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STRATEGIC AUTONOMY AND EUROPEAN DEFENSE
On the way to a European army?

448 pages
paperback
24.00 Euro
published in June 2017
ISBN 978-3-8012-0498-3

Over the last decade European Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) has been one of the weakest links of European integration. While the member states proceeded with uncoordinated cuts in their defence budgets, Europe's political energy was almost totally absorbed by the euro crisis. It has taken a radically changing global and regional environment, characterized by hybrid threats and a blurring divide between internal and external security, to make the CSDP a political priority for the European Union again. With the new Global Strategy (2016) and its implementation package, the EU institutions have – remarkably effectively – opened the door to a European Defence Union and eventually – in the long run – a European Army. It is now up to the member states to decide how they want to achieve strategic autonomy, but at the same time ensure that the European Union retains its identity as a soft power.

This book offers insights into the political, academic and public debates on European defence and a more robust CSDP. It provides data and trends on defence spending, modernisation and multilateral cooperation for each member state and identifies the central forces shaping national and European security and defence policy. At the same time it highlights how much has already been achieved and provides concrete recommendations for the next steps towards European strategic autonomy.

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