

*A Europe in Arms:
European Defense Integration in Response to the
War in Ukraine*



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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how the European Union's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine has shaped the degree of European defense integration. Using a qualitative single-case design, it combines process tracing and discourse analysis to examine institutional developments and political narratives between 2016 and 2025. Drawing on neofunctionalism, intergovernmentalism, and postfunctionalism, the study translates competing theoretical expectations into observed empirical indicators.

The findings show that the Ukraine war acted as a catalyst for intensified defense coordination at the EU level. Initiatives such as the Strategic Compass, the Rapid Deployment Capacity, and the expansion of the European Defence Fund reflect heightened functional pressures and increased supranational agenda-setting. At the same time, member states retained decisive control, while concerns about sovereignty and politicization constrained deeper delegation of authority.

Overall, EU defense cooperation after the Russian invasion in 2022 follows a pattern of bounded supranationalism: integration advanced through crisis-induced coordination and discursive convergence but remained institutionally constrained by state interests and domestic legitimacy.

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1. Introduction

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has fundamentally reshaped the European security landscape. For the European Union, a polity that has traditionally relied on political and economic unity rather than military power, the war revived a long-standing question about Europe's capacity to provide security autonomously: can it provide real security, or will it remain dependent on the United States and NATO? Scholars have long characterized defense as one of the EU's most sovereignty-sensitive and least integrated policy domains, closely tied to national identity, democratic control, and the prerogatives of the state (Hoffmann, 1966; Hooghe & Marks, 2018; Howorth, 2019). Considering this, Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 constituted an unprecedented external shock that challenged assumptions about the limits of European defense cooperation.

In the immediate aftermath of the invasion, EU leaders adopted ambitious initiatives, including plans for a Rapid Deployment Capacity by 2025 and the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence, which "seeks to boost the EU's ability to navigate through international challenges" (Nováky, 2021). Simultaneously, national governments announced significant increases in unprecedented defense spending, most notably the €100 billion *Zeitenwende* fund announced by Chancellor Olaf Scholz (Bunde, 2022). These developments signal a potential turning point in European defense cooperation.

The war in Ukraine did not occur in an institutional vacuum. European defense integration has gained momentum after 2016, when Brexit and the election of U.S. President Donald Trump raised doubts about Europe's long-term reliance on American security guarantees. These developments revitalized debates on strategic autonomy, understood as the EU's ability to act militarily without exclusive reliance on external actors (Helwig, 2023). In this context, member states launched the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in 2017, enabling collaborative defense capability projects (PESCO Secretariat, n.d.). At the same time, the

European Commission proposed the European Defense Fund (EDF) to incentivize joint research and procurement (European Commission, 2021). Political ambitions for enhanced defense cooperation were further articulated in President Macron's Sorbonne speech in 2017 and Commission President von der Leyen's pledge to lead a "*geopolitical Commission*" (ÉLYSEE, 2017; European Commission, 2019). Despite gradual and contested progress, these developments provide a crucial baseline against which the effects of the 2022 invasion can be assessed.

From a theoretical perspective, scholars disagree on how crisis affects European integration, particularly in high-politics domains. Drawing on *neofunctionalism*, some argue that external shocks can generate functional pressures that spill over into deeper cooperation and empower supranational actors to expand their role (Schimmelfennig, 2021). In contrast, the *intergovernmentalism* perspective emphasizes that defense remains firmly under national control and that any integration reflects bargaining among member states rather than supranational entrepreneurship (Moravcsik, 1998). A third perspective, *postfunctionalism*, emphasizes the constraining role of politicization: when integration enters sovereignty-sensitive domains, identity concerns and public opinion may limit elite-driven projects and restrict further delegation to the supranational level (Hooghe & Marks, 2009).

Against this background, this thesis investigates how the Russian invasion, conceptualized as an exogenous shock, affected the degree of European defense integration. Rather than testing 'the EU's reaction' as a unitary outcome, the analysis focuses on the causal mechanisms through which the invasion shaped integration dynamics. More precisely, this thesis examines: '*How did the Russian invasion of Ukraine lead to changes in the degree of European defense integration, and through which integration mechanisms can these changes be explained?*'

The dependent variable is the degree of European defense integration following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The independent variable is the Russian invasion of Ukraine as an external

shock, while the explanatory mechanisms are derived from three established integration theories: neofunctionalism, intergovernmentalism, and postfunctionalism. These mechanisms are not EU reactions themselves, but the causal pathways through which the invasion shaped integration outcomes. To answer this question, the thesis adopts a qualitative single-case design combining process tracing and discourse analysis.

The societal relevance of this research is considerable. Defense integration directly affects the security of European citizens and the EU's credibility as a geopolitical actor in an increasingly unstable international environment. With shifting transatlantic relations, the rise of China, uncertainty over long-term U.S. engagement, and Russia's continued aggression, the EU's ability to act collectively in defense has become a pressing political issue. At the same time, citizens across Europe are witnessing unprecedented increases in defense spending, while uncertainty remains about whether these investments translate into meaningful collective capabilities. Assessing whether the Ukraine war has accelerated substantive integration or merely produced symbolic measures is therefore of immediate interest to policymakers and the broader public.

Academically, this thesis contributes to the literature on European integration by systematically applying classical integration theories to one of the EU's most sovereignty-sensitive and historically under-theorized policy domains. While European defense cooperation has existed since the 1950s, integration theory has predominantly been applied to market integration, monetary union, and crisis governance, rather than security and defense (Hoffmann, 1966; Schimmelfennig, 2018). Existing scholarship on the Common Security and Defense Policy has predominantly focused on institutional descriptions, capability gaps, or policy effectiveness, frequently treating integration as incremental and path-dependent rather than theoretically contested (Fiott, 2023; Howorth, 2019). The invasion of Ukraine challenges the assumption that defense constitutes a 'least-likely case' for integration theory (Hooghe &

Marks, 2018), by generating observable changes in cooperation under acute external pressure. While recent studies acknowledge that the war accelerated EU-level initiatives such as the Strategic Compass and the Rapid Deployment Capacity, they often remain descriptive and do not explicitly theorize the mechanisms through which crisis-driven change occurs (Schimmelfennig, 2021). This thesis addresses this gap by explicitly theorizing crisis-driven defense integration and by tracing whether change occurred through functional spillover and supranational entrepreneurship, intergovernmental bargaining, or politicization and identity-based constraints. By doing so, the thesis reconnects empirical developments in EU defense policy to broader theoretical debates on European integration and crisis-driven change. It demonstrates that classical integration theories remain analytically relevant even in high-politics domains, contributing to their refinement in contexts characterized by sovereignty sensitivity, politicization, and external security shocks.

The thesis is structured as follows. Chapter 2 develops the theoretical framework and derives expectations. Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methodology. Chapter 4 presents the empirical analysis of institutional and discursive developments between 2016 and 2025. Finally, chapter 5 discusses the findings and reflects on theoretical implications, policy relevance, and future research.

2. Theoretical Framework and Expectations

European defense integration has long been considered one of the EU's least developed policy domains. Scholars frequently describe defense as the "last frontier" of European integration, largely resistant to supranationalization due to its close connection to national sovereignty and security prerogatives (Hoffmann, 1966; Howorth, 2019). Since 2016, and particularly after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the EU has launched a series

of noteworthy initiatives, including PESCO, the European Defence Fund (EDF), and the Strategic Compass. These developments have reignited a long-standing debate in the literature: whether major crises push the EU toward deeper cooperation, or do they ultimately reinforce state control?

While this thesis does not adopt a full Historical Institutional (HI) framework, the concept of a *critical juncture* is analytically useful for identifying moments of heightened uncertainty and potential institutional change (Capoccia & Kelemen, 2007). HI highlights how long-standing policy paths may be disrupted by exogenous shocks such as wars or economic crises, which temporarily relax institutional constraints and open space for change (Pierson, 2004). However, HI offers limited explanatory leverage in explaining *why* integration deepens in some cases while stalling in others after such disruptions, as it is stronger in accounting for path dependence than for post-shock political agency and variation in outcomes. For this reason, the analysis draws on three established theories of European integration to explain the mechanisms that may shape post-crisis outcomes. These perspectives complement the descriptive use of the critical juncture concept by offering competing causal accounts of integration dynamics following a major external shock.

There exist differing scholarly viewpoints on how to understand these dynamics. While some emphasize national sovereignty and bargaining, others draw attention to the limiting role of politicization, and yet others underline the catalytic potential of crises. Neofunctionalism emphasizes functional pressures and supranational entrepreneurship. State preferences and bargaining are prioritized under intergovernmentalism. And lastly, postfunctionalism highlights politicization and identity-based constraints. This chapter reviews these theories and derives expectations for how each would interpret the trajectory of EU defense integration following the Ukraine war.

2.1 The State of the Art: EU Defense Integration

Over the past years, research on EU security and defense policy has greatly increased. More recent research shows how EU institutions are influencing foreign and security policy de facto. For instance, it has been shown that the European Commission and the European Parliament frame policy discussions, establish coalitions, and set agendas even in traditionally intergovernmental sectors (Riddervold & Rosén, 2016). At the same time, scholars point to concrete institutional innovations that seek to consolidate the European defense market and support cooperative capability developments (Giumelli & Marx, 2023; Håkansson, 2021). Instruments created since 2016, such as PESCO and other related capability projects, are often cited as evidence of increased EU-level activity in defense.

Analytically, these developments have produced two competing interpretations. One side of the literature emphasizes the emergence of strategic autonomy and a gradual shift toward EU-level action, arguing that initiatives like the EDF reflect growing political willingness to strengthen the EU's capacity to act as a security provider (Biscop, 2019). A contrasting side, often associated with intergovernmentalism, remains skeptical. From this perspective, member states continue to define preferences and retain control over outcomes, with EU defense initiatives better understood as instruments of coordination or NATO complementarity rather than EU-level integration (Bickerton et al., 2015).

The Russian invasion has further intensified this debate. According to academics like Fiott (2023) and Schimmelfennig (2021), the war sparked a strong integration movement that expedited long-discussed initiatives and offered political justification for more cooperation at the EU-level. Others note that the apparent EU momentum may be tactical, partial, or limited by politicization and enduring national sovereignty concerns, and that many restrictions are still mostly national or NATO-led (Riddervold & Newsome, 2018). In summary, most scholars agree that the years after 2016, and especially 2022, have been characterized by increased

action in EU defense, even though the depth and nature of integration are still up for debate. Nonetheless, there is still disagreement among academics over whether these changes primarily strengthen intergovernmental coordination or truly reflect supranational integration. Despite this growing body of work, relatively few studies systematically assess how competing grand theories of European integration explain defense cooperation, particularly in the post-Ukraine context. Existing research frequently concentrates on specific tools or institutional developments (e.g., PESCO or the EDF) or adopts a single theoretical lens. This gap partly reflects the long-standing treatment of defense as an exceptional policy domain in EU studies, traditionally viewed as resistant to supranational theorization. In addition, the post-2022 period is still empirically unfolding, leading much of the literature to prioritize descriptive or policy-oriented analyses over explicit theoretical comparison. Finally, neofunctionalist, intergovernmentalist, and postfunctionalist explanations are rarely placed side by side within a single post-crisis case in integration research on EU defense, which is still dispersed among theoretical traditions. To close this gap, this thesis expressly treats the war in Ukraine as a theoretical stress test for neofunctionalism, intergovernmentalism, and postfunctionalism. It then compares how each perspective explains differences in integration outcomes following a significant security shock.

2.2 Neofunctionalism: Spillovers and Crises-Driven Integration

Neofunctionalism, pioneered by Ernst Haas (1958), views integration as a process in which cooperation in one policy area produces pressures for cooperation in others: a dynamic known as a *spillover*. This logic has been used to explain how the EU's early economic cooperation expanded into a monetary union and eventually also to other sectors. In more recent work, scholars have emphasized the role of crises in accelerating this logic. Schimmelfennig (2021) argues that exogenous shocks create functional pressures that often lead to new integration,

particularly when supranational institutions frame crises as collective problems requiring EU solutions. Stone Sweet and Sandholtz (1998) similarly underline the role of Union-level entrepreneurship in translating functional pressures into institutional change.

When it comes to defense, neofunctionalism suggests that the conflict in Ukraine revealed inefficiencies in strategic coordination, capabilities development, and fragmented national procurement. Deeper integration is anticipated because of these functional demands and supranational entrepreneurship by entities like the European Commission, the High Representative, and the European External Action Service (*EEAS*). Crisis-driven integration dynamics were demonstrated by initiatives like the Strategic Compass, the Rapid Deployment Capacity, and the EDF, which were specifically portrayed as responses to the war. As a result, this section formulates the first expectation.

Expectation 1: *‘If neofunctionalism holds, the Ukraine war should lead to observable increases in EU defense integration, driven by functional pressures and supranational actors.’*

2.3 Intergovernmentalism: State Bargaining and Sovereignty

Intergovernmentalism posits that integration outcomes result primarily from bargaining between sovereign states. In intergovernmentalism, Moravcsik (1998) argues that national preferences are formed domestically and aggregated through interstate negotiation, with limited delegation to EU-level institutions. The *‘new intergovernmentalism’* further argues that post-Maastricht integration increasingly relied on coordination rather than supranational authority (Bickerton et al., 2015; Puetter, 2012). In other words, member states have developed new platforms and tools that maintain national authority while promoting collaboration, as opposed to strengthening supranational actors. This tendency is reflected in defense cooperation under the Security and Defence Policy (CSDP): programs like PESCO or the EDF

exist, but their scope and ambition are limited by sovereignty concerns and rely on agreement among member states.

From this perspective, the Ukraine war altered the strategic environment but did not automatically produce integration. National responses such as Germany's *Zeitenwende* fund or Poland's defense buildup underscore that states remain the primary actor defining integration outcomes. These insights strengthen the expectation that defense integration after 2022 will advance only where major state preferences converge. As a result, this section formulates the second expectation.

Expectation 2: *'If Intergovernmentalism holds, the Ukraine war will only produce defense integration where major member states' interests align, and integration outcomes will reflect intergovernmental bargains rather than supranational entrepreneurship.'*

2.4 Postfunctionalism: Politicization and Identity Constraints

Postfunctionalism emphasizes how politicization constrains integration. Hooghe & Marks (2018) argue that European integration is increasingly shaped by the transnational cleavage between cosmopolitan and nationalist orientations. In earlier work, Hooghe & Marks (2009) emphasize that public opinion and national identity play a crucial role in straining elite-driven integration projects when policy advances into sovereignty-sensitive areas, such as defense and migration.

Defense integration exemplifies these dynamics. Although Eurobarometer surveys show broad support for "some" EU role in defense, significant national variation persists (European Commission, 2022). National leaders frequently frame proposals for an 'EU Army' or deeper defense cooperation as threats to sovereignty, mobilizing domestic publics against centralized defense structures. Studies of politicization across other policy domains show that heightened salience does not necessarily translate into further integration. It may instead strengthen

contestation and constrain elites. For example, de Wilde (2011) and Zürn (2016) demonstrate how increasing politicization of European governance limits the scope for supranational decision-making. While Riddervold and Newsome (2018), on the other hand, show that security and defense policy remains particularly sensitive to such constraints. Similarly, Schimmelfennig (2021) finds that even during moments of crisis, politicization often blocks the functional spillovers expected by neofunctionalism. From this perspective, crises like the Russian invasion may raise the salience of defense policy but can simultaneously amplify sovereignty concerns and domestic opposition to deeper integration. As a result, this section formulates the third expectation.

Expectation 3: *‘If Postfunctionalism holds, the Ukraine war will not produce substantial new integration, as politicization and sovereignty concerns constrain supranational initiatives.’*

3. Research Design, Methodology, and Data Collection

3.1 Research Design and Approach

This thesis adopts a qualitative, explanatory single-case design to investigate how the EU’s defense integration evolved in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. A qualitative approach is appropriate given the study’s focus on causal mechanisms, interpretive frames, and institutional change rather than statistical generalization. As George and Bennett (2005) argue, qualitative case studies enable scholars to analyze “complex causal relations and contextual conditions” that cannot be reduced to variable-based correlations.

The research is structured as an embedded single-case study of the European Union between 2016 and 2025, treating the invasion of Ukraine in 2022 as an exogenous shock and critical juncture. This longitudinal design allows for comparison between pre-war and post-war

dynamics and enables the identification of continuity and change in European defense integration. The case incorporates both EU-level institutions and selected member states as sub-units of analysis.

The explanatory strategy combines process tracing and discourse analysis to uncover both *how* and *why* defense integration has changed. Process tracing is used to reconstruct causal sequences linking the Ukraine war to subsequent policy developments, while discourse analysis examines how key political actors framed defense integration and legitimacy. According to Beach and Pedersen (2019), process tracing enables researchers to “identify and test causal mechanisms” within a single case by systematically linking evidence to theoretical expectations. Bennett and Checkel (2015) similarly emphasize that combining causal-process analysis with attention to ideas and interpretation strengthens explanatory leverage in qualitative research. Together, these methods enable both causal inference and interpretive analysis.

3.2 Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

3.2.1 *Process Tracing*

Process tracing is used to identify and test causal mechanisms within a single case. Similarly, Beach & Pedersen (2019) explain that the objective is not to establish correlations but a method that reconstructs how decisions and institutional developments unfolded over time. This thesis uses process tracing to examine how the EU’s defense strategy was impacted by the Russian invasion and whether it pushed integration beyond pre-existing trajectories.

In accordance with Bennett and Checkel (2015), the analysis will start by identifying significant events, decisions, and policy initiatives that occurred between 2016 and 2025, paying special attention to whether the Ukraine war acted as a catalyst for change. The Strategic Compass, EDF regulations, PESCO annual assessments, European Council conclusions, and

official statements from the European Commission and the High Representative are examples of EU policy documents that make up the empirical material. To recreate decision-making sequences and pinpoint instances where new integration dynamics, such as the development of new tools, an extension of coordination mechanisms, or improved roles for supranational actors, emerged, these papers are examined chronologically.

3.2.2 *Discourse Analysis*

While process tracing reconstructs causal pathways, discourse analysis examines the interpretive dimension of EU defense integration. It focuses on *how* political actors frame defense cooperation, attribute meaning to institutional developments, and legitimize or contest EU-level action. Schmidt (2008) emphasizes that discourse analysis is essential for understanding how “ideas and communicative practices” shape institutional outcomes. Hansen (2006), at the same time, shows how security discourse construct political possibilities and boundaries for action.

Official speeches, press releases, and policy statements by national leaders from important member states such as Germany, France, and Poland, and EU leaders such as Ursula von der Leyen and Josep Borrell, are subjected to the discourse analysis. To ensure a broad and robust empirical basis, the analysis draws on 135 primary documents. From this corpus, 385 analytically relevant text fragments were identified and coded. Coding focused on recurring themes such as strategic autonomy, European sovereignty, NATO complementarity, crisis framing, and references to national control or limits to integration. To illustrate the coding process, consider the following example: in her 2022 State of the Union address, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen stated that “the time has come for Europe to take its security into its own hands”. This fragment was coded under the themes of *strategic autonomy* and *crisis framing*, as it explicitly links the war in Ukraine to the necessity of collective European

action. Other passages were systematically coded across the corpus to identify recurring justifications, contestation, and limits to EU-level defense cooperation.

A comparable breadth applies to the process-tracing analysis. In addition to about 40 national policy documents and parliamentary discussions, this section of the study looks at over 80 EU institutional documents, such as the Strategic Compass, PESCO yearly reviews, EDF regulations, and decisions from the European Council. When combined, these resources enable methodological triangulation between discursive framing and institutional developments. The size and diversity of the empirical material provide a solid basis for identifying causal mechanisms and ensure that the conclusions are grounded in a robust and transparent empirical foundation. The analysis follows the contextual approach outlined by Jørgensen and Philips (2002), linking language use to institutional and political settings.

3.3 Data Sources and Case Boundaries

3.3.1 *Case Boundaries and Unit of Analysis*

The EU, as a political structure involved in defense and security, serves as the analytical unit. Selected member states, such as France, Germany, and Poland, and EU-level organizations such as the European Commission, the EEAS, High Representative, and European Council are examined as analytical sub-units. Additionally, specific examples from other EU member states will occasionally be discussed. According to the theoretical framework, this enables a methodical comparison of supranational and intergovernmental dynamics.

The case is bounded both substantively (EU defense policy) and chronologically (2016-2025). Two significant factors support the chosen timeline: the expected realization of the Rapid Deployment Capacity by 2025 and the adoption of the EU Global Strategy in 2016, which rekindled aspirations for strategic autonomy. The analysis primarily concentrates on EU

member states and institutions that have a significant influence on the Common Security and Defence Policy.

3.3.2 Primary Data Sources

The analysis draws on two types of primary data: policy documents and political discourse. First, formal changes in defense integration are mapped through process tracing using EU policy and institutional documents. The EU Global Strategy, the Implementation Plan on Security and Defence, the Strategic Compass, the EDF Regulation, and Annual PESCO Implementation Reports are examples of official rules, strategic frameworks, and Council conclusions. To track institutional developments, decisions, and skills that demonstrate the extent of integration, these papers are used in the process tracing analysis.

Second, the discourse analysis examines speeches, interviews, and press releases by EU-level actors (e.g., Ursula von der Leyen, Josep Borrell) and national leaders (e.g., Emmanuel Macron, Olaf Scholz). Sources include official EU websites, national government communications (e.g., Bundesregierung, Elysée, Polish Chancellery), and parliamentary debates and interviews published in media outlets such as Politico, Euractiv, and the Financial Times.

3.3.3 Secondary Data Sources

Secondary sources complement the primary materials and provide contextual support. These include academic literature, policy reports, and public opinion data. Eurobarometer surveys are used to assess public attitudes toward defense integration, supporting the postfunctionalist analysis of politicization. In addition, reports from institutions such as the European Union Institute for Security Studies and the European Defence Agency provide technical insights into the implementation of EU defense initiatives.

3.3.4 Data Management and Analytical Strategy

For process tracing, a chronological timeline records key defense initiatives, involved actors, and institutional outcomes. The discourse analysis is guided by a thematic coding scheme that captures dominant frames and shifts in justification before and after 2022. The combination of causal and interpretive analysis enhances transparency and allows the two methods to reinforce one another. The operationalization of variables and indicators is specified in the following section.

3.4 Operationalization of Variables and Indicators

Building on the theoretical framework, this section translates the three theoretical expectations into observable and measurable indicators. The dependent variable is the degree of EU defense integration, understood as the extent to which the EU develops shared institutions, policies, and coordination mechanisms in security and defense. Observable indicators include the creation of new instruments, increased EU-level coordination, and convergence in member-state positions. The independent variables derive from three theoretical perspectives: neofunctionalism, intergovernmentalism, and postfunctionalism.

To ensure that each theoretical expectation can be empirically assessed, the variables were operationalized into specific, observable indicators. These indicators were chosen to make abstract mechanisms, such as ‘functional pressures’ or ‘sovereignty discourse’, traceable in concrete documents and speeches. The table below summarizes how each theoretical lens translates into measurable empirical criteria.

Theoretical Approach and Expectations	Independent Variable(s)	Observable Indicator(s)	Data Sources
Neofunctionalism corresponding with expectation 1	Functional pressures; supranational entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explicit references to functional pressures in EU documents (e.g., “European solutions,” “collective capacity”). - Evidence of increased EU-level funding or authority (EDF, RDC). - Supranational leaders framing Ukraine as justification for more EU defense cooperation. 	Strategic Compass; EDF; Commission communications; HR/VP speeches; PESCO reports
Intergovernmentalism – corresponding with expectation 2	State preference; bargaining outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intergovernmental compromise language (e.g., “balanced contributions,” “national flexibility”). - Divergent national framing (e.g., “European pillar of NATO”). - Summit conclusions emphasizing coordination rather than delegation. 	European Council conclusions; national strategy papers (FR/DE/PL); parliamentary debates
Postfunctionalism – corresponding with expectation 3	Politicization: sovereignty claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - References to sovereignty, identity, or resistance to supranational defense (e.g., “EU Army” framed as threat). - Media and parliamentary debates emphasizing national control. - Eurobarometer evidence of cross-national divergence in defense integration support. 	Eurobarometer; national speeches; media interviews; parliamentary debates
Dependent Variable: EU Defense Integration	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number and scope of defense initiatives adopted (PESCO projects, EDF lines). - Degree of supranational institutionalization (Commission role, legal frameworks). - Operational capacity milestones (e.g., RDC progress). 	PESCO annual reviews; EDF regulations; RDC progress reports; Council/Commission documents

Table 1: Operationalization of Variables and Indicators

This operationalization clarifies how discourse analysis captures recurring frames such as sovereignty, politicization, and solidarity, and how process tracing links these discursive patterns to concrete institutional developments. Indicators related to policy instruments, coordination mechanisms, and actor roles allow assessment of whether the Ukraine war constituted a critical trigger for integration or reinforced existing trajectories. Together, these indicators enable systematic empirical testing of the three theoretical expectations.

3.5 Limitations

This qualitative research design prioritizes depth and mechanism-based explanation but entails limitations. First, causal inference in process tracing remains interpretive: the identification of mechanisms relies on plausibility rather than definitive proof (Beach & Pedersen, 2019). Second, discourse analysis captures public framing but provides limited insight into confidential bargaining processes. Third, the study's focus on EU defense integration after the Ukraine war limits generalizability to other policy domains. Finally, temporal constraints mean that some initiatives, such as the full implementation of the Rapid Deployment Capacity, cannot yet be fully assessed. Despite these limitations, the design is well suited to the thesis's exploratory objective of identifying how crisis-driven integration unfolds in a sovereignty-sensitive domain.

4. Analysis

4.1 Introduction to the Analysis

This chapter presents the empirical analysis of how the EU's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine shaped the trajectory of defense integration between 2016 and 2025. The chapter assesses whether the Ukraine war constituted a causal trigger for deeper defense integration or whether post-2022 developments primarily reflect the acceleration of pre-existing trends. It does so by reconstructing key policy developments and examining how the EU institutions and member-state leaders framed defense cooperation in public discourse.

The empirical findings are presented by an analytical method rather than being directly structured around the theoretical expectations. This choice reflects the dual-method research design adopted in this thesis. Presenting the findings per method allows each analytical lens to be applied systematically before the results are integrated and assessed comparatively across

the three theoretical perspectives in Section 4.4. In this way, the research question and theoretical framework remain the organizing principles of the analysis, while the method-based structure ensures clarity, traceability, and verifiability of the empirical findings.

The next section applies process tracing to reconstruct the sequence of EU defense initiatives from 2016 to 2025, identifying how the war in Ukraine shaped the pace and character of institutional change.

4.2 Process Tracing; Institutional Developments and Causal Dynamics

4.2.1 Pre-Ukraine Developments: 2016-2021

The foundations of today's European defense policy were laid well before the invasion of Ukraine. Following the 2016 EU Global Strategy, High Representative Federica Mogherini promoted a 'Security and Defence Implementation Plan' that initiated several structural instruments (European Union External Action, 2018). These included PESCO, the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), and the EDF.

With 25 participating member states, PESCO was established in 2017 and forms legally binding agreements for cooperative capability development and operational preparedness (Council of the European Union, 2017). Despite being officially intergovernmental, it established regular coordination and peer review processes under the direction of the European Defence Agency (EDA). Also launched in 2017, the EDF provided supranational funding for cooperative defense technology research and development (European Parliament, 2021). The Commission was given unprecedented involvement in a field that has historically been the purview of national governments by dedicating a portion of the EU budget to defense.

Rather than a drastic change, these developments already showed a steady deepening of integration, indicating moderate functional spillover. However, national vetoes and

overlapping NATO obligations continued to restrict defense integration between 2016 and 2021.

4.2.2 The Ukraine Invasion as Catalyst: 2022-2025

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 marked a potential critical juncture for European defense cooperation. The EU adopted the Strategic Compass in a matter of months, clearly portraying the conflict as a watershed that necessitated greater unity (Council of the European Union, 2022). Additionally, it called for a "quantum leap" in defense integration and unveiled the EU Rapid Deployment Capacity (RDC), a 5000-man force that will be operational by 2025.

Empirically, several developments indicate acceleration. Specifically, institutional entrepreneurship, budgetary expansion, and strategic framing. First, through institutional entrepreneurship, the European Commission and the EEAS took the lead in coordinating military assistance and procurement through the European Peace Facility and the Joint Task Force on Defence Procurement. Second, in response to functional demands for pooled resources, the EDF budget was expanded to €8 billion for 2021-2027 (European Parliament, 2021), reflecting functional pressures for pooled resources. Lastly, through strategic framing, supranational leaders explicitly linked the crisis to deeper integration. Borrell argued that Europe must "learn the language of power" (Borrell, 2024), while von der Leyen urged that "Europe must take security into its own hands" (Von Der Leyen, 2022).

These actions correspond with neofunctionalism expectations that crises produce functional pressures that empower supranational institutions.

4.2.3 Intergovernmental Constraints and State Bargaining

Intergovernmental dynamics continued to be crucial despite the momentum. Through bargaining and domestic initiatives, major member states dictated the scope of integration:

Germany's *Zeitenwende*, France's Strategic Autonomy agenda, and Eastern member states emphasize NATO primacy.

For instance, in February 2022, Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced the *Zeitenwende* Fund, a €100 billion defense fund, signaling a national rearmament strategy rather than EU delegation (The Federal Government, 2022). Scholz emphasizes national rearmament and states that Germany would "strengthen our own Bundeswehr." President Macron continued to frame European defense as compatible with but distinct from NATO, rooted in national leadership (ÉLYSEE, 2017). Poland and the Baltic States emphasized NATO's primacy, favoring intergovernmental coordination over supranational integration (Kvasha, 2025).

These dynamics align with intergovernmental expectations: integration advances only where state preferences converge, and the Strategic Compass itself contains compromising language such as "voluntary participation" and "NATO complementarity."

4.2.4 Politicization and Sovereignty Discourses

Politicization simultaneously constrained integration. Several national leaders invoked sovereignty when discussing deeper EU defense structures. In neutral countries such as Austria and Ireland, political debates repeatedly emphasized that military neutrality remains a core element of national security policy. One of the foundations of Austria's security policy specifically is the "Active Neutrality Policy and European Solidarity". Specifically, the document states "Austria's security policy is defined by its military neutrality and its membership of the EU," additionally a quote from Federal Chancellor Karl Nehammer in the document states that their security strategy "considers the need to protect our national interest and safeguard the freedom and rights of our citizens" (Austrian Federal Chancellery, 2024). In Poland and Hungary, similar sovereignty concerns were articulated more directly. The Polish prime minister declared 2026 to be a "year of Polish acceleration, " pledging to build "the strongest army in Europe" (Pala, 2026). Hungary, on the other hand, sees proposals for

supranational defense integration as unrealistic and politically unacceptable. Balázs Orbán, the Hungarian prime minister's political director, states "strengthening European defense must in no way mean drowning in debt through joint loans, nor must it mean providing arms for Ukraine or violating the sovereignty of member states," signaling that the Orbán government is unlikely to simply cooperate with its partners in the EU (Takács, 2025). These statements illustrate how politicization and national identity narratives constrained the scope for deeper supranational integration despite heightened security pressures.

Eurobarometer 97 published in the summer of 2022 revealed broad public support for European cooperation but persistent national variation, particularly there is lower enthusiasm in states such as Greece, Estonia, Cyprus, and Slovenia (European Commission, 2022). In domestic debates, terms such as 'strategic autonomy' or 'strategic culture' were used both to justify integration and to resist it.

These findings support postfunctionalist predictions that sovereignty-sensitive areas activate identity-based resistance.

4.2.5 Interim Assessment

Overall, process tracing indicates that the Ukraine war accelerated existing integration dynamics without fundamentally transforming the governance mode of EU defense. The crisis functioned as a catalyst within an intergovernmentally bounded framework.

4.3 Discourse Analysis: Framing EU Defense After Ukraine

4.3.1 From Strategic Autonomy to Collective Security

Prior to 2022, European leaders commonly used the term 'strategic autonomy' to define the EU's long-term goal to reduce dependency on external actors in security and defense. This concept emphasized capability development, resilience, and the ability to act independently

when necessary. Prior to the invasion, strategic autonomy was usually presented as a gradual, long-term objective rather than an urgent necessity in official EU documents and speeches.

The discursive focus shifted significantly towards shared responsibility, urgency, and collective security during Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, declared in her 2022 State of the Union speech that "this is the moment for Europe to step up and take responsibility for its own security," clearly connecting the war to the necessity of more robust defense action at the EU-level (Von Der Leyen, 2022). Similarly, High Representative Josep Borrell called the invasion "Europe's geopolitical awakening," and contended that the EU needs to take a "quantum leap in its capacity to act" in terms of security and defense (European Union External Action, 2022).

This rhetorical shift supports the interpretation of the Ukraine war as a focusing event on the sense described by Bion et al. (2009): an external shock that concentrates political attention, redefines priorities, and opens a window for legitimizing policy change. Such framing is considered supranational entrepreneurship from a neofunctionalist perspective. EU-level actors attempted to normalize a more robust supranational role in defense cooperation by portraying the crisis as a common European problem demanding collective solutions. Importantly, this shift does not imply full discursive consensus, but it does mark a clear departure from pre-2022 language centered primarily on autonomy as a distant objective.

4.3.2 National Framing and Intergovernmental Discourse

Despite a partial convergence in supranational rhetorical, national leaders continued to frame European defense primarily through national responsibility and alliance commitments. The empirical material shows that references to EU-level cooperation were consistently embedded within national security narratives rather than presented as a transfer of authority.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz stressed national rearmament in his February 2022 Bundestag speech, saying that Germany would "invest more than ever before in the strength of

our own Bundeswehr” (The Federal Government, 2022). Scholz recognized the value of European cooperation, but he presented it as a supplement to national capability development rather than as a supranational delegation. The importance of national control was reaffirmed in following cabinet pronouncements that emphasized Germany’s obligation to satisfy NATO capabilities targets and fortify bilateral defense partnerships.

A separate but no less state-centered logic was used in French speech. Although he frequently used terms like ‘European sovereignty’ and ‘strategic autonomy,’ President Emmanuel Macron framed these ideas in terms of strong member state leadership rather than supranational authority. Macron positioned France as a driving force behind EU defense measures while maintaining a strong intergovernmental emphasis in his Sorbonne speech and subsequent speeches, arguing that “Europe must be able to decide for itself” (ÉLYSEE, 2017). Thus, national power was portrayed as being multiplied by EU cooperation rather than being replaced.

In contrast, Eastern member states largely avoided the term ‘European defense’ in their official discourse. Polish former President Andrzej Duda emphasized deterrence and transatlantic solidarity, stating that “NATO remains the cornerstone of our security” and warned against duplicating alliance structures (Duda, 2023). Similar formulations recur across speeches and government statements from other Eastern states, where EU defense initiatives are welcomed only insofar as they reinforce NATO capabilities.

These discursive patterns align closely with intergovernmental expectations. Leaders publicly endorse cooperation; they adapt European rhetoric to domestic strategic cultures and alliance preferences. As a result, integration advances selectively and conditionally, shaped by converging national interests rather than supranational authority.

4.3.3 Politicization and the Sovereignty Frame

Postfunctionalism predicts that integration in sovereignty-sensitive domains triggers politicization and identity-based contestation that constrain supranational advances (Hooghe & Marks, 2009). The discourse analysis provides clear empirical support for this mechanism in the field of EU defense.

Political elites in several member states specifically used sovereignty to restrict the extent of European collaboration. While endorsing specific EU measures like cooperative procurement or training missions, authorities in neutral nations like Austria and Ireland frequently stressed in parliamentary discussions that military neutrality remains the cornerstone of national defense strategy. These remarks demonstrate a careful balancing act: cooperation is framed as acceptable only insofar as it does not challenge constitutional or identity-based constraints.

The concept of an ‘EU army’ was specifically opposed in more Eurosceptic settings. Such proposals, according to, for instance, the Hungarian government leaders, are both strategically useless and politically unfeasible. Additionally, Polish officials cautioned that national sovereignty could be threatened by command structures at the EU-level. These stances considerably reduced the rhetorical space for deeper integration, even while they did not exclude participation in certain EU instruments.

Public opinion data reinforce these findings. Eurobarometer 97 (2022) reported that more than half of Europeans (55%) are “satisfied with the response of the Russian invasion of Ukraine by their national government.” However, national variation remains. From 78% in both Portugal and Poland, who are satisfied, to 59% in Greece, who are dissatisfied. Such variation, mirrored in domestic media debates, illustrates how national identity narratives mediate support for integration.

Across the empirical material, sovereignty emerges as a central framing device. Even when leaders support EU-level action, they often justify it as strengthening national sovereignty rather than transferring it. As de Wilde (2011) argues, high politicization encourages elites to depoliticize integration by rhetorically re-nationalizing it. This dynamic is clearly visible in EU defense discourse and helps explain why institutional advances have not been accompanied by deeper supranational authority. The ‘sovereignty frame’ thus remains central: even when leaders support stronger cooperation, they often justify it as enhancing national sovereignty rather than delegating it. This rhetorical balancing limits the transformative potential of supranational initiatives and sustains the intergovernmental character of EU defense policy.

4.3.4 Discursive Mechanisms and Implications

The discursive evidence indicates a dual dynamic. At the supranational level, crisis framing strengthened collective narratives. At the national level, sovereignty and identity concerns constrained the legitimacy of deeper integration. The Ukraine war thus produced rhetorical Europeanization without full discursive convergence. Integration advanced symbolically and procedurally but remains grounded in nationally framed legitimacy.

4.4 Comparative Discussion Across Theories

By evaluating the explanatory capacity of neofunctionalism, intergovernmentalism, and postfunctionalism, considering the institutional and discursive changes that followed the invasion of Ukraine, this section synthesizes the empirical findings. Applying the theoretical framework, the analysis assesses whether and how the observed developments correspond to the integration mechanisms predicted by each theory. Rather than treating these theoretical perspectives in isolation, the findings demonstrate that multiple integration mechanisms operated concurrently and interacted across levels of governance, shaping the trajectory of European defense integration in commentary and constraining ways.

4.4.1 Evidence of Functional Pressures and Supranational Entrepreneurship

Neofunctionalism theory, captured in expectation 1, expects crises to generate functional pressures that spill over into new areas of cooperation, facilitated by supranational actors who frame collective problems and propose institutional solutions (Hooghe & Marks, 2019; Niemann & Ioannou, 2015). The empirical analysis provides substantial support for this mechanism.

Institutionally, functional pressures brought on by the crisis are reflected in the acceleration of EU defense initiatives after 2022. In response to specific capability gaps revealed by the war, the Strategic Compass was adopted, the EDF was expanded, the European Peace Facility was activated, and the Rapid Deployment Capacity was launched. The European Commission and the EEAS were clearly involved in agenda-setting, particularly when it came to coordinating military assistance to Ukraine and encouraging joint procurement mechanisms. These developments serve as an example of supranational entrepreneurship in translating security externalities into EU-level policy responses.

The discourse analysis reinforces this interpretation. Supranational leaders consistently framed the war as a shared European challenge requiring collective action. Statements by Von der Leyen and Borrell consistently framed the war as an “European moment” demanding collective action. They emphasized urgency, interdependence, and collective responsibility, constructing the crisis as a moment that necessitated deeper coordination. For instance, Commission President von der Leyen stated that “This is the Europe that we must protect at all costs. And we must do that together” in response to the war (Von der Leyen, 2025), while High Representative Borrell framed the invasion as a “wake-up call to a new reality: war” (European External Action Service, 2023). This reflects what Niemann and Ioannou (2015) term functional spillover through discursive legitimation, the rhetorical construction of interdependence to justify integration. This corresponds to neofunctionalist expectations that

discursive framing helps legitimize spillover by redefining national problems as European ones.

Nevertheless, the empirical evidence also suggests that spillover remained functionally bounded. Supranational entrepreneurship expanded, while implementation and decision-making remained tightly linked to member-state approval.

4.4.2 *Intergovernmental Bargaining and Conditional Cooperation*

From an intergovernmentalist perspective, captured in expectation 2, integration advances when member-state preferences converge and when governments perceive cooperation as serving national interests (Moravcsik, 1998). The findings strongly support this logic.

Despite increased EU-level activity, key decisions remained firmly under national control. Significant defense initiatives, such as the Strategic Compass and the Rapid Deployment Capacity, were approved by unanimous consent and specifically highlight voluntary participation and NATO complementarity. The scope and limits of EU defense cooperation were defined by national plans, including Germany's *Zeitenwende*, France's leadership-driven approach to strategic autonomy, and Eastern member states' insistence on NATO priority. Key initiatives required member-state consensus, and national strategies shaped the trajectory.

Empirically, the *Zeitenwende* policy illustrates conditional integration: Germany's decision to increase defense spending dramatically, but did so primarily through national channels, subsequently coordinating selected investments within EU frameworks. Similarly, Eastern member states supported EU initiatives that reinforce deterrence against Russia but resisted any steps that could weaken transatlantic ties. These patterns indicate that EU defense integration advanced through coordination and alignment rather than delegation.

As a result, although supranational bodies influenced the policy agenda, they did so within bounds that were agreed upon by governments. Integration advanced through coordination, not constitutional transfer of power. Intergovernmental bargaining thus structured the institutional

outcomes, ensuring that integration remained incremental, reversible, and embedded within national sovereignty.

4.4.3 Politicization and Identity Constraints

Postfunctionalism, captured in expectation 3, posits that integration is increasingly constrained by politicization and national identity cleavages (Hooghe & Marks, 2018). The empirical findings strongly corroborate this mechanism.

Across multiple member states, defense integration was framed through sovereignty narratives that limited the legitimacy of supranational authority. In neutral countries, political discourse consistently reaffirmed constitutional neutrality. In, for instance, Hungary, elite discourse explicitly rejected the idea of an EU army. Public opinion data, retrieved from the Eurobarometer survey, further reveal significant cross-national variation in support for EU-level defense action, indicating that domestic identity narratives mediate citizens' acceptance of integration.

These discursive constraints shaped elite behavior. Even when leaders supported deeper cooperation, they carefully framed EU initiatives as enhancing national sovereignty rather than transferring it. The variation in public support, ranging from near-unanimity in Western European states to skepticism in neutral or Eastern states (European Commission, 2022), illustrates the enduring salience of national identity. As de Wilde (2011) argues, high politicization leads to a 'freezing' effect, where elite actors adjust rhetoric to avoid domestic backlash. This dynamic was visible in member-state communications. Postfunctionalism thus helps explain why institutional advances were not matched by discursive convergence or constitutional transfer of authority.

4.4.4 A Hybrid Pattern of Integration

Overall, the findings suggest that the post-Ukraine trajectory of EU defense integration cannot be fully explained by a single theory. Instead, it reflects a *hybrid model of crisis-induced*

coordination. From a neofunctionalism perspective, the war provided functional pressures and political opportunity structures that facilitated new initiatives. From an intergovernmentalist perspective, member states retained decisive control over the scope and implementation of those initiatives. Lastly, from a postfunctionalist perspective, domestic politicization and sovereignty concerns limited the legitimacy of transferring further competences to the supranational level.

This hybrid pattern aligns with what one could describe as constrained integration. It advances through rhetorical convergence and functional adaptation but remains institutionally bounded by state sovereignty. Defense policy after 2022 represents a form of bounded supranationalism: integration occurs through joint action and supranational coordination, yet under persistent national control.

Ultimately, the EU's capacity to act collectively in defense has improved procedurally but not constitutionally. The Ukraine war acted as a catalyst, but with parameters defined by national interests and domestic legitimacy.

5. Conclusion

This thesis is set out to answer the research question: *'How did the Russian invasion of Ukraine lead to changes in the degree of European defense integration, and through which integration mechanisms can these changes be explained?'*

European defense integration has long been constrained by national sovereignty and limited supranational authority. The Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 constituted a major external shock that tested whether crises could catalyze integration in one of the EU's most sovereignty-sensitive domains. This thesis examined both institutional developments and

political framings between 2016 and 2025, using process tracing and discourse analysis, to assess how defense cooperation evolved after the invasion.

5.1 The Main Findings

The analysis shows that the Ukraine war acted as a catalyst for intensified defense coordination at the EU level. Initiatives such as the Strategic Compass, the Rapid Deployment Capacity, and the expansion of the EDF indicate that functional pressures generate tangible policy responses and enhanced supranational agenda-setting.

At the same time, these developments did not result in supranational integration. Member states retained decisive control over both the formulation and implementation of defense initiatives. National strategies demonstrate that engagement with EU frameworks was driven by national preference formation rather than delegation of authority.

Politicization and identity-based concerns continued to constrain integration. Although European unity was emphasized rhetorically, domestic debates frequently reaffirmed sovereignty and NATO's primacy, limiting the legitimacy of deeper supranational defense integration.

In sum, the invasion of Ukraine led to a higher degree of European defense coordination, driven by crisis-induced functional pressures and supranational agenda-setting, but constrained by intergovernmental control and domestic politicization, resulting in integration by coordination rather than delegation.

5.2 Theoretical Reflections

The findings demonstrate that no single integration theory fully explains post-Ukraine defense integration. Instead, the EU's response reflects a *hybrid pattern of crisis-induced coordination* rather than a linear move toward supranationalism.

First, neofunctionalism correctly anticipated that crises generate functional pressures that can stimulate deeper cooperation. As theorized by Schimmelfennig (2021) and Niemann & Ioannou (2015), the Ukraine war created political opportunity structures that enabled supranational actors to expand their agenda-setting role. The empirical analysis confirms this expectation: the European Commission and EEAS acted as policy entrepreneurs by framing the war as a shared European security challenge and by advancing coordinated responses. This also aligns with Hooghe & Marks' (2019) argument that discursive legitimation can facilitate spillover under conditions of high interdependence.

However, intergovernmentalism more accurately captures the limits of this process. Consistent with classic and new intergovernmentalism accounts (Hoffmann, 1966; Howorth, 2019; Riddervold & Newsome, 2018), the findings show that member states remained the primary veto players in defense integration. Core developments were the product of negotiated compromises among governments rather than autonomous supranational authority. This confirms earlier claims made by the scholars Howorth (2019) and Riddervold and Newsome (2018) that, especially in sovereignty-sensitive policy fields such as defense, states remain the primary veto players and arbiters of integration outcomes. Ultimately, defense integration advanced only where national interests overlapped and remained intergovernmentally controlled.

Finally, postfunctionalism offers crucial insights into the persistent constraints of integration. As anticipated by Hooghe & Marks (2009, 2018), defense integration activated sovereignty concerns, identity narratives, and politicization at the domestic level. The observed variation in public support, combined with sovereignty-laden discourse across member states, mirrors findings by de Wilde (2011) and Zürn (2016) that heightened politicization limits elite-driven integration in high-salience areas. Even during a major security crisis, domestic legitimacy concerns set clear boundaries to supranational ambition.

Taken together, the results point to integration by coordination rather than delegation, a form of crisis-induced intergovernmental adaptation rather than a supranational leap. The overall pattern aligns with *bounded supranationalism* or *constrained integration*: supranational actors gained agenda-setting influence, but authority remained conditional on intergovernmental consent and domestic acceptance.

By demonstrating how these mechanisms interact rather than operate in isolation, this thesis refines integration theory by showing that crisis-driven integration in high-politics domains unfolds through layered and conditional processes. In this sense, the findings suggest that classical integration theories remain analytically valuable, but only when applied in a mechanism-sensitive and context-aware manner.

5.3 Empirical and Policy Implications

Empirically, this thesis shows that the EU's defense cooperation has expanded procedurally but not constitutionally. Supranational actors increasingly facilitate coordination, while member states retain control over strategic decisions.

For policymakers, the findings suggest that progress in EU defense integration is most feasible through functional cooperation such as joint procurement, capability development, and logistical coordination rather than institutional redesign. Crisis framing can accelerate action, but durable integration depends on national buy-in and domestic legitimacy.

5.4 The Broader Significance and Future Research

More broadly, post-Ukraine defense integration illustrates both the EU's adaptive capacity and its structural limits. While the war elevated defense to a central position on the EU's agenda, integration advanced within clear sovereignty boundaries. Even so, this represents a

significant departure from earlier inertia and suggests that defense is no longer the EU's immutable 'last frontier' of integration.

This study has several strengths and limitations. The research enhances internal validity through triangulation of institutional developments and political framing. At the same time, causal inference remains interpretive, and the qualitative design limits generalizability beyond the security and defense domain. Reliability was strengthened through systematic coding and transparent source selection.

Future studies may expand the paradigm to additional crisis-driven policy domains, add quantitative measures of defense integration to this qualitative approach, or investigate the influence of politicization and public opinion in member states. Understanding how functional pressures and legitimacy limitations interact to shape the EU's changing security architectures might be enhanced by such studies.

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