government, and the fact that the previous government refused to leave office for a number of days,⁵⁰ the EU called for restraint and dialogue as a way forward and reaffirmed its readiness to work with the democratically legitimate government on a robust reform process.⁵¹

On 20 June, the European Council welcomed the peaceful transfer of power in the country and invited the European Commission and the HR/VP to develop a set of concrete measures to support Moldova.⁵² On 23 July, following steps taken by the authorities to strengthen the rule of law and democracy and fight against corruption, the EU resumed its budget support assistance to Moldova, which had been put on hold for two years, by disbursing €14.54 million.⁵³ The Association Implementation Report released by the EU on 12 September confirmed that, following the change of government in June, the country had taken solid steps to implement key reforms.⁵⁴ This progress was also highlighted during the 5th EU–Moldova Association Council on 30 September, during which the EU welcomed the government’s

49 Council of the EU, “Outcome of the Council meeting – Foreign Affairs”, March 18, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7600-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.

50 James Shotter, Michael Peel and Henry Foy, “Moldova stand-off deepens as rival governments lay claim to office”, *Financial Times*, June 10, 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/4c656e68-8b60-11e9-a1c1-51bf8f989972>.

51 EEAS, “Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini and Commissioner Johannes Hahn on the political situation in the Republic of Moldova”, June 9, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/moldova/63826/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-and-commissioner-johannes-hahn_en.

52 European Council, “European Council meeting (20 June 2019) – Conclusions”, June 20, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39922/20-21-euco-final-conclusions-en.pdf>.

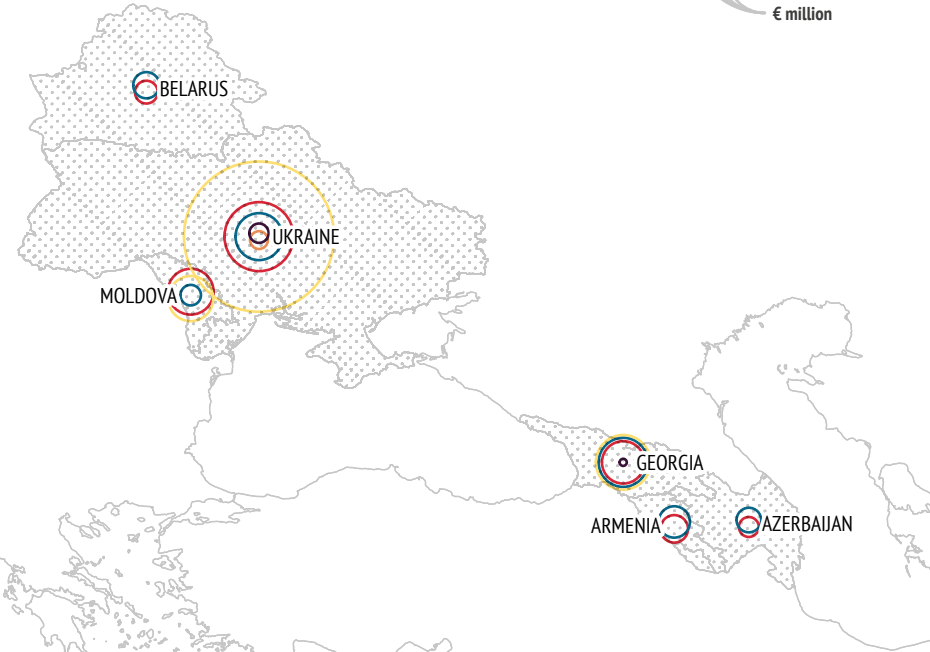
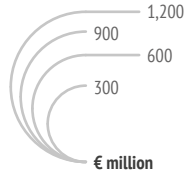
53 EEAS, “The EU resumes budget support assistance to the Republic of Moldova”, July 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/moldova/65760/eu-resumes-budget-support-assistance-republic-moldova_en.

54 European Commission, “EU report: the Republic of Moldova moved forward with key reforms”, September 12, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_5548.

Eastern Partnership

EU Integrated Approach, 2019-2020

- Development cooperation disbursements (2019)
- European Neighbourhood Instrument (2019-2020)
- Humanitarian assistance (2019-2020)
- Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (2019)*
- Macro-Financial Assistance (2020)



* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects.
 Totals do not include completed projects.

Data: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European External Action Service, 2020

intensified reform efforts in various key sectors and reiterated its readiness to continue providing assistance.⁵⁵

On 10 October, the Union approved the disbursement of €30 million in Macro-Financial Assistance, as the first tranche of a €100

55 Council of the EU, “Joint press statement following the fifth Association Council meeting between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova”, September 30, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/09/30/joint-press-statement-following-the-fifth-association-council-meeting-between-the-european-union-and-the-republic-of-moldova/>.

million programme adopted in 2017, in order to support Moldova in covering its external financing needs while implementing its ambitious structural reform agenda.⁵⁶ On 18 October, it disbursed another €14.35 million in budget support assistance,⁵⁷ followed by a further €25 million on 31 October.⁵⁸ Furthermore, in October the EU took part in two-day talks on the Transdniestrian settlement process under the 5+2 formation in Bratislava.⁵⁹ The positive momentum appeared to falter in November, following a vote of no-confidence in the government over questions concerning the recruitment process of the Prosecutor General. The EU noted that the need for reforms remained despite this development and reiterated its commitment to work with reform-minded interlocutors, on the basis of the principle of conditionality and respect for the rule of law and democratic standards.⁶⁰ It should be noted that, in the context of the DCF/TA, total trade between the EU and Moldova stood at €4.7 billion in 2019 – a 40% increase since 2015.⁶¹

The EU's relations with Belarus remained at a low level in 2019, with human rights issues at the top of Brussels' agenda. On different occasions during the year, the Union issued statements condemning the death sentences and executions carried out by Belarusian authorities and calling on Belarus to introduce a moratorium on executions

56 EEAS, "EU approves €30 million disbursement in Macro-Financial Assistance to the Republic of Moldova", October 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/moldova/68696/eu-approves-%E2%82%AC30-million-disbursement-macro-financial-assistance-republic-moldova_en.

57 EEAS, "The EU approves new budget assistance to the Republic of Moldova to support rule of law, energy and public finance reforms", October 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/moldova/69083/eu-approves-new-budget-assistance-republic-moldova-support-rule-law-energy-and-public-finance_en.

58 EEAS, "The EU approves a new package of budget assistance to the Republic of Moldova to support rule of law and rural development reforms", October 31, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/moldova/69734/eu-approves-new-package-budget-assistance-republic-moldova-support-rule-law-and-rural_en.

59 OSCE, "Two-day 5+2 talks on the Transdniestrian settlement process conclude in Bratislava", October 10, 2019, <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/435392>.

60 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the situation in the Republic of Moldova", November 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/moldova/70293/statement-spokesperson-situation-republic-moldova_en.

61 European Commission, "Moldova", June 11, 2020, <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/moldova/>.

as a first step towards abolition.⁶² The EU had the opportunity to reiterate its unequivocal opposition to capital punishment, as well as discuss the human rights situation in the country, during the 6th round of EU–Belarus Human Rights Dialogue, which took place on 18 June.⁶³ On 25 February, the EU also prolonged for one year its embargo on arms and equipment that could be used for internal repression, as well as its sanctions against individuals connected with the unresolved disappearances of Belarussian citizens.⁶⁴ The two sides had the opportunity to take stock of bilateral EU–Belarus relations during the 7th and 8th EU–Belarus Coordination Group meetings on 24–25 April and 17–18 December, respectively. The two parties discussed the state of play in negotiations of the EU–Belarus Partnership Priorities, human rights, as well as issues of nuclear safety. On the latter, the EU stressed the importance of the continued cooperation of Belarussian authorities with European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group in the preparation of the National Action Plan for the implementation of the Stress Test Peer Review recommendations.⁶⁵ On 18th November, following parliamentary elections in the country, the EU noted the OSCE–ODIHR International Election Observation Mission preliminary assessment that they had not been conducted fully in line with international

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- 62 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on a new death sentence in Belarus”, January 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/56407/statement-spokesperson-new-death-sentence-belarus_en; EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on two executions in Belarus”, June 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/64157/statement-spokesperson-two-executions-belarus_en; EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the application of the death penalty in Belarus”, July 30, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/66022/statement-spokesperson-application-death-penalty-belarus_en; EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on a new death sentence in Belarus”, October 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/69482/statement-spokesperson-new-death-sentence-belarus_en; EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on reports of another execution in Belarus”, December 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/72508/statement-spokesperson-reports-another-execution-belarus_en.
- 63 EEAS, “6th round of EU–Belarus Human Rights Dialogue takes place in Brussels”, June 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/64298/6th-round-eu-belarus-human-rights-dialogue-takes-place-brussels_en.
- 64 Council of the EU, “Belarus: EU prolongs arms embargo and sanctions against 4 individuals for one year”, February 25, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/02/25/belarus-eu-prolongs-arms-embargo-and-sanctions-against-4-individuals-for-one-year/>.
- 65 EEAS, “EU–Belarus Coordination Group meets in Minsk”, April 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/61442/eu-belarus-coordination-group-meets-minsk_en; EEAS, “EU–Belarus Coordination Group meets in Brussels”, December 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/72421/eu-belarus-coordination-group-meets-brussels_en.

standards and called for swift comprehensive electoral reform, in view of the presidential elections of 2020.⁶⁶

In response to a Russian large-scale military exercise in Abkhazia, the EU reiterated its support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Relations with Georgia remained positive during the year. On 22–23 January, the President of the European Council and the HR/VP met separately with the newly elected Georgian President in Brussels. The leaders reaffirmed the Union's commitment to intensifying bilateral cooperation, the EU's unwavering support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and to conflict resolution efforts and its readiness to further assist Georgia's initiatives towards people living in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.⁶⁷ On 5 March, the 5th EU–Georgia Association Council took place. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to advancing Georgia's deeper political association and economic integration with the EU and welcomed the progress made by Georgia in implementing domestic reforms and the Association Agreement. Georgia's key role for European energy security, notably as part of the Southern Gas Corridor was also stressed.⁶⁸ On 4 May, in response to a Russian large-scale military exercise in Abkhazia, the EU reiterated its support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity and called on Russia to comply fully with the EU-mediated 12 August 2008 Agreement.⁶⁹ On 23 May, the EU and Georgia held their 12th annual Human Rights Dialogue. The Union welcomed the progress on human rights issues in the country and encouraged Georgia

66 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the parliamentary elections in Belarus", November 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/70603/statement-spokesperson-parliamentary-elections-belarus_en.

67 European Council, "European Council", January 22, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/01/22/remarks-by-president-donald-tusk-after-his-meeting-with-president-of-georgia-salome-zourabichvili/>; EEAS, "High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini met with the President of Georgia, Salomé Zourabichvili", January 23, 2019, <https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/georgia/57005/high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-met-president-georgia-salom%C3%A9>.

68 Council of the EU, "Joint press statement following the 5th Association Council meeting between the EU and Georgia", March 5, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/05/joint-press-statement-following-the-5th-association-council-meeting-between-the-eu-and-georgia/>.

69 EEAS, "Remarks by Ambassador Hartzell on military exercises in the Georgian region of Abkhazia", May 4, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/georgia/61834/remarks-ambassador-hartzell-military-exercises-georgia-region-abkhazia_en.

to continue with its domestic reforms.⁷⁰ Between late June and early July, the country experienced a political crisis and a deterioration of relations with Russia, following an incident in the parliament involving a Russian politician that ultimately led to violent protests.

On 3 July, the EU criticised the Russian decision to ban flights to Georgia and impose restrictions on crossing points at the Abkhaz Administrative Boundary Line as unjustified and disproportionate.⁷¹ On 21 August, the HR/VP called for the immediate cessation of the Russian-backed ‘borderisation’ activities of the *de facto* authorities

The EU criticised the Russian decision to ban flights to Georgia and impose restrictions on crossing points.

in South Ossetia near the village of Gugutiantkari.⁷² On 10 November, following rising tensions along the Administrative Boundary Line of South Ossetia, the Union urged all relevant actors to refrain from escalatory steps and statements and called for the immediate reopening of the crossing points closed since September. The attempts from within South Ossetia to prevent the EU Monitoring Mission’s work and restrict its mandate were also condemned.⁷³ On 17 November, the EU lamented the Georgian parliament’s failure to pass the constitutional amendments required to move to fully proportional parliamentary elections in 2020 and called for dialogue between the government and all political parties and civil society with a view to finding an acceptable path forward in the country’s best interest.⁷⁴ On 13 December, following the parliament’s appointment of 14 members

70 EEAS, “The EU and Georgia held the 12th round of their annual Human Rights Dialogue in Tbilisi on 23 May 2019”, May 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/georgia/63067/eu-and-georgia-held-12th-round-their-annual-human-rights-dialogue-tbilisi-23-may-2019_en.

71 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the latest developments in relations between the Russian Federation and Georgia”, July 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/georgia/64985/statement-spokesperson-latest-developments-relations-between-russian-federation-and-georgia_en.

72 EEAS, “Statement of the EU Delegation to Georgia in agreement with EU Heads of Mission in Georgia on borderisation activities in the area of Gugutiantkari village”, August 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/georgia/66571/statement-eu-delegation-georgia-agreement-eu-heads-mission-georgia-borderisation-activities_en.

73 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on developments related to South Ossetia, Georgia”, November 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/georgia/70195/statement-spokesperson-developments-related-south-ossetia-georgia_en.

74 EEAS, “Statement by the EU Delegation and the US Embassy to Georgia regarding on-going events in Tbilisi”, November 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/georgia/70557/statement-eu-delegation-and-us-embassy-georgia-regarding-going-events-tbilisi_en.

of the Georgian Supreme Court by a selection procedure that had key shortcomings, the EU called for the procedure's revision taking into account the recommendations of the Venice Commission, before additional appointments.⁷⁵

The EU's relations with Armenia remained on an upwards trajectory in 2019, following the election of a reform-minded government in December 2018. On 5 March, the President of the European Council and the HR/VP met separately with Armenian Prime Minister, Nikol Pashinyan, in Brussels. The EU leaders reaffirmed the Union's readiness to support Armenia's democratic and economic reforms, noting their close link to the implementation of the EU-Armenia Partnership Agreement.⁷⁶ On 8 April, the two sides held the 10th round of their regular Human Rights Dialogue. The EU noted Armenian citizens' increased expectations regarding the strengthening of democracy, the rule of law and human rights after the previous year's elections and called on Armenia's leadership to continue on the path of reforms.⁷⁷ On 13 June, the EU and Armenia held their second Partnership Council. During the meeting, the EU reiterated its readiness to deepen the bilateral political and economic relations. It also announced the allocation of an additional €25 million in the context of its 2019 Annual Action Plan of assistance for Armenia, in recognition of the government's determination to pursue a reform agenda and to implement the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) effectively.⁷⁸ On 16 December, the EU and Armenia held their 2nd Partnership Committee meeting and took stock of CEPA's implementation. The EU expressed appreciation for Armenia's progress in implementing

75 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court of Georgia", December 13, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/72068/statement-spokesperson-appointment-judges-supreme-court-georgia_en.

76 European Council, "Remarks by President Donald Tusk after his meeting with Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan", March 5, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/05/remarks-by-president-donald-tusk-after-his-meeting-with-prime-minister-of-armenia-nikol-pashinyan/>; EEAS, "Federica Mogherini met with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan", March 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59089/federica-mogherini-met-armenian-prime-minister-nikol-pashinyan_en.

77 EEAS, "Joint Press Release – EU and Armenia hold 10th Human Rights Dialogue", April 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60765/joint-press-release-%E2%80%93-eu-and-armenia-hold-10th-human-rights-dialogue_en.

78 Council of the EU, "Joint press statement following the second Partnership Council meeting between the EU and Armenia", June 13, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/13/joint-press-statement-following-the-second-partnership-council-meeting-between-the-eu-and-armenia/>.

its reform agenda and reconfirmed its readiness to support Yerevan in continuing on this path.⁷⁹

The year was also marked by some encouraging developments in relation to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. On 18 January, the EU welcomed recent contacts between the Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders and the decrease of tensions between the two countries as positive steps towards the peaceful settlement of the conflict. The Union also reiterated its support for the mediation efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs.⁸⁰ On 29 March, the EU also welcomed the first formal meeting of the Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders, under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs and their stated commitment to strengthening the ceasefire, promoting an environment conducive to peace and taking further steps toward result-oriented negotiations.⁸¹ However, tensions in the region picked up again in the summer, resulting in casualties along the Line of Contact and escalatory rhetoric. During a visit to Armenia, the President of the European Council expressed the EU's concern over these developments and urged both sides to show restraint and take measures to restore an atmosphere conducive to peace and meaningful negotiations.⁸²

The EU continued its stepped-up cooperation with Azerbaijan in 2019. On 5-6 February, the two parties held consultations on justice, freedom, security and human rights and democracy, where they took stock of relevant developments since 2017 and committed to continued engagement on these areas.⁸³ On 17 March, the EU welcomed the

79 EEAS, "Joint Press Release: The European Union and Armenia held their Partnership Committee", December 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/armenia/72251/joint-press-release-european-union-and-armenia-held-their-partnership-committee_en.

80 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on recent developments toward the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict", January 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/56817/statement-spokesperson-recent-developments-toward-peaceful-settlement-nagorno-karabakh_en.

81 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the first meeting of the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan under the auspices of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group", March 31, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60418/statement-spokesperson-first-meeting-leaders-armenia-and-azerbaijan-under-auspices-co-chairs_en.

82 European Council, "Remarks by President Donald Tusk after his meeting with Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan", July 10, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/07/10/remarks-by-president-donald-tusk-after-his-meeting-with-prime-minister-of-armenia-nikol-pashinyan/>.

83 EEAS, "The European Union and Azerbaijan held consultations on justice, freedom, security and human rights and democracy", February 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/azerbaijan/57734/european-union-and-azerbaijan-held-consultations-justice-freedom-security-and-human-rights-and_en.

pardoning of over 400 prisoners, including representatives of political parties, NGOs, bloggers and journalists, by the Azerbaijani President to mark the Novruz holiday.⁸⁴ On 4 April, the 16th EU–Azerbaijan Cooperation Council took place in Brussels. The Council noted the intensification of EU–Azerbaijan relations and agreed on the importance of concluding quickly the negotiations on a comprehensive new EU–Azerbaijan agreement. The two parties also addressed challenges to democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms in Azerbaijan, as well as recent positive developments in relation to the Nagorno–Karabakh conflict.⁸⁵ On 19 October, following the detention of dozens of people during a peaceful rally, the Union called on the authorities to release those that remained in detention and ensure that the right to freedom of assembly is respected.⁸⁶ On 19 December, the EU and Azerbaijan held their 2nd Security Dialogue in Baku. The participants exchanged views on political and security issues of mutual interest, including conflict resolution and crisis management and regional and international security challenges, and discussed possibilities for practical cooperation. The importance of the Southern Gas Corridor in the diversification of energy supplies to European markets was highlighted in this respect.⁸⁷

Western Balkans

In 2019, the Union confirmed the EU perspective of the Western Balkans and then HR/VP Mogherini participated at the Brdo–Brijuni Summit in Tirana on 9 May to stress the importance of cooperation and reconciliation in the region and recognise the significant progress

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- 84** EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the pardoning of prisoners in Azerbaijan to mark Novruz Holiday”, march 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59751/statement-spokesperson-pardoning-prisoners-azerbaijan-mark-novruz-holiday_en.
- 85** Council of the EU, “EU–Azerbaijan Cooperation Council, 4 April 2019”, April 4, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-ministerial-meetings/2019/04/04/>.
- 86** EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the latest developments in Azerbaijan”, October 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/69107/statement-spokesperson-latest-developments-azerbaijan_en.
- 87** EEAS, “The 2nd EU–Azerbaijan Security Dialogue took place in Baku”, December 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/azerbaijan/72503/2nd-eu-azerbaijan-security-dialogue-took-place-baku_en.

made by Western Balkans on reforms. The Brdo-Brijuni Summit is a joint initiative of Croatia and Slovenia designed to strengthen political dialogue in the Western Balkans. The HR/VP used the occasion to acknowledge the importance of the Prespa Agreement between Greece and the Republic of North Macedonia – in February the EU was formally notified of the country's new name – and the Treaty on Good Neighbourly Relations with Bulgaria.⁸⁸

At the end of May, the European Commission released its annual assessments and recommendations for reforms in the Western Balkans and Turkey. The Commission confirmed that the Western Balkans are of great importance to the Union and that a 'firm and credible' EU perspective for countries in the region is the way to ensure stability and reconciliation. Seen from the perspective of the Commission's 2018 'Western Balkans Strategy', it was confirmed that Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia had made progress on the agreed reforms and the Commission recommended that the Council opens accession negotiations with the countries.⁸⁹

In this spirit, at the Poznań Summit on the Western Balkans on 5 July, the EU announced a range of financial support mechanisms for the region. This included a €180 million connectivity package of grants for the region to help develop key transport and energy infrastructure, a €15 million road safety package, €1.65 million in grants for broadband connectivity, €150 million for socio-economic development and a further €20 million to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the region. Along with adherence to the EU's acquis, economic development is a crucial plank of the Western Balkans' integration into the EU single market. The Poznań Summit is part of the Berlin process that is designed to spur on regional cooperation between the Western Balkan states and the EU.⁹⁰

88 EEAS, "Good neighbourly relations, cooperation in the Western Balkans essential for their EU perspective", May 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/62177/mogherini-good-neighbourly-relations-cooperation-western-balkans-essential-their-eu_en.

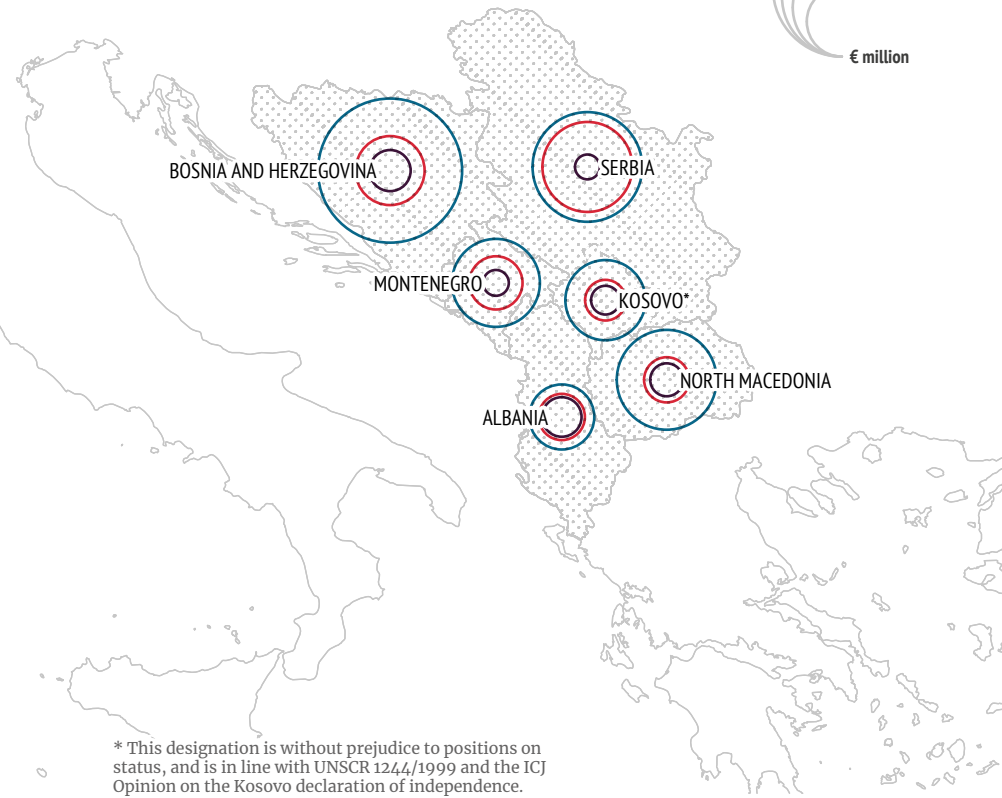
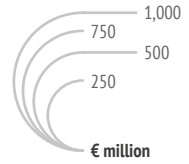
89 EEAS, "Reforms in the Western Balkans and Turkey: annual assessments and recommendations", May 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/63397/european-commission-press-release-reforms-western-balkans-and-turkey-annual-assessments-and_en.

90 EEAS, "Western Balkans Summit in Poznań: strengthening links within the region and with the EU", July 5, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_3669.

Western Balkans

EU Integrated Approach, 2015-2020

- EIB loans (2018)
- EU Connectivity Agenda (2015-2019)
- Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance II (2020)



* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Data: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European External Action Service, 2020; European Investment Bank, 2019

In Albania, the year began with a series of protests and demonstrations by individuals protesting high tuition fees, among other issues. This political concern marked a year of political tensions in the country. In February, the EU urged restraint on all sides and

it condemned violence and the damage to public property.⁹¹ In particular, the Union strongly denounced the incitement to violence by some politicians and it stressed its serious concerns with the decision by the opposition in parliament to relinquish their mandates.⁹² Nevertheless, the protests continued into June with episodes of violence as calls for Albanian Prime Minister, Edi Rama, to step down increased. Demonstrators disrupted planned municipal elections and the President, Illir Meta, took the decision to cancel local elections that were planned for 30 June. In this context, and despite these circumstances, the Commission reported that Albania had otherwise made significant progress on domestic reforms to open accession negotiations. The Commission stated that reforms in line with the Stabilisation and Association Agreement were positive, and the country did engage with the EU on a range of issues.⁹³ For example, on 21 May Albania and Frontex launched their first ever joint operation outside the EU on the land border between Albania and Greece – the joint operation aimed to control migratory flows and tackle cross-border crime.⁹⁴

For the Republic of North Macedonia, the 15th Stabilisation and Association Council (SAC) meeting on 19 March spelled out the successful reforms undertaken by Prime Minister Zoran Zaev's government, with particular progress on countering corruption and protection against discrimination. Then HR/VP Mogherini also stressed that, with a view to the April 2019 Presidential elections, it was essential that the government and opposition remain engaged in the political process of reform.⁹⁵ The 16th Stabilisation and Association

91 EEAS, "Statement ahead of the protest, 21 June 2019", June 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/64482/statement-ahead-protest-21-june-2019_en.

92 EEAS, "Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini and Commissioner Johannes Hahn on the latest developments in Albania", February 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/58486/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-and-commissioner-johannes-hahn_en.

93 European Commission, "Albania 2019 Report", SWD(2019) 215 final, Brussels, May 29, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-albania-report.pdf>.

94 EEAS, "Albania and Frontex launch the first ever joint operation outside EU", May 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/62894/albania-and-frontex-launch-first-ever-joint-operation-outside-eu_en.

95 EEAS, "Remarks by HR/VP Federica Mogherini at the joint press conference following the EU and North Macedonia Stabilisation and Association Council", March 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/republic-north-macedonia/59902/remarks-hrvp-federica-mogherini-joint-press-conference-following-eu-and-north-macedonia_en.

Council meeting was held in Brussels on 20 June, where the EU parties reiterated the positive news that the Commission had recommended opening accession negotiations with the country.

However, despite the positive Commission recommendation and the congratulatory remarks for both Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia, the accession process appeared to ground to a halt in mid-October at the European Council when France, Denmark and Netherlands reportedly raised reservations about the rapidly evolving process.⁹⁶ Indeed, the vetoing of the accession negotiations was followed by a ‘non-paper’ by France and others on reforming the EU accession process⁹⁷ in November, with ideas such as the introduction of new stages to the process, but the document was met with concern by countries in the region and EU institutions such as the European Commission. In fact, the European Commissioner for Enlargement at the time, Johannes Hahn, went on record as saying that the veto and the Council’s indecision on enlargement to the Western Balkans damaged the Union’s credibility in the region and undermined the EU’s global role.⁹⁸ While the European Commission digested the ideas contained in the ‘non-paper’, then HR/VP Mogherini embarked on a charm offensive in the region. She not only ‘expressed regret over the decision of the European Council not to open accession negotiations’ with the two countries, but reiterated her support for the European perspective of Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia.⁹⁹

For Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019 began with a call by the EU for the cantonal assemblies to swiftly elect delegates for the establishment of the Federation House of Peoples, because the old House of Peoples was deemed to lack democratic legitimacy on issues such as

96 Alasdair Sandford, “North Macedonia president meets Macron after French veto on EU accession talks”, November 12, 2019, <https://www.euronews.com/2019/11/12/north-macedonia-president-meets-macron-after-french-veto-on-eu-accession-talks>.

97 “Non-Paper Reforming the European Union Accession Process”, November, 2019, <https://g8fip1kplyr33r3krz5b97d1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Enlargement-nonpaper.pdf>.

98 “France: Deal with ‘endless soap opera’ of EU accession process before seeking new members”, DW News, October 15, 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/france-deal-with-endless-soap-opera-of-eu-accession-process-before-seeking-new-members/a-50839909>.

99 EEAS, “Federica Mogherini hosts a dinner with the Western Balkans’ leaders”, October 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/republic-north-macedonia/69608/federica-mogherini-hosts-dinner-western-balkans-leaders_en.

budgetary decisions.¹⁰⁰ A meeting between the then HR/VP and the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina resulted in agreement that the country's Council of Ministers should be formed as soon as possible following the October 2018 general elections. By February, the EU had congratulated Bosnia and Herzegovina on the inaugural session of the Federation House of Peoples, as well as the selection of Delegates to the State House of Peoples.¹⁰¹ In December, the EU welcomed the appointment of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina following a year of political stalemate.¹⁰²

A negative development occurred in mid-April, following news that authorities of the Republika Srpska had tabled draft amendments to a law on public peace and order, which the EU deemed would hamper fundamental freedoms in Republika Srpska.¹⁰³ Conversely, the Sarajevo Cantons were commended by the EU and partners on the adoption of asset disclosure laws designed to reduce corruption.¹⁰⁴ In November, the EU praised the repealing of the death penalty in the Republika Srpska constitution, but – with the exception of Russia – the Ambassadors of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board (PIC SBA) rejected the conclusions of the Republika Srpska National Assembly, which sought to undo a number of post-war reforms.¹⁰⁵

Throughout 2019, the EU continued to support Bosnia and Herzegovina with financial support and capacities: for example, on 23 April the EU provided 11 vehicles to authorities in order to enhance civil protection and to assist with natural disasters and accidents.¹⁰⁶

100EEAS, “EUD/EUSR, OHR, US: Formation of FBiH House of Peoples to be Completed”, January 17, 2019, <http://europa.ba/?p=61503>.

101Delegation of the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina, “Statement of the EUD/EUSR on the inaugural session of the Federation House of Peoples”, February 20, 2019, <http://europa.ba/?p=62128>.

102Delegation of the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina, “Joint statement by High Representative Josep Borrell and Neighbourhood and Enlargement Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi on the appointment of the Council of Ministers”, December 23, 2019, <http://europa.ba/?p=67308>.

103Delegation of the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina, “Statement by the Delegation of the EU to BiH and the EU Special Representative in BiH on draft amendments to the RS Law on Public Peace and Order”, April 11, 2019, <http://europa.ba/?p=62871>.

104European Commission, “Analytical Report – Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina’s application for membership of the European Union”, *SWD(2019) 222 final*, Brussels, May 29, 2019, p. 40, <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-bosnia-and-herzegovina-analytical-report.pdf>.

105Delegation of the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina, “Statement of the Ambassadors of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board *”, November 13, 2019, <http://europa.ba/?p=66541>.

106Delegation of the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina, “EU Provided 11 Vehicles to Enhance Civil Protection System in BiH”, April 23, 2019, <http://europa.ba/?p=63116>.

On civil protection, in December, the EU made available €1.5 million to help Bosnia and Herzegovina prepare to become a participating state within the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM).¹⁰⁷ In July, the Union also invested €98.6 million in grants for Bosnia and Herzegovina to assist with its connectivity agenda and enhance transportation links in the country.¹⁰⁸

Migration was a specific area of interest to the EU in 2019. In April, the European Commission provided €13 million¹⁰⁹ in support to help Bosnia and Herzegovina manage migration flows, and by June the Union announced further assistance of €14.8 million to help with refugees and migrants in the country.¹¹⁰ On 17 July, experts and officials from the EU and Bosnia and Herzegovina convened at a high-level meeting to discuss the specific challenge of migration, as the EU estimated that nearly 36,000 refugees and migrants had entered the country since January 2018 – approximately 7,400 of them being in immediate need of assistance.¹¹¹ In October, the EU warned that the situation for refugees and migrants was not improving and that this was particularly worrying with winter on the horizon. The EU condemned the ‘forcible transfer of hundreds of migrants to the improvised Vucjak shelter by the Una-Sana Canton police’ and it called on authorities to urgently address the situation.¹¹²

The question of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s EU accession loomed over 2019. The European Commission issued an opinion on 25 May in which it stated that negotiations for accession should begin once the country had achieved the necessary compliance with the agreed membership criteria. In particular, the Commission remarked that Bosnia and Herzegovina ‘will need to fundamentally improve its

107 Delegation of the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina, “Preparations of BiH for full membership in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism”, December 17, 2019, <http://europa.ba/?p=67158>.

108 Delegation of the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina, “Connectivity Agenda: €96.8 million in EU grants for Bosnia and Herzegovina”, July 5, 2019, <http://europa.ba/?p=64582>.

109 Delegation of the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina, “EU supports Bosnia and Herzegovina in managing migration flows with additional €13 million”, April 30, 2019, <http://europa.ba/?p=63226>.

110 Delegation of the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina, “EU provides €14.8 million to assist refugees and migrants in BiH”, June 25, 2019, <http://europa.ba/?p=64423>.

111 Delegation of the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina, “EU – Bosnia and Herzegovina High Level Meeting on Migration”, July 17, 2019, <http://europa.ba/?p=64769>.

112 Delegation of the EU to Bosnia and Herzegovina, “EUD/EUSR Statement: BiH authorities need to urgently address the migration issues”, October 18, 2019, <http://europa.ba/?p=66207>.

legislative and institutional framework' before negotiations can begin.¹¹³ In this respect, the EU stressed the need for progress on the rule of law, corruption and organised crime, equality and non-discrimination, elections and public administration, freedom of the media and fundamental freedoms more generally. The Council of the EU took note of the Commission's Opinion on 18 June and called on authorities not to 'block the legitimate aspirations of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina to advance towards the European Union'.¹¹⁴ The 4th Stabilisation and Association Committee on 7 November took stock of the Commission's Opinion, and, in December, the Council endorsed the Commission's Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina and it called on authorities in the country to follow the comprehensive reform roadmap.¹¹⁵

The June Council Conclusions welcomed Serbia's overall progress in the accession negotiations – 2 chapters had been concluded and 16 out of 35 negotiating chapters had been opened. Despite this positive development, the Council of the EU underscored the need for Serbia to normalise relations with Kosovo¹¹⁶ and to make further progress on the rule of law, fundamental freedoms, corruption and crime. In particular, the EU pointed to the lack of progress in the area of freedom of expression and it raised serious concerns about media freedoms in the country.¹¹⁷ In fact, the Commission reported in May 2019 that freedom of expression and political stability were key objectives for Serbia. In early 2019, the country experienced political instability,

113 EEAS, "Reforms in the Western Balkans and Turkey: annual assessments and recommendations", May 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/63397/european-commission-press-release-reforms-western-balkans-and-turkey-annual-assessments-and_en.

114 Council of the EU, "Council Conclusions – Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process", COM(2019) 260 final, Brussels, June 18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39837/st10446-en19.pdf>.

115 Council of the EU, "Council conclusions on the Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for membership of the European Union", 14954/19, Brussels, December 10, 2019, https://www.consilium.europa.eu//media/41692/bih-st14954-en19.pdf?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Council+conclusions+on+Commission+Opinion+on+Bosnia+and+Herzegovina%27s+application+for+membership+of+the+European+Union.

116 This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

117 Council of the EU, "Council Conclusions – Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process", COM(2019) 260 final, Brussels, June 18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39837/st10446-en19.pdf>.

with several opposition parties boycotting the parliament and the ruling coalition engaging in practices that ‘led to a deterioration of legislative debate and scrutiny, and undermined the parliament’s oversight of the executive’.¹¹⁸ Anti-government protests began in December 2018 and continued during the year, and, although largely peaceful in nature, many of the opposition parties announced their intention to boycott parliamentary elections in Serbia.

Protests by civil society organisations in Pristina against amendments to a draft law on political party financing were supported by the EU.

Following steps taken in 2018 to impose unilateral tariffs on imports from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo was called on by the EU to focus on the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and the swift implementation of agreed reforms.¹¹⁹ The continued imposition of tariffs in 2019 was a concern for the EU and it stated that Kosovo’s actions were a ‘clear violation’ of

the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA).¹²⁰ In June, protests by civil society organisations in Pristina against amendments to a draft law on political party financing were supported by the EU. The Union called on parliamentary parties to ‘heed demands by civil society’.¹²¹ With a view to the parliamentary elections on 6 October in Kosovo, President Hashim Thaçi called on the EU to deploy an Election Observation Mission. The Mission was deployed to Kosovo on 7 September and was based in Pristina, with approximately 100 observers joining the mission.¹²² On Kosovo’s EU accession prospects,

¹¹⁸European Commission, “Serbia 2019 Report”, SWD(2019) 291 final, Brussels, May 29, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-serbia-report.pdf>.

¹¹⁹Council of the EU, “Council Conclusions – Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process”, COM(2019) 260 final, Brussels, June 18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39837/st10446-en19.pdf>.

¹²⁰EEAS, “Statement by the Head of EU Office/EUSR and Heads of EU missions in Kosovo”, February 15, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kosovo/58195/statement-head-eu-officeeur-and-heads-eu-missions-kosovo_en.

¹²¹EEAS, “Statement by the Head of EU Office/EUSR and Heads of EU Missions in Kosovo on the Draft Law of Financing of Political Parties”, June 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kosovo/64291/statement-head-eu-officeeur-and-heads-eu-missions-kosovo-draft-law-financing-political_en.

¹²²EEAS, “About the EOM mission to Kosovo, 2019”, September 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/election-observation-missions/eom-kosovo-2019/66699/about-eom-mission-kosovo-2019_en.

the Commission stressed the need for Kosovo to work on countering corruption and crime, its judicial system and ensuring fundamental freedoms – these points were reiterated at the 3rd Stabilisation and Association Committee, which took place in Brussels on 8 October. In December, the EU welcomed the constitution of the Assembly of Kosovo and it called on a swift government formation following the October parliamentary elections.¹²³

Russia in the Western Balkans

‘The myriad of destabilising actions in the Western Balkans has created an impression that Russia has successfully elbowed its way ‘back’ into the region. Yet the perception that post-Soviet Russia ever left the region is misleading: since the early 1990s, Russia has maintained a constant presence in the Western Balkans. Its objectives and the way it has cultivated and projected power have constantly mutated, however, primarily due to the interplay of four factors: constraints and opportunities stemming from war and peace dynamics in the Western Balkans, relations with Europe and the US, Russia’s self-perception and its power resource base.

Ravaged by wars in the 1990s, the Western Balkans provided few legal business opportunities for outsiders. Just like other major powers, Russia’s policy in the region therefore focused mainly on conflict management. Even if the Kremlin timidly attempted to build an economic presence and leverage the gas supply contracts inherited from Soviet times, it largely relied on diplomatic means and its residual military power: Moscow put pressure on the warring parties, supported international sanctions, joined conflict resolution formats and proposed (as well as obstructed) diplomatic solutions. At the same time, Russia deployed peace-keepers and tolerated (if not encouraged) the constant stream of Russian fighters leaving for the Balkans.

¹²³ European Commission, “Kosovo* 2019 Report”, SWD(2019) 216 final, Brussels, May 29, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-kosovo-report.pdf>.

Overall, Russia's power projection in the region sought to convert the political capital won through conflict management into influence and the status of a power broker. It did not work as smoothly as desired: regional clients often did not heed Russia's advice, while NATO kept exercising the 'responsibility to protect'. The alliance's interventions in Kosovo, without a UN mandate, were interpreted in Moscow as unmistakable signs of the rise of a Western-driven unipolarity. With their hopes for co-management of European security dashed, uncritical Russian views of the EU and US as a constellation of friendly and like-minded powers had evaporated by the late 1990s.'

- > Stanislav Secieru, "Russia in the Western Balkans: Tactical Wins, Strategic Setbacks", *EUISS Brief*, no. 8, June, 2020, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief%208%20Russia%20WB.pdf>.

In June, the Council of the EU welcomed the overall progress made by Montenegro on accession negotiations, with the country opening 32 out of 35 chapters and provisionally closing 3. Despite acknowledging the significant progress made, the Council nevertheless stressed the need for Montenegro to make progress on countering corruption and organised crime, maintaining electoral reforms and ensuring freedom of expression.¹²⁴ The 10th SAC between the EU and Montenegro met on 27 June, where Montenegro's progress was again underlined. In October, the EU also commended the Parliament of Montenegro for broadening and extending the remit of a parliamentary committee that is working toward comprehensive electoral reform, which, as the EU acknowledged, is an important step in enhancing political dialogue in the parliament.¹²⁵ However, the year ended on a negative note when the parliamentary committee was unable to complete its work

¹²⁴Council of the EU, "Council Conclusions – Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process", *COM(2019) 260 final*, Brussels, June 18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39837/st10446-en19.pdf>.

¹²⁵EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the decision of the Montenegro Parliament on the temporary parliament committee on comprehensive reform of electoral and other legislation", October 2, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/montenegro/66127/statement-spokesperson-decision-montenegro-parliament-temporary-parliament-committee_en.

on electoral reform by the end of its mandate on 18 December. The EU regretted the development, especially in light of parliamentary elections planned for 2020.¹²⁶

Core documents

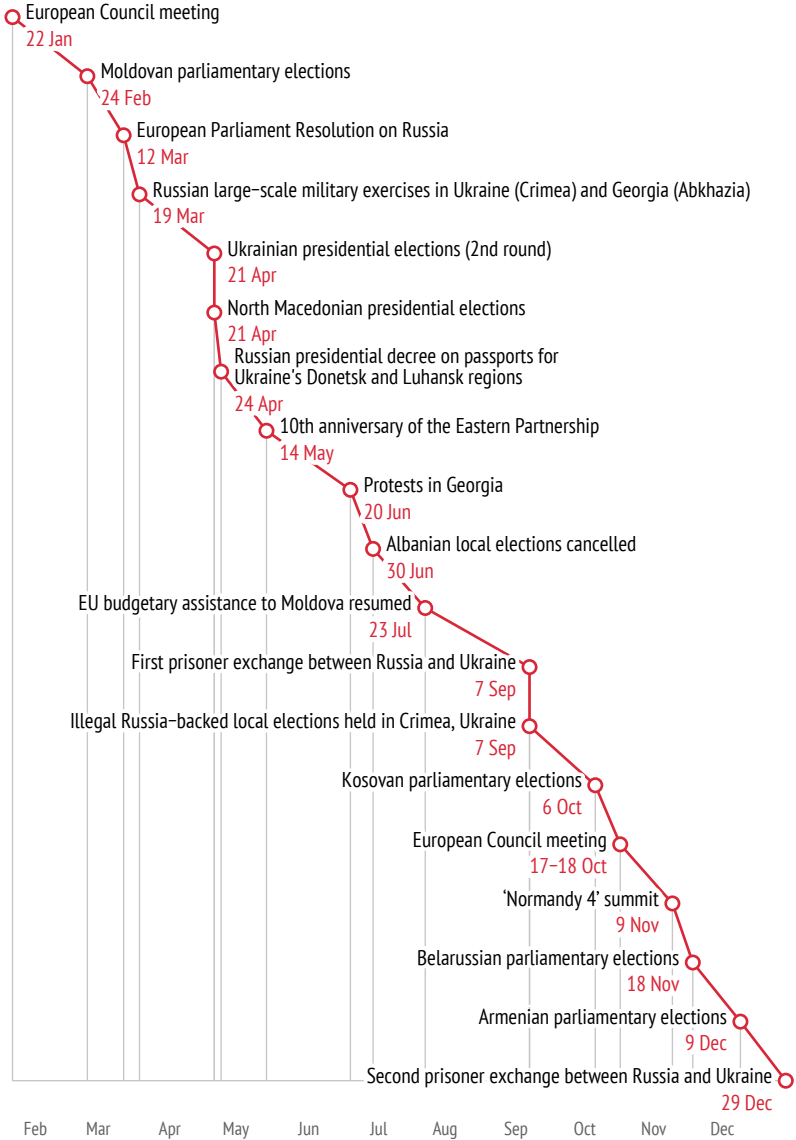
- > “Remarks by President Donald Tusk after his meeting with President of Georgia Salomé Zourabichvili”, January 22, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/01/22/remarks-by-president-donald-tusk-after-his-meeting-with-president-of-georgia-salome-zourabichvili/>.
- > “Resolution on the State of EU–Russia Political Relations”, *P8_TA(2019)0157*, March 12, 2019, European Parliament, Strasbourg, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0157_EN.html.
- > “Outcome of the Council meeting – Foreign Affairs”, March 18, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7600-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > “Celebrating 10 years of the Eastern Partnership”, May 14, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_2489.
- > “Albania 2019 Report”, SWD(2019) 215 final, Brussels, May 29, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-albania-report.pdf>.
- > “Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina’s application for membership of the European Union”, COM(2019) 261 final, Brussels, May 29, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-bosnia-and-herzegovina-opinion.pdf>.

¹²⁶EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the lack of political dialogue in Montenegro”, December 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/montenegro/72373/statement-spokesperson-lack-political-dialogue-montenegro_en.

- > “Kosovo* 2019 Report”, SWD(2019) 216 final, Brussels, May 29, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-kosovo-report.pdf>.
- > “Montenegro 2019 Report”, SWD(2019) 217 final, May 29, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-montenegro-report.pdf>.
- > “Serbia 2019 Report”, SWD(2019) 291 final, Brussels, May 29, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-serbia-report.pdf>.
- > “Black Sea: Council adopts conclusions”, June 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/17/black-sea-council-adopts-conclusions/>.
- > “Council Conclusions – Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process”, COM(2019) 260 final, Brussels, June 18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39837/st10446-en19.pdf>.
- > “European Council meeting (20 June 2019) – Conclusions”, June 20, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39922/20-21-euco-final-conclusions-en.pdf>.
- > “EU report: the Republic of Moldova moved forward with key reforms”, September 12, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_5548.
- > “Non-Paper Reforming the European Union Accession Process”, November, 2019, <https://g8fip1kplyr33r3krz5b97d1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Enlargement-nonpaper.pdf>.
- > Council of the EU, “Council conclusions on the Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina’s application for membership of the European Union”, 14954/19, Brussels, December 10, 2019, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41692/bih-st14954-en19.pdf?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Council+conclusions+on+Commission+Opinion+on+Bosnia+and+Herzegovina%27s+application+for+membership+of+the+European+Union.

Key events

Eastern Neighbourhood and Western Balkans



Asia Pacific

Central Asia

The EU further developed its relations with the states of Central Asia in 2019, especially within the context of the new EU Strategy on Central Asia that was presented by the HR/VP and European Commission on 15 May – the Council of the EU adopted the strategy on 17 June. The new strategy focuses on promoting resilience, prosperity and regional cooperation and it stresses the EU’s ambition to finalise the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (EPCAs) and to promote peace in Afghanistan. The Council also stressed the need to combat corruption, tackle climate change and to remediate uranium mining legacy sites.¹ The Council Conclusions follow on from the Joint Communication that was published on 15 May, where the HR/VP and European Commission called for renewed ‘efforts to promote Euro-Asian connectivity’ given the ‘increased interest for the EU’s approach to sustainable connectivity’ in the region.² To promote the new strategy both the former President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, and then HR/VP, Federica

¹ Council of the EU, “Council Conclusions on the New Strategy on Central Asia”, 10221/19, Brussels, June 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39778/st10221-en19.pdf>.

² High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and European Commission, “The EU and Central Asia: New Opportunities for a Stronger Partnership”, *JOIN(2019) 9 final*, May 15, 2019, Brussels, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/joint_communication_-_the_eu_and_central_asia_-_new_opportunities_for_a_stronger_partnership.pdf.

Mogherini, visited Central Asia in May and the states of the region welcomed the strategy and the prospect of closer cooperation.

On 10–11 April, the EU hosted a regional conference in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on ‘Geographical Indications’ for Central Asian products such as textiles, artisanal products and agriculture in order to assist with branding and marketing them on international markets.³ On 28 May, the EU and the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan held the 6th High-Level Political and Security Dialogue – this was the first meeting that took place after the adoption of the Joint Communication. At the meeting, the EU and Central Asian states discussed the launching of the new phase of the EU’s Border Management Programme in Central Asia (BOMCA) and the fight against illicit drug trafficking and hybrid threats⁴ – BOMCA was launched in 2003 and the EU has already invested some €40.8 million since this time for border management and customs tasks.⁵ At the beginning of July, the EU and Central Asia organised a forum in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, to outline the Union’s key objectives and to promote dialogue with actors in the region.⁶ The forum took place back-to-back with the 15th EU-Central Asia Ministerial meeting on 7 July and the meeting continued a strategic dialogue on the key areas of focus for the new strategy.⁷ At the same time, and as a sign of the Union’s growing presence in the region, the EU opened a new Delegation in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan (taking the

The European Commission announced that it would mobilise an additional €4 million to prevent violent extremism and counter radicalisation in Central Asia.

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- 3 EEAS, “The EU hosts Regional Geographic Indications Conference in Dushanbe”, April 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uzbekistan/60903/eu-hosts-regional-geographic-indications-conference-dushanbe_en.
 - 4 EEAS, “The EU and the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan hold High-Level Political and Security Dialogue”, May 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kazakhstan/63320/eu-and-countries-central-asia-and-afghanistan-hold-high-level-political-and-security-dialogue_en.
 - 5 EEAS, “Border Management Program in Central Asia (BOMCA)”, June 26, 2018, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/47342/border-management-program-central-asia-bomca_ru.
 - 6 EEAS, “The first EU-Central Asia Forum in Bishkek”, July 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tajikistan/65541/first-eu-central-asia-forum-bishkek_en.
 - 7 EEAS, “HR/VP Federica Mogherini visited Ashgabat to sign the Establishment Agreement of an EU Delegation to Turkmenistan”, July 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/turkmenistan/65289/high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-visited-ashgabat-sign-establishment_en.

total number of Delegations to 142.⁸ Finally, in September the European Commission announced that it would mobilise an additional €4 million to prevent violent extremism and counter radicalisation in Central Asia.⁹

Connecting the dots in Central Asia

‘Despite ‘connectivity’ having become a new global buzzword, an exact definition of the term remains elusive. If various EU descriptions are combined, connectivity comprises of transport, digital, energy and human networks, as well as rules, standards and institutions which govern the flows of interaction. Moreover, the EU’s September 2018 Connectivity Strategy defines the European interpretation of connectivity as sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based. This European vision of connectivity also runs through the EU’s new Central Asia Strategy, which was adopted on 15 May 2019. Compared with the previous Central Asia Strategy from 2007, the new Strategy places increased emphasis on encouraging economic development (‘prosperity’), comprehensive security (‘resilience’) and intra-regional cooperation between the Central Asian states: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In order for prosperity and resilience to be achieved, significant regional connectivity challenges – which largely stem from the legacy of the region’s Soviet past (including its dramatic rupture and the informal shadow networks that quickly took root) – need to be overcome. Furthermore, the EU’s Strategy faces competing visions of connectivity from both China and Russia.’

- > Sinikukka Saari, “Connecting the Dots: Challenges to EU Connectivity in Central Asia”, *EUISS Brief*, no. 6, June, 2019, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief%206%20Central%20Asia_0.pdf.

⁸ EEAS, “HR/VP Federica Mogherini visited Ashgabat to sign the Establishment Agreement of an EU Delegation to Turkmenistan”, July 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/turkmenistan/65289/high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-visited-ashgabat-sign-establishment_en.

⁹ European Commission, “The EU steps up support to prevent violent extremism and radicalisation in Central Asia”, September 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tajikistan/67271/eu-steps-support-prevent-violent-extremism-and-radicalisation-central-asia_en.

In its relations with Turkmenistan, the EU stressed the importance of trade relations, bilateral cooperation and human rights. On 26 February, the EU and Turkmenistan held their 18th meeting of the Joint Committee at which they discussed ongoing reforms in the country and the over €88 million that the EU will dedicate to regional programmes in support of the private sector, trade and investment. On energy, the two actors also discussed the potential for importing Turkmen gas deliveries to the EU at the Joint Committee.¹⁰ A month later, on 29 March, the EU and Turkmenistan held their 11th Human Rights Dialogue. The EU stressed the importance of supporting freedom of opinion and expression and it stated that while Turkmenistan has made certain efforts it is important to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances, plus it would be welcome if foreign diplomats could visit penitentiary facilities in Turkmenistan.¹¹

At the start of the year, Kazakhstan and the EU held their 17th Cooperation Committee meeting in Brussels and the partners discussed trade and investment relations in the context of the EPCA and the rule of law, human rights and good governance.¹² On 9 June, Kazakhstan held presidential elections and the EU was concerned following a OCSE-ODIHR report that stated that the elections were tarnished because of ‘clear violations of fundamental freedoms as well as pressure on critical voices. There were widespread detentions of peaceful protesters on election day’.¹³ On 18–19 November, the EU and Kazakhstan held their 17th Subcommittee on Justice and Home Affairs and 11th Human Rights Dialogue. At the meeting, the EU raised the issue of continued obstacles to freedom of expression and information

10 EEAS, “The European Union and Turkmenistan held their 18th Joint Committee meeting”, February 26, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/turkmenistan/58748/european-union-and-turkmenistan-held-their-18th-joint-committee-meeting_en.

11 EEAS, “The European Union and Turkmenistan hold their 11th Human Rights Dialogue”, March 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/turkmenistan/60573/european-union-and-turkmenistan-hold-their-11th-human-rights-dialogue_en.

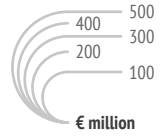
12 EEAS, “17th Cooperation Committee meeting between the European Union and Kazakhstan”, January 30, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kazakhstan/57409/17th-cooperation-committee-meeting-between-european-union-and-kazakhstan_en.

13 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the presidential elections in the Republic of Kazakhstan”, June 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kazakhstan/63895/statement-spokesperson-presidential-elections-republic-kazakhstan_en.

Central Asia

EU Integrated Approach, 2019-2021

- Development assistance disbursements (2019)
- EIB financed projects signed in 2019
- Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (2019-2021)*



* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects.
Totals do not include completed projects.

Data: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European Investment Bank, 2020

in Kazakhstan and it called for unhindered access to detention facilities by independent monitors to investigate ‘acts of torture and rehabilitation of victims’.¹⁴

There were also a number of significant developments in the EU-Tajikistan relationship during 2019. In February, the EU deployed a joint Commission-EEAS technical team to Dushanbe to engage in initial discussions about the EU’s Special Incentive Arrangement for Sustainable Development (GSP+), which offers lower-middle income

¹⁴ EEAS, “EU and Kazakhstan hold Subcommittee on Justice and Home Affairs and the Human Rights Dialogue”, November 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kazakhstan/70672/eu-and-kazakhstan-hold-subcommittee-justice-and-home-affairs-and-human-rights-dialogue_en.

countries additional trade incentives in support of good governance, environmental protection and labour and human rights.¹⁵ The EU's Special Representative for Central Asia, Peter Burian, visited the country in March to discuss issues such as trade and police reform.¹⁶ In mid-2019, the EU continued to work with Tajik authorities on security matters such as the reintegration of the families of foreign terrorist fighters,¹⁷ and the Union even co-sponsored an international conference on 17 May on countering terrorism and its financing through illicit drug trafficking and organised crime.¹⁸ During the year the EU would also support the country with its national health strategy and relief from flooding and it invested €59 million to improve rural livelihoods in the country.¹⁹ On the diplomatic front, the EU and Tajikistan held their 7th Cooperation Committee meeting on 7 June in the context of the EU-Tajikistan Partnership and Cooperation Framework Agreement (PCA). On 15 November, the EU and Tajikistan held their 11th Human Rights Dialogue and the Cooperation Council met on 10 December to discuss reforms, energy relations and rule of law.²⁰ The year ended with HR/VP Borrell visiting Minister of Foreign Affairs Sirojiddin Muhridin on 11 December to discuss relations and issues such as regional water management, terrorism and border security.²¹

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- 15 EEAS, "The EU and Tajikistan discuss additional trade preferences for Tajikistan", February 15, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tajikistan/58200/eu-and-tajikistan-discuss-additional-trade-preferences-tajikistan_en.
 - 16 EEAS, "EU Special Representative for Central Asia Peter Burian visits Dushanbe", March 15, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tajikistan/59649/eu-special-representative-central-asia-peter-burian-visits-dushanbe_en.
 - 17 EEAS, "Reintegration of the families of foreign terrorist fighters", May 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tajikistan/62478/reintegration-families-foreign-terrorist-fighters_en.
 - 18 EEAS, "European Union supports counterterrorism event in Tajikistan", May 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tajikistan/62675/european-union-supports-counterterrorism-event-tajikistan_en.
 - 19 EEAS, "European Union invests €59 million to improve rural livelihoods in Tajikistan", August 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tajikistan/66469/european-union-invests-€59-million-improve-rural-livelihoods-tajikistan_en.
 - 20 EEAS, "EU-Tajikistan Cooperation Council, 10 December 2019", December 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tajikistan/71871/eu-tajikistan-cooperation-council-10-december-2019_en.
 - 21 EEAS, "High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, Sirojiddin Muhridin", December 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tajikistan/71913/high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-met-minister-foreign-affairs-republic_en.

The EU welcomed the news in August that Uzbekistan had closed the Jaslyk penal colony in line with Uzbekistan's ratification and full implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The EU also remarked that it looks forward to Uzbekistan's reform of its prison system.²² In October, the EU and Uzbekistan held their 16th Cooperation Committee meeting where representatives from both sides discussed the ongoing EPCA negotiations and Uzbekistan's desire to join the WTO.²³ Back in March, the EU had confirmed its support for Uzbekistan's 'renewed vigour and commitment' to join the WTO.²⁴ In November, the HR/VP visited

To enhance cooperation with the region on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) threats, the EU worked with countries in Central Asia on the 'Jeyran Field Exercise'.

Uzbekistan to meet with Abdulaziz Kamilov, the Uzbek Minister of Foreign Affairs. The meeting served to take stock of the EPCA that was launched in November 2018 and to discuss the parliamentary elections that were set for 22 December.²⁵ To enhance cooperation with the region on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) threats, the EU worked with countries in Central Asia on the 'Jeyran Field Exercise' on 13–15 November. The exercise, one of the largest of its kind in the

region, took place in Uzbekistan and it brought together anti-terrorist experts and responders and public health workers, too.²⁶ The exercise was preceded by a round table on 11–12 November that brought

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- 22 EEAS, "Statement by the European Union on the closure of the Jaslyk penal colony", August 13, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uzbekistan/66375/statement-european-union-closure-jaslyk-penal-colony_en.
- 23 EEAS, "The European Union and Uzbekistan held their 16th Cooperation Committee Meeting", October 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uzbekistan/69380/european-union-and-uzbekistan-held-their-16th-cooperation-committee-meeting_en.
- 24 EEAS, "European Union Supports Uzbekistan's Accession to World Trade Organization (WTO)", March 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uzbekistan/59579/european-union-supports-uzbekistan-s-accession-world-trade-organization-wto_en.
- 25 EEAS, "Federica Mogherini met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan, Abdulaziz Kamilov", November 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uzbekistan/70320/federica-mogherini-met-minister-foreign-affairs-uzbekistan-abdulaziz-kamilov_en.
- 26 EEAS, "Opening of the Jeyran Field Exercise", November 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uzbekistan/70426/opening-jeyran-field-exercise_en.

together national focal points on CBRN from the region.²⁷ The EU took note of the positive OSCE assessment of the parliamentary elections that took place in Uzbekistan on 22 December. The preliminary OSCE assessment showed that the ‘improvements to election law and greater acceptance of freedom of expression allowed for the elections to be conducted in an open and fair atmosphere with genuine competition between the various candidates’.²⁸

Finally, the EU and Kyrgyzstan further developed relations in 2019 and on 6 July the two actors concluded negotiations for their EPCA, which was launched on 19 December 2017. The EPCA is touted to deepen bilateral relations with the aim of enhancing political cooperation and reforms, cooperating on foreign and security policy, boosting trade and investor protection and enhancing cooperation on justice, freedom and security matters.²⁹ A Cooperation Council between the EU and Kyrgyzstan was held in Brussels on 9 December – this was the 17th such meeting between the actors. The Cooperation Council not only reiterated the importance of the EPCA but ministers discussed the need to strengthen rule of law and electoral reforms with a view to the Kyrgyz parliamentary elections that are due by October 2020. The ministers also noted that the Kyrgyz Republic has increased its use of GSP+ preferences, which will add to trade benefits and relations between the actors.³⁰

27 EEAS, “European Union Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Centres of Excellence Initiative: 11th National Focal Points Round-table Meeting for Central Asia”, November 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uzbekistan/70302/european-union-chemical-biological-radiological-and-nuclear-centres-excellence-initiative-11th_en.

28 EEAS, “Uzbekistan: Statement by the Spokesperson on the parliamentary elections”, December 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uzbekistan/72570/uzbekistan-statement-spokesperson-parliamentary-elections_en.

29 EEAS, “EU–Kyrgyz Republic Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement – Fact Sheet”, July 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/epca_factsheet.pdf.

30 Council of the EU, “EU–Kyrgyzstan Cooperation Council, 9 December 2019”, December 9, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-ministerial-meetings/2019/12/09/>.

East Asia

2019 was marked by an adjustment of EU–China relations in the context of systemic changes. On 18 January, the EU and China held high level political exchanges on the occasion of the EEAS Secretary General’s visit to Beijing. During the meeting, the two parties highlighted the importance of advancing the bilateral relations and reiterated their readiness to support and advance the rules-based multilateral order.³¹ On 12 March, the European Commission and the HR/VP

The EU sees China as a cooperation partner, but also as an economic competitor and a ‘systemic rival’.

published a Joint Communication reviewing the EU–China relations and the associated opportunities and challenges. The document shows that the EU sees China as a cooperation partner, but also as an economic competitor and a ‘systemic rival’ at the same time. It also set out a number of

policy actions with a view to refining the EU’s strategic approach, as set out in the 2016 China Strategy, and enabling the Union to both deepen cooperation with China and better defend its own economic and security interests in the context of the mutual relationship.³² The EU’s aims in this regard include the development of a level playing field and equal market access for European businesses, as well as the protection of critical EU infrastructure and industry. As regards the latter, the Union took a significant step forward in March 2019, with the adoption of a regulation that established a framework for the screening of investments from third countries that may affect security or public order in the EU.³³

31 EEAS, “EU and China held high level political exchanges at the occasion of EEAS Secretary General’s visit to Beijing”, January 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/56748/eu-and-china-held-high-level-political-exchanges-occasion-eeas-secretary-general%E2%80%99s-visit_en.

32 European Commission and HR/VP, “Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council on EU–China – A strategic outlook”, JOIN(2019) 5 final, March 12, 2019.

33 “Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a framework for the screening of foreign direct investments into the Union”, EU 2019/452, Brussels, March 19, 2019.

On 18 March, the 9th round of the EU–China Strategic Dialogue was held,³⁴ as well as a Council meeting, during which ministers welcomed the assessments and proposed actions in the ‘Strategic Outlook’ and underlined the paramount importance of unity when engaging with China. The meeting was followed by a working lunch with the Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister.³⁵ On 2 April, the EU and China held their 37th Human Rights Dialogue, in the context of the Union’s continued engagement with China in this area.³⁶ The dialogue provided another opportunity for the EU to raise, among other issues, the situation in Xinjiang, where the Chinese authorities have established political ‘re-education camps’, conduct mass surveillance and impose travel restrictions targeting Uighurs and other minorities.³⁷ These events informed the 21st EU–China Summit, which took place on 9 April in Brussels.³⁸ The two sides discussed the full breadth of their relationship and agreed to strengthen their cooperation at the bilateral and global level in a spirit of reciprocity. They set 2020 as a target date for concluding an ambitious agreement on investment, as well as reaffirmed their commitment to contribute to peace and stability around the globe, including in Iran, Afghanistan, the Korean peninsula, the South China Sea and Africa.

Throughout the second half of the year, the EU also issued several statements on the situation in Hong Kong, where the government’s proposed extradition reforms had sparked widespread popular protests that had been met with an increasingly harsh response, leading

34 EEAS, “Remarks by High Representative/ Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the press conference following the EU–China Strategic Dialogue”, March 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59785/remarks-high-representative-vice-president-federica-mogherini-press-conference-following-eu_en.

35 Council of the EU, “Outcome of the Council meeting”, March 18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39024/st07600-en19-vf.pdf>.

36 EEAS, “The European Union and China held their 37th Human Rights Dialogue”, April 2, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60545/european-union-and-china-held-their-37th-human-rights-dialogue_en.

37 EEAS, “Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament urgency debate on China, notably the situation of ethnic and religious minorities”, April 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61227/speech-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-european-parliament-urgency-debate_en.

38 Council of the EU, “EU–China Summit Joint statement”, April 9, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39020/euchina-joint-statement-9april2019.pdf>.

to escalating violence and continuing unrest.³⁹ The protests in Hong Kong were extremely large, with a reported million or so residents taking to the streets in June alone.⁴⁰ In her statements, then HR/VP Mogherini called for restraint and de-escalation and pledged the EU's support for establishing confidence-building measures and an inclusive political process. These developments were discussed during the annual Structured Dialogue meeting between Hong Kong's government and the EU, where the two sides also had the opportunity to exchange views and explore ways to deepen their cooperation in a range of areas.⁴¹

The protests in Hong Kong were extremely large, with a reported million or so residents taking to the streets in June alone.

As regards Taiwan, 2019 saw further escalation of cross-strait tensions, as well as a number of significant developments on and around the island. In 6 April, a French warship conducted a passage through the Taiwan strait,⁴² while in July the US government approved a \$2.2 billion arms sale including Abrams tanks and Stinger missiles to Taiwan.⁴³ The year closed with the presidential campaign (and, ultimately, re-election) of the Democratic Progressive Party's Tsai Ing-wen to the Taiwanese presidency.⁴⁴ Against this background, and

39 EEAS, "Statement by the EU Spokesperson on the ongoing protests against the proposed extradition reforms in Hong Kong", June 13, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/64040/statement-eu-spokesperson-ongoing-protests-against-proposed-extradition-reforms-hong-kong_en; Council of the EU, "Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on Hong Kong", November 18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/11/18/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-european-union-on-hong-kong/>.

40 Jin Wu, K.K. Rebecca Lai and Alan Yuhas, "Six Months of Hong Kong Protests. How did we get here?", *The New York Times*, November 18, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/world/asia/hong-kong-protests-arc.html>.

41 EEAS, "Structured Dialogue meeting between HKSARG and the European Union explores way to deepen relations", November 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/71150/structured-dialogue-meeting-between-hksarg-and-european-union-explores-way-deepen-relations_en.

42 Idrees Ali and Phil Stewart, "Exclusive: In rare move, French warship passes through Taiwan Strait", *Reuters*, April 24, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-taiwan-france-warship-exclusive/exclusive-in-rare-move-french-warship-passes-through-taiwan-strait-idUSKCN1S027E>.

43 "US approves potential sale of \$2.2bn in arms to Taiwan, stoking China's anger", *The Guardian*, July 9, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/09/us-approves-potential-sale-of-22bn-in-arms-to-taiwan-stoking-chinas-anger>.

44 Sarah Zeng et al., "Taiwan elections: Tsai Ing-wen re-elected as president as rival Han Kuo-yu concedes defeat", *South China Morning Post*, January 11, 2020, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3045693/taiwan-elections-tsai-ing-wen-re-elected-president-victory-over>.

in line its 'One China' policy, the EU continued intensifying its co-operation and dialogue with Taipei on a broad range of issues, while calling on both sides to avoid actions and statements that could increase tensions around the Strait.⁴⁵

The EU as a maritime security provider

'Maritime security is one of the fundamental strategic interests of the European Union. Then HR/VP Federica Mogherini reiterated this fact at the conclusion of the informal meeting of EU defence ministers in Helsinki at the end of August 2019, adding that there was a 'growing demand for an EU role as a maritime security provider not only in our region, but also further away' – especially in Asia and the Indian Ocean. As a global trading power, the EU is vitally dependent on free, open and safe maritime shipping: 90% of its external and 40% of its internal trade is seaborne. The value of goods transported by sea is 1.8 times higher than that of goods transported by air and almost three times higher than that of goods transported overland. In 2018 alone, the value of trade between the EU and Asia, home to its main economic partners, reached €1.4 trillion, with 50% of it transiting through the Indian Ocean. As a result, the EU has a vested interest in a secure maritime domain and it is only natural that it should contribute to its preservation, especially in waters connecting it to its main economic partners in Asia. It is also natural that Asian countries want to see Europe becoming more proactively involved in addressing the many maritime security challenges – both traditional and non-traditional – in the Indo-Pacific, especially given its aspiration to play a greater security role in the region.'

45 EEAS, "Speech on behalf of the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary debate on the latest developments in the cross-strait relations between mainland China and Taiwan, January 30, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/taiwan/57441/speech-behalf-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-european-parliament-plenary_en.

- > Eva Pejsova, “The EU as a Maritime Security Provider”, *EUISS Brief*, no. 13, December, 2019, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief%2013%20Maritime_o.pdf.

2019 witnessed the consolidation and further intensification of the EU’s Strategic Partnership with Japan. 1 February 2019 was the first day of provisional application of the 2018 EU–Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA). The agreement provides an overarching framework for enhanced bilateral political and sectoral cooperation and joint actions on issues of common interest, including on regional and global challenges.⁴⁶ During the first Joint Committee meeting under the SPA, on 25 March, the two parties agreed, *inter alia*, to strengthen security policy cooperation including on crisis management.⁴⁷ On February 1, 2019, the bilateral Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) also entered into force. Accounting for around one-third of the world’s GDP and more than one-fifth of its trade, and in conjunction with the SPA, the EPA upgrades the EU–Japan relationship to the strategic level.⁴⁸

During the 26th EU–Japan Summit on 25 April 2019, EU and Japanese leaders discussed the SPA and EPA and agreed to intensify security and defence cooperation, particularly in the areas of maritime security, counter-terrorism, cybersecurity, and crisis management, and to work more closely on quality infrastructure and sustainable connectivity between Europe and the Asia-Pacific region, as well as in the fields of data security, energy, transport, and research and innovation.⁴⁹ Following that, on 27 September, the EU and Japan signed a Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure, paving the way for close cooperation bilaterally, multilaterally and in

46 EEAS, “EU–Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA)”, February 1, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/57491/eu-japan-strategic-partnership-agreement-spa_en.

47 EEAS, “EU and Japan launch implementation of Strategic Partnership Agreement”, March 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60133/eu-and-japan-launch-implementation-strategic-partnership-agreement_en.

48 EEAS, “EU–Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)”, January 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/56981/eu-japan-economic-partnership-agreement-epa_en.

49 Council of the EU, “EU–Japan Summit Joint Statement”, April 25, 2019, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39222/190425-eu-japan_summit-statement-final.pdf.

third countries on transport, energy, digital and people-to-people contacts.⁵⁰

The Korean peninsula continued being an area of major concern for the EU in 2019. In January, Kim Jong-un visited China's President Xi Jinping in what was the two leaders' 4th such meeting. There were several attempts to advance the negotiation process that had started in the previous year, including a US-North Korea Summit in Hanoi, on 28 February, which nevertheless ended without any agreement.⁵¹ Two months later, the North Korean leader visited Russia, where he received support from the Russian President Vladimir Putin over security guarantees ahead of nuclear disarmament.⁵² The negotiation process, however, stalled, while North Korea's ending of its self-imposed nuclear test moratorium engendered further concerns.⁵³ Against this background, on 18 February, the HR/VP met with the Republic of Korea Foreign Minister at the margins of the Munich Security Conference and underlined the Union's support to promoting the diplomatic process and achieving complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation.⁵⁴ In this context, the Union renewed in July its autonomous sanctions on North Korean individuals and entities that contribute to the country's nuclear-related, ballistic-missile-related or other weapons of mass destruction-related programmes or sanctions evasion.⁵⁵

In addition, on 26 November, the EU and the Republic of Korea held their 3rd security and defence consultations, during which they

50 EEAS, "The Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure between the European Union and Japan", September 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/68018/partnership-sustainable-connectivity-and-quality-infrastructure-between-european-union-and_en.

51 "Trump Kim talks: What to make of the Hanoi summit collapse?", *BBC News*, February 28, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-47382060>.

52 "North Korean leader Kim arrives in Russia's Vladivostok", *Reuters*, April 24, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-russia-kim-arrival/north-korean-leader-kim-arrives-in-russias-vladivostok-idUSKCN1S0oTP>.

53 UN, "Statement attributable to the Spokesman for the Secretary-General – on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea", January 1, 2020, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-01-01/statement-attributable-to-the-spokesman-for-the-secretary-general-%E2%80%93-the-democratic-people%E2%80%99s-republic-of-korea>.

54 EEAS, "Federica Mogherini met with the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea Kang Kyung-wha", February 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/58259/federica-mogherini-met-foreign-minister-republic-korea-kang-kyung-wha_en.

55 Council of the EU, "North Korea: EU renews its autonomous sanctions on individuals and entities", July 15, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/07/15/north-korea-eu-renews-its-autonomous-sanctions-on-individuals-and-entities/>.

discussed regional security issues, recent defence policy developments and bilateral security and defence cooperation. In particular, the participants exchanged views on further cooperation in the area of maritime security, while the EU expressed its willingness to explore the possibility of the Republic of Korea's participation in more EU CSDP missions and operations, additionally to EUNAVFOR Atalanta.⁵⁶ Beyond security and defence, 1 July marked the 8th anniversary of the EU–Republic of Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA). A European Commission evaluation of the FTA in 2019 showed that EU goods exports to the Republic of Korea increased by 43% (to €49.2 billion) between 2010 and 2018 and services by 79% from 2010 to 2016.⁵⁷

The EU and Mongolia continued consolidating their relations in 2019. On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations, the HR/VP sent a letter to the Mongolian Foreign Minister highlighting the achievements of the mutual relations, including the entry into force of the EU–Mongolia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement in 2017, as well as the EU's continued interest in deepening and extending the scope of bilateral cooperation.⁵⁸

South Asia

Afghanistan experienced a tumultuous year punctuated by terror attacks and instability. The Union made known its concerns about the deteriorating environment for media and journalists in the country, and it expressed dismay at the increasing level of threats toward

56 EEAS, “The European Union and the Republic of Korea hold security and defence consultations”, November 26, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/71021/european-union-and-republic-korea-hold-security-and-defence-consultations_en.

57 European Commission, “Ex-post evaluation: trade agreement between the EU and the Republic of Korea shown to have increased EU exports by 43%”, March 6, 2019, <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1991>.

58 EEAS, “30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the EU and Mongolia”, September 26, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mongolia/67949/30th-anniversary-diplomatic-relations-between-eu-and-mongolia_en.

media workers.⁵⁹ There were also a number of attacks on civilians. In July, attacks were perpetrated in Wardak province and the Taliban closed 42 health clinics to the detriment of 5,000 patients that visited the centres on a daily basis.⁶⁰ In the same month, and in the context of the 2019 presidential elections, an attack was launched against the headquarters of vice-presidential candidate Amrullah Saleh on the first day of official campaigning – 20 people lost their lives during the attack.⁶¹ On 31 July, a further attack took place on a bus in Farah province killing at least 34 people including women and children.⁶² In October, there was an attack on a wedding in Kabul where 60 people died and 150 were wounded,⁶³ and there were several other attacks claimed by the Taliban for the remainder of 2019, including on a mosque.

Attacks were perpetrated in Wardak province and the Taliban closed 42 health clinics to the detriment of 5,000 patients.

In the year marking the centennial of Afghan independence, the Union continued to support Afghanistan throughout 2019. In March, it dedicated €27 million in humanitarian assistance to the country,⁶⁴ in August €1 million were earmarked for the Afghan media covering the 2019 presidential elections,⁶⁵ in October close to €900,000 were dedicated to

59 EEAS, “Joint Local Statement by the European Union Delegation, EU Heads of Mission and Norway on the recent threats against the media in Afghanistan”, July 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/64931/joint-local-statement-european-union-delegation-eu-heads-mission-and-norway-recent-threats_en.

60 EEAS, “Joint Local Statement by Heads of Mission of the European Union, its Members States and Norway on attacks against medical facilities”, July 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/65805/joint-local-statement-heads-mission-european-union-its-members-states-and-norway-attacks_en.

61 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on yesterday’s attack against vice-presidential candidate Amrullah Saleh at the beginning of the Presidential election campaign in Afghanistan”, July 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/65964/statement-spokesperson-yesterday-attack-against-vice-presidential-candidate-amrullah-saleh_en.

62 EEAS, “Local statement on today’s attack against a civilian bus in Farah, Afghanistan”, July 31, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/66053/local-statement-todays-attack-against-civilian-bus-farah-afghanistan_en.

63 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the attack at a wedding hall in Kabul”, October 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/66483/statement-spokesperson-attack-wedding-hall-kabul_en.

64 European Commission, “Afghanistan: EU releases €27 million in humanitarian assistance”, March 20, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_1733.

65 EEAS, “EU Commits One Million Euros to Support Media on Elections”, August 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/66777/eu-commits-one-million-euros-support-media-elections_en.

helping Afghan families face the ill-effects of 2018's droughts⁶⁶ and in November the EU reinforced its humanitarian support with a €40 million envelop for Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran, which took the Union's overall assistance in 2019 to €77 million.⁶⁷ Such assistance was combined with the EU's diplomatic efforts and, in addition to HR/VP visiting Afghanistan in March, the Council called for direct peace negotiations between the Afghans, the government and the Taliban.⁶⁸ In May, there was an intensification of bilateral meetings with the Special Working Group meeting on 7–9 May, the 2nd Joint Committee meeting on 14 May and a High-Level Political and Security Dialogue on 28 May.

After the summer, the EU turned its attention to the presidential elections on 28 September, which the HR/VP called necessary given the breakdown in US-Taliban talks and the intra-Afghan Dialogue. The elections were blighted by violent attacks in which people were killed and injured, and the EU called for restraint and patience from both sides before the results of the election were announced.⁶⁹ In December, the EU and its member states welcomed the announcement of the preliminary results of the elections which showed that incumbent President Ashraf Ghani was on course to win a second term.⁷⁰ Finally, at the end of the year HR/VP Borrell addressed the European Parliament on human rights and he highlighted the continued cases of child abuse and the fact that 80% of civilian casualties in the country are children.⁷¹

66 EEAS, "Contribution from the European Union enhances resilience in Badghis Province", October 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/69464/contribution-european-union-enhances-resilience-badghis-province_en.

67 EEAS, "Afghanistan: EU reinforces humanitarian support with €40 million as crisis worsens", November 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/71081/afghanistan-eu-reinforces-humanitarian-support-€40-million-crisis-worsens_en.

68 Council of the EU, "Council Conclusions: Afghanistan's Peace Process", 7978/19, Brussels, April 8, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39011/st07978-en19.pdf>.

69 EEAS, "Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the Presidential election in Afghanistan", September 30, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/68137/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-presidential-election_en.

70 EEAS, "Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States represented in Kabul", December 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/72566/statement-behalf-european-union-and-its-member-states-represented-kabul_en.

71 EEAS, "Afghanistan: remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the European Parliament Plenary session debate on violations of human rights", December 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/72400/afghanistan-remarks-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-european-parliament_en.

The EU's relations with Bangladesh mainly focused on climate change and the refugee crisis emanating from Myanmar/Burma. The year started with the preliminary assessment of the 30 December parliamentary elections in the country, which were marred by violence on the day despite the fact that the opposition participated in the elections for the first time in 10 years.⁷² On the diplomatic front, the EU and Bangladesh met for their 9th Joint Commission session on 21 October in Dhaka, where the Union called on Bangladesh to uphold its reforms on labour standards, as well as called for the country's continued support with Rohingya refugees.⁷³ In this regard, back in February the EU dedicated €24 million towards humanitarian aid for those living in the Cox's Bazar district, where most of the refugees currently reside.⁷⁴ In addition to this support, the EU dedicated €205 million to strengthen Bangladesh's education sector in February⁷⁵ and in November €140,000 was made available for humanitarian assistance for the victims of Cyclone Bulbul. Some 17,500 people directly benefitted from the assistance.⁷⁶

The EU dedicated €24 million towards humanitarian aid for those living in the Cox's Bazar district.

The 8th EU-Bhutan biennial consultations were held in Paro on 5 November and the meeting confirmed the strong partnership between the two sides. The EU commended Bhutan on its human rights record with special mention to the way it safeguards women's and children's rights and promotes gender equality. At the meeting, the EU encouraged Bhutan to continue to ratify its remaining human

72 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on parliamentary elections in Bangladesh", January 1, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/bangladesh/56110/statement-spokesperson-parliamentary-elections-bangladesh_en.

73 EEAS, "The European Union and Bangladesh held the 9th session of their Joint Commission", October 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/bangladesh/69148/european-union-and-bangladesh-held-9th-session-their-joint-commission_en.

74 EEAS, "Rohingya Crisis: EU releases €24 million for Bangladesh", February 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/bangladesh/58610/rohingya-crisis-eu-releases-€24-million-bangladesh_en.

75 EEAS, "New EU programme of EUR 205 million to strengthen the Education sector in Bangladesh", February 2, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/bangladesh/57655/new-eu-programme-eur-205-million-strengthen-education-sector-bangladesh_en.

76 EEAS, "European Union brings relief to the victims of cyclone Bulbul in Bangladesh", November 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/bangladesh/71142/european-union-brings-relief-victims-cyclone-bulbul-bangladesh_en.

rights conventions so that it can qualify for the GSP+ scheme and increased its preferential access to EU markets. The EU also underlined that it would maintain its support for Bhutan in areas such as social and economic development.⁷⁷

The EU called for restraint during this period and it pleaded with India and Pakistan to find a peaceful solution to Kashmir.

A number of security issues emerged in relation to India during the year. There was a terrorist attack on 14 February in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district which killed 40 individuals of the Indian paramilitary forces. The EU expressed its solidarity with India.⁷⁸ Following this terrorist attack, there was a military escalation on the 'Line of Control' between India and Pakistan at

the end of February and the EU called for restraint on both sides in order to avoid further escalation.⁷⁹ In August, India revoked the partial autonomy of the State of Jammu and Kashmir and it restricted fundamental rights and freedoms in the region. India also significantly increased its military and paramilitary presence in Kashmir, with Pakistan doing the same, and there were arrests of political activists and human rights defenders. Again, the EU called for restraint during this period and it pleaded with India and Pakistan to find a peaceful solution to Kashmir.⁸⁰

77 EEAS, "The EU and Bhutan confirmed their strong partnership during the 8th EU-Bhutan Biennial Consultations held in Paro on 5 November 2019", November 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/69948/eu-and-bhutan-confirmed-their-strong-partnership-during-8th-eu-bhutan-biennial-consultations_en.

78 EEAS, "Statement by the spokesperson on the terrorist attack in India", February 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/58163/statement-spokesperson-terrorist-attack-india_en.

79 EEAS, "Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the recent escalation of tensions between India and Pakistan", February 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/58829/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-recent-escalation-tensions_en.

80 EEAS, "Speech on behalf of the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament plenary debate on the situation in Kashmir", September 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/67477/speech-behalf-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-european-parliament-plenary_en.

EU-India Think Tank Twinning Initiative

Throughout the year the longstanding ‘EU Think Tanks Twinning Initiative’ continued to stimulate dialogue within the context of the EU-India Strategic Partnership. On 8 January, a conference was held in New Delhi focusing on foreign policy and security issues and other seminars were held in April in Brussels and in November in Delhi.⁸¹ The Initiative brings together experts from the EU and India to explore areas of cooperation:

‘[T]he greatest space for co-operation between India and the EU is in the creation and development of shared norms, informed by a common heritage as liberal democracies with private sector-led economies and a “partnership” view of development assistance. The norms underlying trade and those that determine the nature of infrastructure investment are the two broad fields in which the Western Indian Ocean could transform co-operation between India and the EU.’

- > Mihir Sharma, Tuneer Mukherjee, Gareth Price and John-Joseph Wilkins, “East Africa, India and Europe: Norms to Enhance Indian Ocean Commerce”, December 14, 2019, <https://euindiathinktanks.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/0104-Final-summary-EU-India-and-East-Africa-ORF-CH-EUISS-min.pdf>.

‘While the EU and India have agreed to engage more comprehensively in relation to disasters, there are limits to potential cooperation. For instance, as India transitions from aid recipient to donor it is increasingly reluctant to accept foreign assistance in disaster response. Domestically, some Indian states lack the capacity to enforce standards and regulations in relation, for instance, to the construction industry. The EU could explore the

⁸¹ See, for example: EEAS, “EU-India Think Tanks Twinning Initiative to host Delhi Workshop”, November 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/70061/eu-india-think-tanks-twinning-initiative-host-delhi-workshop_en. On 2 April, the EUISS organised a workshop on EU-India relations with a focus on natural disasters. See: EUISS, “EU-India Experts’ Day”, April 2, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/eu-india-experts-day>.

possibility of extending support for specific disaster-related training initiatives.’

- > Gareth Price, Mihir Sharma and John-Joseph Wilkins, “Prospects for Strengthening EU-India Engagement in the Field of Natural Disasters”, April, 2019, <https://euindiathinktanks.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/CH-ORF-EUISS-summary-of-TTTI-paper-II-disasters.pdf>.

‘An EU-India joint working group on AI could be established to work out which of the various other ideas/focal points offer greatest traction for EU-India engagement. To start with, relevant topics to be explored could be centred around the sectors mentioned in the Niti Aayog Discussion Paper on AI: Health, Education & Skilling, Agriculture, Retail, Manufacturing, Smart Cities, Smart Energy etc.’

- > Gareth Price, Mihir Sharma and John-Joseph Wilkins, “Emerging Technologies: what areas for EU-India Cooperation?”, March 12, 2019, https://euindiathinktanks.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/0304-Final-summary-EU-India-and-AI-CH-ORF-EUISS_-min.pdf.

The EU’s relations with India during 2019 also focused on maritime security. On 7-8 February, senior officials and experts convened in New Delhi to exchange views on maritime security in the Indian Ocean.⁸² A second meeting was held in Brussels on 18-19 September to continue the dialogue with a view to enhancing disaster relief and humanitarian assistance in the region, plus to explore the possibilities of facilitating contacts and exchanges between the military.⁸³ In July, the EU also announced €1.5 million to support India and Bangladesh with emergency aid for the victims of severe monsoons. More than

⁸² EEAS, “EU-India to discuss maritime security in the Indian Ocean region”, February 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/57689/eu-india-discuss-maritime-security-indian-ocean-region_en.

⁸³ EEAS, “EU and India discuss Indian Ocean maritime security”, September 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/67476/eu-and-india-discuss-indian-ocean-maritime-security_en.

500,000 people were displaced as a result of the flooding.⁸⁴ In other areas of cooperation, the EU and India held their 5th dialogue on disarmament and non-proliferation on 26 July and Indian researchers benefitted from Horizon 2020 support as a sign of closer EU-India cooperation on Research and Innovation.⁸⁵

During the year, the EU and the Maldives continued positive diplomatic relations. The EU commended the Maldives for the peaceful and democratic parliamentary elections held on 6 April⁸⁶ and bilateral meetings were held on human rights, climate change and security in March at the 4th Policy Dialogue and the Maldives Partnership Forum in mid-June. On 8

The EU also announced €1.5 million to support India and Bangladesh with emergency aid for the victims of severe monsoons.

August, HR/VP Mogherini paid an official visit to the Maldives where she announced an EU contribution of €2.5 million to the country's counter-terrorism efforts.⁸⁷ This support follows a financing agreement signed between the EU and the Maldives for €5 million to boost the country's preparedness for and resilience against climate change. As the EU stressed at the time, 'the Maldives remains one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change pressures, and its communities face an existential threat on a daily basis'.⁸⁸

In its relations with Nepal, the EU supported the country after a range of natural disasters. For example, on 31 March, there was serious loss of life following a windstorm disaster in the Rautahat Bara Parsa area in the south of the country. The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported that 20 people died and 700 were injured following

84 EEAS, "Humanitarian Aid: €8.5 million for South and South East Asia", July 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/65783/humanitarian-aid-€85-million-south-and-south-east-asia_en.

85 EEAS, "Research and Innovation opportunities between EU and India", September 13, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/67306/research-and-innovation-opportunities-between-eu-and-india_en.

86 EEAS, "Joint statement on the Maldivian parliamentary election", April 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sri-lanka/60714/joint-statement-maldivian-parliamentary-election_en.

87 EEAS, "Joint Press Release between the European Union and the Maldives", August 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sri-lanka/66300/joint-press-release-between-european-union-and-maldives_en.

88 EEAS, "EU and Maldives step up cooperation on climate change to implement the Paris Agreement", June 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sri-lanka/64206/eu-and-maldives-step-cooperation-climate-change-implement-paris-agreement_en.

the windstorm, and there was extensive damage to critical infrastructure in the area.⁸⁹ In July, Nepal experienced flooding and landslides which again resulted in loss of life and injuries. In light of these natural disasters, the EU announced that it would contribute €2 million to improve national response capacities.⁹⁰ In September, the EU and its partners earmarked \$100 million to strengthen local and provincial public services in Nepal.⁹¹ Finally, the EU approved the disbursement of €8.75 million to the agriculture sector in Nepal to support food production, agribusinesses and land management.⁹²

With Pakistan, the EU continued to help calm relations between Islamabad and New Delhi following the conflagration at the border in Kashmir and the terrorist attack in Pulwama. In fact, HR/VP Mogherini visited Pakistan in March as part of the 4th EU–Pakistan Strategic Dialogue, where the two sides discussed regional security issues. On 5–7 November, the Chairman of the EU Military Committee, General Claudio Graziano, met with counterparts in Pakistan to discuss possible cooperation on CSDP operations. On 15 November, the EU and Pakistan held their 10th Joint Commission meeting to focus on trade, development and security issues. The EU cooperated with Pakistan on improving democratic institutions and rural development during the year. In January, the EU dedicated €115 million in grants to Pakistan to assist with education, economic development, poverty reduction and parliamentary democracy.⁹³ To support Pakistan with severe droughts in 2019, the EU dedicated €100,000 to directly support 15,000 people

89 UNICEF, “Bara and Parsa storm: UNICEF responds to the disaster with immediate relief”, May 15, 2019, <https://www.unicef.org/nepal/stories/bara-and-parsa-storm>.

90 EEAS, “Humanitarian Aid: €8.5 million for South and South East Asia”, July 24, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nepal/65781/humanitarian-aid-€85-million-south-and-south-east-asia_en.

91 EEAS, “EU & JFA Development Partners contribute \$100 million to strengthen capacity of local and provincial governments”, September 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nepal/66976/eu-jfa-development-partners-contribute-100-million-strengthen-capacity-local-and-provincial_en.

92 EEAS, “EU working together with the government of Nepal: EU approves disbursement of €8.75 million in the agriculture sector”, November 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nepal/70228/eu-working-together-government-nepal-eu-approves-disbursement-€875-million-agriculture-sector_en.

93 EEAS, “European Union’s new support to Education, Rural Development and Democratic Institutions in Pakistan with 115 million euros grants funding”, January 2, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/pakistan/56129/european-union-s-new-support-education-rural-development-and-democratic-institutions-pakistan_en.

with aid relief⁹⁴ and a further €300,000 was provided following earthquakes in the country in October.⁹⁵ In August, the EU announced a new €4 million package to Pakistan for its counter-terrorism efforts.⁹⁶

In April, Sri Lanka was the victim of terrorist attacks that struck churches and hotels on Easter Sunday. The month following the attacks was marked by communal violence and the EU called on the government to ensure the rule of law and on the Sri Lankan media to avoid spreading misinformation.⁹⁷ The EU also raised concerns about the political and religious pressure being directed at the Muslim community in Sri Lanka after the attacks.⁹⁸ In the wake of these terrorist attacks, the EU stepped up its support for counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism in the country with support worth €8.5 million.⁹⁹ In July, the EU and Sri Lanka held an informal dialogue on counter-terrorism to chart the Union's support package for the country.

The EU continued to work with the government on issues such as governance, the rule of law and human rights and all of these issues were raised with Sri Lankan counterparts at the 22nd meeting of the Joint Commission on 14 February and the 4th Working Group meeting in Colombo in September.¹⁰⁰ Despite these bilateral meetings, there

Sri Lanka was the victim of terrorist attacks that struck churches and hotels on Easter Sunday.

94 EEAS, "European Union brings relief to drought-hit communities in southern Pakistan", March 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/pakistan/59457/european-union-brings-relief-drought-hit-communities-southern-pakistan_en.

95 EEAS, "Press Release: EU allocates € 300,000 to provide emergency relief to earthquake victims in Pakistan", October 4, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/pakistan/68353/press-release-eu-allocates-e-300000-provide-emergency-relief-earthquake-victims-pakistan_en.

96 EEAS, "European Union steps up support to counter-terrorism efforts in Sindh province", August 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/pakistan/66514/european-union-steps-support-counter-terrorism-efforts-sindh-province_en.

97 EEAS, "Joint Statement", May 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sri-lanka/62479/joint-statement_en.

98 EEAS, "Joint Statement", June 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sri-lanka/63994/joint-statement_en.

99 EEAS, "European Commission steps up support to counter-terrorism, the prevention of violent extremism and peacebuilding in Sri Lanka", August 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sri-lanka/66412/european-commission-steps-support-counter-terrorism-prevention-violent-extremism-and_en.

100 EEAS, "Joint press release following the meeting of the European Union-Sri Lanka 4th Working Group on Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights", September 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sri-lanka/66959/joint-press-release-following-meeting-european-union-sri-lanka-4th-working-group-governance_en.

were a number of human rights concerns beginning with the news in April that the Sri Lankan government was actively moving to resume executions and end its 43-year moratorium on the death penalty.¹⁰¹ In August, the EU and UN voiced serious concerns about the appointment of Lieutenant-General Shavendra Silva as Commander of the Sri Lankan Army ‘given the allegations of grave human rights and humanitarian law violations against him’.¹⁰² Finally, the year ended with presidential elections on 16 November that took place in a largely peaceful environment, which was not a given after the Easter Sunday terror attacks.¹⁰³ To support Sri Lanka’s electoral efforts, the EU deployed an EOM to the country in October.¹⁰⁴

South-East Asia

At the beginning of the year, the EU allocated €300,000 for humanitarian relief to Indonesia following the tsunami that hit the country in late December 2018. It added to a further €80,000 in humanitarian assistance, the full amount was geared to helping some 6,000 of the most affected people in the Pandeglang district. More than 430 people were killed and a further 14,000 were injured following the tsunami that hit Sunda Strait.¹⁰⁵ Additionally, the EU and partners (such as the UN) provided support to Indonesia for countering violent extremism in March, nuclear safety in May and CBRN in December. In November, the EU and Indonesia held a series of dialogues on human rights, security and political issues. There was an update on Indonesia’s proposed new penal code during the dialogue, which the

101EEAS, “Joint statement on the death penalty”, April 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sri-lanka/60713/joint-statement-death-penalty_en.

102EEAS, “Joint Statement”, August 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sri-lanka/66564/joint-statement_en.

103EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson following the 2019 Presidential Elections in Sri Lanka”, November 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sri-lanka/70576/statement-spokesperson-following-2019-presidential-elections-sri-lanka_en.

104EEAS, “EU deploys Election Observation Mission to Sri Lanka”, October 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sri-lanka/69290/eu-deploys-election-observation-mission-sri-lanka_en.

105EEAS, “EU scales up support for victims of tsunami in Indonesia”, February 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/indonesia/57796/eu-scales-support-victims-tsunami-indonesia_en.

EU had certain concerns about. The EU and Indonesia also discussed counter-terrorism strategies, peacekeeping and crisis management, maritime security and other issues. The political dialogue focused on pressing international issues, such as North Korea and the Rohingya in Myanmar/Burma.¹⁰⁶

EU-ASEAN relations

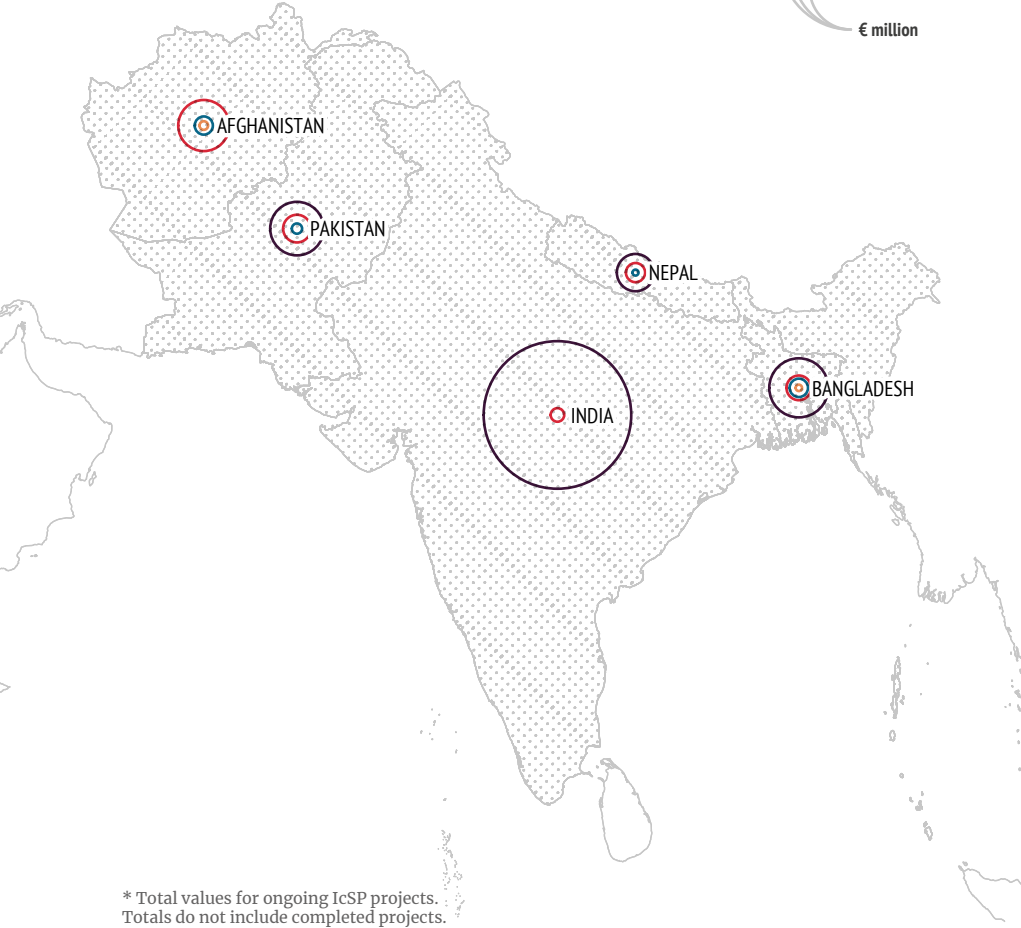
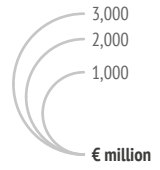
On 21 January, the EU and ASEAN foreign ministers met in Brussels for the 22nd ministerial meeting to discuss the deepening of relations between the two regional groupings. The partners stressed the need to support multilateralism and international law, as well as to discuss major global challenges such as climate change and sustainable development. The ministers also discussed security and defence and maritime security.¹⁰⁷ The 26th EU-ASEAN Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting was held in Jakarta on 20 February, and it was agreed in principle that the relationship should be upgraded to a Strategic Partnership. In addition to exchanging views on how to enhance sustainability and security cooperation in the region, the EU and ASEAN discussed the need for greater connectivity between the EU and Asia and they reaffirmed their respective commitment to a future ASEAN-EU FTA.¹⁰⁸ On 8 July, senior officials from the EU and ASEAN met in Bangkok to launch a High-Level Dialogue on environment and climate change.¹⁰⁹

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- 106** EEAS, “The 8th EU-Indonesia Human Rights Dialogue”, November 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/indonesia/70210/8th-eu-indonesia-human-rights-dialogue_en; EEAS, “The 4th EU-Indonesia Security Dialogue”, November 12, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/indonesia/70335/4th-eu-indonesia-security-dialogue_en; EEAS, “European Union and Indonesia hold their fourth Political Dialogue”, November 13, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/indonesia/70369/european-union-and-indonesia-hold-their-fourth-political-dialogue_en.
- 107** Council of the EU, “Joint statement of the 22nd EU-ASEAN ministerial meeting”, January 21, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/01/21/joint-statement-of-the-22nd-eu-asean-ministerial-meeting/>.
- 108** EEAS, “26th ASEAN-EU Joint Cooperation Committee Meeting Convenes in Jakarta”, February 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/indonesia/58424/26th-asean-eu-joint-cooperation-committee-meeting-convenes-jakarta_en.
- 109** EEAS, “ASEAN and EU enhance cooperation on Environmental Protection and Climate Change (Bangkok, 8 July 2019)”, July 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/togo/65134/node/65134_be.

South Asia

EU Integrated Approach, 2019-2021

- Development assistance disbursements (2019)
- EIB financed projects signed in 2019
- Humanitarian assistance (2019-2020)
- Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (2019-2021)*



* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Data: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European Investment Bank, 2020

In April, the EU raised its concerns with Brunei-Darussalam following news that under the implementation of its 2013 Penal Code Order a number of the punishments foreseen ‘amount to torture, acts of cruelty, inhuman or degrading treatment’. The EU called on Brunei-Darussalam to maintain its *de facto* moratorium on the death penalty and to abide by its human rights commitments and obligations.¹¹⁰

Relations with Cambodia were strained at the start of 2019 following the breakdown in democracy, human rights and rule of law experienced by the country since 2018. On 11 February, HR/VP Mogherini announced that the EU had started the process of temporarily suspending Cambodia’s preferential access to the EU market under the ‘Everything But Arms’ trade scheme. The decision followed an EU fact-finding mission to the country in 2018 which concluded that there was ‘evidence of serious and systematic violations of core human rights and labour rights in Cambodia’.¹¹¹ Following the EU’s decision, officials from the Commission and the EEAS visited Cambodia on 19–20 March to call on authorities to urgently address the EU’s concerns.¹¹² A follow-up EU mission to Cambodia took place on 3–10 June to ascertain whether any progress had been made on human rights and labour rights, and the mission noted steps towards improving compliance with international standards on freedom of association and collective bargaining.¹¹³ The year ended with the positive news that Cambodia had eased detention conditions for Cambodian opposition leader Kem Sokha,

The EU had started the process of temporarily suspending Cambodia’s preferential access to the EU market.

¹¹⁰EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the implementation of the Penal Code Order in Brunei-Darussalam”, April 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60557/statement-spokesperson-implementation-penal-code-order-brunei-darussalam_en.

¹¹¹European Commission, “Cambodia: EU launches procedure to temporarily suspend trade preferences”, February 11, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_882.

¹¹²EEAS, “Visiting EU mission continues engagement with Cambodia”, March 22, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/cambodia/60086/visiting-eu-mission-continues-engagement-cambodia_en.

¹¹³European Commission, “EU sends monitoring mission to Cambodia to assess the human rights and labour rights situation”, June 11, 2019, <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=2028>.

despite a continued need to ensure and protect fundamental freedoms in the country.¹¹⁴

On 7 March, Laos and the EU held their 9th Human Rights and Governance Dialogue in Vientiane, Laos. The dialogue raised and discussed issues such as development, the rule of law and the rights of the child and elimination of discrimination against women.¹¹⁵ Throughout the year, EU bodies continued to support development in Laos with a €5 million grant by the EIB for a 1,400 km rural road in April¹¹⁶ and assistance worth €200,000 for the victims of tropical storm Podul that struck the country in October.¹¹⁷ On the diplomatic front, Laos and the EU met for the 9th Joint Committee meeting on 21 May to discuss a range of issues including human rights. A frank discussion was held on 7 March about human rights and the EU's annual report showed that Laos was still lagging behind with the rule of law reforms and countering corruption. The Council of the EU also noted that the state in Laos continues to 'exercise a close control over media and civil society' and that there was 'no progress on investigations into a number of enforced disappearances'.¹¹⁸ The EU underlined the importance it attaches to reforms and to Laos when then European Commissioner Neven Mimica paid a visit to the country on 9-10 September – this was the first ever visit by a European Commissioner to the country since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the EU and Laos in 1975.¹¹⁹

114EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the latest developments in Cambodia", November 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/cambodia/70204/statement-spokesperson-latest-developments-cambodia_en.

115EEAS, "Joint Press Release EU-Lao PDR Human Rights Dialogue 7th March 2019 - Vientiane", March 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lao-pdr/59256/joint-press-release-eu-lao-pdr-human-rights-dialogue-7th-march-2019-vientiane_en.

116EEAS, "European Investment Bank to help protect 1,400km roads in rural Lao PDR from climate change", April 1, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lao-pdr/60440/european-investment-bank-help-protect-1400km-roads-rural-lao-pdr-climate-change_en.

117EEAS, "EU provides € 200,000 to assist storm victims in Laos", October 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lao-pdr/68936/eu-provides-€-200000-assist-storm-victims-laos_en.

118EEAS, "2018 Human Rights and Democracy country update – Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)", May 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lao-pdr/62762/2018-human-rights-and-democracy-country-update--lao-peoples-democratic-republic-lao-pdr_en and EEAS, "The European Union and Lao PDR hold their 9th Joint Committee", May 22, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lao-pdr/62902/european-union-and-lao-pdr-hold-their-9th-joint-committee_en.

119EEAS, "EU Commissioner Mimica starts landmark visit to Laos", September 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lao-pdr/66971/eu-commissioner-mimica-starts-landmark-visit-laos_en.

On 4 March, the EU congratulated Malaysia for depositing its instrument of accession to the Rome Statute of the ICC. In 2018, it was the 20-year anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute and so Malaysia's decision was a good sign of its commitment to strengthening rule of law, human rights and accountability, plus it underlined its commitment to the multilateral system.¹²⁰ In July, HR/VP Mogherini published a declaration on the 5th anniversary of the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 and it welcomed the decision of the Joint Investigation Team on 19 June that four individuals would face criminal charges in the Netherlands. The EU yet again called on Russia to accept its responsibility and to cooperate fully with the investigation.¹²¹ Finally, in mid-November the EU called for the immediate release of five men who had been sentenced by the Sharia High Court in the state of Selangor to caning and imprisonment for allegedly attempting to have same-sex relations.¹²²

Myanmar/Burma remained a case of concern for the Union, especially as January was marked by an escalation of violence in Rakhine State. The EU called for restraint by all sides following an attack on police posts in Rakhine State by the Arakan Army – an ethnic armed group.¹²³ Furthermore, on 11 January the court in Myanmar/Burma decided to uphold the conviction of *Reuters* reporters Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo to 7 years in prison, which cast doubts on the independence of Myanmar/Burma's justice system and fundamental freedoms in the country.¹²⁴ There was positive news in May, however, when

120EEAS, "Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the accession of Malaysia to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court", March 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/malaysia/59070/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-accession-malaysia-rome-statute_en.

121EEAS, "Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 (17 July 2019)", July 16, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/07/16/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-occasion-of-the-5th-anniversary-of-the-downing-of-malaysia-airlines-flight-mh17-17-july-2019/>.

122EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the sentencing of five men to caning in Malaysia", November 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/malaysia/70262/statement-spokesperson-sentencing-five-men-caning-malaysia_en.

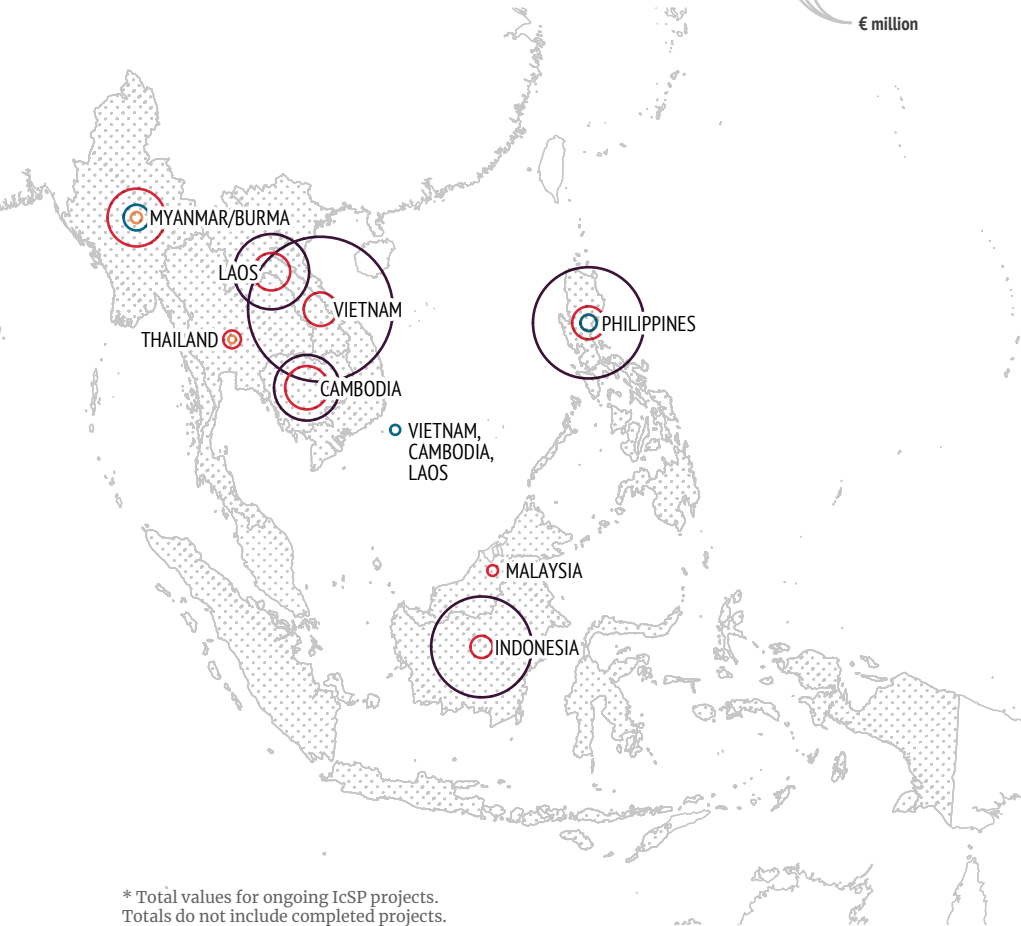
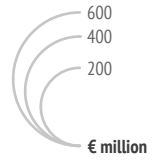
123EEAS, "Local EU Statement on the escalation of violence in Rakhine State", January 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/myanmar-burma/56339/local-eu-statement-escalation-violence-rakhine-state_en.

124EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the conviction of Reuters reporters Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo in Myanmar", January 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/myanmar-burma/56391/statement-spokesperson-conviction-reuters-reporters-wa-lone-and-kyaw-soe-oo-myanmar_en.

South-East Asia

EU Integrated Approach, 2019-2021

- Development assistance disbursements (2019)
- EIB financed projects signed in 2019
- Humanitarian assistance (2019-2020)
- Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (2019-2021)*



* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Data: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European Investment Bank, 2020

Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo were granted a presidential pardon and freed.¹²⁵ Owing to the human rights situation in the country, the EU sent a high-level monitoring mission to Myanmar/Burma on 18–22 February under the EU’s ‘Everything But Arms’ trade preferences scheme.¹²⁶ A month later, in March, the EU yet again condemned violence in the country as the Arakan army and the Myanmar/Burmese military continued to fight with considerable damage to the humanitarian situation in the country.¹²⁷

In April, the Council of the EU prolonged sanctions against Myanmar/Burma until 30 April 2020 in order to stem the flow of arms and banned equipment and to target those responsible for human rights violations against the Rohingya population and ethnic minorities in the Rakhine, Kachin and Shan states.¹²⁸ Sanctions were followed on 16 May by the first Senior Officials’ meeting between the EU and Myanmar/Burma in Brussels to discuss human rights, trade and investment, regional cooperation with ASEAN, sustainable development, humanitarian issues and adherence to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.¹²⁹ On 14 June, the two sides continued to discuss democratic freedoms and national reconciliation during the 5th EU–Myanmar Human Rights Dialogue held in Nay Pyi Taw.¹³⁰

The EU also continued to support sustainable development in the country. In March, the EU provided €221 million in support for

125 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the Presidential pardon granted to Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo in Myanmar”, May 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/myanmar-burma/61938/statement-spokesperson-presidential-pardon-granted-wa-lone-and-kyaw-soe-oo-myanmar_en.

126 EEAS, “EU monitoring mission evaluates progress on human rights and labour rights in Myanmar”, February 22, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_1331.

127 EEAS, “Statement on the further escalation of violence in Rakhine State”, March 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/myanmar-burma/59577/statement-further-escalation-violence-rakhine-state_en.

128 Council of the EU, “Myanmar/Burma: Council prolongs sanctions”, April 29, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/04/29/myanmar-burma-council-prolongs-sanctions/>.

129 EEAS, “The EU and Myanmar hold their first Senior Officials’ Meeting”, May 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/myanmar-burma/62548/eu-and-myanmar-hold-their-first-senior-officials-meeting_en.

130 EEAS, “The European Union and Myanmar hold 5th Human Rights Dialogue - Joint Press Release”, June 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/myanmar-burma/64195/european-union-and-myanmar-hold-5th-human-rights-dialogue-joint-press-release_en.

education in Myanmar/Burma¹³¹ and it also deployed a follow-up election monitoring mission to the country to observe whether electoral reforms since the last general election in 2015 had been enacted. The mission concluded that more election reforms were required before the next general elections in 2020.¹³² In April, the EU launched a civil society partnership in the country designed to bring more than 120 civil society representatives from the country together¹³³ and, in August, it contributed €8 million for a four-year period to support greater connectivity in the country and economic integration with ASEAN.¹³⁴

In the Philippines there was mixed news. In January, the country experienced bomb blasts in Cotabato, Jolo and Sulu.¹³⁵ The blasts were aimed at cathedrals and the EU expressed its condolences, as well as underlined its full support for the on-going peace process in Mindanao. There was, however, hopeful news in January when the Philippines created the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, which was seen as a milestone moment in the Mindanao Peace Process.¹³⁶ The EU also brought humanitarian relief to Philippines in January as the country experienced floods and landslides following tropical depression Usman. The EU mobilised

131EEAS, “European Union to support education in Myanmar with EUR 221 million”, March 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/myanmar-burma/59991/european-union-support-education-myanmar-eur-221-million_en.

132EEAS, “EU Election Follow-Up Mission suggests implementing more election reform recommendations ahead of 2020 elections”, April 4, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/myanmar-burma/60640/eu-election-follow-mission-suggests-implementing-more-election-reform-recommendations-ahead_en.

133EEAS, “European Union Launches Strategy for a Strengthened Partnership with Civil Society in Myanmar”, April 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/myanmar-burma/60674/european-union-launches-strategy-strengthened-partnership-civil-society-myanmar_en.

134EEAS, “EUR 8 million to support inclusive and sustainable trade growth in Myanmar”, August 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/myanmar-burma/66437/eur-8-million-support-inclusive-and-sustainable-trade-growth-myanmar_en.

135EEAS, “EU Ambassador’s statement on the bombing in Cotabato”, January 1, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/philippines/56120/eu-ambassadors-statement-bombing-cotabato_en and EEAS, “Statement from the EU Delegation to the Philippines following the twin blasts in Jolo, Sulu”, January 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/philippines/57213/statement-eu-delegation-philippines-following-twin-blasts-jolo-sulu_en.

136EEAS, “Local Statement on the Conduct and Outcome of the Plebiscite for the Ratification of the Bangsamoro Organic Law held on 21 January 2019”, January 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/philippines/57159/local-statement-conduct-and-outcome-plebiscite-ratification-bangsamoro-organic-law-held-21_en.

some €130,000 to benefit 15,000 people with life-saving assistance.¹³⁷ In June, following the publication of the EU annual report on human rights and democracy in the world, the Council of the EU continued to stress its concern at the way the campaign against illegal drugs was being conducted in the Philippines. The EU noted that a fragmented judicial system, prison overcrowding, a lack of investigation and convictions for wrongful deaths and shrinking space for civil society conspire to undermine human rights and fundamental freedoms in the country.¹³⁸

EU-Asia-Europe (ASEM)

On 15–16 December 2019, the 14th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Foreign Ministers Meeting, chaired by HR/VP Borrell in Madrid, brought together foreign affairs ministers from 53 ASEM partners. The ministers discussed strengthening cooperation on a wide range of areas, including the situation in the Korean peninsula, Myanmar/Burma and Afghanistan, as well as security challenges, such as terrorism, maritime and cyber.¹³⁹ Ahead of the meeting, the HR/VP held bilateral meetings with several Asian counterparts, including from Japan, China and ASEAN, where various issues of mutual interest were discussed.¹⁴⁰ The final statement also stressed the importance of closer EU-Asia cooperation on security issues pertaining to maritime security, terrorism and ICT and digital connectivity.¹⁴¹

137 EEAS, “European Union brings relief to the victims of floods and landslides in the Philippines”, January 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/philippines/56337/european-union-brings-relief-victims-floods-and-landslides-philippines_en.

138 EEAS, “EU Annual Report on human rights and democracy in the world 2019: Philippines country update”, May 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/philippines/62292/eu-annual-report-human-rights-and-democracy-world-2019-philippines-country-update_en.

139 Council of the EU, “ASEM 14th Foreign Ministers meeting: Chair’s statement”, December 16, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/12/16/asem-14th-foreign-ministers-meeting-chair-s-statement/>.

140 EEAS, “High Representative/Vice President Josep Borrell holds bilateral meetings ahead of the Asia-Europe Foreign Ministers’ Meeting”, December 15, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/72141/high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-holds-bilateral-meetings-ahead-asia-europe_en.

141 Council of the EU, “Chair’s Statement, 16 December 2019”, ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting, December 15–16, 2019, Madrid, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41868/2019-12-16-asem-fmm-chair-s-statement.pdf>.

On 1 June, HR/VP Mogherini was in Singapore for the annual Shangri-La Dialogue organised by the IISS. Alongside the defence ministers of South Korea and Japan, HR/VP Mogherini stressed the importance of the EU's engagement in Asia and on important dossiers, such as North Korea. While in Singapore, HR/VP Mogherini also met with the defence ministers of Singapore, China, South Korea, Vietnam, Australia and New Zealand and she used the occasion to discuss EU and Asia cooperation on security and defence.¹⁴² Relations with Singapore mainly revolved around the EU-Singapore FTA and the Partnership Cooperation Agreement, which received approval

Over 10,000 EU companies are established in Singapore.

from the European Parliament in February and entered into force on 21 November. Approval of the FTA marked closer ties between the EU and Asia, especially as Singapore is by far the EU's largest trading partner in South-East Asia with bilateral trade in goods totalling over €53 billion and services trade worth €51 billion. So far, over 10,000 EU companies are established in Singapore.¹⁴³ On the diplomatic front, the EU and Singapore held their annual senior officials' meeting in Brussels on 16 October to discuss trade relations, the digital economy, cybersecurity and Singapore's role as ASEAN coordinator for relations with the EU until August 2021.¹⁴⁴ The EU stressed its intention to deepen its relations with ASEAN, especially within the context of the Union's connectivity strategy. Finally, the EU protested the news of the execution of Abd

¹⁴²EEAS, "The EU's security and defence cooperation with Asian partners in the spotlight as Federica Mogherini travels to Singapore for the Shangri-La Dialogue", May 31, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/australia/63496/eu's-security-and-defence-cooperation-asian-partners-spotlight-federica-mogherini-travels_en.

¹⁴³European Commission, "Agreement with Singapore set to give a boost to EU-Asia trade", February 13, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_906 and Council of the EU, "Final green light to the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement", November 8, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/11/08/final-green-light-to-the-eu-singapore-free-trade-agreement/>.

¹⁴⁴EEAS, "The European Union and Singapore held their annual Senior Officials' meeting", October 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/singapore/68964/european-union-and-singapore-held-their-annual-senior-officials-meeting_en.

Helmi Ab Halim by Singapore on 22 November and the Union called for the eradication of the death penalty.¹⁴⁵

2019 was a year of democratic restoration for Thailand. At the beginning of the year, the election commission announced that general elections would take place on 24 March. The EU noted positively that the decision taken by Thailand in late 2018 to lift restrictions on political activities was a necessary precondition for the 2019 elections.¹⁴⁶ Despite some ambiguous media reports in March, the EU had to announce that it would not be deploying an EOM to the country for elections, but it confirmed that the EU was positive about the elections and Thailand's transition back to democracy.¹⁴⁷ On the day after the parliamentary elections, the EU congratulated Thailand for holding peaceful elections – the first fully-contested elections in the country since 2011.¹⁴⁸ In July, then Presidents Donald Tusk and Jean-Claude Juncker congratulated Prayut Chan-o-cha for becoming Prime Minister after the elections and the swearing in of his government.¹⁴⁹ On this basis, the EU announced in October that it was prepared to deepen its relationship with Thailand by moving to swiftly sign the PCA and to resume negotiations for an EU-Thailand FTA.¹⁵⁰

On 10 May, the EU and Vietnam met for the first time under the PCA that was agreed in 2018. The PCA meeting discussed energy

145 EU Delegation to Singapore, “EU local statement on the death penalty case of Mr Abd Helmi Ab Halim in Singapore”, November 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_local_statement_death_penalty_abd_helmi_ab_halim_22_november_20_2_.pdf.

146 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the announcement of general elections in Thailand”, January 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/thailand/57001/statement-spokesperson-announcement-general-elections-thailand_en.

147 EEAS, “EU Not Fielding Observation Mission for Thai Elections”, March 22, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/thailand/60054/eu-not-fielding-observation-mission-thai-elections_en.

148 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the parliamentary elections in Thailand”, March 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/thailand/60163/statement-spokesperson-parliamentary-elections-thailand_en.

149 EEAS, “Congratulatory letter for PM Prayut from the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission”, July 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/thailand/65671/congratulatory-letter-pm-prayut-president-european-council-and-president-european-commission_en.

150 EEAS, “Thailand: EU to broaden its engagement following elections”, October 14, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/14/thailand-eu-to-broaden-its-engagement-following-elections/>.

efficiency, climate change, justice, education and sustainable development.¹⁵¹ On 30 June, the EU and Vietnam welcomed the signature of the FTA and Investment Protection agreement before the agreements were to be consented to by the European Parliament and the Vietnamese National Assembly. Human rights were a key part of the EU-Vietnam relationships in 2019 and on 7 March the 8th annual Human Rights Dialogue was held in Brussels. The EU raised a number of concerns regarding freedom of expression, the death penalty, labour rights, etc. In particular, the EU underlined the ‘significant increase of arrests and convictions as well as limitations in the freedom of movement of human rights defences since 2016’.¹⁵² In June, the EU continued to follow human rights in the country closely and on 6 June the EU voiced its concern at the sentencing of Vu Thi Dung and Nguyen Thi Ngoc Suong, plus other human rights defenders, for peaceful freedom of expression.¹⁵³

The EU also regretted tensions in the South China Sea as contentious encounters between Chinese, Vietnamese and US naval vessels and fishing boats occurred throughout the year.

The security and civil protection relationship also grew during the year. In early August, there were widespread floods in Vietnam and the EU mobilised €100,000 to assist the most affected communities: the humanitarian assistance would directly benefit 18,000 people. The EU’s action aimed to prevent disease and promote hygiene in the wake of the mass flooding.¹⁵⁴ In the same month, the EU also regretted tensions in the South China Sea as contentious encounters between Chinese, Vietnamese and US naval vessels and fishing boats occurred throughout the

151 EEAS, “First Joint Committee under the European Union-Viet Nam Comprehensive Partnership and Cooperation Framework Agreement”, May 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/vietnam/62140/first-joint-committee-under-european-union-viet-nam-comprehensive-partnership-and-cooperation_en.

152 EEAS, “8th EU-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue”, March 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/vietnam/59207/8th-eu-vietnam-human-rights-dialogue_en.

153 EEAS, “Statement by the Spokesperson on the sentencing of Nguyen Ngoc Anh in Vietnam”, June 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/vietnam/63762/statement-spokesperson-sentencing-nguyen-ngoc-anh-vietnam_en.

154 EEAS, “European Union brings relief to the victims of floods in Vietnam”, August 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/vietnam/66736/european-union-brings-relief-victims-floods-vietnam_en.

year.¹⁵⁵ 2019 was also the year in which the EU and Vietnam enhanced their cooperation on security and defence. On 17 October, an FPA was signed by the EU and Vietnam allowing the country to participate in and contribute to EU CSDP missions and operations (the EU has other FPAs with Australia, South Korea and New Zealand).¹⁵⁶ As the signing ceremony of the FPA, HR/VP Mogherini thanked Vietnam and said that Vietnam's interest in participating in one of the EU's military training missions in Africa was welcome.¹⁵⁷ The first dialogue to take place in the context of FPA was held in Brussels on 22 November.¹⁵⁸

Finally, the EU and Timor-Leste held their 5th Political Dialogue on 21 May to discuss a number of challenges such as rural development, human rights and gender-based violence.¹⁵⁹

Oceania

In 2019, the EU continued to develop positive relations with Australia and most of the developments revolved around the negotiations for the EU-Australia FTA. There were three rounds of negotiations during 2019, in March, July and October, while in December an impact assessment report was published in support of the negotiations.¹⁶⁰ In 2019, Australia exported €8.2 billion in goods and €7 billion in services to the EU and the Union exported €30.8 billion in goods and €17

155 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on recent developments in the South China Sea", August 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/vietnam/66761/statement-spokesperson-recent-developments-south-china-sea_en.

156 EEAS, "EU-Vietnam - Framework Participation Agreement", October 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/vietnam/68973/eu-vietnam-framework-participation-agreement_en.

157 EEAS, "Remarks by HR/VP Federica Mogherini at the signing ceremony of the EU-Viet Nam Framework Participation Agreement", October 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/vietnam/69008/remarks-hrvp-federica-mogherini-signing-ceremony-eu-viet-nam-framework-participation-agreement_en.

158 EEAS, "The European Union and Vietnam held the first security and defence dialogue", November 26, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/vietnam/71019/european-union-and-vietnam-held-first-security-and-defence-dialogue_en.

159 EEAS, "Timor-Leste and the EU Stepping up Cooperation", May 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/timor-leste/62814/timor-leste-and-eu-stepping-cooperation_en.

160 European Parliament, "EU-Australia relations 2018-2019", 2019, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/danz/product/20200407DPU25184>.

billion in services to Australia.¹⁶¹ The EU–New Zealand relationship was made much stronger in 2019. The year began with a visit by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern to Brussels and after this official visit a meeting of the EU–New Zealand Joint Committee – created after the 2016 Partnership Agreement was established – was convened to reflect on the multilateral system, climate change, development issues, Asia and the Pacific. The meeting set the groundwork for a trilateral meeting between the EU, New Zealand and Australia that took place in Wellington on 10 April.¹⁶² In April, the EU sent its deepest condolences to New Zealand following the terrorist attacks in Christchurch on 15 March.¹⁶³ Finally, in the context of the trade negotiations that began in May 2018, the EU and New Zealand met on three separate occasions in February, May and July 2019 to

The EU sent its deepest condolences to New Zealand following the terrorist attacks in Christchurch on 15 March.

discuss the FTA.¹⁶⁴

In the Pacific region, the EU continued to develop relations with a number of island nations, as well as cooperating with overseas countries and territories in the region. For example, at the beginning of March, the EU provided €1.6 million in support for Palau to help improve the energy efficiency of 9 health centres, as well as to reduce transmission and distribution losses from the electricity grid.¹⁶⁵ In May, the EU and Fiji met in Brussels for their 4th High Level Political Dialogue to discuss the EU–Pacific EPA, climate change, human rights, fisheries and even Brexit. The EPA was ratified by the

161 European Commission, “EU–Australia Trade Relations”, April 22, 2020, <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/australia/>.

162 EEAS, “European Union – New Zealand Joint Committee illustrates strength of the bilateral partnership”, March 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59439/european-union-new-zealand-joint-committee-illustrates-strength-bilateral-partnership_en.

163 EEAS, “Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the terrorist attacks in Christchurch”, March 15, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/new-zealand/59634/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-terrorist-attacks-christchurch_en.

164 European Parliament, “EU–New Zealand Trade Relations, 2018–2019”, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/danz/product/20200407DPU25191>.

165 EEAS, “EU gives €1.6M to support Palau in improving Energy Efficiency”, March 4, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/58999/eu-gives-€16m-support-palau-improving-energy-efficiency_en.

European Parliament in January 2011 and it currently includes the EU, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Samoa. Fiji also requested that its citizens receive visa-free access to the Schengen area, and the EU confirmed that it would consider the request.¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, the EU congratulated Kiribati on its accession to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT) on 22 July.¹⁶⁷ The move is further proof of the country's commitment to human rights and it follows on from news in June that Kiribati would launch a new Pacific Partnership to end violence against women and girls.

The Solomon Islands held general elections on 3 April and in preparation for this the EU, Australia and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) supported voters by making available innovative education resources: indeed, electoral information was transmitted in envelopes attached to bags of rice. The EU and its partners recognised that it was a challenge to organise elections across 900 poorly connected islands.¹⁶⁸ In May, the Solomon Islands benefitted from regional support to end violence against women and girls. The programme, partly funded by the EU, will dedicate €19.5 million to support women and girls – 64% of women experience physical or sexual violence in the Solomon Islands.¹⁶⁹ This follows on from an initiative announced by the EU and UN on 26 February to dedicate €50 million to eliminate domestic violence in the Pacific region.¹⁷⁰ Finally, on 7 October the EU and Solomon Islands held a High Level Political Dialogue to discuss issues such as climate change, waste management and there

166EEAS, “The EU and Fiji stepping up cooperation”, May 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/62813/eu-and-fiji-stepping-cooperation_en.

167EEAS, “Local EU Statement on the accession of Kiribati to the ‘UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT)’ on 22 July 2019”, August 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/66492/local-eu-statement-accession-kiribati-un-convention-against-torture-and-other-cruel-inhuman-or_en.

168EEAS, “EU, Government of Australia and UNDP Support Voter Education in Solomon Islands”, February 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/58166/eu-government-australia-and-undp-support-voter-education-solomon-islands_en.

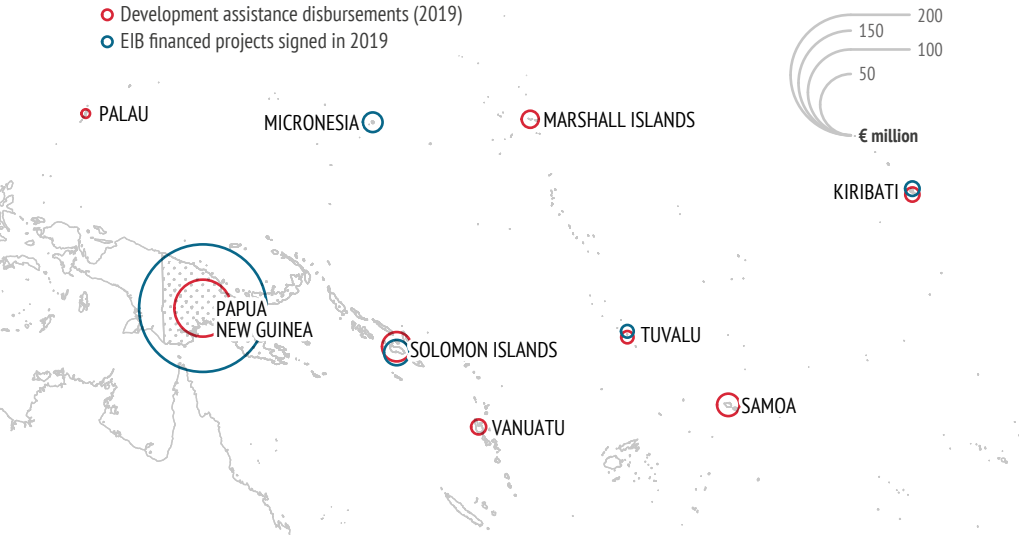
169EEAS, “Solomon Islands launch of the new Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls”, May 8, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/62908/solomon-islands-launch-new-pacific-partnership-end-violence-against-women-and-girls_en.

170EEAS, “Spotlight Initiative – EU and UN fight against domestic violence in the Pacific region”, February 26, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/58698/spotlight-initiative--eu-and-un-fight-against-domestic-violence-pacific-region_en.

Oceania

EU Integrated Approach, 2019

- Development assistance disbursements (2019)
- EIB financed projects signed in 2019



Data: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European Investment Bank, 2020

was also a review of Solomon Islands’ steps towards joining the EU-Pacific EPA.¹⁷¹

In December, a major measles outbreak in Samoa called for EU assistance and, through the Union’s Civil Protection Mechanism, two emergency medical teams from France and Norway were dispatched to the capital Apia to provide medical assistance. The EU reported that on 4 December there were a reported 3,728 cases of measles with 62 confirmed deaths (including 58 children). France deployed 10 paediatricians and medical experts on 30 November, Norway deployed a 20-person team on 1 December and 16 medical staff were deployed under the European Civil Protection Pool.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹EEAS, “The EU and Solomon Islands step up cooperation”, October 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/68443/eu-and-solomon-islands-step-cooperation_en.

¹⁷²EEAS, “European Union helps Samoa fight measles outbreak”, December 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/71591/european-union-helps-samoa-fight-measles-outbreak_en.

However, much of the EU's relations with the Pacific region adopted a regional focus. In March, the EU signed programmes worth almost €32 million to promote regional sustainable waste management as a way to adapt to climate change.¹⁷³ The then Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, used an op-ed in March to stress the importance of building up the Pacific region's resilience to climate change, and he pointed out that the Union was prepared to assist the 10 million people living in the region (more than 0.5 million of which are European citizens residing in the Overseas Countries and Territories).¹⁷⁴ In this same month, the EU and Australia released a joint statement on the Pacific calling for greater attention to developing infrastructure and economic growth in the region. The EU and Australia recognised that many remote Pacific countries face connectivity challenges and high infrastructure costs – the Asian Development Bank (ADB) estimates that the region requires \$3.1 billion per year up to 2030 to meet infrastructure development needs.¹⁷⁵ Additionally, in June, the EU and the Forum Fishery Agency met in Pohnpei, Micronesia, for the first time ever to discuss fisheries and sustainable marine management.¹⁷⁶ Finally, this meeting was followed up by the 50th Pacific Islands Forum on 13–16 August in Funafuti, Tuvalu. The EU was present at the meeting to stress its commitment

The EU and Australia recognised that many remote Pacific countries face connectivity challenges and high infrastructure costs.

¹⁷³EEAS, “The Pacific and the EU sign programmes worth almost EUR 32 million for waste management and climate change adaptation”, March 1, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/58911/pacific-and-eu-sign-programmes-worth-almost-eur-32-million-waste-management-and-climate-change_en.

¹⁷⁴EEAS, “The Pacific, so far, yet so close to Europe. There is no planet B, nor is there a Pacific B”, March 4, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/59000/pacific-so-far-yet-so-close-europe-there-no-planet-b-nor-there-pacific-b_en.

¹⁷⁵EEAS, “European Union and Australian Government Joint Statement”, March 10, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/59352/european-union-and-australian-government-joint-statement_en.

¹⁷⁶EEAS, “First ever fisheries policy dialogue between the EU and Pacific”, June 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/64499/first-ever-fisheries-policy-dialogue-between-eu-and-pacific_en.

to the Pacific region and to assist states in the region with issues such as climate change and infrastructure.¹⁷⁷

Core documents

- > “Joint statement of the 22nd EU-ASEAN ministerial meeting”, January 21, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/01/21/joint-statement-of-the-22nd-eu-asean-ministerial-meeting/>.
- > “EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)”, January 23, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/56981/eu-japan-economic-partnership-agreement-epa_en.
- > “EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA)”, February 1, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/57491/eu-japan-strategic-partnership-agreement-spa_en.
- > “Joint Communication on EU-China – A strategic outlook”, *JOIN(2019) 5 final*, March 12, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-eu-china-a-strategic-outlook.pdf>.
- > “Outcome of the Council meeting”, March 18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39024/st07600-en19-vf.pdf>.
- > “Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a framework for the screening of foreign direct investments into the Union”, EU 2019/452, Brussels, March 19, 2019.
- > “Council Conclusions: Afghanistan’s Peace Process”, 7978/19, Brussels, April 8, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39011/st07978-en19.pdf>.

¹⁷⁷ EEAS, “The European Union (EU) Delegation for the Pacific issues the following press release following the 50th Pacific Islands Forum and Related Meetings held in Tuvalu from 13–16 August”, August 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/fiji/66579/european-union-eu-delegation-pacific-issues-following-press-release-following-50th-pacific_en.

- > “EU-China Summit Joint statement”, April 9, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39020/euchina-joint-statement-9april2019.pdf>.
- > “EU-Japan Summit Joint Statement”, April 25, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39222/190425-eu-japan-summit-statement-final.pdf>.
- > “Myanmar/Burma: Council prolongs sanctions”, April 29, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/04/29/myanmar-burma-council-prolongs-sanctions/>.
- > “EU Annual Report on human rights and democracy in the world 2019: Philippines country update”, May 14, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/philippines/62292/eu-annual-report-human-rights-and-democracy-world-2019-philippines-country-update_en.
- > “The EU and Central Asia: New Opportunities for a Stronger Partnership”, *JOIN(2019) 9 final*, May 15, 2019, Brussels, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/joint_communication_-_the_eu_and_central_asia_-_new_opportunities_for_a_stronger_partnership.pdf.
- > “Council Conclusions on the New Strategy on Central Asia”, 10221/19, Brussels, June 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39778/st10221-en19.pdf>.
- > “North Korea: EU renews its autonomous sanctions on individuals and entities”, July 15, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/07/15/north-korea-eu-renews-its-autonomous-sanctions-on-individuals-and-entities/>.
- > “EU-Vietnam - Framework Participation Agreement”, October 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/vietnam/68973/eu-vietnam-framework-participation-agreement_en.
- > “Chair’s Statement, 16 December 2019”, ASEM Foreign Ministers’ Meeting”, December 15-16, 2019, Madrid, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41868/2019-12-16-asem-fmm-chair-s-statement.pdf>.

Key events

Asia Pacific



Americas

North America

The EU's relations with North America in 2019 were mixed: the Union continued to develop a positive relationship with Canada, but the EU-US partnership was marked by growing tensions. Signs of strain in the transatlantic relationship were evident throughout the year, despite steps by the US Congress to temper the administration's foreign policy plans towards Europe. At the beginning of the year, information surfaced that, over the course of 2018, the US President repeatedly expressed to senior officials and close aides the desire to pull the US out from NATO.¹ In January, this led the House of Representatives to adopt the 'NATO Support Act' in order to try to stop the Trump administration from using federal funds to leave the alliance and allow the 'congressional legal counsel to challenge the administration in court'.² Later in the

Signs of strain in the transatlantic relationship were evident throughout the year, despite steps by the US Congress to temper the administration's foreign policy plans towards Europe.

1 Julian Barnes and Helene Cooper, "Trump Discussed Pulling U.S. From NATO, Aides Say Amid New Concerns Over Russia", *The New York Times*, January 14, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/14/us/politics/nato-president-trump.html>.

2 Claudia Grisales, "House lawmakers approve new NATO protections", *Stars and Stripes*, January 22, 2019, <https://www.stripes.com/news/europe/house-lawmakers-approve-new-nato-protections-1.565580>.

year, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations voted unanimously in favour of the Support Act in an act seen as the US Congress' commitment to NATO.³

In December, during the leaders' meeting for the Alliance's 70th anniversary, the US President repeated once more his calls for increased military spending across the Alliance and admonished European states for not spending enough on defence, singling out Germany in particular. He also hit out at the French President over the latter's remarks during a recent interview that the Alliance was 'brain dead' owing to internal political dissensus.⁴ During another exchange on the Islamic State, Trump also challenged the French President to repatriate captured fighters.⁵ The US President abruptly cut the meeting short at the end of its second day, after a video surfaced that appeared to show other leaders joking at his expense.⁶ Despite these tensions, in 2019 a number of NATO allies made contributions to the 'four thirties' initiative, the Alliance decided to recognise space as an operational domain⁷, members agreed to a new Military Strategy in May 2019 and the NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg announced in November that European allies and Canada increased defence spending in real terms by 4.6%.⁸

On 2 February, Washington announced its intention to withdraw from the INF Treaty citing long-standing Russian violations and Moscow's use of the nuclear capable SSC-8/9M729 cruise missile on 23 January (the missile has a range of 500kms and violates the

3 Julian Borger, "Senate committee passes bipartisan bill to stop Trump withdrawing from NATO", *The Guardian*, December 11, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/dec/11/senate-committee-passes-bipartisan-bill-stop-trump-withdrawing-nato>.

4 "Emmanuel Macron warns Europe: NATO is becoming brain-dead", *The Economist*, November 7, 2019, <https://www.economist.com/europe/2019/11/07/emmanuel-macron-warns-europe-nato-is-becoming-brain-dead>.

5 Alexandra Brzozowski, "NATO Summit 2019 – Day #1", *Euractiv*, 4 December, 2019, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/defence-and-security/news/nato-summit-2019-day-1/>.

6 Patrick Wintour and Rowena Mason, "Trump cuts short Nato summit after fellow leaders' hot-mic video", *The Guardian*, December 4, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/dec/04/trump-describes-trudeau-as-two-faced-over-nato-hot-mic-video>.

7 NATO, "Foreign Ministers take decisions to adapt NATO, recognize space as an operational domain", November 20, 2019, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_171028.htm.

8 NATO, "NATO Secretary General announces increased defence spending by Allies", November 29, 2019, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_171458.htm.

Treaty).⁹ On 14 February, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the future of the INF Treaty and its impact on the EU, calling for the Union's CFSP bodies to develop a common threat assessment on the implication of the INF Treaty on European security and dialogue with Russia and the US.¹⁰ Following a six-month period from the US suspension, during which Russia did not return into compliance, the US administration formally announced it had fully withdrawn from the treaty on 2 August 2019.¹¹ On the same day, the US Department of Defense (DoD) announced plans to test a new type of medium-range missile.¹² Such a test took place on 20 August, which involved a reconfigured missile launcher used in the Aegis missile defence system that is currently deployed in Romania and Poland.¹³ A second test of a nuclear-capable, ground-launched ballistic missile followed on 12 December.¹⁴ Russia continued to build up its military presence on NATO's eastern flank in 2019, with a strengthening of the Western Military District and the deployment of the S-400 Triumph surface-to-air missile system in Kaliningrad in March.¹⁵ Russia's actions and the demise of the INF Treaty prompted a strategic reflection in NATO about nuclear deterrence, and Heads of State and Government

Washington announced its intention to withdraw from the INF Treaty citing long-standing Russian violations.

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- 9 US Department of State, "INF Myth Busters: Pushing Back on Russian Propaganda Regarding the INF Treaty", July 30, 2019, <https://www.state.gov/inf-myth-busters-pushing-back-on-russian-propaganda-regarding-the-inf-treaty>.
 - 10 European Parliament, "Resolution on the Future of the INF Treaty and the Impact on the European Union", P8_TA(2019)0130, February 14, 2019, Strasbourg, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0130_EN.html?redirect.
 - 11 "US withdraws from key nuclear treaty with Russia sparking fears of nuclear arms race", *Euronews*, August 2, 2019, <https://www.euronews.com/2019/08/02/us-to-pull-out-of-nuclear-missile-treaty-with-russia-on-friday>.
 - 12 "U.S.-Russia arms control treaty dies; U.S. to test new weapon", *Euronews*, August 2, 2019, <https://www.euronews.com/2019/08/02/u-s-russia-arms-control-treaty-dies-u-s-test-n1038566>.
 - 13 Idrees Ali, "U.S. tests first ground-launched cruise missile after INF treaty exit", *Reuters*, August 19, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-pentagon-missiles-russia/u-s-tests-first-ground-launched-cruise-missile-after-inf-treaty-exit-idUSKCN1V91IV>.
 - 14 "US tests nuclear-capable ground-launched ballistic missile after INF treaty exit", *Euractiv*, December 13, 2019, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/defence-and-security/news/us-tests-nuclear-capable-ground-launched-ballistic-missile-after-inf-treaty-exit/>.
 - 15 Peter A. Wilson and John V. Parachini, "Russian S-400 Surface-to-Air Missile System: Is it Worth the Sticker Price?", RAND, May 6, 2020, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/05/russian-s-400-surface-to-air-missile-system-is-it-worth.html>.

discussed deterrence in the post-INF Treaty context at the 3-4 December 'London Summit'.¹⁶

The US also announced its intention to revoke its status as a signatory of the Arms Trade Treaty.

Furthermore, on 26 April, the US also announced its intention to revoke its status as a signatory of the ATT, which regulates conventional weapons, including small arms, battle tanks, combat aircraft and warships.¹⁷ Despite the uncertainty created by the end of the INF Treaty, however, the EU and US did meet during the year on important arms control issues. For example, on 14-15 May the EU and US held in Brussels a Dialogue on CBRN capacity-building, with the aim to coordinate their efforts in reducing WMD threats and strengthening CBRN security globally.¹⁸ On May 24, 2019, the sixth EU-US Cyber Dialogue was held, too. The two sides provided updates on their respective cyber strategies, policies, and legislation and discussed coordination and cooperation toward ensuring international cyber stability and security, including bolstering cyber resilience, combatting cybercrime and furthering cyber diplomacy and deterrence.¹⁹

On trade relations, on 8-10 January 2019 the EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström visited Washington, where she also met the US Secretary of the Treasury and members of the US Congress. The visit took place in the context of the Executive Working Group set up by US President Donald Trump and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker to implement the positive transatlantic trade agenda

16 NATO, "London Declaration", December 4, 2019, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_171584.htm.

17 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the intention by the US to withdraw its signature from the Arms Trade Treaty", April 27, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61561/statement-spokesperson-intention-us-withdraw-its-signature-arms-trade-treaty_en.

18 EEAS, "EU and U.S. hold Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) capacity building Dialogue", May 29, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/63418/eu-and-us-hold-chemical-biological-radiological-and-nuclear-cbrn-capacity-building-dialogue_en.

19 EEAS, "Joint Elements Statement on the Sixth EU-U.S. Cyber Dialogue", June 21, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/64495/joint-elements-statement-sixth-eu-us-cyber-dialogue_en.

agreed upon in the July 2018 EU-US Joint statement.²⁰ Commissioner Malmström visited the US again and had talks with the United States Trade Representative on 6-7 March.²¹ In the same context, on 15 April, the Council of the EU adopted negotiating directives for trade talks with the United States on the elimination of tariffs for industrial goods and on conformity assessment.²² Nevertheless, on 17 April the EU issued a preliminary list of US products considered for countermeasures in the context of the ongoing Boeing dispute at the WTO.²³ On 18 October, following the application of countermeasures by the US against imports from the EU in consequence of the WTO Airbus dispute, the EU Trade Commissioner announced that the Union would respond in due course with its own tariffs in the Boeing case, where the US has been found in breach of WTO rules, and invited the US to negotiate a balanced, WTO-compliant settlement.²⁴

At the same time, the EU and the US, together with Japan, continued their coordination on other trade issues. On 9 January,²⁵ and subsequently on 23 May,²⁶ during a Trilateral Meeting of Trade Ministers, the Ministers discussed their ongoing efforts to address policies and practices of third countries that undermine the proper functioning of international trade, including by creating severe overcapacity and

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- 20 EEAS, "European Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström visits Washington, DC (8-10 January 2019)", January 11, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/56426/european-trade-commissioner-cecilia-malmstr%C3%B6m-visits-washington-dc-8-10-january-2019_en.
- 21 EEAS, "EU Trade Commissioner Malmström Returns to Washington DC", March 5, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59092/eu-trade-commissioner-malmstr%C3%B6m-returns-washington-dc_en.
- 22 Council of the EU, "Trade with the United States: Council authorises negotiations on elimination of tariffs for industrial goods and on conformity assessment", April 15, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/04/15/trade-with-the-united-states-council-authorises-negotiations-on-elimination-of-tariffs-for-industrial-goods-and-on-conformity-assessment/>.
- 23 European Commission, "WTO Boeing dispute: EU issues preliminary list of U.S. products considered for countermeasures", April 17, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_2162.
- 24 European Commission, "Statement by Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmström on U.S. countermeasures in Airbus dispute", October 18, 2019, <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=2075>.
- 25 European Commission, "Joint Statement of the Trilateral Meeting of the Trade Ministers of the European Union, Japan and the United States", January 9, 2019, https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2019/january/tradoc_157623.pdf.
- 26 European Commission, "Joint Statement of the Trilateral Meeting of the Trade Ministers of the United States, European Union, and Japan", May 23, 2019, http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2019/may/tradoc_157894.pdf.

undermining fair competition and technological innovation. On 12 December, the European Commission unveiled a proposal to allow the EU to protect its trade interests despite the paralysis of the multilateral dispute settlement system in the WTO. The proposal came as a reaction to the shutdown of the operations of the WTO Appellate Body the previous day, owing to the US blocking new appointments to it.²⁷ Earlier on in the year, on 17 April, the US also decided to cease suspension of Title III of the Helms–Burton (Libertad) Act and the EU reiterated its strong opposition to the extraterritorial application of unilateral Cuba–related measures.²⁸ On 2 May, the day of the Act’s full activation, the EU released a statement arguing that such actions undermined trust and predictability in the transatlantic partnership.²⁹

A n additional source of tension was the US recognition of the Golan Heights as Israeli territory.

Tensions related to the US withdrawal from the JCPoA continued unabated in 2019, especially in the context of the establishment of INSTEX. On 6 March, in a meeting of the Treaty’s Joint Commission, participants acknowledged Iran’s continued implementation of its nuclear-related commitments and recognised that the lifting of sanctions and allowing for the normalisation of trade and economic relations with Iran constitute essential parts of the agreement.³⁰ The re-imposition by the US of sanctions previously lifted under the JCPoA, which hinder normalisation of trade and economic relations with Iran, continued to create tensions in the transatlantic relationship. An additional

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- 27 European Commission, “Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 654/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the exercise of the Union’s rights for the application and enforcement of international trade rules”, *COM(2019) 623 final*, Brussels, December 12, 2019.
- 28 EEAS and European Commission, “Joint Statement by Federica Mogherini and Cecilia Malmström on the decision of the United States to further activate Title III of the Helms Burton (Libertad) Act”, April 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61183/joint-statement-federica-mogherini-and-cecilia-malmstr%C3%B6m-decision-united-states-further_en.
- 29 Council of the EU, “Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the full activation of the Helms–Burton (LIBERTAD) Act by the United States”, May 2, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/05/02/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-full-activation-of-the-helms-burton-libertad-act-by-the-united-states/>.
- 30 EEAS, “Chair’s statement following the 6 March 2019 meeting of the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action”, March 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59179/chairs-statement-following-6-march-2019-meeting-joint-commission-joint-comprehensive-plan_en.

source of tension was the US recognition of the Golan Heights as Israeli territory, which runs contrary to the policy of the Union, which does not recognise Israeli sovereignty over any of the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967, in line with international law and relevant UNSCRs.³¹ Finally, 1 January marked the coming into effect of the US (and Israeli) decision to withdraw from the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) over perceived anti-Israel bias, which had been announced in 2017.³² On 6 April, the HR/VP issued a statement expressing support to the International Criminal Court, following the US authorities' decision to revoke the ICC Prosecutor's visa for entry into the country.³³

On the diplomatic front, in early January it became known that at the end of the previous year the Trump administration had downgraded the diplomatic status of the EU's Delegation to the United States without notice.³⁴ The status of the EU Delegation was restored on 4 March, coinciding with the arrival to Washington of the new Ambassador and Head of Delegation.³⁵

The Trump administration had downgraded the diplomatic status of the EU's Delegation to the United States without notice.

In February, the HR/VP met with the US Secretary of State and the Speaker of the US House of Representatives. In their discussions, they confirmed the importance of maintaining a strong transatlantic partnership and exchanged views on issues related to foreign policy

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- 31 Council of the EU, "Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the Golan Heights", March 27, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/27/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-golan-heights/>.
- 32 Tania Kraemer, "Goodbye, UNESCO: Israel and US quit UN heritage agency", *Deutsche Welle*, January 1, 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/goodbye-unesco-israel-and-us-quit-un-heritage-agency/a-46910385>.
- 33 EEAS, "Statement of the Spokesperson expressing support to the International Criminal Court following the decision by US authorities to revoke the ICC Prosecutor's visa for entry into the US", April 6, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/60707/statement-spokesperson-expressing-support-international-criminal-court-following-decision-us_en.
- 34 Michael Knigge, "Trump administration downgrades EU mission to US", *Deutsche Welle*, January 8, 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/trump-administration-downgrades-eu-mission-to-us/a-46990608>.
- 35 U.S. Mission to the EU, "Immediate Change to the EU Delegation to the United States' Protocol Status", March 4, 2019, <https://useu.usmission.gov/immediate-change-to-the-eu-delegation-to-the-united-states-protocol-status-2/>.

and European defence and security.³⁶ Then HR/VP Mogherini also had bilateral discussions with the US Secretary of State during an official visit to the Washington in June, as part of the regular high-level transatlantic political dialogue.³⁷ In the area of Justice and Home Affairs, ministers met twice during the year to discuss issues such as countering terrorism, CBRN threats, aviation security, 5G, cybersecurity, e-evidence, electoral security and to begin a joint evaluation of the EU-US Passenger Name Record (PNR) agreement.³⁸

Relations between the EU and Canada were constructive throughout the year. On March 20, the two parties held their 5th bilateral Security and Defence Symposium in Ottawa. The Symposium focused on enhanced cooperation opportunities between the EU and Canada, highlighting in particular the EU's PESCO initiative and emerging defence challenges, particularly cyber and hybrid threats, on both sides of the Atlantic.³⁹ During his visit to the country, the Director General of the EU Military Staff made an informal request to the Canadian government to participate in the Union's military training efforts in the Sahel with a view to combatting extremism in the region.⁴⁰ Canada is already participating in the EUCAP Sahel Mali mission. On 20 June, the country also joined EUAM Iraq by seconding a senior counter-terrorism expert.⁴¹ On 12 April, the EU and Canada discussed their

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- 36 EEAS, "Secretary Pompeo and Speaker Pelosi Visit EU institutions", February 22, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/58595/secretary-pompeo-and-speaker-pelosi-visit-eu-institutions_en.
- 37 EEAS, "High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini in Washington: Meets with Secretary Pompeo and Adviser Kushner", June 19, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/64310/high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-washington-meets-secretary-pompeo-and_en.
- 38 Council of the EU, "Joint EU-US statement following the EU-US Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial Meeting", June 19, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/19/joint-eu-u-s-statement-following-the-eu-u-s-justice-and-home-affairs-ministerial-meeting/> and Council of the EU, "Joint EU-US statement following the EU-US Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial Meeting", December 11, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/12/11/joint-eu-us-statement-following-the-eu-us-justice-and-home-affairs-ministerial-meeting/>.
- 39 EEAS, "Media advisory: Canada-European Union Security and Defence Cooperation Focus of Forum 20 March", March 18, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/59805/media-advisory-canada-european-union-security-and-defence-cooperation-focus-forum-20-march_en.
- 40 Mike Blanchfield, "EU military wants to partner with Canada in Mali as peacekeeping mission winds down", *The Globe and Mail*, March 25, 2019, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-eu-military-wants-to-partner-with-canada-in-mali-as-peacekeeping/>.
- 41 EEAS, "Canada joins EUAM Iraq by seconding a senior expert on counter-terrorism", June 20, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/64391/canada-joins-euam-iraq-seconding-senior-expert-counter-terrorism_en.

practices and the potential of cooperation on social media, disinformation and electoral interference, highlighting the possibility of Canada making use of the Union's Code of Practice on Disinformation.⁴² The EU also welcomed Canada's accession to the Arms Trade Treaty on 19 June, which it hailed as an important contribution towards the prevention and eradication of the illicit trade in conventional arms and ammunition.⁴³

On 17–18 July, the 17th EU–Canada Summit took place in Montreal. In the Joint Declaration of the summit, the EU and Canada agreed to intensify bilateral relations and step up cooperation to address global challenges, as well as reaffirmed their joint commitment to multilateralism, rules-based trade and the fight against climate change.

The summit agenda featured foreign and security issues, including the JCPoA, Ukraine and Syria, as well as discussions on cooperation in areas such as hybrid and cyber threats and counter-terrorism.⁴⁴ Both sides also committed to the full implementation of the EU–Canada free trade agreement, also known as Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). As of December 2019, 14 EU member states had notified the Council of completion of national ratification procedures for CETA.⁴⁵ The two sides also announced the conclusion of negotiations for a new PNR agreement. Finally, towards the end of the year, the EU welcomed the continuity in Canada's

EU and Canada agreed to intensify bilateral relations and step up cooperation to address global challenges.

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- 42 Carl Meyer, "Canada could benefit from Europe's crackdown on social media companies, says ambassador", *National Observer*, April 12, 2019, <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2019/04/12/news/canada-could-benefit-europes-crackdown-social-media-companies-says-ambassador>.
- 43 EEAS, "Statement by the Spokesperson on the ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty by Canada", June 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/canada/64591/statement-spokesperson-ratification-arms-trade-treaty-canada_en.
- 44 Council of the EU, "Canada-EU Summit Joint Declaration", July 17–18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/40403/final-2019-joint-declaration-final.pdf>.
- 45 Council of the EU, "Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada, of the one part, and the European Union and its Member States, of the other part", Treaties and Agreements database, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/documents-publications/treaties-agreements/agreement/?id=2016017>.

climate change policy that resulted from the outcome of 27 October federal elections.⁴⁶

Core documents

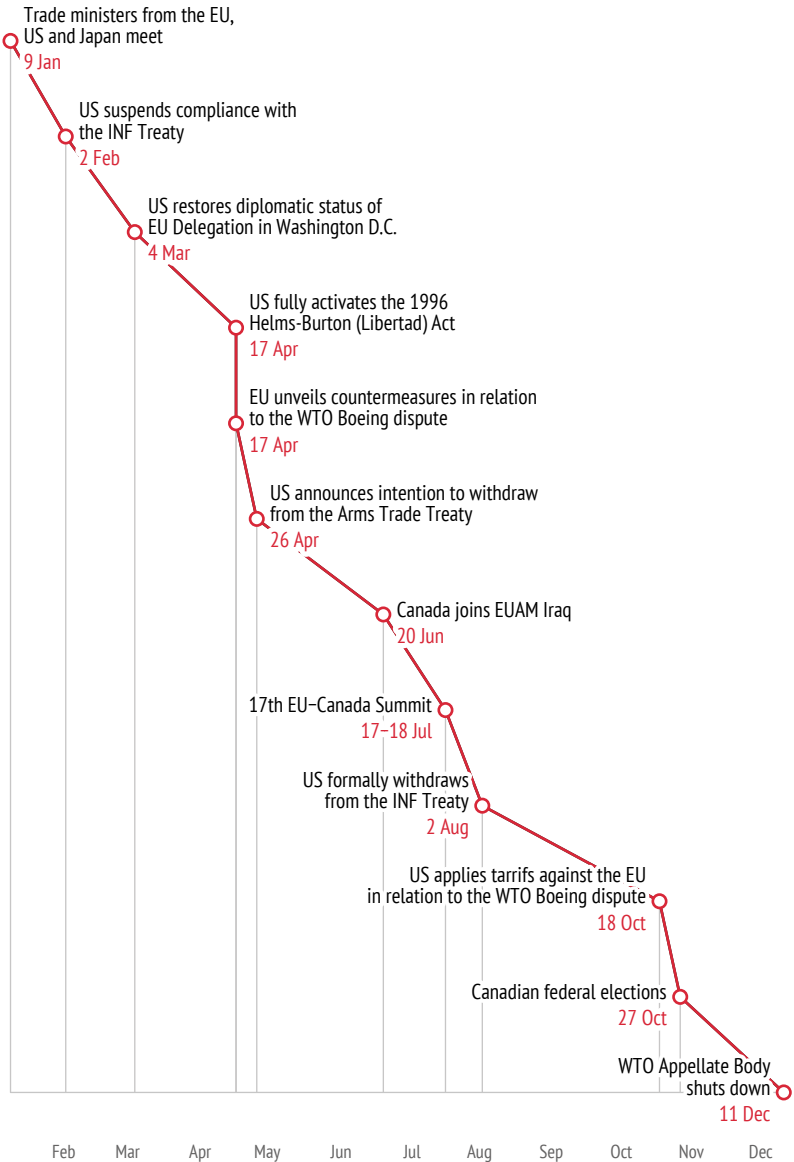
- > “Joint Statement of the Trilateral Meeting of the Trade Ministers of the European Union, Japan and the United States”, January 9, 2019, https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2019/january/tradoc_157623.pdf.
- > “Resolution on the Future of the INF Treaty and the Impact on the European Union”, P8_TA(2019)0130, February 14, 2019, Strasbourg, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0130_EN.html?redirect.
- > “Council Decision authorising the opening of negotiations with the United States of America for an agreement on the elimination of tariffs for industrial goods”, 6052/19, Brussels, April 9, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39180/st06052-en19.pdf>.
- > “Joint Statement by Federica Mogherini and Cecilia Malmström on the decision of the United States to further activate Title III of the Helms Burton (Libertad) Act”, April 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61183/joint-statement-federica-mogherini-and-cecilia-malmstr%C3%B6m-decision-united-states-further_en.
- > “Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the full activation of the Helms-Burton (LIBERTAD) Act by the United States”, May 2, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/05/02/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-full-activation-of-the-helms-burton-libertad-act-by-the-united-states/>.

⁴⁶ Mike Blanchfield, “EU, Germany welcome ‘continuity’ on climate change with Liberal minority win”, *The Globe and Mail*, October 27, 2019, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-eu-germany-welcome-continuity-on-climate-change-with-liberal/>.

- > “Joint Statement of the Trilateral Meeting of the Trade Ministers of the United States, European Union, and Japan”, May 23, 2019, http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2019/may/tradoc_157894.pdf.
- > “Canada-EU Summit Joint Declaration”, July 17-18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/40403/final-2019-joint-declaration-final.pdf>.
- > “Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 654/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the exercise of the Union’s rights for the application and enforcement of international trade rules”, *COM(2019) 623 final*, Brussels, December 12, 2019.

Key events

North America



Latin America and Caribbean

In Latin America, the year was marked by crisis in Venezuela, continent-wide protests and the reaction to fires in the Amazon rainforest. In Venezuela, spring saw opposition leader Juan Guaidó call for protests against Nicolás Maduro, which led to accusations of a coup attempt, mass protests, electricity blackouts and the arrest of opposition politicians. In February, a host of EU member states formally recognised Juan Guaidó as Venezuela's interim president following Maduro's failure to organise new presidential elections in line with a request by the HR/VP. EU member states were joined by the US and Canada, plus a number of countries in the region, while countries such as Bolivia, Cuba, Nicaragua, Russia and Turkey continued to recognise Maduro. The decision to recognise Guaidó came on the back of a 31 January resolution by the European Parliament that admonished Maduro for the detention of journalists and called for a restoration of democracy.⁴⁷ This political crisis aggravated long-standing problems in the country, such as access to basic services and education, as well as the refugee crisis. The UNHCR estimates that 4.5 million Venezuelans have left their country to date.⁴⁸

In response to the crisis in Venezuela, the EU mobilised its diplomatic and financial capacities. For example, on 1–2 March the European Parliament dispatched a delegation to Peru to observe how the country was dealing with the increased flow of Venezuelan migrants. On 28 March, HR/VP Mogherini appointed Enrique Iglesias⁴⁹ as the Special Adviser for Venezuela with a view to him supporting

47 European Parliament, "Resolution on the Situation in Venezuela", January 31, 2019, 2019/2543(RSP), https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0061_EN.html.

48 UNHCR, "Venezuela Situation", <https://www.unhcr.org/venezuela-emergency.html>.

49 Enrique Iglesias is a Spanish-Uruguayan national who served as Foreign Minister of Uruguay as well as holding senior positions with the Ibero-American General Secretariat and the Inter-American Development Bank. See: EEAS, "Federica Mogherini Appoints Enrique Iglesias as Special Advisor for Venezuela", May 28, 2019, Brussels, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/63282/federica-mogherini-appoints-enrique-iglesias-special-adviser-venezuela_uz.

the work of the EU and the ICG.⁵⁰ While in New York to meet with the ICG in September,⁵¹ the HR/VP spoke about the EU's support for Venezuelans through the mobilisation of over €170 million for measures inside and outside the country. €100 million was dedicated to helping Venezuelan migrants, refugees and host communities and countries, and a further €70 million focused on providing healthcare, sanitation and education to Venezuelans inside the country.⁵² During a conference organised by the EU, the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IoM) on 28–29 October, the focus was on building international solidarity for the Venezuelan refugee and migrant crisis.

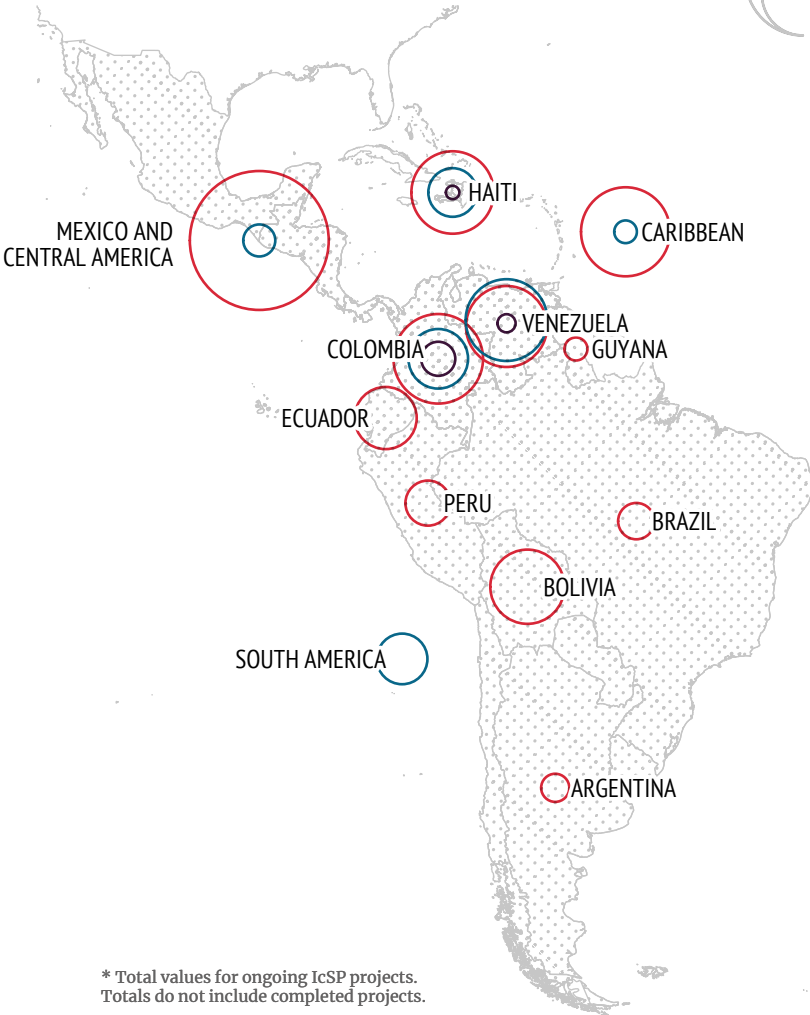
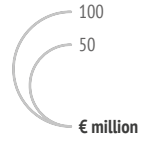
It should be noted that, in parallel to the EU's efforts, Russia was supporting Nicolás Maduro with military deliveries and expertise. Two Russian planes landed in Caracas in March from Moscow reportedly carrying 100 soldiers and 35 tonnes of equipment, plus the chief of staff of the Russian ground forces, Vasily Tonkoshkurov.⁵³ In addition to military assistance, Russia was also seen as a key partner for Maduro in helping him to soften the blow of sanctions imposed by the US and the EU. The Union had imposed restrictive measures on Venezuela in November 2017 and the US government tightened sanctions throughout the year. In October, US officials claimed that Russia's state-controlled oil company Rosneft was supporting Maduro with imports of petrol and processed oil products – although Venezuela has the world's largest reserves of crude oil, its state-run oil firm PDVSA is unable to process crude oil because of infrastructural issues.⁵⁴ In addition to Russia, Turkey also supported Maduro

- 50 The ICG for Venezuela is comprised of EU institutions, 8 EU member states (France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK*) and 5 countries from Latin America (Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama and Uruguay). See: EEAS, "EU Works for Political Solution to the Crisis in Venezuela", September, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/factsheet_eu_venezuela_09_2019.pdf.
- 51 EEAS, "Remarks by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the Event on Humanitarian Crisis in Venezuela and its Impact on the Region", September 24, 2019, New York, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/67844/remarks-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-event-humanitarian-crisis_en.
- 52 EEAS, "EU Supports Venezuelan Refugees, Migrants and Host Communities", Factsheet, October, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/factsheet_venezuela_conference.pdf.
- 53 "Russia sends military planes to Venezuela", *Deutsche Welle*, March 25, 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/russia-sends-military-planes-to-venezuela/a-48047119>.
- 54 Michael Stott and Anne-Sylvaine Chassany, "US claims Rosneft 'central' to survival of Venezuela's Maduro", *Financial Times*, October 23, 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/d5ea8a44-f4a9-11e9-b018-3ef8794b17c6>.

Latin America

EU Integrated Approach, 2019-2021

- Development cooperation disbursements (2019)
- Humanitarian assistance (2019-2020)
- Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (2019-2021)*



in 2019 following a US assessment that President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government was importing large amounts of Venezuelan gold and other precious metals.⁵⁵ China's relationship with Maduro was affected by the sanctions regime, with Beijing deciding to scale-back its economic relationship with Venezuela while also calling for an end to restrictive measures.⁵⁶

Protests were not just restricted to Venezuela, however, as the year saw violent conflict hit Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras and Peru in the wake of a regional economic slowdown and concerns about corruption, equality and cost-of-living rises. In Chile, troops were deployed to the streets in October in the wake of multiple fatalities and injuries.⁵⁷ In Bolivia, presidential elections in October were claimed to have irregularities by the Organization of American States (OAS) and, in the wake of protests in the country, Evo Morales stood down as president on 13 November.⁵⁸ In Ecuador, protests over petrol prices and social cuts designed to lower the country's deficit led to violence in the capital Quito in October, forcing President Lenin Moreno to move his government from the capital city to Guayaquil. Finally, in February Haiti saw violent protests against the President and government for corruption and the rise in the cost of living.⁵⁹

The crisis in Venezuela and across the region somewhat overshadowed the 16 April publication of a Joint Communication by the EU on relations with Latin America and the Caribbean (LAS), even if the crisis only served to reinforce the need for a more meaningful relationship between the two regions on democracy promotion and peace and security. The Joint Communication outlined a number of areas where cooperation could be enhanced between the partners, such as

55 Laura Pitel, "Turkey failing to heed US warnings on Venezuela, says Trump envoy", *Financial Times*, March 28, 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/75b4fabe-5176-11e9-9c76-bf4a0ce37d49>.

56 Matt Spetalnick, "U.S. envoy sees China scaling back economic support for Venezuela's Maduro", *Reuters*, January 15, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-venezuela-politics-china-russia/u-s-envoy-sees-china-scaling-back-economic-support-for-venezuelas-maduro-idUSKBN1ZE2B0>.

57 "Chile protestors clash with police hours after cabinet reshuffle", *France24*, October 29, 2019, <https://www.france24.com/en/20191029-fresh-unrest-in-chile-as-protestors-clash-with-police-despite-cabinet-reshuffle>.

58 "Bolivia President Evo Morales Resigns", *Deutsche Welle*, November 10, 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/bolivia-president-evo-morales-resigns/a-51195195>.

59 "Haiti government silent as deadly protests show no sign of ending", *France24*, February 14, 2019, <https://www.france24.com/en/20190214-haiti-popular-unrest-turmoil-protests-stronger-death-toll-reaches-7-people-corruption>.

Venezuela

Displaced persons per country, 2019-2020



Data: UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 2020

democracy and human rights, global governance, trade, connectivity and resilience. In the context of a global erosion of multilateralism, the EU was keen to promote the multilateral agenda with Latin American and Caribbean partners and it emphasised the importance of promoting the implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change and reform of the UN system and the WTO. On 17 May, the EU-LAC Foundation became an international organisation marking an important milestone in EU and Latin American and Caribbean relations and further enhancing the partners' determination to promote multilateralism. More specifically on the peace and security agenda, the Joint Communication stressed the importance of cooperation on law enforcement, disaster management, civil protection and CSDP missions and operations.⁶⁰

The Union continued to be the largest provider of development cooperation and assistance to Latin America during 2019. Overall, the EU has dedicated €3.6 billion (2014-2020) for country-specific and regional programmes that focus on security and rule of law, environmental sustainability and climate change and more.⁶¹ The Union also sought to develop a range of economic and social relations with Latin America and the Caribbean, as can be seen by the cooperation conference held in Brussels on 21-22 November to strengthen dialogue on innovation cooperation. In this same month, the partners also organised a regional workshop to promote EU space capacities such as Copernicus and Galileo. The underlying rationale of the workshop was to promote the benefits of the EU's space capacities for growth opportunities, academic cooperation and natural disaster management.⁶² Economic relations between the EU, Latin America and the Caribbean were high on the agenda in 2019 with several meetings of

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- 60 European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, "Joint Communication on the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean: Joining Forces for a Common Future", *JOIN(2019) 6 final*, Strasbourg, April 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/joint_communication_to_the_european_parliament_and_the_council_-_european_union_latam_and_the_caribbean_-_joining_forces_for_a_common_future.pdf.
- 61 EEAS, "EU Supports Venezuelan Refugees, Migrants and Host Communities", Factsheet, October, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/factsheet_venezuela_conference.pdf.
- 62 EEAS, "Taller regional TAIEX-Instrumento de Colaboración (PI, Partnership Instrument) sobre aplicaciones espaciales para los países de América Central y el Caribe", November 26-27, 2019, Panama, https://eeas.europa.eu/regions/latin-america-caribbean/70976/taller-rerional-taiex-instrumento-de-colaboraci%C3%B3n-pi-partnership-instrument-sobre-aplicaciones_en.

the Association Committees throughout the year to discuss barriers to trade and market access.

Aside from economic partnership, however, the EU continued to support Latin America and the Caribbean with the consequences of natural disasters and disease. The Caribbean was once again affected by the effects of natural disasters. In September 2019, Cyclone Dorian struck the Bahamas causing widespread destruction. The EU responded in September by mobilising financial resources and experts, plus the Netherlands deployed two ships and Dutch, French and German marines provided relief to the island under the UCPM.⁶³ Among many other initiatives, in October, the EU provided a €2 million grant to rehabilitate ten emergency shelters in the British Virgin Islands including the provision of emergency relief supplies, training, social care and shelter management.⁶⁴ In December, the EU provided the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) with a grant of €4.1 million to combat mosquito-borne diseases in the region.⁶⁵ The grant will be channelled over a four-year period to improve prevention, detection and control for diseases such as Zika and Dengue.

The EU's cooperation with Cuba continued in 2019 with a meeting on 7 March in Brussels to discuss the illicit trade in small arms and lights weapons, as well as disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The EU and Cuba also convened their first dialogue on advancing the SDGs on 16 April in Havana. The EU stressed that it continued its opposition to the US embargo on the country and the European Commission and Cuban authorities signed a total of €61.5 million in agreements to enhance EU-Cuba cooperation on food security, renewable energy, climate change and economic modernisation. These efforts were advanced under the umbrella of the EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement (PDCA),

63 EEAS, "European Union mobilises support for victims of Hurricane Dorian", September 12, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/news/european-union-mobilises-support-victims-hurricane-dorian_en.

64 EEAS, "EU Grant to Rehabilitate British Virgin Islands Emergency Shelters", October 30, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/regions/latin-america-caribbean/69653/eu-grant-rehabilitate-british-virgin-islands-emergency-shelters_en.

65 EEAS, "EU Continues to Support Caribbean in Fight against Mosquito Borne Diseases", December 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/regions/latin-america-caribbean/71442/eu-continues-support-caribbean-fight-against-mosquito-borne-diseases_en.

which was signed in 2016 and entered into provisional application on 1 November 2017.⁶⁶

The EU also attended to its partnerships and relationships in Central America. With Mexico, the EU started the year with a Joint Parliamentary Committee to discuss issues such as climate change, sustainable development and migration, security and human rights.

The European Commission and Cuban authorities signed a total of €61.5 million in agreements to enhance EU-Cuba cooperation.

The meeting also served as a review of the modernised EU-Mexico Global Agreement, which was agreed in principle in April 2018 to replace a previous agreement signed in 2000. The negotiations for the agreement began in May 2016 and it promises to remove Mexican tariffs on European food and drinks and allow for an exchange of services, as well as protecting workers'

rights and the environment.⁶⁷ Following this meeting, an EU delegation visited Mexico on 24-25 April to promote the EU's vision of a circular economy, resource-efficiency and sustainable growth – over 70 representatives from 17 EU member states attended the mission. This visit also laid the groundwork for the 8th EU-Mexico High Level Dialogue on the environment, at which representatives discussed biodiversity, air quality and environmental compliance.⁶⁸

Another crisis that led to tensions in Latin America and the wider world was the widespread fires that engulfed the Amazon tropical rainforest in August. The forest makes up over a half of the world's total wet rainforests, as well as serving as the world's biggest land-based carbon sink. Brazil was the worst effected, with one estimate showing that the country had witnessed an 84% increase in forest

66 EEAS, "EU and Cuba held first Dialogue on Sustainable Development Goals", April 17, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61135/eu-and-cuba-held-first-dialogue-sustainable-development-goals_en.

67 EEAS, "26th meeting of the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee opens in Mexico", February 7, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/57793/26th-meeting-eu-mexico-joint-parliamentary-committee-opens-mexico_en.

68 EEAS, "Environmental cooperation: European Commission promotes circular economy and green partnerships in Mexico", April 25, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/61489/environmental-cooperation-european-commission-promotes-circular-economy-and-green-partnerships_en.

fires from January to August.⁶⁹ Aside from the clear environmental and social damage caused by the fires, there was political contestation between the Brazilian government and international actors over the handling of the crisis. Highlighting a tension between national sovereignty and the global commons, outrage by numerous European countries at the devastation was met with claims by President Jair Bolsonaro that the Amazon was an issue for Brazil alone.⁷⁰ Despite this political backdrop, Bolivia officially requested EU support on 29 August through the UCPM, which saw the deployment of experts to the affected areas, the mobilisation of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) and the use of the Union's Copernicus satellite service.⁷¹

Finally, on 7 October the candidate for the post of HR/VP, Josep Borrell, presented himself in the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee (AFET) in Brussels. During this hearing, the then HR/VP designate was asked about his views on Latin America. He called the continent an EU 'ally on multilateralism',⁷² but noted that there was a clear need for the Union to continue to engage with countries such as Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela in order to support the legitimate democratic aspirations of people.⁷³ In particular, HR/VP designate Borrell also echoed the sentiments of the 13 May Council of the EU Conclusions on Latin America and the Caribbean, which called for a resumption of the Summit meetings between these countries

**The Council
Conclusions
reiterated the need for
the EU to engage with
Latin America and the
Caribbean in order to
buttress multilateral
institutions.**

69 Enrique Gomez Ramirez, "Amazon wildfire crisis: need for an international response", European Parliamentary Research Service Briefing, November, 2019, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/644198/EPRS_BRI\(2019\)644198_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/644198/EPRS_BRI(2019)644198_EN.pdf).

70 Lisandra Paraguassu and Gabriela Baczynska, "As EU threatens trade retaliation, Brazil sends army to fight Amazon fires", *Reuters*, August 23, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-brazil-politics/as-eu-threatens-trade-retaliation-brazil-sends-army-to-fight-amazon-fires-idUSKCN1VD19T>.

71 European Commission, "EU Civil Protection Mechanism activated to help Bolivia", August 30, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/luxembourg/news/eu-civil-protection-mechanism-activated-help-bolivia_fr.

72 European Parliament, "Hearing of Josep Borrell", October 7, 2019, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/resources/library/media/20191008RES63704/20191008RES63704.pdf>.

73 European Parliament, "Letter from the Chair of the AFET Committee to the Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs", October 8, 2019, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/resources/library/media/20191119RES66904/20191119RES66904.pdf>.

and the EU. Furthermore, the Council Conclusions reiterated the need for the EU to engage with Latin America and the Caribbean in order to buttress multilateral institutions and fora such as the UN and the WTO.⁷⁴ In this regard, on 28 June, the EU and Mercosur (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) reached an agreement on trade as part of a more comprehensive Association Agreement being negotiated by the partners.⁷⁵

Core documents

- > “Resolution on the Situation in Venezuela”, January 31, 2019, 2019/2543(RSP), https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0061_EN.html.
- > “Joint Communication on the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean: Joining Forces for a Common Future”, JOIN(2019) 6 final, Strasbourg, April 16, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/joint_communication_to_the_european_parliament_and_the_council_-_european_union_latin_america_and_the_caribbean_-_joining_forces_for_a_common_future.pdf.
- > “Council Conclusions on the Joint HR/Commission Communication on EU relations with Latin American and the Caribbean, “Joining forces for a common future””, 9241/19, Brussels, May 13, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39346/eu-lac.pdf>.
- > “New EU-Mercosur Trade Agreement: The Agreement in Principle”, Brussels, July 1, 2019, https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2019/june/tradoc_157964.pdf.

⁷⁴ Council of the EU, “Council Conclusions on the Joint HR/Commission Communication on EU relations with Latin American and the Caribbean, “Joining forces for a common future””, 9241/19, Brussels, May 13, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39346/eu-lac.pdf>.

⁷⁵ European Commission, “EU and Mercosur reach agreement on trade”, June 28, 2019, <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=2039>.

Key events

Latin America and the Caribbean

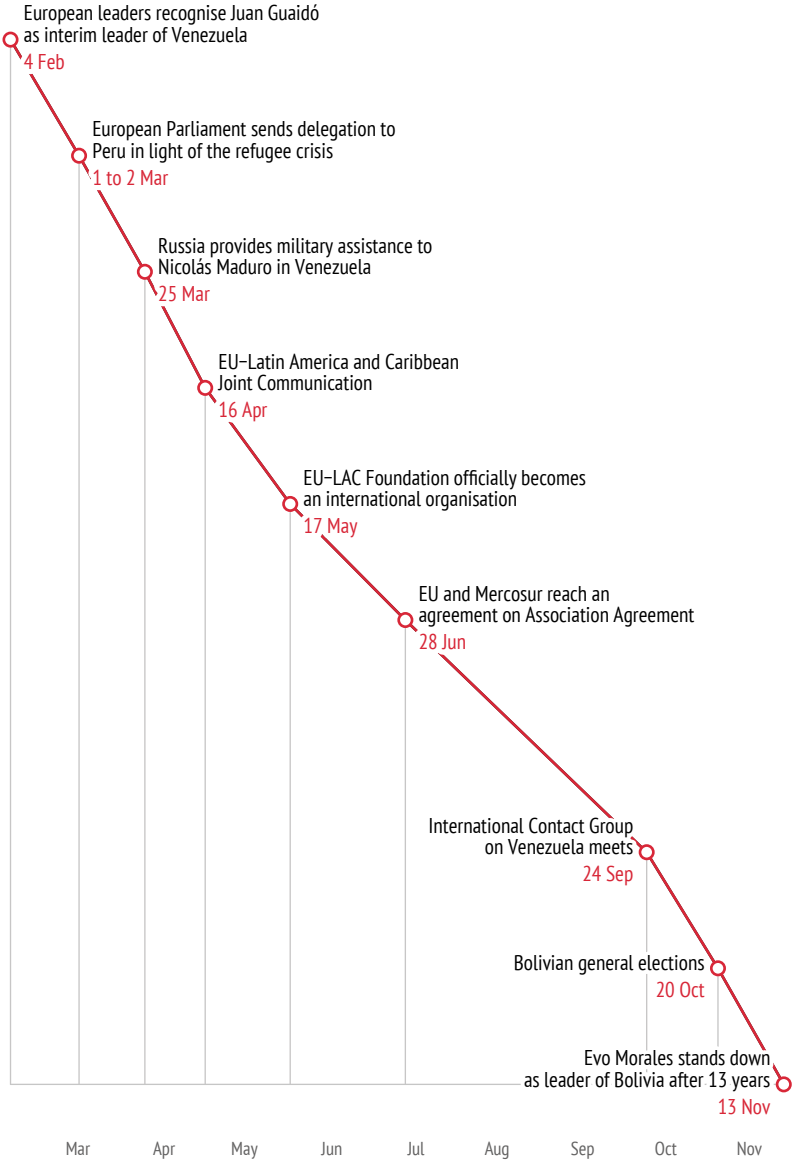




Image: European Defence Agency



**EUROPEAN
SECURITY AND
DEFENCE**

Crisis management

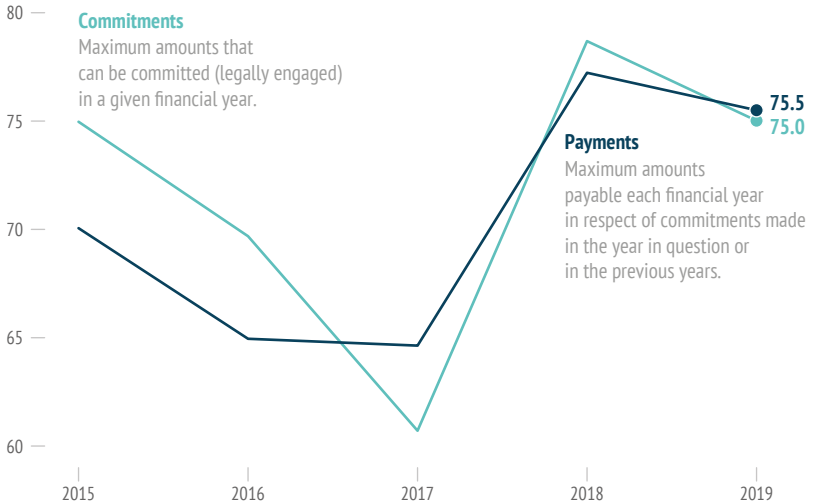
CSDP missions and operations

In terms of its CSDP missions and operations, the EU continued to deploy approximately 5,000 individuals on 16 deployments to 11 separate countries. On the political level, in June EU ministers agreed that CSDP missions and operations are a key EU contribution to peace and stability, but that member states need to ‘provide the necessary means and personnel for these missions and operations’ so that the EU can carry out its tasks effectively. The 17 June Council Conclusions made clear also that member states should engage in a strategic reflection about the EU’s overall maritime presence in strategic areas. Furthermore, the Conclusions stated that there should be a greater link between capability development initiatives at the EU level and the operational availability of forces for CSDP mission and operations. These points were echoed by the European Parliament in its annual report on the CSDP, but members went further in calling for a greater European strategic autonomy for crisis response and they called on EU member states to ensure that resources and forces are made available for crisis management missions and operations.¹

¹ European Parliament, “Annual Report on the Implementation of the Common Security and Defence Policy”, Strasbourg, Pg_TA(2020)0009, January 15, 2020, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0009_EN.html.

Athena Mechanism

2015-2019



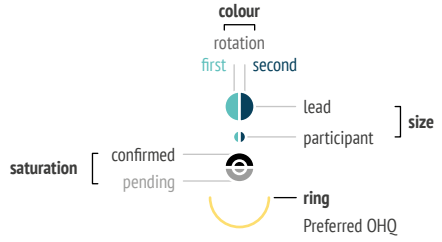
Data: Council of the EU, 2020

During 2019, political energy was dedicated to the future of EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia. On 29 March, the Council agreed to extend the naval operation to 30 September 2019 but this extension came with a specific instruction that the Operation Commander should temporarily suspend the deployment of the operation’s naval assets during the extension period. While the operation continued to conduct surveillance tasks by air, and it reinforced its support to the Libyan Navy and Coastguard, without maritime assets the operation effectively ground to a halt.² Established in June 2015 in order to disrupt the business model of migrant smugglers and human traffickers, the reality was that EU member states could not agree on the future of the naval operation because of profound disagreements over migration policy.

2 Council of the EU, “EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia: mandate extended until 30 September 2019”, Brussels, March 29, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/29/eunavfor-med-operation-sophia-mandate-extended-until-30-september-2019/>.

EU Battlegroups

Offers and Commitments, 2019-2025, as at 6 December 2019



* SIAF/SILF limited to ops in littoral
 ** Since there is no agreed EU abbreviation for the Republic of North Macedonia the full name is used.

Despite this situation, Operation Sophia continued to fulfil its duties as best as it could. In June, Rear Admiral Ettore Socci (Italy) took over as Force Commander from Rear Admiral Stefano Turchetto (Italy). In terms of its duties in the Central Mediterranean, Operation Sophia continued to field some 300 men and women at the OHQ and Force Headquarters (FHQ), and naval and air assets from Spain, Luxemburg, Poland, Italy and France were in theatre or on standby. On 27 September, the 8th edition of the Shared Awareness and De-confliction for the Mediterranean Sea (SHADE MED) took place in Rome and some 200 attendees from the civil and military domains congressed in order to better coordinate efforts to support the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy, while also finding more effective ways of developing EU member state training for the operation.

After celebrating its 10th anniversary in December 2018, EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta continued its task of protecting food and deterring piracy off the Horn

2019 marked 20 years of the CSDP.

of Africa. Since its deployment in 2008, Atalanta has protected 1.8 million tonnes of World Food Programme (WFP) aid.³ Throughout the year, Atalanta deterred and/or responded to a range of piracy attacks. In addition to these duties Operation Atalanta played a key role in advancing CSDP partnerships and in February EUNAVFOR ship ESPS Relampago (Spain) engaged in a Passing Exercise (PASSEX) with Japanese destroyer JDS Samidare near Djibouti. In December, Atalanta then engaged in maritime capacity building initiatives with the Djiboutian Navy and recovery exercises with the US Navy.

On 29 March, and as a consequence of Brexit, the final stages of moving the operation's Operational Headquarters (OHQ) from Northwood, UK, to Spain and France. More precisely, the headquarters of the operation moved to the Rota Naval Base, Cadiz, Spain, and the maritime security centre for the Horn of Africa and part of the OHQ has been transferred to Brest, France. In July, the Force Command of the operation was transferred from Rear Admiral Ricardo Hernandez (Spain) to Rear Admiral Armando Paolo Simi (Italy). On 1 October,

³ EUNAVFOR, "Op Atalanta Celebrates Tenth Anniversary with Thanks from International Partners", January 10, 2019, <https://eunavfor.eu/op-atalanta-celebrates-tenth-anniversary-with-thanks-from-international-partners/>.

CSDP Military Missions and Operations

2019



Data: European External Action Service, 2020

Vice Admiral Antonio Martorell Lacave (Spain) handed over the baton as Operation Commander to Major General Planells Palau (Spain). In December, Rear Admiral Armando Paolo Simi (Italy) passed on the Force Command to Commodore José António Vizinha Mirones (Portugal).

EUFOR Althea entertained a number of high-level visits during the year with Prime Ministers, ministers and diplomats from Austria, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey,

UK and the US. 2019 marked the 15-year anniversary of the operation's deployment and there was no let-up in the activities conducted by EUFOR. The operation engaged in tasks such as communications training, live firing exercises, civil protection, police training, battalion weapons and firing exercises, helicopter training, food deliveries, the destruction of ammunition and minefield marking. In June, there was a change in command from Major General Martin Dorfer (Austria) to Major General Reinhard Trischak (Austria). In October, EUFOR conducted 'Exercise Quick Response' to prove the operation's ability to conduct large-scale peace support operations along with partner countries.

The EU's military training missions (EUTMs) continued to play a crucial role in furthering the CSDP and providing security in Africa. EUTM Somalia had an active year including a range of high-level visits from Ambassadors from Germany, Finland, Italy and Sweden, the head of the Swedish Armed Forces, EUNAVFOR Atalanta's Operation Commander and then HR/VP Mogherini in 21 May. In January, Lt General Esa Pulkinen – then Director of the EU Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) and Commander of the mission – visited EUTM Somalia to discuss the mission's progress and to meet key stakeholders in the region. In February, EUTM Somalia conducted its first counter improvised explosive device (IED) course – a two-week course saw officers from the engineering brigade of the Somali National Army (SNA) trained in how to counter the increasing use of IEDs by insurgency groups. Furthermore, in April EUTM Somalia successfully completed infantry training for the SNA and a month later the mission trained SNA trainers in order to amplify the mission's training objectives. In August, the mission Force Command passed from Brigadier General Matteo Spreafico (Italy) to Brigadier General Antonello De Sio (Italy).

EUTM Mali also had a productive year, with activities for the Malian Armed Forces (FAMA) focusing on database intelligence and gender. In October, Austrian-funded mine detectors were handed over to the FAMA and a training programme was designed around their use. In December, Brigadier General João Boga Ribeiro (Portugal) took over as commander of EUTM Mali. Meanwhile, over at EUTM Central African Republic (RCA) Brazil joined the mission in January and the training focus during the year concentrated on radio communications, infantry training, military administration and informatics

The Council of the EU in February adopted a new civil-military concept of operations on the regionalisation of the CSDP in the Sahel.

and communications systems. It should also be noted that the Council of the EU in February adopted a new civil-military concept of operations on the regionalisation of the CSDP in the Sahel. The aim of the new concept was to reinforce and rename the RACC, and to allow EUTM Mali to ‘provide training outside [of] its mission area on a case by case basis. Accordingly, the new measures were designed to increase coordination between civilian and military CSDP missions (alongside EUCAP Sahel Mali and EUCAP Sahel Niger) and to better support the G5 Sahel countries.⁴

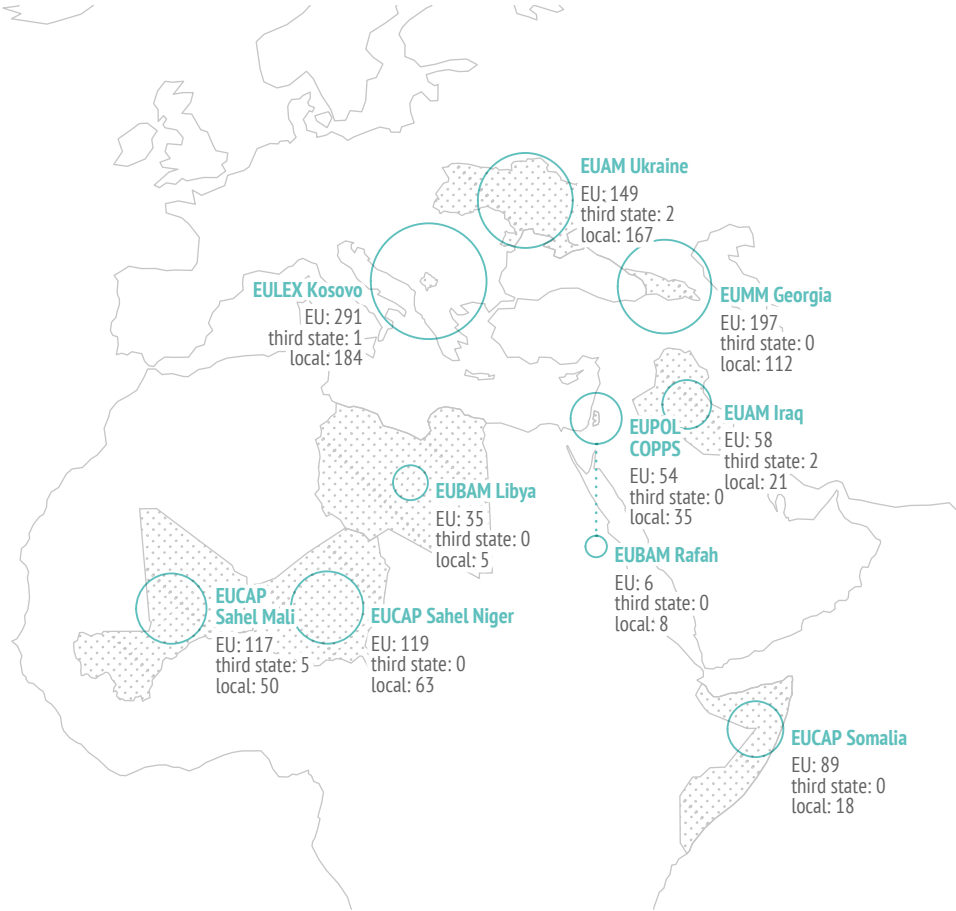
In terms of the 11 ongoing civilian CSDP missions, the EU continued to provide security support to a range of countries. The EU Advisory Mission to Iraq (EUAM Iraq) worked during 2019 on a range of issues, including the protection of cultural heritage, illegal trade in cultural goods, the role of women and the implementation of UNSCR 1325, security sector reform, and border management. In July, there was positive news when EUAM Iraq and the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior opened a Joint Coordination Center (JCC) which will allow EUAM staff and advisers to work much more closely with counterparts in the Iraqi government. This action was taken in addition to the regular meetings between EUAM Iraq advisers and various Iraqi government ministries that took place during the year. In October, EUAM Iraq signed a memorandum of understanding with the NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) in order to strengthen cooperation in areas such as human resources management, capacity building, women, peace and security and international law. Finally, the mission hosted a number of high-level visits from the governments of Germany, New Zealand, Sweden and Switzerland and officials from Australia and Canada also joined the mission as third state partners.

The EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) Rafah continued its border-related tasks during the year. In June, EUBAM Rafah was extended by the Council of the EU until 30 June 2020, with a budget

⁴ Council of the EU, “Sahel: EU takes further steps to better support the security of the region”, Press Release, February 18, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/02/18/sahel-eu-takes-further-steps-to-better-support-the-security-of-the-region/>.

CSDP Civilian Missions

Personnel figures as at November 2019



Data: European External Action Service, 2020

line of €2.15 million.⁵ The extended mandate called for the mission to maintain its readiness to support the Palestinian general

5 Council of the EU, “EU police mission and EU border assistance mission extended for 12 months”, Press Release, June 28, 2019, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/28/palestine-eu-police-mission-and-eu-border-assistance-mission-extended-for-12-months/?utm_source=dsm&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Pal%20EU+police+mission+and+EU+border+assistance+mission+extended+for+12+months.

administration for borders and crossings with technical assistance when required. In December, the mission and the relevant authorities signed a memorandum of understanding for the creation of a Command and Control centre that will bring together EU advisers and political authorities in the region to better manage Palestinian border crossings. The EU Police and Rule of Law Mission (EUPOL COPPS) for the Palestinian Territory was also extended in June until the end of June 2020, with a budget of €12.43 million.⁶ During the year, EUPOL COPPS worked on issues such as countering money laundering, witness protection, domestic violence, traffic and accident awareness, community policing, environmental crimes and cybercrime.

The EUAM to Ukraine spent a great deal of 2019 working on integrated border management and providing training to the Ukrainian State Bureau of Investigations (SBI) and Ukrainian police forces. In May, the Council of the EU extended EUAM Ukraine until 31 May 2021 with a budget of €54 million and it called on the mission to continue to help strengthen the rule of law in the country.⁷ Furthermore, in June the Council appointed a new head of mission in the form of Antti Hartikainen (Finland), who was the former Director General of Finnish Customs and head of the EUBAM Libya mission. His mandate will run until 30 June 2020. The mission's support to the SBI was invaluable during 2019, as the Bureau took on the task of investigating 25,000 open criminal cases. EUAM Ukraine helped the SBI to recruit new operatives and train existing ones.⁸ On 29 October, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the SBI and EUAM Ukraine in order to allow the mission to observe the SBI's selection interviews for candidates for the Bureau.

The EU Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) to Kosovo worked on issues such as gender-based violence, environmental crime, border management, missing persons, correctional services, crowd and riot control and more. In November, Lars-Gunnar Wigemark (Sweden) was

6 Ibid.

7 EUAM Ukraine, "EUAM Ukraine: Council extends mission and approves budget increase", May 13, 2019, <https://www.euam-ukraine.eu/news/euam-ukraine-council-extends-mission-and-approves-budget-increase/>.

8 EUAM Ukraine, "EUAM confirms its support for the SBI to meet current and future challenges", September 20, 2019, <https://www.euam-ukraine.eu/news/kmyes-zapevnilo-dbr-u-svoij-pidtrimsi-shhodo-podolannya-potochnih-ta-majbutnih-viklikiv/>.

appointed as the new head of mission for EULEX Kosovo and he will hold this mandate until 14 June 2020. Mr Wigemark was the former head of the EU Delegation and EU Special Representative to Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to providing strategic advice to the relevant authorities in Kosovo, the mission also donated equipment to various bodies. For example, in August EULEX Kosovo handed over four vehicles and forensics equipment to the Kosovo Police Forensics Directorate.⁹

The EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) to Georgia continued to monitor compliance with the Six Point Agreement and its patrols continued on a daily basis throughout the year. In 2019, over 200 monitors were deployed with EUMM Georgia to ensure the normalisation of borders and boundary lines, confidence building to reduce border tensions and providing advice to EU policymakers and member states. In October, the mission became the first civilian CSDP mission to include the representation of all EU member states. In December, EUMM Georgia conducted an information-sharing meeting with Georgia's State Security Service in order to improve the information flow between the Georgian government and the EU. Finally, on 31 December Erik Høeg (Denmark) ended his tenure as head of EUMM Georgia after having held the position since December 2017.

During 2019, EUBAM Libya continued to undertake coastal security, law enforcement, border management and anti-organised crime tasks. The mission worked to assist Libyan authorities with information and data checking, and EUBAM Libya decided to support the idea of establishing a Crime Information Unit (CIU) in Libya. In agreeing to help establish the CIU, the mission started to train selected officers from Libyan law enforcement authorities and then exercises were developed to help these officials exchange crime-related data and information. In addition to this project, and although the mission works out of its second base in Tunis for the time being, EUBAM Libya

The mission became the first civilian CSDP mission to include the representation of all EU member states.

⁹ EULEX Kosovo, "EULEX donates equipment to the Kosovo Police Forensics Directorate", August 16, 2019, <https://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/?page=2,11,1026>.

additionally worked with Libyan authorities to develop the organisational structure for a new Libyan Border Agency Headquarters.

The EU Capacity Building Mission (EUCAP) to Somalia had an active 2019. In January, the mission facilitated training exercises between EUNAVFOR Atalanta and the Somaliland Coast Guard. In order to ensure safe and secure ports in the country, the exercises helped the Somaliland coast guard develop its maritime security and counter-piracy procedures. The training was seen as an important feature of the proposed Somaliland Coast Guard Law that came into force in 2019, and the coast guard began its duties in earnest to prevent illegal fishing, monitor damage to the marine environment and check the identify of fishing boats and ships. As part of this new capacity, EUCAP Somalia organised a training in March focusing on Search and Rescue (SAR) tasks for the Somaliland Coast Guard and EUCAP advisers provided training on geographical positioning, recognition and identification and maritime communications. Maria-Cristina Stepanescu (Romania) stepped down as head of mission in August, and she was replaced by Chris Reynolds (Ireland) on 19 September following a decision by the Council of the EU.

The majority of the EU's civilian and military CSDP missions continued to centre on the Sahel region in 2019. A new civilian mission was created on 9 December. EUAM RCA is to be launched in the spring of 2020 and Paulo Soares (Portugal) – an individual with over 25 years of experience in the Portuguese Gendarmerie – was appointed as the head of mission. EUAM RCA is tasked with supporting the reform of internal security forces in the country, and the mission will provide strategic advice to the Ministry of Interior and internal security forces. The mission will work closely with EUTM RCA to ensure civil-military cooperation. EUCAP Sahel Mali was extended by the Council of the EU on 21 February until 14 January 2021, with a €67 million budget. Following on from its 2018 revised operational plan, EUCAP Sahel Mali can now offer targeted advice and training on a regional basis given that, as from March 2019, the mission benefitted from over 200 staff agents.¹⁰

10 Council of the EU, "EUCAP Sahel Mali: mission extended until 14 January 2021, €67 million budget adopted", Press Release, February 21, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/02/21/eucap-sahel-mali-mission-extended-until-14-january-2021-budget-of-67-million-adopted/>.

Finally, EUCAP Sahel Niger continued to provide police, judicial and border assistance and training during the year, as well as focusing on counter-terrorism initiatives with Nigerian authorities. In May, the mission greeted German Chancellor Angela Merkel who was on a visit with a 60-strong delegation to learn about the mission and its activities.¹¹ The mission, which was extended until 30 September 2020 back in 2018, also began to focus efforts on the situation in Burkina Faso. Throughout the autumn, European officials trained gendarmes in Burkina Faso in counter-terrorism and anti-criminal strategies and techniques. The initiative was part of the increased regional focus of CSDP in the Sahel, with the civilian and military missions in the region stepping up their efforts in Chad, Mauritania and Burkina Faso. The EU's aim in 2019 was to support the G5 Sahel countries with capacity building and training activities.

Deepening EU security and defence: the Council of the EU Presidencies

The work of the Romanian and Finnish Presidencies of the Council of the EU advanced policy and discussions on the CSDP. Romania focused its efforts in ensuring that the EU was engaged in cooperation with NATO, hybrid threats and that greater attention is paid to communicating to the public steps taken by the EU in the area of security and defence. Under the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the EU, attention was paid to the digitalisation of defence, cybersecurity, hybrid threats and the onset of new technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI).

- > “Continuity and change in European security and defence? A discussion with Finland and Croatia”, *EUISS event report*, November 15, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/continuity-and-change-european-security-and-defence-discussion-finland-and-croatia>.

¹¹ EUCAP Sahel Niger, “PSDC civile: La chancelière allemande Angela Merkel en visite à EUCAP Sahel Niger”, Press Release, May 3, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/csdp-missions-operations/eucap-sahel-niger/61812/%E2%80%8Apsdc-civile-la-chanceli%C3%A8re-allemande-angela-merkel-en-visite-%C3%A0-eucap-sahel-niger_en.

- > “Towards ‘European Sovereignty’ in security and defence?”, EUISS event report, June 14, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/towards-‘european-sovereignty’-security-and-defence>.

Civilian CSDP Compact

Under the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the EU, EU member states and the EEAS met in Brussels on 14 November for the first Annual Review Conference on the Civilian CSDP Compact. Back in November 2018, member states agreed to the Compact in order to increase contributions to civilian CSDP missions and to meet the objective of being able to launch a new mission of up to 200 civilian personnel within 30 days, with all the necessary equipment and capacity.¹² Earlier in April 2019, a Joint Action Plan on the compact was published by the EEAS and European Commission calling on member states to commit to increased contributions to civilian CSDP missions. The

The plan includes a target to ensure that seconded officials make up 70% of civilian mission personnel.

Joint Action Plan also outlined that EU institutions could support member states in reviewing national procedures to ensure a sufficient rate of recruitment and rotation – the plan includes a target rate of ensuring that 70% of representation across civilian missions should be comprised of seconded personnel. With regard to training,

the plan outlines the importance of the newly created EU Civilian Training Group (EU CTG), which is to promote common training courses on language skills, security challenges, mission standards, etc.¹³

¹² Council of the EU, “Conclusions on the Establishment of a Civilian CSDP Compact”, 14305/18, Brussels, November 19, 2018, <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14305-2018-INIT/en/pdf>.

¹³ Council of the EU, “Joint Action Plan Implementing the Civilian CSDP Compact”, SWD(2019) 173 final, Brussels, April 30, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-8962-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.

European Peace Facility

The EPF was under further construction in 2019. The EPF will be funded by EU member states and in 2019 the President of the European Council proposed an €8 billion funding window for the Facility over the 2021–2027 period. The EPF is designed to build on the African Peace Facility (APF) and Athena Mechanism by allowing the Union to provide training, equipment and/or infrastructure for its CSDP mission and operations. Despite its off-budget nature, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the European Peace Facility on 28 March 2019 calling for the Council and the HR/VP to keep the Parliament abreast of developments such as how the proposed budgetary allocation will be spent and to ensure that the Facility is consistent with other aspects of the EU's external action.¹⁴

14 European Parliament, “Recommendation for a Council Decision Establishing a European Peace Facility”, *P8_TA-PROV(2019)0330*, Strasbourg, March 28, 2019, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0330_EN.html?redirect.



Defence cooperation

Permanent Structured Cooperation

In the HR/VP's 22 March annual report on PESCO, which took stock of the first full cycle of permanent structured cooperation in EU security and defence, it was underlined that member states had made progress on defence spending and investment and that there was clear engagement with other EU security and defence initiatives. However, the annual report also found that participating member states (pMS) still need to do much more on strengthening collaborative defence capability development and ensuring the availability and deployability of forces for CSDP missions and operations. A Council Recommendation on PESCO was released in May and it called on pMS to live up to the 20 binding commitments they signed up to. The Recommendation made clear that the quality and granularity of the National Implementation Plans (NIPs) was still lacking and pMS were encouraged to submit more in-depth information on forward-looking defence plans.

PESCO projects

Number of PESCO projects member states share with each other bilaterally, 2020

	France	Italy	Spain	Greece	Germany	Belgium	Netherlands	Czechia	Cyprus	Poland	Portugal	Romania	Slovakia	Croatia	Austria	Hungary	Sweden	Finland	Bulgaria	Estonia	Latvia	Slovenia	Ireland	Lithuania	Luxembourg
France		16	19	4	14	10	8	6	4	6	6	9	4	3	4	6	7	4	4	2	2	4	1	2	3
Italy	16		14	9	9	6	7	5	5	6	5	7	5	5	4	4	3	4	3	2	1	2	2	3	3
Spain	19	14		5	13	9	9	7	5	5	7	5	4	4	4	6	7	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	3
Greece	4	9	5		3	3	3	1	6	4	5	4	3	4	4	3	1	1	4	1	2	2	1	2	1
Germany	14	9	13	3		7	8	7	3	6	4	4	3	2	3	5	3	3	2	2	2	3	1	2	3
Belgium	10	6	9	3	7		7	4	3	6	3	4	3	2	1	4	3	3	2	2	3	2		2	1
Netherlands	8	7	9	3	8	7		6	2	6	3	5	3	3	2	4	3	5	2	3	3	2	1	3	2
Czechia	6	5	7	1	7	4	6		1	2	1	3	2	1	2	3	3	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	2
Cyprus	4	5	5	6	3	3	2	1		2	2	1	2	3	2	3	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	2	1
Poland	6	6	5	4	6	6	2	2		4	3	2	3	1	5	1	4	2	3	3	3			3	1
Portugal	6	5	7	5	4	3	3	1	2	4		4	1	1	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1
Romania	9	7	5	4	4	5	3	1	3	4			2	1	3	2	4	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
Slovakia	4	5	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	2		2	1	3	3	1	2	1	1	2		2	1
Croatia	3	5	4	4	2	2	3	1	3	3	1	2	2		3	3	1	2	3	2	1	3	1	3	1
Austria	4	4	4	4	3	1	2	2	2	1	3	3	1	3		3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Hungary	6	4	6	3	5	4	4	2	3	5	2	2	3	3	3		2	1	2	2	4			2	1
Sweden	7	3	7	1	3	3	3	3	1	1	2	4	3	1	2	2		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Finland	4	4	4	1	3	3	5	2	1	4	2	2	1	2	1	2	1		1	3	2	1		2	1
Bulgaria	4	3	3	4	2	2	2	1	3	2	1	2	2	3	1	2	1	1		1	1	2	1	2	1
Estonia	2	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	3	1		2	1		2	1
Latvia	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	2	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2		1			1
Slovenia	4	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	2	3	1	4	1	2	1	1	1			2	1
Ireland	1	2	2	1	1		1	1	1			1		1	1		1		1						1
Lithuania	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	2	3	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	2			1
Luxembourg	3	3	3	1	3	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

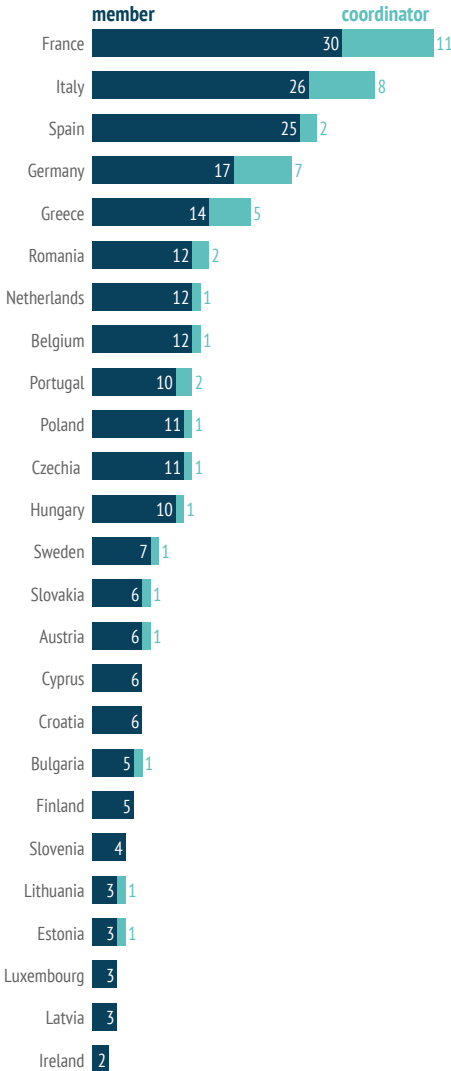
Data: PESCO Secretariat, 2020

The Council Conclusions also stated that the next call for PESCO projects would take place in 2021, thus slowing the pace of project adoption and allowing space to consolidate and advance existing projects.¹ At the November EU defence ministerial, a further 13 new PESCO projects were adopted by pMS taking the total number of

1 Council of the EU, “Council Recommendation assessing the progress made by the participating Member States to fulfil commitments undertaken in the framework of permanent structured cooperation (PESCO)”, 8795/19, May 6, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39353/st08795-en19.pdf>.

Total number of PESCO projects per member state

2020



Data: PESCO Secretariat, 2020

projects to 47.² Five of the new projects focused on cyber, diving, tactical, medical and CBRN training and the others centred on developing sea, air and space defence capabilities. PESCO projects continued to be a source of European defence capability cooperation in 2019. A clear pattern has emerged that France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands and Romania prefer collaborating with each other on projects (they are involved in 8 or more PESCO projects together). It is also evident that most PESCO projects require the participation of at least one member state with an established defence industry for projects to move forward – smaller member states are more reluctant to engage with one another on their own PESCO projects.

France, Germany and Italy also lead in terms of the number of PESCO projects they coordinate and France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Greece, Romania,

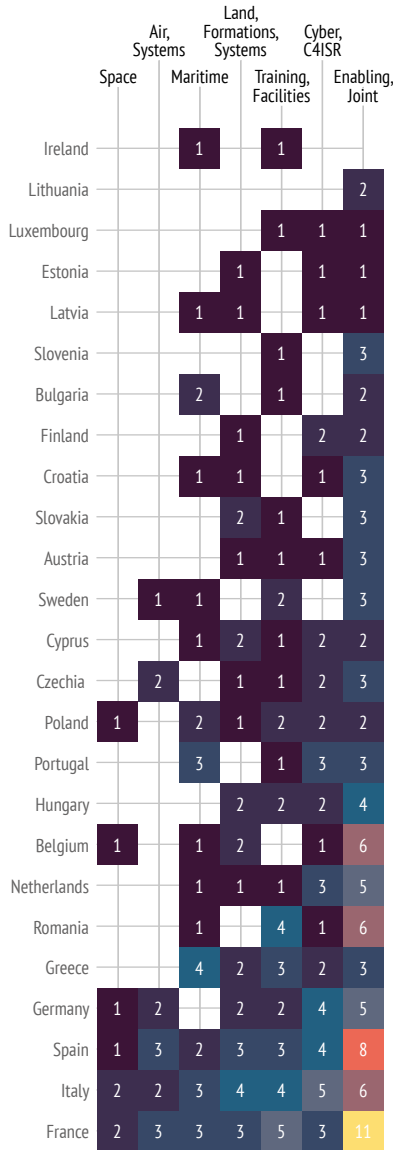
2 Council of the EU, “Council Decision on amending and updating the list of projects to be developed under PESCO”, (CFSP) 2019/1909, November 12, 2019, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32019D1909>.

Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal and Poland are involved in 10 or more PESCO projects at present. In terms of PESCO projects, the bulk are dedicated to enabling and joint capabilities or cyber and C4ISR, whereas space, maritime and air systems are on the lower end of the scale.

In terms of project implementation, one-half of the PESCO Secretariat – the EDA – reported that at the end of 2019 it was providing dedicated support to five projects focusing on CBRN, maritime mine counter measures, the deployable modular underwater intervention capability package (Divepack), European Secure Software Defined Radio (ESSOR) and the Cyber Response Teams.³

PESCO projects

EU member state participation by military domain, 2020



³ European Defence Agency, “EDA Annual Report 2019”, 2020, <https://www.eda.europa.eu/info-hub/press-centre/latest-news/2020/03/23/eda-annual-report-2019-is-out!>.

Data: PESCO Secretariat, 2020

European Defence Fund

In February, agreement was reached between the European Parliament and Council on the Regulation for the EDF, although any final decisions were dependent on the finalisation of the MFF negotiations. On the basis of a common understanding between the European Parliament and Council, a progress report on the EDF was published on 1 March which adapted the language of the Regulation in step with the common political understanding.⁴ In its Conclusions of 17 June, the Council of the EU stressed once again that member states see the EDF as a way to boost competitiveness, efficiency and innovation and they welcomed the Commission's intention to promote disruptive technologies for defence through the Fund.⁵

Two letters on the US and EU defence

'It took two letters. One, sent to Brussels on 1 May 2019 by two US undersecretaries, accused the EU of damaging transatlantic cooperation and hindering US access to Europe's defence market through the rules it plans to set for the participation of third states in the European Defence Fund and Permanent Structured Cooperation. The other, sent to Washington on 16 May 2019 by senior EU officials of equal standing, refuted these claims by showing the objective and transparent way in which the EU had established the EDF and PESCO. Unlike the letter from Washington, which was laced with robust language and questionable accusations, the EU response argued that, even with the introduction of the two initiatives, the European defence market would remain more open than that of the US. The EU institutions also stated that by creating the EDF and PESCO, the Union

4 Council of the EU, "Progress Report on the Regulation establishing the European Defence Fund", 6733/1/19, Brussels, March 1, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6733-2019-REV-1/en/pdf>.

5 Council of the EU, "Council Conclusions on Security and Defence in the context of the EU Global Strategy", 10048/19, Luxembourg, June 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39786/st10048-en19.pdf>.

was showing its collective determination to reduce European capability duplication and enhance interoperability, while also ensuring the competitiveness of Europe's defence industry. In essence, the EU pointed out that its security and defence initiatives are designed to contribute to transatlantic burden sharing – something the US has been requesting from European allies for some time.'

- > Daniel Fiott, "The Poison Pill: EU Defence on US Terms?", *EUISS Brief*, no. 7, June, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/7%20US-EU%20defence%20industries.pdf>.

There was also welcome news on 19 March, when the work programme of the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP) was adopted. Under the work programme €500 million would be dedicated to European capability development over the period 2019–2020. Following the adoption of the work programme, the Commission published nine calls for proposals related to CBRN, a multipurpose unmanned ground system, underwater control systems, counter unmanned air systems, C4ISR, maritime surveillance, anti-tank capabilities and more.⁶

The EU's strategic investments in defence

'Growing economic and geopolitical competition is forcing the European Union to rethink its place in the world. The new European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has called for a 'geopolitical Commission' and 'technological sovereignty' for the Union in strategic sectors. EU defence industrial strategy is likely to feature among such political ambitions, and the creation of a new Directorate General for Defence Industry and Space within the Commission – along with the

6 European Commission, "Annexes to the Commission Implementing Decision on the Financing of the European Defence Industrial Development Programme and the Adoption of the Work Programme for the Years 2019 and 2020", *C(2019) 2205 final*, Brussels, March 19, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/34515>.

financial resources endowed under the European Defence Fund – will raise questions about how EU institutions will view and attempt to influence the European defence sector. Such soul-searching has to probe the ways in which the European defence market is still strategically relevant and whether EU member states are genuinely committed to building a European Defence Technological and Industrial Base beyond a desire to protect national markets – to the extent that these markets exist on a national basis, of course. Although the EDF has been mainly justified by the need to nurture the competitiveness of Europe’s defence industry, political rationales such as why Europe needs an industry from a defence or strategic perspective are equally relevant.’

- > Daniel Fiott, “Strategic Investment: Making Geopolitical Sense of the EU’s Defence Industrial Policy”, *Chaillot Paper*, no. 156, December, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/strategic-investment-making-geopolitical-sense-eus-defence-industrial-policy>.

Furthermore, the work programme for the PADR was adopted on 19 March and a call for proposals worth €25 million (the final of three financial tranches under the PADR) centred on three defence research areas: 1) ‘Electromagnetic Spectrum Dominance’ to develop a multifunction radio frequency system; 2) disruptive defence technologies looking at future technologies, emerging game changes and unmanned systems; and 3) external expertise to draw on for the evaluation of PADR proposals.⁷

⁷ European Commission, “Commission Decision on Financing the Preparatory Action on Defence Research and the Adoption of the Work Programme for 2019”, *C(2019) 1873 final*, Brussels, March 19, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/34514>.

Coordinated Annual Review on Defence

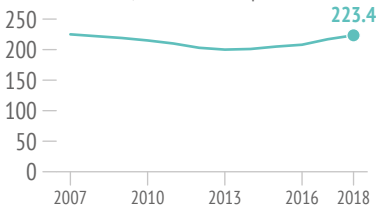
For the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), the main focus in 2019 was setting up the first full CARD cycle and to this end the first bilateral dialogues began in September. The aim of the CARD cycle is to provide ministers with a comprehensive review of the state of play of European defence capabilities and to highlight potential opportunities for cooperation between member states. Based on the 2018 CARD trial run and the revised methodology agreed in June 2019, the EDA spent the autumn conducting bilateral dialogues with member states and the dialogues lasted until March 2020, after which point the Agency will begin an aggregated assessment of the state of play. The CARD report will be delivered to EU Defence Ministers in November 2020.

Collaborative defence expenditure

2007-2018

Total Defence Expenditure

EUR billions, constant 2018 prices



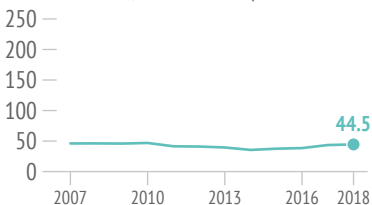
Collaborative Defence R&T Investment

EUR millions, constant 2018 prices



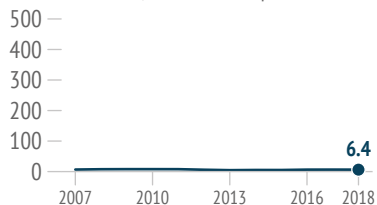
Total Defence Investment

EUR billions, constant 2018 prices



Collaborative Equipment Procurement

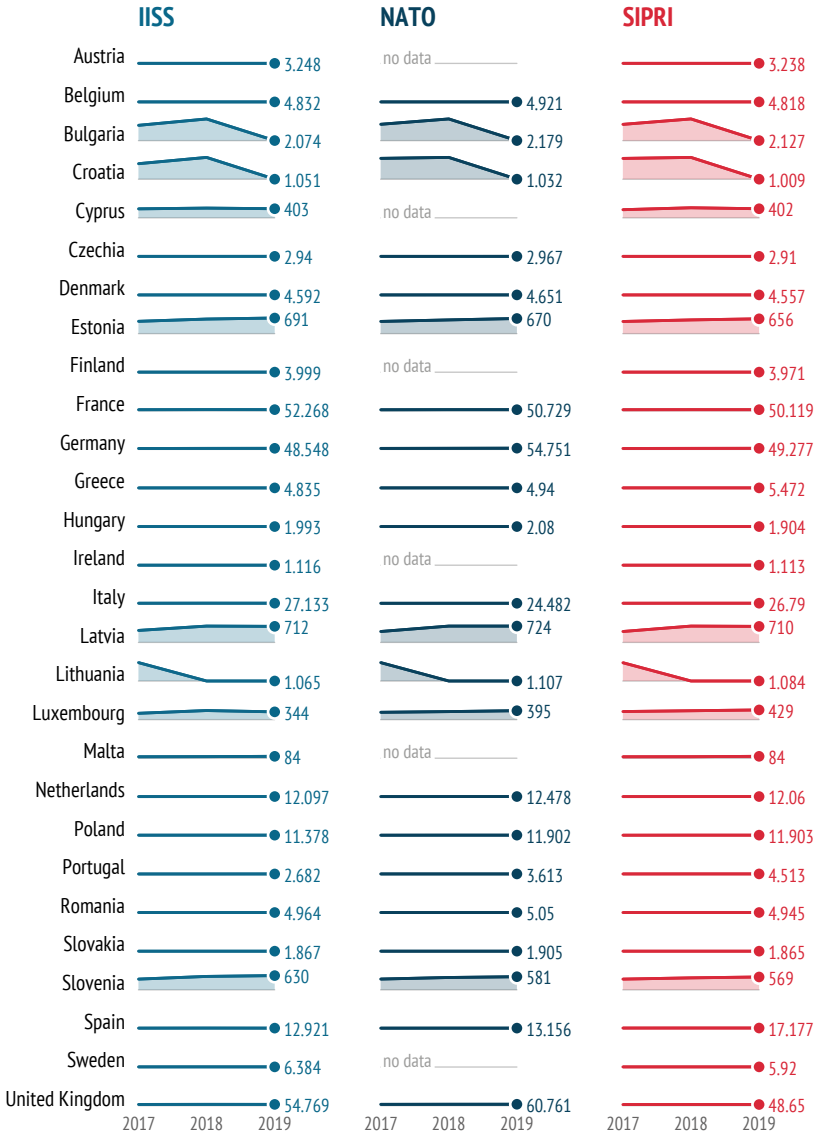
EUR millions, constant 2018 prices



Data: European Defence Agency, 2007-2019

Defence expenditure

Current \$ billion, 2019



Data: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2020; North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 2019; International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2020

Defence expenditure

% of GDP, 2019



Data: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2020; North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 2019; International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2020

The first full cycle of CARD should help identify capability development opportunities that could be initiated through either PESCO, the EDF or both mechanisms. Time will tell whether there is a greater appetite for European defence collaboration, however. Based on data that shows collaborative spending trends from 2007–2018, there is clearly some way to go if European collaborative investment is to be improved. Indeed, collaborative defence Research and Technology (R&T) investment has decreased by some margin over the intervening years and so has collaborative equipment procurement.

Capability Development

In 2019, the European Defence Agency continued to support member states with capability and R&T programmes and by the end of the year the Agency was engaged in Ad hoc projects totalling €313.83 million. Overall, the Agency was engaged in 158 capability projects from its operational budget, 113 Ad hoc capability and R&T projects, 46 generic and supporting activities and 5 PESCO projects. These projects focused on cyber defence, air-to-air refuelling, communication and information systems, remotely piloted aircraft systems, energy efficiency, AI and much more. To assist with European capability development efforts, the Agency used the revised

The Agency was engaged in Ad hoc projects totalling €313.83 million.

Overarching Strategic Research Agenda (OSRA) to identify 139 R&T areas that would profit from greater European cooperation. Additionally, in its work on Key Strategic Activities (KSA) the Agency produced 16 KSA reports that address critical skills needed for defence industrial development. In 2019, the Agency reported that 30 new research projects were under negotiation which could be added to the Agency's existing portfolio of 42 R&T projects worth €258 million. Additionally, the Agency developed innovative mechanisms such as the Cooperative Financial Mechanism (CFM) which is designed to assist member states overcome the unsynchronised defence budgets by providing financial solutions such as lending facilities. The EDA also registered success with its VAT exemption scheme for Agency

projects – saving member states some €12 million.⁸ Finally, the Agency published a progress report on military mobility in May 2019 and the EDA showcased its specific Ad hoc Project on military mobility, as well as steps to digitalise customs activities with a view to creating a Military Customs System.⁹

EU-NATO cooperation

2019 was a year marked by further tensions in the transatlantic relationship. Despite the frictions, however, the EU and NATO continued to build on the two Joint Declarations of 2016 and 2018 and the 74 common proposals. According to the fourth¹⁰ and fifth¹¹ progress reports on the common set of proposals, there was an intensification of staff-to-staff meetings and political dialogue through staff retreats. For example, there were dedicated meetings on crisis communication, civil protection, CBRN, stability in the Western Balkans and combatting disinformation. Additionally, the work of the EU's East StratCom Task Force continued to support the alliance with awareness about pro-Kremlin disinformation on NATO, both the EU Hybrid Fusion Cell and NATO's Hybrid Analysis Branch continued to exchange views on the threat landscape facing the EU and NATO and the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the EU organised a seminar that brought together members of NATO's Political Committee and the EU's Working Party on Terrorism (COTER).

East StratCom Task Force continued to support the alliance with awareness about pro-Kremlin disinformation.

8 European Defence Agency, "EDA Annual Report 2019", 2020, <https://www.eda.europa.eu/info-hub/press-centre/latest-news/2020/03/23/eda-s-annual-report-2019-is-out!>.

9 Ibid.

10 "Fourth progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by NATO and EU Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017", June 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39782/fourth-report-ue-nato-cooperation-en.pdf>.

11 "Fifth progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by EU and NATO Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017", June 16, 2020, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/6/pdf/200615-progress-report-nr5-EU-NATO-eng.pdf.

To ensure complementarity between the two organisations' capability development processes, the joint reports showcase the continued exchange on the EU's CDP and CARD processes with NATO's Defence Planning Process (NDPP) and Partnership for Peace Planning and Review Process. In particular, the fifth progress report acknowledged that the EU had ensured coherence of taxonomy and timelines between the Headline Goal Process and the NDPP. In this respect, NATO officials have frequently been invited to attend CARD bilateral meetings and exchanges have been had on PESCO projects. A further beneficial development has been the cross-briefings that have occurred between EU and NATO staff during the EDA's steering board meeting and there has been further EDA-NATO cooperation on Multi-Role Transport Tanker Fleet (MRTTF) cooperation.

What level of EU-NATO cooperation?

'there are concerns over how NATO-EU relations are faring at a time when the transatlantic relationship is going through turbulent times. In particular, US relations with several EU member states and the EU in general are mired in disagreements on issues ranging from the future of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, also known as the Iran nuclear deal, to the possibility of introducing new tariffs on specific goods traded between the two sides. Looming on the horizon there are also concerns about the implications of Brexit for NATO-EU relations – in particular, whether it may inadvertently complicate both organisations' ability to work together.'

- > Gustav Lindstrom and Thierry Tardy (eds.), *The EU and NATO: The Essential Partners* (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies/ NATO Defence College, 2019), <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/eu-and-nato>.

In order to enhance EU-NATO resilience and preparedness, the two organisations successfully implemented the Parallel and Coordinated Exercises (PACE) in 2017 and 2018 and in 2019 the two organisations completed the lessons identified exercises of each PACE iteration.

Despite the ongoing discussions for future PACE exercises, this has not stopped cooperation and during 2019 EU staff participated in NATO's Crisis Management Exercise 2019 (CMX19) and the two organisations have cooperated in terms of helicopter exercises.

On military mobility, there was cooperation on the need to identify and approve the military requirements for military mobility. Following the submission of NATO's 'updated infrastructure parameters' to the EU in March, the Council of the EU approved the updated military requirements in July and these were discussed again in October when a consolidated version of the updated EU Military Requirements for Military Mobility were presented by Director General of the EU Military Staff to the Director General of NATO's International Military Staff. The EU and NATO agreed in 2019 to continue working towards the identification of dual-use requirements for future transport projects, and to this end each organisation exchanged information on the national points of contact dealing with military mobility. Throughout 2019, there were also a number of workshops organised and a table-top exercise was held in June 2019 as a basis for an informal discussion on infrastructure and logistics.

Finally, both the EU and NATO continued to discuss and analyse the importance of new technologies such as AI. Indeed, at the informal meeting of EU defence ministers on 29 August in Helsinki, a joint dinner was held between the EU, NATO and the UN to discuss the strategic and defence aspects of AI – ministers were joined by members of the EU's 'Global Tech Panel' and the issue of AI and defence formed an important element of the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the EU.

Artificial Intelligence, defence and the EU

In 2019, the EU continued to debate the ways in which AI could assist with European defence and the CSDP. Although a sensitive subject concerning ethical questions, the Union and its member states probed the ways in which disruptive technologies are posing strategic challenges for the EU. In April, the EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC) held a working lunch on the security implications of AI. In June, a workshop with the Estonian and Finnish Ministries of Defence attempted to demystify discussions about AI in defence. Here it was concluded that labels

such as ‘killer robots’ often overlook the ways in which AI is already being used responsibly by armed forces in Europe. Finally, under the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the EU another conference looked at areas where the EU and NATO could cooperate on AI. It was concluded that AI would fundamentally alter the strategic calculus for the EU and NATO, and there was also a recognition that each organisation had their own approaches to AI in defence and that cooperation should proceed via a step-by-step approach beginning with continued dialogue between the EU and NATO on lessons learned and strategic/technological foresight.

- > EUISS, “The Security Implications of Artificial Intelligence”, April 11, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/security-implications-artificial-intelligence>.
- > EUISS, “Artificial Intelligence: What Kind of Strategic enabler for EU Security and Defence?”, June 12, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Report%20-%20AI%20and%20Defence.pdf>.
- > EUISS, “The EU, NATO and Artificial Intelligence: New Possibilities for Cooperation?”, November 14, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/EU%20NATO%20AI%20-%20Report.pdf>.

Core documents

- > “Progress Report on the Regulation establishing the European Defence Fund”, 6733/1/19, Brussels, March 1, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6733-2019-REV-1/en/pdf>.
- > “Annexes to the Commission Implementing Decision on the Financing of the European Defence Industrial Development Programme and the Adoption of the Work Programme for the Years 2019 and 2020”, C(2019) 2205 final, Brussels, March 19, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/34515>.

- > “Commission Decision on Financing the Preparatory Action on Defence Research and the Adoption of the Work Programme for 2019”, *C(2019) 1873 final*, Brussels, March 19, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/34514>.
- > “Recommendation for a Council Decision Establishing a European Peace Facility”, *P8_TA-PROV(2019)0330*, March 28, 2019, Strasbourg, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0330_EN.html?redirect.
- > “Joint Action Plan Implementing the Civilian CSDP Compact”, *SWD(2019) 173 final*, April 30, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-8962-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > “Council Recommendation assessing the progress made by the participating Member States to fulfil commitments undertaken in the framework of permanent structured cooperation (PESCO)”, *8795/19*, Brussels, May 6, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39353/st08795-en19.pdf>.
- > “Council Conclusions on Security and Defence in the context of the EU Global Strategy”, *10048/19*, Luxembourg, June 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39786/st10048-en19.pdf>.
- > “Fourth Progress Report on the Implementation of the Common Set of Proposals Endorsed by NATO and EU Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017”, June 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39782/fourth-report-ue-nato-cooperation-en.pdf>.
- > “Council Decision on amending and updating the list of projects to be developed under PESCO”, (*CFSP*) *2019/1909*, November 12, 2019, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32019D1909>.
- > “Annual Report on the Implementation of the Common Security and Defence Policy”, Strasbourg, *P9_TA(2020)0009*, January 15, 2020, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0009_EN.html.
- > “EDA Annual Report 2019”, 2020, <https://www.eda.europa.eu/info-hub/press-centre/latest-news/2020/03/23/eda-s-annual-report-2019-is-out!>.

- > “Fifth progress report on the implementation of the common set of proposals endorsed by EU and NATO Councils on 6 December 2016 and 5 December 2017”, June 16, 2020, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/6/pdf/200615-progress-report-nr5-EU-NATO-eng.pdf.

Security

Crisis response and civil protection

The EU continued to provide civil protection and disaster relief support during 2019. The European Commission allocated €2.4 billion for humanitarian relief on a global basis to over 80 countries.¹ Furthermore, the Union also strengthened its disaster risk management capacities by establishing a new European reserve of additional capacities (rescEU), which will see the EU field increased firefighting planes, helicopters, medical support and evacuation capacities and a field hospital. RescEU is also designed to assist with CBRN emergencies and to build a common stockpile of medicine and medicinal products.

The Union also strengthened its disaster risk management capacities by establishing a new European reserve of additional capacities.

¹ European Commission, “Annual Report on the EU’s Humanitarian Aid Operations Financed in 2019”, COM(2020) 358 final, Brussels, August 7, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/com_2020_358_f1_report_from_commission_en_v3_p1_1087085.pdf.

Crisis management and civil protection

Crisis simulations and exercises are an effective way of broadening the minds of decision-makers, forecasting the future, identifying capability gaps, pin-pointing the weaknesses and strengths in the crisis response architecture and developing crisis response networks. The EU increasingly makes use of crisis scenarios. However, simulations and exercises can only add value to preparedness efforts when they are but one element of a wider crisis response architecture. Greater efforts are required in terms of information gathering and sharing and linking the EU and national crisis response mechanisms and networks. The results of crisis simulations and exercises can be neglected by political authorities, but usually the costs of not planning in advance are high. Instead of supporting simulations and exercises in the wake of a crisis, it is better to engrain a culture of foresighting and scenario testing in crisis response architectures before a crisis emerges.

Civil protection and the challenge of cross-border crises were also issues on the agendas of the Romanian and Finnish Presidencies of the Council of the EU. Under the Romanian Presidency, there was a focus on how risk management and prevention is more effectively achieved at the national level, because local actors have a better understanding of local and regional aspects to crisis response. The EU can play an important role in facilitating a coordinated response to transboundary crises and EU member states increasingly recognise the relevance of EU-level response mechanisms such as the Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR). Under the Finnish Presidency, the focus shifted to how rapid information-sharing and situational awareness at the national level, frequent training and exercises, mainstreaming cyber-security, as well as harnessing the potential of new technologies, such as AI, are vital for crisis response for trans-boundary challenges.

- > Daniel Fiott, "Stress Tests: An Insight into Crisis Scenarios, Simulations and Exercises", *EUISS Brief*, no. 9, September, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief%209%20Scenarios.pdf>.

- > EUISS, “From Sense-making to Decision-making: Sharing Experiences on the Management of Transboundary Crises in the EU”, April 4, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Sensemaking%20to%20decisionmaking%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf>.
- > EUISS, “Anticipating, Detecting and Responding to Complex Crises: Learning from National Responses, Building Capacity Across the EU”, October 24, 2019, https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Crisis%20Foresight%20-%20Final%20Report_0.pdf.

Hybrid threats

2019 was a busy year for the EU for various forms of hybrid threats, especially with the need to ensure that the European Parliamentary elections in May took place without foreign interference. In March, the EU also established a framework for the screening of investments from non-EU countries and this was seen as a way to ensure that certain inward investments cannot be used as a basis for hybrid operations or tactics and to protect the EU’s critical infrastructure. In May, the Union released its report on the implementation of the Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats and Joint Communication on increasing resilience. The report made clear that the EU is recruiting more experts on cyber, counter-intelligence and other areas for the EEAS Hybrid Fusion Cell. The report also detailed the work the Union had undertaken in March to establish the Rapid Alert System (RAS) and €3 million was allocated in 2019 for the professional monitoring of the information environment. In mid-2019, the EEAS’ East StratCom Taskforce was bolstered with additional language experts

to counter disinformation from Russia in the Western Balkans and southern neighbourhood.²

The EU's response to hybrid threats

'Hybrid threats – unconventional threats that fall under the threshold of military force – have become an ubiquitous feature of today's security environment. Although the EU is much better placed to detect and combat hybrid threats today than was the case five years ago, this new form of asymmetric conflict remains a major challenge. The EU has developed specific strategies to combat hybrid challenges in these areas, but there is a need for an overarching strategic response and of improving coordinated EU approaches to hybrid threats. Hybrid threats was an issue that was firmly on the agendas of the Romanian and Finnish Presidencies of the Council of the EU. The Romanian Presidency focused its efforts on resilience and strategic communication, and under the Finnish Presidency there was a focus on critical infrastructure protection in the context of hybrid threats. In this regard, it was agreed that critical infrastructure – from energy, transport and telecommunications networks to water supply, waste management, healthcare and financial systems – is crucially important for the member states and the EU as a whole, as it is fundamental for the safety and stability of society.'

- > Daniel Fiott and Roderick Parkes, "Protecting Europe: The EU's Response to Hybrid Threats", *Chaillot Paper*, no. 151, April, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/protecting-europe-0>.
- > EUISS, "Facing Hybrid Threats through Consolidated Resilience and Enhanced StratCom", February 28, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/>

2 European Commission, "Report on the implementation of the 2016 Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats and the 2018 Joint Communication on increasing resilience and bolstering capabilities to address hybrid threats", *SWD(2019) 200 final*, Brussels, May 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/report_on_the_implementation_of_the_2016_joint_framework_on_countering_hybrid_threats_and_the_2018_joint_communication_on_increasing_resilien.pdf.

facing-hybrid-threats-through-consolidated-resilience-and-enhanced-strategic-communication.

- > EUISS, “Critical Connections, Continuity and Supply: Assessing the Security of European Critical Infrastructure and Functions in a Hybrid Threat Context”, November 6, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/critical-connections-continuity-and-supply-assessing-security-european-critical>.

In June, the Commission and EEAS released a Joint Communication on the implementation of the Action Plan against Disinformation, which was published in December 2018. The Joint Communication made clear that EU initiatives had helped to expose disinformation attempts in the run-up to the May European elections. The Joint Communication also outlined how the EU would work towards a four-pronged strategy for future elections, structured around:

1) improved coordination of election authorities; 2) better protection against cyber threats; 3) combating the misuse of personal data; and 4) boosting transparency for political communications and ads.³ In

October, the European Commission released its first self-assessment reports of signatories to the Code of Practice on disinformation, and while it noted that a number of online platforms and technology companies failed to provide adequate granularity and information on their efforts, comprehensive efforts had been made since 2018.⁴ In December, the Council of the EU endorsed the measures taken by EU institutions during the year and

The European Commission released its first self-assessment reports of signatories to the Code of Practice on disinformation.

³ European Commission/EEAS, “Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan Against Disinformation”, *JOIN(2019) 12 final*, Brussels, June 14, 2019, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52019J0012&from=EN>.

⁴ European Commission, “Annual self-assessment reports of signatories to the Code of Practice on Disinformation 2019”, October 29, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/annual-self-assessment-reports-signatories-code-practice-disinformation-2019>.

encouraged further action in the areas of cybersecurity, critical infrastructure and disinformation.⁵

Cybersecurity

2019 was marked by growing emphasis on cybersecurity. The EU witnessed a considerable array of cyber incidents during the year from cyber criminals and state-sponsored actors that targeted EU and national institutions, civil society groups and individuals. Europol reports that ransomware remains the top threat facing the EU, but increasingly the Union is under threat from phishing, malware infections, data theft and sabotage.⁶ In its annual report on the cyber threat landscape, the EU Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) noted that acts such as cyber espionage were increasingly tied to geopolitical developments, that there is a coupling of state intelligence capabilities and cyber threats and that China, Russia and Iran stand out as ‘the most capable and active cyber actors tied to economic espionage’.⁷ Against this background, the Union strengthened its cybersecurity capacity, in order to tackle the growing cyber challenges and to take advantage of the opportunities of the new digital age. In this context, and on 27 June 2019, the EU Cybersecurity Act (originally proposed by the Commission in 2017) entered into force. The regulation brought about two significant changes: a comprehensive reform of ENISA and the establishment of an EU-wide cybersecurity certification framework.⁸

ENISA has been given a new name (the EU Agency for Cybersecurity) and new tasks. In particular, it will have a key role in setting up and

5 Council of the EU, “Conclusions: Complementary efforts to enhance resilience and counter hybrid threats”, 14972/19, December 10, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14972-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.

6 Europol, “Internet Organised Crime Threat Assessment (IOCTA) 2019”, October 9, 2019, <https://www.europol.europa.eu/activities-services/main-reports/internet-organised-crime-threat-assessment-iocta-2019>.

7 ENISA, “ENISA Threat Landscape Report 2018 – 15 Top Cyberthreats and Trends”, January, 2019, p. 109 and p. 120, <https://www.enisa.europa.eu/publications/enisa-threat-landscape-report-2018>.

8 “Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on ENISA (the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity) and on information and communications technology cybersecurity certification and repealing Regulation (EU) No 526/2013 (Cybersecurity Act)”, *EU 2019/881*, April 17, 2019.

operating the aforementioned cybersecurity certification framework, including by doing preparatory technical work and informing the public. Additionally, the Agency will contribute to reinforcing operational cooperation and crisis management in the EU, by assisting EU member states with handling cybersecurity incidents, as requested, and strengthening EU coordination in case of large-scale, cross-border incidents. ENISA will also continue to support EU institutions, member states and businesses with the implementation of the Directive on security of network and information systems (NIS Directive) in its role as secretariat of the national Computer Security Incidents Response Teams (CSIRTs) Network. To fulfil its expanded mandate, the Agency has been given more financial and human resources, with its budget increased from €11 million to €23 million over a five-year period.⁹

As regards the EU cybersecurity certification framework, it will include multiple certification schemes – sets of rules, technical requirements, standards and procedures – for different categories of ICT products, processes and services. The schemes would be prepared by ENISA, upon request from the Commission or the member states-controlled European Cybersecurity Certification Group. Each scheme should specify the categories of products, services and processes covered, the cybersecurity requirements to be met, the evaluation type, the intended level of assurance, as well as the certificate's period of validity. Companies operating in the EU would have to certify their products, services or procedures just once, with the certification recognised across the Union. While certification is to remain voluntary, the Commission will assess whether mandatory certification should be required for certain categories of products and services. The Commission will also publish a rolling work programme that will identify strategic priorities for future certification schemes.

Another prominent issue in 2019 was that of 5G technology. Throughout the year, the US exerted strong diplomatic pressure on its European allies to discourage them from using equipment from Chinese telecommunications champion Huawei in the rollout of their

⁹ European Commission, “The EU Cybersecurity Act brings a strong agency for cybersecurity and EU-wide rules on cybersecurity certification”, June 26, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/eu-cybersecurity-act-brings-strong-agency-cybersecurity-and-eu-wide-rules-cybersecurity>.

5G networks, even threatening to curtail intelligence cooperation with non-conforming countries.¹⁰ While European countries have not fully aligned with Washington's policies, 2019 was marked by increased debate on this issue and the review of relevant legislation by national authorities.¹¹ In addition, signs emerged of a unified and coordinated EU approach to 5G network security. On 26 March 2019, the European Commission issued a non-binding recommendation which included a set of operational steps and measures to ensure the cybersecurity of 5G networks.¹² On 9 October, in a significant step towards implementing this proposal, member states, supported by the European Commission and ENISA, published a high-level report on the EU-wide coordinated risk assessment of 5G networks, which identified a number of important security challenges.¹³ The Cooperation Group is working on developing a toolbox of mitigating measures to address these risks, which was originally slated to be finalised by the end of 2019. On its part, the Council acknowledged the significance of 5G technology in its Conclusions of 3 December 2019, which referred to its key role in the future European economy and society, as well as the need to mitigate the associated security risks. In particular, the Conclusions emphasised the importance of adopting a comprehensive and risk-based approach in evaluating suppliers of equipment critical to national security, also taking into account suppliers' domestic political-legal context.¹⁴

2019 was marked by a number of important elections across the EU, including those for the European Parliament in May. Against a background of increasing cyber operations against the EU institutions and member states, the EU has taken measures to safeguard the integrity of the democratic process and ensure free and fair

10 "US warns Germany over use of 'untrusted vendors' in 5G network", *Deutsche Welle*, March 11, 2019, <https://www.dw.com/en/us-warns-germany-over-use-of-untrusted-vendors-in-5g-network/a-47863162>.

11 Gisela Grieger, "5G in the EU and Chinese telecoms suppliers", European Parliamentary Research Service, April 8, 2019, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2019/637912/EPRS_ATA\(2019\)637912_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2019/637912/EPRS_ATA(2019)637912_EN.pdf).

12 European Commission, "Commission Recommendation on Cybersecurity of 5G networks", C(2019) 2335 final, Brussels, March 26, 2019.

13 NIS Cooperation Group, "EU coordinated risk assessment of the cybersecurity of 5G networks", October 9, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=62132.

14 Council of the EU, "Council Conclusions on the significance of 5G to the European Economy and the need to mitigate security risks linked to 5G", 14517/19, Brussels, December 3, 2019.

European elections. On 5 April 2019, EU member states, the European Parliament, the Commission and ENISA successfully carried out the first-ever table-top exercise (EU ELEX19) to test EU member states' and the EU's response practices and crisis plans and to identify ways to prevent, detect and mitigate potential cybersecurity incidents that could affect the elections.¹⁵ More than 80 representatives were part of the table-top exercise and a key aim was to enhance preparedness between national cybersecurity authorities, as well as to improve and maintain situational awareness at the member states and EU levels.¹⁶

Steps were also taken to bolster the strength and innovativeness of the EU's cybersecurity capacity. Building on a Commission proposal,¹⁷ on 13 March 2019, the Council mandated the Council Presidency to begin talks with the European Parliament on pooling the EU's expertise in cybersecurity research, technology and industrial development.¹⁸ The focus of the initiative is on establishing a European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Centre as a top knowledge base for cybersecurity and on setting up a Cybersecurity Competence Network consisting of National Coordination Centres. In addition, a Cybersecurity Competence Community was created to bring together various stakeholders to enhance and spread cybersecurity expertise across the EU. In this context, the European Commission also published in December a revised EU Cybersecurity Taxonomy, which proposes a common classification of cybersecurity terminologies, definitions and domains across the EU, with the aim of facilitating the categorisation of EU cybersecurity competencies.¹⁹

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- 15 European Parliament, "EU Member States test their cybersecurity preparedness for free and fair EU elections", April 5, 2019, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20190404IPR35103/eu-member-states-test-cybersecurity-preparedness-for-free-and-fair-eu-elections>.
 - 16 European Parliament, "EU Member States test their cybersecurity preparedness for free and fair EU elections", April 5, 2019, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20190404IPR35103/eu-member-states-test-cybersecurity-preparedness-for-free-and-fair-eu-elections>.
 - 17 European Commission, "Proposal for a Regulation establishing the European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Competence Centre and the Network of National Coordination Centres", *COM(2018) 630 final*, Brussels, September 12, 2018.
 - 18 Council of the EU, "Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Competence Centre and the Network of National Coordination Centres - Mandate for negotiations with European Parliament", *7583/19*, Brussels, March 18, 2019.
 - 19 Joint Research Centre, "A Proposal for a European Cybersecurity Taxonomy", *Publications Office of the European Union*, Luxembourg, 2019.

EU cyber norms and diplomacy

‘Cyberspace is not an ungoverned space. Existing international law and accepted norms of responsible behaviour provide clear guidance on what is and what is not permissible in cyberspace. And yet, states increasingly rely on cyber operations to achieve their political objectives and strategic goals: whether through industrial cyber-espionage to give competitive advantage to domestic companies, sophisticated operations to steal military secrets, or blatant attacks targeting the critical infrastructure of other states. This widespread sense of impunity has driven the EU and its member states to support regional and global efforts to ensure that the perpetrators of the attacks face the consequences and that their victims are adequately protected and compensated. The so-called Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox adopted by the EU in 2017 provided a significant boost to the Union’s goal of becoming a ‘forward-looking cyber player’. In addition to a number of diplomatic and operational measures, the toolbox proposed the use of sanctions as one of the instruments at the Union’s disposal.’

- > Patryk Pawlak and Thomas Biersteker (eds.)
“Guardian of the galaxy: EU cyber sanctions and norms in cyberspace”, *Chaillot Paper*, no. 155, October, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/guardian-galaxy-eu-cyber-sanctions-and-norms-cyberspace>.

The year also saw the strengthening of the EU’s ‘Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox’, which lays out the measures available under the CFSP for a joint EU response to malicious cyber activities. On 17 May 2019, the Council established a framework allowing for the first time the EU to impose, if necessary, targeted restrictive measures to deter and respond to (attempted) cyber-attacks which pose an external threat to the EU or its member states, including cyber-attacks against

third states or international organisations.²⁰ The newly-established framework is an important milestone in the EU's continuing efforts to defend the rules-based international order and shape responsible behaviour in cyberspace.²¹ The need to respect the rules-based order in cyberspace was also the key message of a declaration issued by the High Representative on behalf of the EU a few weeks earlier, on 12 April 2019.²²

Terrorism

Terrorism continued to constitute a significant threat to security in EU member states during 2019 and the EU continued strengthening its tools in the fight against terrorism. For example, the Council of the EU recognised the continued importance of radicalisation, especially in light of the growing number of offenders radicalised while incarcerated. In addition, the Council acknowledged that many offenders will be released over the course of the next two years. As a result, on 6 June, ministers adopted Council Conclusions on preventing and combating radicalisation in prisons and on dealing with terrorist and violent extremist offenders after release, with a view to establishing an inventory of best practices.²³ Included among the best practices identified by the Council were the need for comprehensive training programmes for prison and probation staff; special measures for individuals convicted of terrorist offences; support for religious representatives to provide alternative narratives; education, training and psychological support after release; and, further monitoring

20 Council of the EU, "Council Regulation concerning restrictive measures against cyber-attacks threatening the Union or its Member States", 7302/19, May 14, 2019.

21 Patryk Pawlak and Thomas Biersteker, "EU cyber sanctions and norms in cyberspace", *Chaillot Paper*, no. 155, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/guardian-galaxy-eu-cyber-sanctions-and-norms-cyberspace>.

22 Council of the EU, "Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on respect for the rules-based order in cyberspace", April 12, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/04/12/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-respect-for-the-rules-based-order-in-cyberspace/>.

23 Council of the EU, "Council conclusions on preventing and combating radicalisation in prisons and on dealing with terrorist and violent extremist offenders after release", 9727/19, Brussels, June 6, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9366-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.

of radicalised individuals who are considered to pose a continued threat.²⁴

Europol assesses terrorism in the EU in 2019

According to Europol's 2020 EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT), terrorism continued to be a challenge for the EU in 2019. There were a total of 119 foiled, failed or completed terrorist attacks in 13 EU member states. Europol also report that 1,004 individuals were arrested for terror-related offences across 19 EU member states. Overall, 10 people lost their lives due to terrorist attacks in the EU, with 27 injuries (the total number of fatalities has decreased since 2018, when 13 people died). As a general trend, the number of completed, failed and foiled terrorist attacks continue to decrease in the EU and the number of jihadist attacks have decreased, too, with seven such completed or failed attacks in 2019. Despite these downward trends, Europol also note that hundreds of European citizens with links to Islamic State are still in Iraq and Syria and that there is a rising threat from radicalised prisoners in the EU. Additionally, the 2020 TE-SAT shows that there is an increase in right-wing terrorist attacks in certain member states, which reflects a global uptick in such incidents. There was also an increase in left-wing and anarchist terror attacks, too, with a total of 26 attacks in 2019. Finally, while ethno-separatist groups remain inactive in numerous EU member states, there was a notable increase in the activities of dissident republican groups in Northern Ireland.²⁵

As regards protection from terrorism, on 20 June, the Council and the Parliament adopted a Regulation on the marketing and use of

24 Council of the EU, "Radicalisation in Prisons: Council adopts conclusions", Press Release, June 6, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/06/radicalisation-in-prisons-council-adopts-conclusions/>.

25 Europol, "EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT) 2020", June 23, 2020, <https://www.europol.europa.eu/activities-services/main-reports/european-union-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report-te-sat-2020>.

explosive precursors.²⁶ The new rules place tighter controls on substances which can be used to produce home-made explosives, ensure the appropriate reporting of suspicious transactions throughout the supply chain and improve relevant information sharing. Important steps forward were also made with respect to information-sharing. On 1 September, based on Council Decision 2005/671/JHA, the EU Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust) launched a Counter-Terrorism Register with the goal of streamlining the exchange of information between EU member states on potential terrorist offences, including jihadist, right-wing and left-wing extremism.²⁷ Eurojust also officially became an EU Agency on 12 December 2019.²⁸ The database will provide prosecutors greater access to information on suspects and help prevent new terrorist attacks in Europe. A relevant development had also taken place a few months earlier, in late May, when the Council adopted two regulations to boost the interoperability between EU information systems in the area of justice and home affairs, with a view to facilitating information exchange and enhancing security in the EU, including by improving the efficiency of checks at external borders and the detection of multiple identities.²⁹ Furthermore, on 27 September, the Commission submitted a recommendation asking the Council to begin negotiations for an EU-Japan

26 “Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on ENISA (the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity) and on the marketing and use of explosives precursors, amending Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 98/2013”, *EU 2019/1148*, Brussels, June 20, 2019, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELLAR%3A49d1a404-a3b3-11e9-9d01-01aa75ed71a1>.

27 Eurojust, “Launch of Judicial Counter-Terrorism Register at Eurojust”, September 5, 2019, <http://www.eurojust.europa.eu/press/PressReleases/Pages/2019/2019-09-05.aspx>.

28 Eurojust, “Eurojust becomes an Agency”, December 12, 2019, <http://www.eurojust.europa.eu/press/PressReleases/Pages/2019/2019-12-12.aspx>.

29 “Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a framework for interoperability between EU information systems in the field of borders and visa and amending Regulations (EC) No 767/2008, (EU) 2016/399, (EU) 2017/2226, (EU) 2018/1240, (EU) 2018/1726 and (EU) 2018/1861 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Decisions 2004/512/EC and 2008/633/JHA”, *EU 2019/817*, Brussels, May 20, 2019, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32019R0817>; “Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a framework for interoperability between EU information systems in the field of police and judicial cooperation, asylum and migration and amending Regulations (EU) 2018/1726, (EU) 2018/1862 and (EU) 2019/816”, *EU 2019/818*, Brussels, May 20, 2019, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32019R0818>.

Agreement to allow the transfer and use of PNR data in order to prevent and combat terrorism and other serious transnational crime.³⁰

The Union also worked on strengthening its capacity for preventing terrorist financing. On 13 February, the European Commission adopted an updated Draft List identifying high-risk third countries with strategic deficiencies in their Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing regimes.³¹ The Draft List was unanimously rejected by the Council, however, on the grounds that it was not established in a sufficiently transparent way.³² The Commission's work on a revised methodology and list would continue in 2020. On 20 June, the European Parliament and the Council adopted a new Directive to facilitate the use of financial and other information for the prevention, detection, investigation or prosecution of certain criminal offences.³³ The directive strengthens the capacity of law enforcement authorities to fight terrorism, by improving their access to financial information and enhancing the exchange of financial information between law enforcement and national Financial Intelligence Units. Finally, a Regulation adopted on 18 December to reform the functioning of the European system of financial supervision includes provisions that reinforce the role of the European Banking Authority (EBA) with respect

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- 30 European Commission, "Recommendation for a Council Decision to authorise the opening of negotiations for an Agreement between the European Union and Japan for the transfer and use of Passenger Name Record (PNR) data to prevent and combat terrorism and other serious transnational crime", *COM(2019) 420 final*, Brussels, September 27, 2019, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52019PC0420>.
- 31 European Commission, "Commission delegated Regulation supplementing Directive (EU) 2015/849 of the European Parliament and of the Council by identifying high-risk third countries with strategic deficiencies", *C(2019) 1326 final*, Brussels, February 13, 2019, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%63AOJ.L_2016.254.01.0001.01.ENG.
- 32 Council of the EU, "Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) of 13.2.2019 supplementing Directive (EU) 2015/849 of the European Parliament and of the Council by identifying high-risk third countries with strategic deficiencies C(2019)1326", *ST 6964 2019 REV 1*, Brussels, March 7, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/commission-delegated-regulation_hrtc.pdf.
- 33 "Directive of the European Parliament and the Council laying down rules facilitating the use of financial and other information for the prevention, detection, investigation or prosecution of certain criminal offences, and repealing Council Decision 2000/642/JHA", *EU 2019/1153*, Brussels, June 20, 2019, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0240_EN.html.

to risks posed to the financial sector by money laundering and terrorist financing activities.³⁴

Border management and crime

In February, the EU provisionally agreed on new rules on the interoperability of EU justice and home affairs information systems. Advanced under the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the EU, the rules establish interoperability for information systems on searches, biometric matching, identity repository and detection. The rules relate to information exchange between ‘the entry/exit system (EES), the visa information system (VIS), the European travel information and authorisation system (ETIAS), Eurodac, the Schengen information system (SIS) and the European criminal records information system for third country nationals (ECRIS-TCN), as well as other relevant databases on travel documents’.³⁵ In March, the Council agreed on its position for the rules to appoint a legal representative for the gathering of e-evidence across borders in the EU. Reaching its position on the Directive proposed by the European Commission in April 2018, the new rules should help with the gathering of e-evidence and allow proper legal representation as a full list of legal representatives will be publicly available ‘via the European Judicial Network on criminal matters’.³⁶

34 “Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010 establishing a European Supervisory Authority (European Banking Authority), Regulation (EU) No 1094/2010 establishing a European Supervisory Authority (European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority), Regulation (EU) No 1095/2010 establishing a European Supervisory Authority (European Securities and Markets Authority), Regulation (EU) No 600/2014 on markets in financial instruments, Regulation (EU) 2016/1011 on indices used as benchmarks in financial instruments and financial contracts or to measure the performance of investment funds, and Regulation (EU) 2015/847 on information accompanying transfers of funds”, *EU 2019/2175*, Brussels, December 18, 2019, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52017PC0536>.

35 Council of the EU, “Interoperability between EU information systems: Council Presidency and European Parliament reach provisional agreement”, Press Release, February 5, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/02/05/interoperability-between-eu-information-systems-council-presidency-and-european-parliament-reach-provisional-agreement/>.

36 Council of the EU, “E-evidence package: Council agrees its position on rules to appoint legal representatives for the gathering of evidence”, Press Release, March 8, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/08/e-evidence-package-council-agrees-its-position-on-rules-to-appoint-legal-representatives-for-the-gathering-of-evidence/>.

Migration and the Mediterranean

With the conflicts in Libya, Syria and elsewhere, irregular migrants continued to travel to the EU. The Mediterranean remained a key transit route for irregular migration. Frontex reported that a total of 121,032 illegal border crossings (IBCs) were recorded in 2019 with 14,003 irregular migrants crossing through the Central Mediterranean route; 23,696 via the Western Mediterranean route; and, 83,333 through the Eastern Mediterranean route.³⁷ Despite these numbers, Frontex reported in 2020 that irregular border crossings are at their lowest levels since 2013 due to a significant drop in people crossing the Central and Western Mediterranean routes – a 41% drop for the Central Mediterranean route and 58% for the Western route. Preliminary data collected by Frontex for 2019 shows a 6% fall in overall illegal border crossings along the EU's external borders, with 139,000 people crossing over – a 92% drop compared to the record numbers for 2015.

However, Frontex also reports that in 2019 there was a growing migratory pressure arising in the Eastern Mediterranean – there was an approximate increase of 46% compared to 2018 with more than 82,000 irregular migrants detected. There was also an increase in the number of irregular crossings at the EU's border via the Western Balkan route – around 14,000 people were detected via this route (double the amount detected in 2018). Frontex also reports that in 2019 Afghans were the main nationality of irregular migrants (almost a quarter of total arrivals).³⁸

In addition, in June, the Council of the EU gave the Commission a mandate to negotiate an agreement with the US on access to e-evidence and a mandate to participate in negotiations in the Council

³⁷ Frontex, “Migratory Map”, 2019, <https://frontex.europa.eu/along-eu-borders/migratory-map/>.

³⁸ Frontex, “Flash Report – Irregular migration into EU at lowest level since 2013”, January 8, 2020, <https://frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news-release/flash-report-irregular-migration-into-eu-at-lowest-level-since-2013-n5pHIA>.

of Europe for additional protocols to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime. Furthermore, the Council of the EU also tasked the Commission to continue its work on the retention of data for serious crime investigations – ministers agreed at the Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting on 6 June that ‘data retention is an essential tool for fighting serious crime’.³⁹ Additionally, in the same month, the Council agreed on its position for the objectives and funding of migration, border and security policies under the MFF negotiations with the European Commission and European Parliament for the period 2021–2027. Building on the Commission’s proposals, the Council agreed that financial envelopes should be expanded to deal with priority areas, such as high migratory pressures, terrorism, cybercrime, the interoperability of IT systems and the expansion of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex).⁴⁰

20 years since the Tampere Council

On 15–16 October 1999, the European Council convened a special meeting in Tampere, Finland, to establish the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (AFSJ) and agree to the ‘Tampere programme’. The programme saw the European Council set the political guidelines for closer cooperation on immigration policy, judicial cooperation and countering crime. In particular, the Tampere Council also set in motion the drawing up of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the construction of a Common European Asylum System, the completion of Eurodac, the setting up of a European Police Chiefs operational task force, the creation of a European Police College (now called CEPOL) and the formation of EUROJUST.⁴¹

39 Council of the EU, “Justice and Home Affairs Council, 6–7 June 2019”, June 6, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/jha/2019/06/06-07/>.

40 Council of the EU, “Funding for migration, border and security policies: Council agrees its position”, Press Release, June 7, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/07/funding-for-migration-border-and-security-policies-council-agrees-its-position/>.

41 European Parliament, “Tampere European Council 15 and 16 October 1999 – Presidency Conclusions”, 1999, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/tam_en.htm#c.

In April, the Council reached an informal agreement on a regulation for the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, which built on the European Commission's proposal for an Agency on 12 September 2018. The agreement seeks to strengthen the Agency in terms of equipment and staff, with the aim of ensuring that 10,000 operational staff are readied for the standing corps by 2027. Deployments of the standing corps are to begin from 1 January 2021. The agreement also paved the way for a broader mandate for the Agency to support EU member states with border protection, returns and third-state cooperation. On returns and third-state cooperation, under the agreement, Frontex would support EU member states with tasks such as voluntary returns, identification of third-state nationals and the acquisition of travel documents. Furthermore, the agreement and proposed new rules sought to integrate the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) into the European Border and Coast Guard Agency framework.⁴² This entire informal agreement was formally adopted by the Council in the form of a revised regulation on 8 November 2019.⁴³

Remedies for Europe's cross-border boundary disorder

'The EU may not be in imminent danger of invasion, but chaos is nibbling at its borders, from the enclave of Kaliningrad to the exclaves of North Africa. Schengen, its passport-free travel area, has been punctured by smugglers bringing drugs, counterfeit goods and illicit cash into Europe, alongside flows of irregular migrants, sometimes infiltrated by terrorists. The EU has always cultivated ambiguity about its outer border, about where its territory ends and the outside world begins [...] these unclear boundaries are now blamed for allowing chaos and disorder to seep in from Russia, the Middle East and Africa.'

42 Council of the EU, "European Border and Coast Guard: Council Confirms Agreement on Stronger Mandate", Press Release, April 1, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/04/01/european-border-and-coast-guard-council-confirms-agreement-on-stronger-mandate/>.

43 Council of the EU, "European Border and Coast Guard: Council Adopts Revised Regulation", Press Release, November 8, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/11/08/european-border-and-coast-guard-council-adopts-revised-regulation/>.

- > Roderick Parkes, “Healthy Boundaries: Remedies for Europe’s Cross-Border Disorder”, *Chaillot Paper*, no. 152, May, 2019, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/content/healthy-boundaries-remedies-europe’s-cross-border-disorder>.

Cooperation with third countries on border management matters intensified in October and November as the EU signed Frontex cooperation agreements with Montenegro and Serbia. The agreement signed with Montenegro on 7 October is designed to assist the country with illegal immigration, cross-border crime and border management.⁴⁴ The negotiations for the cooperation agreement with Montenegro concluded in July 2018. Signed on 19 November, the cooperation agreement with Serbia followed a similar logic and it allows for EU-Serbia joint operations for border management and the deployment of joint teams to areas in Serbia that border the EU.⁴⁵ Finally, on 21 May Frontex launched its first ever operation to the Western Balkans which saw 50 officers and 16 patrol cars from 12 EU member states deploy to Albania to support it with border control and cross-border crime.⁴⁶

The Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting on 2–3 December resulted in conclusions on victims’ rights, the digitalisation of judicial cooperation, environmental crime and the future of EU migration and asylum policy and internal security. Based on two reports crafted by the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the EU, ministers discussed how migration, asylum and internal security policy could evolve until 2024. The two reports stressed the need for the EU to respect international norms, to speak with one voice on issues such as migration and protection, to invest in better foresight for migratory flows, to

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- 44 Council of the EU, “Border management: EU signs agreement with Montenegro on European Border and Coast Guard cooperation”, Press Release, October 7, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/10/07/border-management-eu-signs-agreement-with-montenegro-on-european-border-and-coast-guard-cooperation/>.
 - 45 Council of the EU, “Border management: EU signs agreement with Serbia on European Border and Coast Guard cooperation”, Press Release, November 19, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/11/19/border-management-eu-signs-agreement-with-serbia-on-european-border-and-coast-guard-cooperation/>.
 - 46 Frontex, “Frontex launches first operation in Western Balkans”, May 21, 2019, <https://frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news-release/frontex-launches-first-operation-in-western-balkans-znTNWM>.

ensure that communication by the EU is consistent with facts and data and to recognise that the EU has to keep up with technological developments that are changing the way EU citizens live and how authorities conduct law enforcement work. The issue of technological developments and internal security were specifically highlighted in the Finnish Presidency report as it stated that ‘artificial intelligence, unmanned aerial vehicles, new communication networks and online environments, to name just a few, can support the work of authorities, but can also be used for illegal purposes’.⁴⁷

Space

2019 marked 40 years of the Ariane launch vehicle, with Ariane 1 launching to space from Kourou, French Guiana, on 24 December 1979. This is was a notable anniversary because Ariane was the first launch vehicle to be developed for commercial satellite launches and it drastically reduced the costs of space travel.⁴⁸ 2019 was a year of several launches. For example, there were a number of launches under Ariane 5 during the year, which saw the delivery of numerous telecom satellites to orbit in order to enhance broadband communications.⁴⁹ In July, the ‘Pioneer’ satellites were launched and the two supercomputing nanosatellites are designed to provide global monitoring services for a commercial firm.⁵⁰ In the same month, two further satellites started to provide data and product services under the Copernicus programme with Sentinel-3A and -3B providing land and

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- 47 Council of the EU, “Presidency Report – Future Direction of EU Internal Security: Outcome of Discussions”, 14297/19, Brussels, November 22, 2019, p. 2, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14297-2019-INIT/en/pdf> and Council of the EU, “Presidency Report – Way Forward for EU Migration and Asylum Policy: Outcome of Discussions”, 14364/19, Brussels, November 22, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14364-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- 48 European Space Agency, “40 years of Ariane”, December 19, 2019, http://www.esa.int/Enabling_Support/Space_Transportation/Ariane/40_years_of_Ariane.
- 49 For example, see: European Space Agency, “Ariane 5’s fourth launch this year”, November 26, 2019, http://www.esa.int/Enabling_Support/Space_Transportation/Ariane/Ariane_5_s_fourth_launch_this_year.
- 50 European Space Agency, “Pioneer satellites launched”, July 5, 2019, http://www.esa.int/Applications/Telecommunications_Integrated_Applications/Pioneer_satellites_launched.

marine data.⁵¹ Furthermore, in October the EUTELSAT 5 West B satellite was successfully launched in order to enhance the service delivery and security of the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay System (EGNOS), thus further boosting EGNOS and Galileo.⁵²

In December, the ESA's Characterising Exoplanet Satellite (Cheops) mission took off successfully and its mandate is to explore planets that exist beyond our solar system (known as extrasolar planets or exoplanets). Scientists estimate that there

The first space mission to remove space debris from earth's orbit.

are more than 4,000 exoplanets around near and far stars and, after the first was discovered in 1995, Cheops will investigate the nature of them.⁵³ Furthermore, in the same month the ESA commissioned what will be the first space mission to remove space debris from earth's orbit. Set to launch in 2025, ClearSpace-1 will be pursued through a commercial start-up consortium in a bid to 'help establish a new market for in-orbit servicing, as well as debris removal'.⁵⁴ Additionally, a few days before the launch the ESA announced that it was using and testing a 'deep learning' algorithm to predict how the Sun could affect the planet and to provide early warning of potentially harmful solar activity that might strike satellites or earth-based power grids and infrastructure.⁵⁵ This news follows the announcement back in September that the ESA would be launching their first AI-enabled satellite that will operate under Copernicus to improve communications and land and marine environment monitoring.⁵⁶

51 Copernicus, "With two satellites in orbit, the Sentinel-3 mission is now delivering data at full capacity", July 15, 2019, <https://www.copernicus.eu/en/news/news/observer-two-satellites-orbit-sentinel-3-mission-now-delivering-data-full-capacity>.

52 EGNOS, "EUTELSAT 5 West B successfully launched with EGNOS payload", October 10, 2019, https://www.gsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/content/press_releases/eutelsat_5_west_b_successfully_launched_with_egnos_payload.pdf.

53 European Space Agency, "Liftoff for Cheops, ESA's exoplanet mission", December 18, 2019, http://www.esa.int/Science_Exploration/Space_Science/Cheops/Liftoff_for_Cheops_ESA_s_exoplanet_mission.

54 European Space Agency, "ESA commissions world's first space debris removal", December 9, 2019, http://www.esa.int/Safety_Security/Clean_Space/ESA_commissions_world_s_first_space_debris_removal.

55 European Space Agency, "Using AI to predict Earth's future", November 19, 2019, http://www.esa.int/Safety_Security/Using_AI_to_predict_Earth_s_future.

56 European Space Agency, "First Earth observation satellite with AI ready for launch", September 12, 2019, http://www.esa.int/Applications/Observing_the_Earth/Ph-sat/First_Earth_observation_satellite_with_AI_ready_for_launch.

In September, there was cause for celebration when the European GNSS Agency (GSA) marked its 15-year anniversary since its creation – the Agency oversees the development of EGNOS and Galileo. In the same month, the GSA announced that it estimated that 1 billion Galileo-enabled smartphones are being used worldwide. Such news highlights the continued market uptake of Galileo and 95% of companies that today produce chips for smartphones do so with Galileo-enabled chips.⁵⁷ In November, there was positive news for the European Space Agency (ESA) and space exploration when the ESA Council at the ministerial level endorsed the expansion of the Agency's budget for space exploration, space research and innovation and developing the space economy. This was the first significant increase in funding for 25 years for the ESA, and the decision was seen as a positive signal for European space exploration.

SatCen received 554 individual product requests from member states in 2018 and in 2019 this went up to 778 requests.

The EU Satellite Centre (SatCen) continued to provide a range of geospatial products and services to a range of clients including the EEAS, EU member states and others. In 2019, SatCen experienced an increase in demand for its services and the agency registered a 'remarkable 30% production growth compared to 2018'.⁵⁸ To

give further numerical context, SatCen received 554 individual product requests from member states in 2018 and in 2019 this went up to 778 requests. In 2019, the Agency delivered a total of 3,080 products and the largest customers were the EEAS/EU Military Staff (with 866 products), EU member states (729 products), Frontex (586), the OSCE (432) and the EEAS/IntCen (275). SatCen also delivered products to a number of CSDP missions and operations including EUNAVFOR Atalanta (62 products), EUNAVFOR Sophia (29), EUMM Georgia (26)

57 European GSA Agency, "GSA celebrates 1 billion Galileo smartphone users", September 9, 2019, https://www.gsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/content/press_releases/gsa-pr-19-03_gsa_celebrates_1_billion_galileo_smartphone_users_0.pdf.

58 EU Satellite Centre, "EU SatCen Annual Report 2019", pp. 7-8, <https://www.satcen.europa.eu/keydocuments/EU%20SatCen%20Annual%20Report%2020195ea979f2f9d71b083826a79a.pdf>.

and more.⁵⁹ Finally, in June 2019 Ambassador Sorin Ducaru took over as SatCen Director following his appointment by HR/VP Mogherini.

Core documents

- > “Status Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Serbia on actions carried out by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency in the Republic of Serbia”, 15579/1/18, Brussels, January 21, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15579-2018-REV-1/en/pdf>.
- > “Status Agreement between the European Union and Montenegro on actions carried out by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency in Montenegro”, 6846/19, Brussels, March 12, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6846-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > “Progress Report – Proposal for a Regulation establishing the space programme of the Union and the EU Agency for the Space Programme”, 7481/19, Brussels, March 13, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7481-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > “Proposal for a Regulation on the European Border and Coast Guard”, 8354/19, Brussels, April 9, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-8354-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > “Progress Report – Proposal for a Regulation establishing the space programme of the Union and the EU Agency for the Space Programme”, 7481/19, Brussels, April 12, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7481-2019-COR-1/en/pdf>.
- > “Partial General Approach – Proposal for a Regulation establishing the Internal Security Fund”, 9248/19, Brussels,

⁵⁹ EU Satellite Centre, “EU SatCen Annual Report 2019”, p. 28, <https://www.satcen.europa.eu/keydocuments/EU%20SatCen%20Annual%20Report%2020195ea979f2f9d71b083826a79a.pdf>.

May 17, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9248-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.

- > “Council Conclusions on Space as an Enabler”, 9248/19, Brussels, May 17, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9248-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > “General Approach – Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on European production and preservation orders for electronic evidence in criminal matters (Annexes)”, 9365/19, Brussels, May 17, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9365-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > “Council Decision authorising the opening of negotiations with a view to concluding an agreement between the European Union and the United States of America on cross-border access to electronic evidence for judicial cooperation in criminal matters”, 9114/19, Brussels, May 21, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9114-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > “Partial General Approach – Proposal for a Regulation of the Integrated Border Management Fund, the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa”, 9629/19, Brussels, May 24, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9629-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > “Report on the implementation of the 2016 Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats and the 2018 Joint Communication on increasing resilience and bolstering capabilities to address hybrid threats”, SWD(2019) 200 final, Brussels, May 28, 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/report_on_the_implementation_of_the_2016_joint_framework_on_countering_hybrid_threats_and_the_2018_joint_communication_on_increasing_resilien.pdf.
- > “Partial General Approach – Proposal for a Regulation establishing the Asylum and Migration Fund”, 9715/19, Brussels, May 29, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9715-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.

- > “Report on the implementation of the 2016 Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats and the 2018 Joint Communication on increasing resilience and bolstering capabilities to address hybrid threats”, SWD(2019) 200 final, Brussels, May 28, 2019, https://eas.europa.eu/sites/eas/files/report_on_the_implementation_of_the_2016_joint_framework_on_countering_hybrid_threats_and_the_2018_joint_communication_on_increasing_resilien.pdf.
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- > “Code of Practice on Disinformation: First Annual Reports – October 2019”, October 29, 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/annual-self-assessment-reports-signatories-code-practice-disinformation-2019>.
- > “Council Conclusions on Space Solutions for a Sustainable Arctic”, 13996/19, Brussels, November 21, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-13996-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > Council of the EU, “Presidency Report – Future Direction of EU Internal Security: Outcome of Discussions”, 14297/19, Brussels, November 22, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14297-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > Council of the EU, “Presidency Report – Way Forward for EU Migration and Asylum Policy: Outcome of Discussions”, 14364/19, Brussels, November 22, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14364-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.
- > “Outcome of the Council Meeting – Justice and Home Affairs”, 14755/19, Brussels, December 2-3, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41586/st14755-en19.pdf>.
- > “Council Conclusions on complementary efforts to enhance resilience counter hybrid threats”, 14972/19, Brussels, December 10, 2019, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14972-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.

- > “EU SatCen Annual Report 2019”, <https://www.satcen.europa.eu/keydocuments/EU%20SatCen%20Annual%20Report%2020195ea979f2f9d71b083826a79a.pdf>.



Image: Sambeetarts/pixabay

ANNEX

Statistical annex

EU Integrated Approach

Central Asia, 2019-2021

	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace*	EIB financed projects signed in 2019	Development assistance disbursements
	2019-2021 EUR million	EUR millions	2019 EUR million
Kazakhstan	4	547.1	2.3
Uzbekistan	4		24.4
Turkmenistan	4		3.6
Kyrgyzstan	4	112	23.1
Tajikistan	4.4	108.3	30.5

* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Source: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European Investment Bank, 2020

Eastern Partnership, 2019-2020

	European Neighbourhood Instrument	Development cooperation disbursements	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace*
	2019-2020 EUR million	2019 EUR million	2019 EUR million
Armenia	46	34.6	
Azerbaijan	27	16.8	
Belarus	31	22.8	
Georgia	120	88	1.2
Moldova	18	103.6	
Ukraine	109	244	15.7

	Macro-Financial Assistance	Humanitarian assistance	CSDP Mission or Operation
	2020 EUR million	2019-2020 EUR million	
Armenia			
Azerbaijan			
Belarus			
Georgia	150		EUMM Georgia
Moldova	100		EUBAM Moldova Ukraine
Ukraine	1200	13	EUAM Ukraine

* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Source: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European External Action Service, 2020

Gulf Region, 2019-2020

	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace*	Humanitarian assistance	Development cooperation disbursements	CSDP Mission or Operation
	2019 EUR million	2019-2020 EUR million	2019 EUR million	
Iraq	10.5	30	207.3	EUAM Iraq
Yemen	0.6	159	186.1	
Iran		8.2	205.3	

* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Source: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European External Action Service, 2020

Horn of Africa, 2019-2021

	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace*	Development cooperation disbursements	Humanitarian assistance	CSDP Mission or Operation
	2019-2021 EUR million	2019 EUR million	2020 EUR million	
Somalia	9.8	147.8	49.4	EUCAP Somalia EUTM Somalia
Ethiopia	14.6	168.9	42.85	
Eritrea	1.4	3.8		
Djibouti	6.4	33.6		
Kenya	8.3	88.2	15.5	
Region-wide				EUNAVFOR Atalanta

* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Source: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European External Action Service, 2020

Latin America and Caribbean, 2019-2021

	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace*	Humanitarian assistance	Development cooperation disbursements
	2019-2021 EUR million	2019-2020 EUR million	2019 EUR million
Haiti	1	17	50.9
Colombia	8	26	60.3
Venezuela	2	50	49.1
South America		18.5	
Mexico and Central America		7	147.8
Caribbean		3.3	59.6
Argentina			5.3
Brazil			9.2
Bolivia			41
Ecuador			28.4
Peru			14.5
Guyana			3.4

* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Source: European Commission, 2019 and 2020

Middle East, 2019-2020

	European Neighbourhood Instrument	Development assistance disbursements	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace*
	2019-2020 EUR million	2019 EUR million	2019 EUR million
Turkey		1050	37.9
Syria	15	395.8	32.7
Israel	22		
Palestine	741		3.7
Lebanon	32	118.9	35.4

	European Neighbourhood Instrument	Development assistance disbursements	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace*
Jordan	139	127.8	6.4
	Macro-Financial Assistance (2020)	Humanitarian assistance	CSDP Mission or Operation
	EUR million	2019-2020 EUR million	
Turkey		50	
Syria		170	
Israel			
Palestine		22.5	EUBAM Rafah
Lebanon			
Jordan	200	20	

* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Source: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European External Action Service, 2020

North Africa, 2015-2020

	European Neighbourhood Instrument	Development assistance disbursements	Humanitarian assistance	EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa
	2019-2020 EUR million	2019 EUR million	2019-2020 EUR million	2015-2020 EUR million
Libya	32	75.8	8	339.9
Algeria	35	46.5	9	0
Morocco	289	161		182
Egypt	5	83.9		60
Tunisia	190	180.1		12.8
Region-wide				176.7
	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace*	Macro-Financial Assistance	CSDP Mission or Operation	
	2019, EUR million	2019, EUR million		
Libya	24.4		EUBAM Libya (Mission)	
Algeria	7.3			
Morocco	18.3			
Egypt	0.9			
Tunisia	17	300		
Region-wide			EUNAVFOR Iriini	

* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Source: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European External Action Service, 2020

Oceania, 2019

	EIB financed projects signed in 2019	Development assistance disbursements
	EUR million	2019 EUR million
Kiribati	2.2	2.1
Papua New Guinea	224.5	43
Micronesia	4.4	
Solomon Islands	7.7	10.6
Samoa		5.9
Marshall Islands		3.2
Tuvalu	1.6	1.5
Vanuatu		2.4
Palau		0.6

Source: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European Investment Bank, 2020

Sahel, 2019-2020

	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace*	Humanitarian assistance	Development cooperation disbursements	CSDP Mission or Operation
	2019 EUR million	2019-2020 EUR million	2019 EUR million	
Mali	17.5	43	185.2	EUTM Mali EUCAP Sahel Mali
Niger	10.2	32.45	148.6	EUCAP Sahel Niger
Central African Republic	28.4	15.2	103.2	EUTM RCA EUAM RCA
Mauritania	12.3	15.79	66.4	
Burkina Faso	17.7	22.5	135.3	
Chad	2.1	31.5	81.3	

* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Source: European Commission, 2019; European External Action Service, 2020

South Asia, 2019-2021

	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace*	EIB financed projects signed in 2019	Humanitarian assistance	Development assistance disbursements
	2019-2021 EUR million	EUR million	2019-2020 EUR million	2019 EUR million
Afghanistan	6		39	371.2
Pakistan		409.6	9.7	99.9
India		3300		19.5
Nepal		190.9	2	44.1
Bangladesh	2.5	503	40	77.7

* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Source: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European Investment Bank, 2020

South East Asia, 2019-2021

	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace*	EIB financed projects signed in 2019	Humanitarian assistance	Development assistance disbursements
	2019-2021 EUR million	EUR million	2019-2020 EUR million	2019 EUR million
Myanmar/Burma	2.7		19	107.4
Thailand	1			8.4
Malaysia				2.5
Indonesia		338.6		13.8
Philippines	7.2	414.3	6.7	32.6
Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos			2	
Cambodia		140.3		58.8
Laos		186		43.2
Vietnam		710		34.1

* Total values for ongoing IcSP projects. Totals do not include completed projects.

Source: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European Investment Bank, 2020

Western Balkans, 2015-2020

	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance II	EU Connectivity Agenda	EIB loans	CSDP Mission or Operation
	2020 EUR million	2015-2019 EUR million	2018 EUR million	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	81.9	1094	242	EUFOR Althea
Kosovo	38	329.9	80	EULEX Kosovo
Albania	75.3	214	105	
Montenegro	30	399.2	141	
North Macedonia	51	517.3	100	
Serbia	27.5	627.4	418	

Source: European Commission, 2019 and 2020; European External Action Service, 2020; European investment Bank, 2019

EU Delegations around the world

Staff levels by contractual status, Dec 2019

	EEAS	Commission	Grand Total
AD	406	519	925
AST	193	91	284
AST-SC		1	1
Local Agents	1058	2072	3130
Seconded National Experts	64	24	88
Contract Agents	238	1053	1291
Total	1,959	3,760	5,719

Source: European External Action Service, 2020

UN Security Council voting

By permanent and non-permanent members, 2019

	Belgium	China	Cote d'Ivoire	Dominican Republic	Equatorial Guinea	France	Germany	Indonesia	Kuwait	Peru	Poland	Russia	South Africa	United Kingdom	United States
S/RES/2459(2019) on the extension of the mandate of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) until 15 March 2020															
3/15/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y
S/RES/2466(2019) on the extension of the mandate of the UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) until 15 October 2019															
4/12/2019	Y	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y
S/RES/2467(2019) on sexual violence in armed conflict															
4/23/2019	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y
S/RES/2468(2019) on the extension of the mandate of the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 31 October 2019															
4/30/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	A	Y	Y
S/RES/2471(2019) on the renewal of sanctions imposed by Security Council resolutions 2206(2015) and 2428(2018) and extension of the mandate of the Panel of Experts on South Sudan until 30 June 2020															
5/30/2019	Y	A	A	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	A	Y	Y
S/RES/2476(2019) on the establishment of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH)															
6/25/2019	Y	A	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
S/RES/2494(2019) on the extension of the mandate of the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 31 October 2020															
10/30/2019	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	A	Y	Y
S/RES/2498(2019) on the extension of exemptions for the arms embargo and enforcement authorisations for the ban on illicit trade and on extension of the mandate of the Panel of Experts on Somalia until 15 December 2020															
11/15/2019	Y	A	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y
Total		4	1	2	2							6	3		

Y = Yes, A = Abstention

Source: United Nations, 2020

	EU	AT	BE	BG	HR	CY	CZ	DK	EE	FI	FR	DE	EL	HU	IE	IT	LV	LT	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SK	SI	ES	SE	UK	
Trinidad and Tobago	Y										Y	Y									Y							Y	Y	
Tunisia	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				Y	Y	Y
Turkey	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Turkmenistan	Y										Y	Y				Y									Y				Y	
Tuvalu																														
Uganda	Y		Y					Y			Y	Y			Y	Y					Y								Y	Y
Ukraine	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
United Arab Emirates	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
United States of America	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Uruguay	Y										Y	Y	Y			Y							Y	Y				Y		Y
Uzbekistan	Y	Y		Y			Y				Y	Y		Y		Y	Y						Y		Y	Y				Y
Vanuatu											Y																			Y
Venezuela	Y		Y								Y	Y	Y			Y					Y	Y	Y	Y				Y		Y
Vietnam	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				Y	Y		Y	Y			Y	Y	Y
Yemen	Y			Y							Y					Y						Y								Y
Zambia	Y					Y			Y	Y	Y				Y	Y													Y	Y
Zimbabwe	Y										Y	Y	Y			Y					Y		Y	Y				Y	Y	Y

* EU Office

Y = Yes

EU Delegations/Missions to international organisations:

Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, Delegation of the European Union to the International Organisations in Vienna (UN, OSCE, IAEA), Delegation of the European Union to the UN and the WTO in Geneva, Delegation of the European Union to the UN Organisations in Rome, Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations - New York, Delegation of the European Union to the OECD and UNESCO in Paris, Delegation of the European Union to the African Union (Adis Abeba), Mission of the European Union to ASEAN (Jakarta)

CSDP Civilian Missions

2019

	End of current mandate	Budget	Budget-ary period	Personnel*			
				EU member states	Third states	Local	Total (male/female)
		EUR million					
EULEX Kosovo	14 Jun 20	83.6	15 Jun 18 14 Jun 20	291	1	184	79/21
EUAM Ukraine	31 May 21	54	1 Jun 19 31 May 21	149	2	167	62/38
EUMM Georgia	14 Dec 20	38.2	15 Dec 18 14 Dec 20	197	0	112	62/38
EUBAM Rafah	30 Jun 20	2.1	1 Jul 19 30 Jun 20	6	0	8	71/29
EUAM Iraq	30 Apr 22	64.8	17 Apr 20 30 Apr 22	58	2	21	73/27
EUPOL COPPS	30 Jun 20	12.43	1 Jul 19 30 Jun 20	54	0	35	61/39
EUCAP Somalia	31 Dec 20	66.1	1 Jan 19 31 Dec 20	89	0	18	80/20
EUCAP Sahel Niger	30 Sep 20	63.4	1 Oct 18 30 Sep 20	119	0	63	80/20
EUBAM Libya	30 Jun 20	61.7	1 Jan 19 30 Jan 20	35	0	5	70/30
EUCAP Sahel Mali	14 Jan 21	66.93	1 Mar 19 14 Jan 21	117	5	50	80/20

* All personnel figures are as at November 2019

Source: European External Action Service, 2020

CSDP Military Missions and Operations

2019

Mission/ Operation	End of current mandate	Common costs	Financial arrange- ment period	Troop Contribut- ing Nations		Personnel
EUR million				EU member states	Third states	As of 31 Dec 2019
EUFOR BiH Oper- ation Althea	Council De- cision with no end date*	15.4	TBC	15	5	553
EUTM Mali	18 May 24	133.7	19 May 20 18 May 24	22	5	697
EUTM Somalia	31 Dec 20	12.1	1 Jan 2019 31 Dec 2020	7	1	137
EUTM Central African Republic	19 Sep 20	11.3	20 Sep 2018 19 Sep 2020	8	3	225
EUNAVFOR Soma- lia Operation Atalanta	31 Dec 20	7.1	30 Jul 2018 Dec 2020	17	3	398
EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia	31 Mar 20	4.6	1 Oct 2019 31 Mar 2020	27**	0	352***

* UN Security Council Resolution 2496(2019) valid until 4 November 2020.

** UK was still a member of the EU.

*** Naval assets suspended with effect from 31 March 2019.

Source: European External Action Service, 2020

EU Battlegroups

Offers and Commitments, as at 6 December 2019

Year	Semester	Rotation	Member States	Third States	EUBG Point of Contact	Preferred OHQ
2019	Jul-Dec	First	PL, CZ, HR, HU, SK		PL	PL
2019	Jul-Dec	Second	FR		FR	FR
2020	Jan-Jun	First	EL, BG, CY, RO	RS, UA	EL	EL
2020	Jan-Jun	Second	FR		FR	FR
2020	Jul-Dec	First	DE, AT, CZ, FI, HR, IE, LV, NL, SE		DE	DE
2020	Jul-Dec	Second	IT ¹ , EL, ES, PT*		IT*	IT*
2021	Jan-Jun	First	Vacant			
2021	Jan-Jun	Second	Vacant			
2021	Jul-Dec	First	IT*, AT*, HR*, HU*, SI*		IT*	IT*
2021	Jul-Dec	Second	Vacant			
2022	Jan-Jun	First	Vacant			
2022	Jan-Jun	Second	Vacant			
2022	Jul-Dec	First	ES, PT*		ES	
2022	Jul-Dec	Second	Vacant			
2023	Jan-Jun	First	PL, CZ*, HU*, SK*		PL	
2023	Jan-Jun	Second	EL, BG, CY, RO	Republic of North Macedonia ² , RS*, UA*	EL	EL
2023	Jul-Dec	First	Vacant			
2023	Jul-Dec	Second	Vacant			
2024	Jan-Jun	First	FR, BE*		FR	FR
2024	Jan-Jun	Second	Vacant			
2024	Jul-Dec	First	IT*	AL	IT*	IT*
2024	Jul-Dec	Second	Vacant			
2025	Jan-Jun	First	DE, AT*, HR*		DE	
2025	Jan-Jun	Second	PT*		PT*	TBD
2025	Jul-Dec	First	DE, AT*, HR*		DE	
2025	Jul-Dec	Second	Vacant			

* Pending political decision.

¹ SIAF/SILF limited to ops in littoral.

² Since there is no agreed EU abbreviation for the Republic of North Macedonia the full name is used.

Source: EU Military Staff, European External Action Service, 2020

Athena Mechanism budgets

2015-2019

Year	Commitments	Payments
2015	74,967,210.42	70,056,845.17
2016	69,684,772.00	64,950,483.00
2017	60,707,797.00	64,635,376.00
2018	78,688,860.96	77,228,570.80
2019	75,016,990.16	75,500,049.48

Commitments: Maximum amounts that can be committed (legally engaged) in a given financial year.

Payments: Maximum amounts payable each financial year in respect of commitments made in the year in question or in the previous years.

Source: Council of the EU, 2020

PESCO projects

EU member state participation by military domain, 2020

	Training, Facilities	Land, Formations, Systems	Maritime	Air, Systems	Enabling, Joint	Cyber, C4ISR	Space
AT	1	1			3	1	
BE		2	1		6	1	1
BG	1		2		2		
CY	1	2	1		2	2	
CZ	1	1		2	3	2	
DE	2	2		2	5	4	1
EE		1			1	1	
EL	3	2	4		3	2	
ES	3	3	2	3	8	4	1
FI		1			2	2	
FR	5	3	3	3	11	3	2
HU	2	2			4	2	
HR		1	1		3	1	
IE	1		1				
IT	4	4	3	2	6	5	2
LT					2		
LU	1				1	1	
LV		1	1		1	1	
NL	1	1	1		5	3	
PL	2	1	2		2	2	1
PT	1		3		3	3	

	Training, Facilities	Land, Formations, Systems	Maritime	Air, Systems	Enabling, Joint	Cyber, C4ISR	Space
RO	4		1		6	1	
SE	2		1	1	3		
SI	1				3		
SK	1	2			3		

Source: PESCO Secretariat, 2020

PESCO projects

Number of PESCO projects member states share with each other bilaterally, 2020

	FR	IT	ES	EL	DE	BE	NL	CZ	CY	PL	PT	RO	SK	HR	AT	HU	SE	FI	BG	EE	LV	SI	IE	LT	LU
FR	16	19	4	14	10	8	6	4	6	6	9	4	3	4	6	7	4	4	2	2	4	1	2	3	3
IT	16	14	9	9	6	7	5	5	6	5	7	5	5	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	1	2	2	3	3
ES	19	14	5	13	9	9	7	5	5	7	5	4	4	4	6	7	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
EL	4	9	5	3	3	3	1	6	4	5	4	3	4	4	3	1	1	4	1	2	2	1	2	1	2
DE	14	9	13	3	3	7	8	7	3	6	4	4	3	2	3	5	3	3	2	2	2	3	1	2	3
BE	10	6	9	3	7	7	4	3	6	3	4	3	2	1	4	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	1	1
NL	8	7	9	3	8	7	6	2	6	3	5	3	3	2	4	3	5	2	3	3	2	1	3	2	2
CZ	6	5	7	1	7	4	6	1	2	1	3	2	1	2	3	3	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2
CY	4	5	5	6	3	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	3	2	3	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	2	1	1
PL	6	6	5	4	6	6	6	2	2	4	3	2	3	1	5	1	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	1	1
PT	6	5	7	5	4	3	3	1	2	4	4	1	1	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2
RO	9	7	5	4	4	4	5	3	1	3	4	2	1	3	2	4	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
SK	4	5	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	2	2	1	3	3	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1
HR	3	5	4	4	2	2	3	1	3	3	1	2	2	3	3	1	2	3	2	1	3	1	3	1	1
AT	4	4	4	4	3	1	2	2	2	1	3	3	1	3	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
HU	6	4	6	3	5	4	4	2	3	5	2	2	3	3	3	2	1	2	2	2	4	2	2	1	2
SE	7	3	7	1	3	3	3	3	1	2	4	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
FI	4	4	4	1	3	3	5	2	1	4	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	3	2	1	1	2	1	2
BG	4	3	3	4	2	2	2	1	3	2	1	2	2	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2
EE	2	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	3	1	2	1	1	2	1	1
LV	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	2	1	3	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
SI	4	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	2	3	1	4	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1
IE	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
LT	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	2	3	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1
LU	3	3	3	1	3	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Source: PESCO Secretariat, 2020

Total number of PESCO projects per member state

2020

	Coordinator	Members
Austria	1	6
Belgium	1	12
Bulgaria	1	5
Croatia		6
Cyprus		6
Czechia	1	11
Estonia	1	3
Finland		5
France	11	30
Germany	7	17
Greece	5	14
Hungary	1	10
Ireland		2
Italy	8	26
Latvia		3
Lithuania	1	3
Luxembourg		3
Netherlands	1	12
Poland	1	11
Portugal	2	10
Romania	2	12
Slovakia	1	6
Slovenia		4
Spain	2	25
Sweden	1	7

Source: PESCO Secretariat, 2020

Defence expenditure

Current \$ million, 2019

	IISS			NATO			SIPRI		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
AT	3.159	3.391	3.248				3.138	3.388	3.238
BE	4.513	4.845	4.832	4.431	4.84	4.921	4.433	4.841	4.818
BG	677	959	2.074	723	961	2.179	720	961	2.127
CY	397	431	403				359	445	402
CZ	2.247	2.710	2.940	2.259	2.750	2.967	2.078	2.710	2.910
DE	41.789	45.510	48.548	45.374	49.725	54.751	42.366	46.512	49.277
DK	3.780	4.559	4.592	3.780	4.559	4.651	3.764	4.559	4.557
EE	544	645	691	540	607	670	537	607	656
EL	4.731	4.857	4.835	4.742	5.383	4.940	5.088	5.757	5.472
ES	13.354	15.059	12.921	11.864	13.187	13.156	16.044	17.823	17.177
FI	3.565	3.757	3.999				3.431	3.757	3.971
FR	48.704	53.160	52.268	46.036	50.459	50.729	49.196	51.410	50.119
HR	687	966	1.051	924	966	1.032	921	966	1.009
HU	1.469	1.724	1.993	1.468	1.791	2.080	1.463	1.792	1.904
IE	1.04	1.118	1.116				1.025	1.107	1.113
IT	26.666	28.701	27.133	23.852	25.004	24.482	26.448	27.808	26.790
LV	531	724	712	484	724	724	483	724	710
LT	817	1.057	1.065	816	1.056	1.107	812	1.056	1.084
LU	280	403	344	325	355	395	358	393	429
MT	64	70	84				64	67	84
NL	10.114	11.254	12.097	9.622	11.162	12.478	9.581	11.115	12.060
PL	9.981	11.893	11.378	9.938	11.857	11.902	9.871	12.041	11.903
PT	2.527	2.573	2.682	2.732	3.392	3.613	3.676	4.420	4.513
RO	3.643	4.359	4.964	3.643	4.359	5.050	3.622	4.359	4.945
SK	1.118	1.300	1.867	1.053	1.297	1.905	1.049	1.296	1.865
SI	474	594	630	476	546	581	474	530	569
SE	5.935	6.193	6.384				5.527	5.733	5.920
UK	52.352	56.003	54.769	55.672	60.308	60.761	46.433	49.892	48.650

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2020; North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 2019; International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2020

Defence expenditure

% of GDP, 2019

	IISS			NATO			SIPRI		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
AT	0.8	0.7	0.7				0.8	0.7	0.7
BE	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
BG	1.2	1.5	3.1	1.2	1.5	3.3	1.2	1.5	3.2
CY	1.8	1.8	1.7				1.6	1.8	1.6
CZ	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.2
DE	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.3
DK	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.3
EE	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.0	2	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.1
EL	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.3	2.5	2.6	2.6
ES	1.0	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.2	1.3	1.2
FI	1.4	1.4	1.5				1.4	1.4	1.5
FR	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9
HR	1.3	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.7
HU	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2
IE	0.3	0.3	0.3				0.3	0.3	0.3
IT	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.4
LV	1.8	2.1	2.0	1.6	2.1	2.0	1.6	2.1	2.0
LT	1.7	2.0	2.0	1.7	2.0	2.0	1.7	2.0	2.0
LU	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
MT	0.5	0.5	0.6				0.5	0.5	0.6
NL	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.2
PL	1.9	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.0	2	1.9	2.1	2.0
PT	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.7	1.9	1.9
RO	1.7	1.8	2.0	1.7	1.8	2.0	1.7	1.8	2.0
SK	1.2	1.2	1.8	1.1	1.2	1.7	1.1	1.2	1.8
SI	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1
SE	1.1	1.1	1.2				1.0	1.0	1.1
UK	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.7

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2020; North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 2019; International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2020

Collaborative defence expenditure for the EU-27

2007-2018

	Total Defence Expenditure	Total Defence Investment	Collaborative Equipment Procurement	Collaborative Defence R&T Investment
	EUR billions, constant 2018 prices	EUR billions, constant 2018 prices	EUR billions	EUR millions
2007	225	46.1	6.7	366
2008	222	46.2	7.7	453
2009	219	45.9	8	320
2010	215	46.9	8	260
2011	210	41.5	7.9	270
2012	203	41	6.1	149
2013	200	39.5	4.7	170
2014	201	35.5	5.3	175
2015	205	37.5	5.2	155.5
2016	208	38.5	6.4	144
2017	217	43.5	6.5	150
2018	223.4	44.5	6.4	153

Source: European Defence Agency, 2007-2019

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“...The Union is faced with mounting geopolitical pressures that require the EU to ‘learn the use of the language of power’...”

The 2020 Yearbook of European Security provides an overview of events in 2019 that were significant for European security and it charts major developments in the EU’s external action and security and defence policy. The 2020 Yearbook of European Security contains region- and issue-specific sections, content-centric timelines, key EU document sources, information boxes and an index.

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