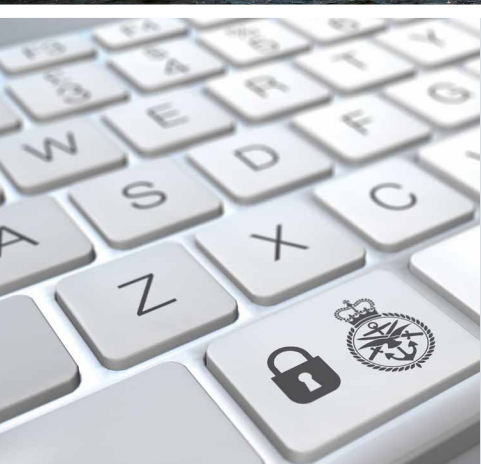




EUROPE



Defence and security after Brexit

Understanding the possible implications of the UK's decision to leave the EU

Overview report

James Black, Alex Hall, Kate Cox, Marta Kepe, Erik Silfversten



For more information on this publication, visit www.rand.org/t/RR1786z1

Published by the RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif., and Cambridge, UK

© Copyright 2017 RAND Corporation

RAND® is a registered trademark.

*Cover: HMS Vanguard (MoD/Crown copyright 2014); Royal Air Force Eurofighter Typhoon FGR4,
A Chinook Helicopter of 18 Squadron, HMS Defender (MoD/Crown copyright 2016); Cyber Security at MoD
(Crown copyright); Brexit (donfiore/fotolia); Heavily armed Police in London (davidfiStock)*

RAND Europe is a not-for-profit organisation whose mission is to help improve policy and decisionmaking through research and analysis. RAND's publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors.

Limited Print and Electronic Distribution Rights

This document and trademark(s) contained herein are protected by law. This representation of RAND intellectual property is provided for noncommercial use only. Unauthorized posting of this publication online is prohibited. Permission is given to duplicate this document for personal use only, as long as it is unaltered and complete. Permission is required from RAND to reproduce, or reuse in another form, any of its research documents for commercial use. For information on reprint and linking permissions, please visit www.rand.org/pubs/permissions.

Support RAND

Make a tax-deductible charitable contribution at
www.rand.org/giving/contribute

www.rand.org

www.rand.org/randeurope

Preface

This RAND study examines the potential defence and security implications of the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union ('Brexit'). Specifically, it seeks to identify those policy areas, strategic concerns or military capabilities that might be most affected, as well as to explore and define the spectrum of possible outcomes in each area. The goal is to help policymakers both inside and outside the UK to understand the key questions provoked by Brexit, and thus to inform how defence and security actors begin to plan for, mitigate and address these uncertainties as the UK begins negotiations to leave the European Union.

This RAND study comprises three publications:

- This overview report, which outlines the principal findings of the study.
- The associated compendium report, which provides the greatest level of detail on the analysis conducted.
- A standalone international perspectives report, which provides a snapshot of selected international perspectives on Brexit following the June 2016 referendum.

Funding for this research and analysis was provided by the independent research and

development provisions of RAND's contracts for the operation of its U.S. Department of Defense federally funded research and development centers (FFRDCs).

The study was conducted by the Defence, Security and Infrastructure programme at RAND Europe—a European subsidiary of the RAND Corporation—and the International Security and Defense Policy Center within the RAND National Defense Research Institute, an FFRDC operated at RAND's U.S. locations. RAND Europe is a not-for-profit organisation whose mission is to help improve policy and decisionmaking through research and analysis.

For more information, please contact:

Alex Hall
Research Group Director
Defence, Security and Infrastructure
RAND Europe
Westbrook Centre
Milton Road
Cambridge
CB4 1YG
United Kingdom

Tel. +44 1223 353 329
alexh@rand.org

Table of contents

Preface	i
1. Introduction	1
1.1. <i>Study context</i>	1
1.2. <i>The US presidential election and Brexit</i>	6
1.3. <i>Structure of the report</i>	7
2. Defence spending, research and industry	9
3. The UK's conventional defence capabilities and multinational defence commitments (EU CSDP and NATO)	11
4. Scotland and the UK nuclear deterrent	13
5. Migration, border security and overseas territories	15
6. Counterterrorism, organised crime, cyber and resilience	17
7. Emerging themes and reflections	19
7.1. <i>Context of deep uncertainty</i>	19
7.2. <i>Implications of Brexit for defence and security in the UK and EU</i>	19
7.3. <i>Knock-on effects for cooperation with non-EU institutions and allies</i>	24
8. Future directions for policymakers and researchers	27
8.1. <i>Integrating defence and security into the wider Brexit negotiations</i>	27
8.2. <i>Towards a framework for strategic decisionmaking in the context of deep uncertainty and lessons learned for 'the next Brexit'</i>	31
Annex: References and sources	35

1. Introduction

On 23 June 2016, the United Kingdom held an historic in-out referendum on its membership of the European Union. The vote followed a tense, closely fought and often fractious campaign. In February, the UK Prime Minister David Cameron had secured a renegotiated settlement with other EU leaders in Brussels. The deal promised curbs on migrant access to welfare, increased safeguards for non-Eurozone economies, a commitment to cut EU 'red tape', and a British opt-out from Europe's commitment to 'ever closer union'.¹

On this basis, the UK Government officially joined with opposition parties – most notably Labour, the Liberal Democrats, and regional parties like the Scottish Nationalists or Plaid Cymru – in campaigning to remain in a reformed EU. In reality, however, the referendum pitted government ministers, party colleagues and even family members against each other, reflecting long-standing divisions at the heart of British

society over the country's identity, role and place in Europe.

On polling day, the UK electorate defied the predictions of pollsters, financial markets and Britain's foreign allies by voting to leave the EU, with a majority of 51.9 per cent and turnout of 72.2 per cent.² The Leave campaign heralded this as Britain's 'Independence Day'. For Remain proponents, by contrast, the unexpected result represented 'the world turned upside down'.³

1.1. Study context

1.1.1. Britain's referendum vote has precipitated a period of deep uncertainty

The immediate aftermath of the UK's referendum vote has been one of economic and political upheaval.⁴ Financial markets underwent a sharp correction, having expected a Remain win.

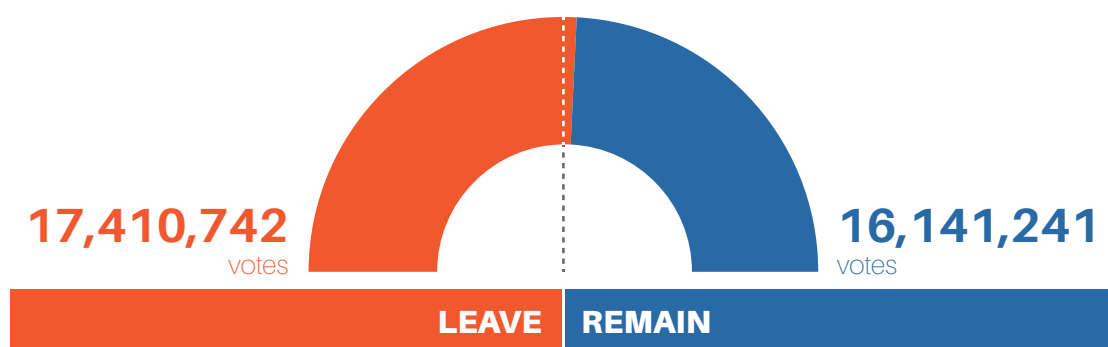


Figure 1.1. National results of UK referendum on membership of the EU

- 1 BBC News (2016e). A full bibliography and reference list is provided in the main report, of which this is an overview.
- 2 Turnout was 72.2 per cent according to the Electoral Commission (2016).
- 3 Staunton and Lynch (2016)
- 4 Besch and Black (2016)

The FTSE 100 – representing London's most valuable listed companies – lost £120 billion overnight, with the value of sterling dropping to a 31-year low against the US dollar.⁵ The Bank of England announced a cut in interest rates to a record low of 0.25 per cent and made substantial cuts to its forecasts for the UK economy in 2017.⁶ Eurozone markets suffered similar short-term disruption, with a 6.8 per cent slide in Germany and drops of 12.5 per cent in Italy and Spain.⁷ The long-term impact of any Brexit, however, remains unclear, with significant business and investor uncertainty about the future.⁸

Within UK Government, long-serving Home Secretary Theresa May replaced David Cameron, becoming Britain's second female Prime Minister.⁹ A major cabinet reshuffle has seen prominent Leave campaigners take the helm at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and at the newly created Department for Exiting the EU (DExEU) and Department for International Trade (DIT).¹⁰ The referendum outcome has also precipitated leadership contests within the opposition Labour party, and in the UK Independence Party that formed a prominent part of the pro-Brexit campaign.¹¹ Regional leaders in London, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar – all areas that voted heavily in favour of 'Remain' – have meanwhile called for a re-run of the vote or an early general election, or else suggested that Brexit provides grounds to revisit the debate on the break-up of the UK.¹² On the European side, the decision has prompted shock, dismay and soul-searching about the future direction of the EU, as well as

fears that Britain's example could inspire other Eurosceptic movements in France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and elsewhere.¹³



Figure 1.2. Regional results of UK referendum on membership of the EU

The sense of deep uncertainty is compounded by a lack of clarity over what form of exit from the EU the vote entails. Though the UK Government has emphasised that 'Brexit means Brexit',¹⁴ there are a number of different extant models that the UK could draw upon – for

5 McGeever (2016)

6 Bank of England (2016)

7 Chu (2016)

8 Economist (2016a)

9 McKenzie and McLaughlin (2016)

10 Castle and Chan (2016)

11 Stewart and Elgot (2016)

12 Reuters (2016a)

13 Rodionova (2016)

14 Cowburn (2016)

instance Norway's membership of the European Economic Area, Canada's free trade agreement, or simple World Trade Organisation rules – and the possibility that negotiations will result in a new, bespoke arrangement for Britain.¹⁵ The negotiating positions of Britain and its European partners are not likely to become clear for a number of months, and will remain subject to debate even after the UK invokes Article 50, the mechanism that initiates a two-year period of Brexit talks.¹⁶

1.1.2. Defence and security have emerged as an important dimension of the wider Brexit debate

Polling data suggests that foreign and security policy considerations were not significant drivers of the referendum result. Rather, questions about the economy, sovereignty and immigration dominated. Some 49 per cent of Leave voters said the biggest single reason for wanting to exit the EU was 'the principle that decisions about the UK should be taken in the UK', while one third reported that leaving 'offered the best chance for the UK to regain control over immigration and its own borders'.¹⁷ Nonetheless, the potential implications of any Brexit vote for defence and security did form an important area of the campaign debate.¹⁸ Particular attention was focused on the question of Britain's role in any potential future 'EU Army', the relationship between the EU and NATO, and the impact of Brexit on intelligence-sharing and counter-terrorism efforts.¹⁹ Voter responses were divided

along social and generational lines – with 69 per cent of those aged 18–24 believing that the UK would be best protected against terrorism inside the EU, compared with only 42 per cent of voters aged 65 and over.²⁰

Since 23 June 2016, the impact of the UK's decision on defence and security has remained unclear. On the British side, a number of commentators have suggested that the vote invalidates the key strategic assumptions of the recent *National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review* (SDSR 2015),²¹ or that the British military could struggle to implement its ambitious procurement plans if defence is not exempted from possible government spending cuts if the economy falters.²² Others have suggested that close collaboration between Britain and its European allies will endure despite Brexit, whether at a bilateral level or through NATO, given the EU's already limited defence role.²³ Some argue that the UK Government may, in fact, be spurred to invest more time and resources in Europe's defence as part of efforts to placate Europhile elements at home and buy goodwill abroad as Brexit negotiations unfold. This would also serve to demonstrate to other allies (not least the US) Britain's enduring – or, as Brexit proponents argue, re-energised – ambition to be a global security player.²⁴ Adding a further dimension of uncertainty is the threat of a repeat of the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence, which could raise questions over the future costs and basing of the UK's nuclear deterrent.²⁵

15 Dhingra and Sampson (2016)

16 Ruparel (2015)

17 Ashcroft (2016)

18 Swinford and Riley-Smith (2016)

19 Tucker (2016)

20 Ashcroft (2016)

21 Norton-Taylor (2016a)

22 Chuter (2016)

23 De Larrinaga (2016)

24 Rogers and Simon (2016)

25 Devlin (2016)

On the European side, defence has emerged as a central theme in proposals by defiant EU leaders to underscore the enduring relevance and vitality of the Union, even with the loss of the UK. Many have noted that Britain has traditionally acted as a brake on further European integration in the field of defence – though it has perhaps had a more engaged and leading role in security – with various initiatives suggested by member states for renewed progress towards an EU operational headquarters, development of common European capabilities and greater support for defence industrial consolidation and research.²⁶ On 14 September 2016, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker labelled such initiatives a top priority for the EU in his annual State of the Union address – with this year’s speech tellingly entitled ‘Towards a Better Europe – A Europe that Protects, Empowers and Defends’.²⁷

1.1.3. Despite its strategic and political significance, this defence and security dimension of Brexit has seen only limited examination and research

In this context of uncertainty, there has been widespread speculation in media and policy forums about the implications of this Brexit decision in the field of security and defence.²⁸ However, much of this commentary has been reactive, political or else influenced by the lack of concrete evidence and objective research and analysis about what the UK’s decision is likely to mean. As noted by Inkster (2016):

The debate about whether the United Kingdom will be better off in or out of the European Union is driven more by emotion than by rational analysis. To the extent that rationality has played a role, it has

applied to the question of which option will leave the British people economically more prosperous. But claims have also been made, by exponents of both camps, that the UK will be more or less secure outside of the EU. As with much of the ‘Brexit’ debate, such claims have been made with little in the way of factual substantiation, and the issue is, like so much else about the UK, complicated by the depth and breadth of the country’s global engagement.²⁹

The absence of clear, evidence-based insight into potential policy implications was exacerbated by the lack of contingency planning within UK Government – outside of limited efforts by HM Treasury and the Bank of England – due to fears that any such plans might have been leaked to influence the outcome of the referendum campaign.³⁰

1.1.4. This RAND study seeks to provide a more detailed understanding of the possible implications of Brexit in the defence and security field

This RAND internally funded study aims to help address the deficit of thinking in this area by providing independent, objective analysis of the following research questions:

- What might be the defence and security implications of the UK leaving the European Union for the UK, Europe, or globally?
- What steps could policymakers in the UK, Europe and globally take in the short term to address, mitigate or extract the most benefit from the implications of Brexit for defence and security?

26 Connelly (2016)

27 European Commission (2016b)

28 Besch and Black (2016)

29 Inkster (2016)

30 Elliot (2016)

- What research questions merit closest attention by defence and security policymakers and the research community in the context of deep uncertainty about Brexit?

In doing so, the study aims to identify those specific policy areas, strategic concerns or military capabilities that might be most affected by Brexit, as well as to explore and define the spectrum of possible outcomes in each area. Rather than trying to provide predictions or claim to present firm answers about the future after Brexit, the study seeks to identify those issues most sensitive to potential change and the credible outcomes in each – as well as the drivers, challenges and interdependencies that will determine how any change unfolds. The work is intended to help policymakers both inside and outside the UK to understand the key questions provoked by Brexit, and thus to inform how defence and security actors begin to plan for, mitigate and address these uncertainties as the UK begins negotiations to leave the EU.

1.1.5. The RAND study team used a structured methodology combining literature review, sensitivity analysis and stakeholder engagement

To assess the potential defence and security implications of the UK's vote, the RAND study team used a structured multi-method approach, combining literature review, sensitivity analysis and wide stakeholder engagement. This approach comprised four phases, as follows:

- **Phase 1: Defining the baseline:** Identifying Britain's activities and commitments as a defence and security actor, determining the sensitivity of these activities to Brexit, and considering the factors that might drive outcomes in these areas.
- **Phase 2: Sensitivity analysis:** Developing a series of hypotheses for each functional area to help understand the scope of credible potential outcomes in each as a result of Brexit, and testing these hypotheses through 42 semi-structured interviews with expert stakeholders from the UK, Europe and the US (see list of interviewees in Annex).
- **Phase 3: Study workshop** with 11 external experts, discussing the potential outcomes in three areas: the UK and EU's international roles as defence and security actors; underpinning capabilities supporting these roles; and specific challenges facing counterterrorism and information sharing.
- **Phase 4: Synthesis:** Bringing together all inputs and findings from the literature review, key informant interviews and the expert workshop into this final report.

Further details on the study method may be found in the compendium report.

1.1.6. This work is not intended to be exhaustive and is subject to several caveats

It is important to note that the findings presented in this short RAND study are subject to a number of constraints on both scope and the efficacy of the research method:

- **Deep uncertainty about the future:** The future direction of policy, strategy and global affairs is inherently uncertain. The outcomes of Brexit will be shaped not only by decisionmakers in the UK, Europe and elsewhere, but also by external and as yet unforeseen events, with the potential for unpredictable interdependencies between developments in different policy areas.
- **Limited scope:** The study is confined to examining the implications of Brexit for defence and security. It does not consider directly or in detail the wider diplomatic, economic, political or social ramifications of the UK leaving the EU – all issues that are inevitably interconnected.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** While the RAND study team engaged with over 50 senior experts from a range of backgrounds, as well

as open-source literature, the insights and views of these experts are likely to represent unintended individual and institutional biases.

- **Practical constraints:** This RAND internally funded study was conducted by a multinational team of diverse political, professional and academic backgrounds and subjected to a QA review. However, it was conducted within a tight timeframe (July–October 2016) and with finite resources.

Given these limitations, the reader is urged to consider that the findings presented are not intended to define a set vision for what the future of defence and security looks like after Brexit. Rather, they are aimed at providing an independent, structured and analytical assessment of those key issues and questions that policymakers and the research community must begin to examine in more detail in order to shape the most positive outcomes from Britain's decision to leave the EU.

1.2. The US presidential election and Brexit

1.2.1. This study was completed ahead of elections in the US. The victory for Donald Trump brings an added dimension and further uncertainty to the Brexit process

The analysis presented in this report was conducted in the final run-up to voting in the US presidential and congressional elections, which produced a victory for Republican candidate Donald Trump. The result has been met with shock and surprise in many capitals worldwide, with many European leaders having strongly criticised the Republican candidate's outspoken views during the presidential campaign. The new President-elect has himself drawn clear parallels

between his anti-establishment platform and the UK vote to leave the EU, labelling himself 'Mr Brexit'.³¹ Many political commentators have portrayed these recent upheavals at the ballot box as part of the wider 'rise of a new nationalism', sceptical of ruling elites, globalisation, free trade and open borders.³²

Certainly, the new US President will play an important role in shaping the approach to, and outcomes from, the Brexit process for both Europe and the UK. This is especially true of foreign, defence and security policy, where the US remains the leading diplomatic, economic and military power in the Western alliance and a guarantor of European security. The uncertainties created by Mr Trump's election will only further complicate the task of planning, negotiating and implementing the UK's withdrawal from the EU, as well as the definition of new roles for Britain and Europe in a Trump-led world.

However, the implications of the recent election results are not yet fully understood and the substance of future US policy remains not yet fully clear as the new Trump administration begins to develop and implement its foreign and security policy. As outlined above, this Brexit study took place in the final months of the presidential election and focuses on implications of the June referendum for the UK and EU. It does not consider the added dimension presented by the US election result, except where this was considered by interviewees reflecting on possible future outcomes and interdependencies ahead of the US ballot.

Further analysis is thus required to understand the combined effect of Brexit and a Trump victory on the NATO Alliance, for instance, or on EU defence ambitions in the event of US

31 Diamond (2016)

32 Economist (2016h)

disengagement, or on the UK's place as a 'bridge' between the US and Europe.³³ What is clear is that the difficult timing of managing Brexit alongside an unpredictable and potentially disengaged US administration will only add to the pressure on UK and EU leaders trying to conduct effective strategy-making in the face of deep uncertainty (see Chapter 8).

1.3. Structure of the report

This overview report is one of three publications produced in support of this study. It summarises the study analysis, providing a two-page summary of each of the principal areas examined during the study. These summaries explore the potential implications of Brexit for:

- Defence spending, research and industry

- Multinational defence formations, EU CSDP and NATO
- Scotland and the UK nuclear deterrent,
- Migration, border security and overseas territories
- Counterterrorism, organised crime, cyber and resilience.

The report concludes with reflections on emerging themes and key areas of concern, and considers future directions for policymakers and the research community.

For the more detailed analysis of the principal areas considered, please consult the associated **compendium report**. For a snapshot of selected international perspectives on Brexit following the June 2016 referendum, please see the related **international perspectives** report.

2. Defence spending, research and industry

For further information and detailed analysis on implications for **defence spending, research and industry**, please see Chapter 3 of the compendium report.



Context of economic uncertainty:

- In the short term, Britain's vote to leave the EU has provoked a period of **deep economic and financial uncertainty**, with particular volatility in currency markets. The value of shares on the FTSE 100 fell by £120 billion overnight following the Leave victory, while **sterling hit a 31-year low** against the US dollar. The OECD has **downgraded predictions for UK economic growth** in 2017 from 2 to 1 per cent, though this is still expected to be higher than in the Eurozone.
- The **long-term economic effects of Brexit are unclear** and will be shaped by future negotiations to determine how the UK will access the **European single market**. While the UK may well negotiate a 'bespoke' post-Brexit deal, it could also make use of **models already in use by non-EU countries**, such as Norway, Switzerland or Canada.



Defence spending:

- Despite cuts in recent years, the **UK remains Europe's largest defence spender** and had planned before Brexit to further increase spending in coming years. This includes a commitment to meet the **NATO target of spending 2 per cent of GDP** on defence, increasing the defence budget by 0.5 per cent annually to 2020–21. In addition, the UK plans to spend **£178 billion over 10 years** on new military equipment, with a 1 per cent yearly rise in the procurement budget.
- The immediate and potential long-term **economic disruption of Brexit raises new challenges** for already ambitious spending plans. Before Brexit, it was already unclear how the UK would continue to meet the NATO 2 per cent target if economic growth was higher than the 0.5 per cent yearly increase in the defence budget.
- Economic uncertainty leaves the affordability of future procurement plans in question. Particular challenges arise from the **slide in the value of the pound**, given that new kit such as the F-35 fighter jet or Apache attack helicopter must be paid for in US dollars.
- Others argue, however, that Brexit could lead to **increased investment in UK defence**, either due to improved growth outside of the EU or as a way of **promoting influence** and a new global role.
- Other European defence budgets may also be affected by Brexit, with the EU losing the UK as one of its **loudest voices for increased defence spending** and also seeing **uncertainty affect the euro**.
- At the same time, however, Brexit could **provide a catalyst** for more ambitious EU defence integration and collaboration between different European states to procure military equipment. EU capitals have responded to Brexit by proposing **new mechanisms for incentivising spending** on defence, including defence bonds, tax breaks and access to European Investment Bank funds.
- Though the UK will no longer be able to veto such moves, out of fears they would duplicate NATO, other **political and economic obstacles remain**, with the future of EU defence integration uncertain.



Research and innovation:

- Brexit could potentially have **significant consequences for defence R&D** and innovation. Britain is among the **biggest spenders** on defence R&D in Europe, with France, Germany and the UK accounting for 92 per cent of the EU's total €2 billion of funding.
- Outside of just defence, the **UK has been one of the most successful competitors** for EU research funding, winning a fifth of all EU grants since 2007, worth €8.04 billion. This EU funding comprises a **quarter of all public research spending** in Britain, meaning the UK is more reliant on EU grants than other countries, such as Germany, that allocate more of their GDP to national funding.
- While **several models exist** for the continuation of access to European research funds after Brexit, non-EU countries such as Norway or Switzerland do not have a say over the research agenda, and must also accept freedom of movement.
- The UK thus risks losing influence over the future directions of EU research funding. This comes at a **critical juncture** for defence research, with the EU planning to launch an initial €90 million fund dedicated to defence R&D in 2017-19, with potentially €500 million yearly thereafter.
- Access to **people, talent and skills** is also an important concern after Brexit, with around 32,000 EU academics working in UK universities, making up 17 per cent of research and teaching staff.



Defence industry and procurement:

- Brexit may allow the UK to pursue a more **flexible defence procurement policy**, depending on its future relationship with the single market. The UK already retains considerable freedom of action within the EU Defence Directives, however, and has been a vocal proponent of more competition.
- Defence industry has made no secret of its **support for the UK remaining in the EU**, given strong ties between UK and European firms, as well as concerns over post-Brexit economic uncertainty.
- **Access to EU defence markets** could be disrupted by Brexit, though UK companies already focus more on **non-EU exports** and could benefit in the short term from the **devaluation of the pound**.
- Reduced access to **skilled EU labour**, the possible **relocation of multinational firms** and disruption to **foreign direct investment** are other major concerns, though some investors are more optimistic.
- Alternative, non-EU mechanisms for **continued defence industrial collaboration** exist, including the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (OCCAR) or the six-nation Letter of Intent (LoI).



UK's role in the European Defence Agency (EDA):

- Leaving the EU will require a new **UK relationship with the EDA**, which promotes European defence cooperation, stimulates defence research and works to strengthen the EU defence industry.
- The UK could choose to **leave the EDA altogether**, but may consider the €3.5 million membership fee good value for money for continued post-Brexit influence of EU policy. It could also opt for **associate status** without any voting rights, like Norway, Serbia and Ukraine, or try to negotiate a special deal for **continued full membership**.
- The UK has been accused of **blocking major EDA initiatives** in recent years and has vetoed any increases to its budget, which has been frozen at €30.5 million for five years. Brexit thus offers other EU states an opportunity for a **more ambitious and better resourced EDA** defence agenda.

3. The UK's conventional defence capabilities and multinational defence commitments (EU CSDP and NATO)

For further information and detailed analysis on implications for the **UK's multinational defence commitments, EU CSDP and NATO**, please see Chapter 4 of the compendium report.



The UK and its conventional military capabilities:

- The decision to leave the EU arguably looks likely to have minimal impact on Britain's conventional defence apparatus in the near term.
- Medium- to longer-term financial considerations may impact on British military capabilities with any sustained period of economic uncertainty having a damaging impact on the defence budget. Equally, strong performance might result in increased spend on defence and a bolstering of Britain's military assets in line with post-Brexit levels of ambition.
- These levels of ambition may be adjusted, either by necessity or through choice, once Britain has decided what sort of defence and security actor it wants to be post-Brexit. Ways and means can then be designed to fit these strategic ends.



The UK's future involvement in multinational defence formations:

- The UK's commitment to NATO will endure, and perhaps intensify, post-Brexit. Britain's other non-EU multilateral defence commitments are unlikely to be directly affected by Brexit. Multinational involvement in initiatives such as the Joint Expeditionary Force, Combined Joint Expeditionary Force and coalitions of the willing, represent a mechanism through which the UK could maintain its profile and engagement with international defence partners.
- While political tensions caused or exacerbated by Brexit could introduce practical difficulties or erode political will both in the UK and within the EU, there may be greater appetite, on both sides, for multinational military collaboration outside of EU frameworks.



The UK's future involvement in EU defence and security activities:

- The removal of UK defence capabilities from the EU inventory arguably represents a considerable diminution of collective EU defence capability that some estimate will be reduced by a quarter. These capabilities will not have been put beyond European use but will be available through NATO and other military frameworks as well as, perhaps, in support of EU operations.
- British contributions to European defence operations will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may be increased or reduced post-Brexit. Beyond crises and existential threats, there may be a rationale for new arrangements for the UK's continuing involvement. However, if the EU moves towards greater integration, this might be at odds with both the UK's agenda for the future and the EU's willingness and ability to incorporate external actors.



The EU as an international defence and security actor post-Brexit:

- Brexit raises questions about the future strategic goals of the EU, which in turn influence the future direction of CSDP. The EU will need to adjust to a new geostrategic reality in the post-Brexit era.
- Initiatives aimed at closer integration of European defence activities have been characterised by slow progress in recent years. Brexit may prove a turning point. On the one hand, Brexit may provide impetus for further integration in European defence. Some contend that, unshackled by the 'blocking' influence of the UK, CSDP will be reinvigorated. Proposals are currently under discussion regarding possible vehicles for closer integration. These include Permanent Structured Cooperation, European Defence Union (or 'Schengen for defence') and the establishment of an EU military headquarters. British opposition has been a barrier to some of these proposals in the past.
- Equally, it is possible that Brexit will have limited tangible impact, with CSDP continuing on its present trajectory. British veto has not been the only obstacle to closer integration: strategic consensus and financial resources have both been lacking in the past. While 'business as usual' could result in the fulfilment of CSDP as currently envisaged, it is perhaps more likely to result in a decline in CSDP capabilities and credibility since it is unlikely to encourage greater financial or political commitment.
- Alternatively, Brexit may precipitate or accelerate the fragmentation and eventual collapse of EU defence integration efforts. Should the credibility of CSDP be further called into question, consensus may become even more difficult to achieve. EU members opposed to closer integration who have hidden behind the British alibi may now find themselves exposed. Caution or procrastination by member states could further slow decisionmaking or see the abandonment of European commitments to defence spend. A lack of strategic alignment between Paris and Berlin would likely hinder efforts towards closer EU defence integration under strong joint Franco-German leadership.



EU and NATO cooperation after Brexit:

- The future of the EU and NATO relationship will, in turn, evolve depending on the nature of CSDP post-Brexit. Collaboration between the two organisations could wither if CSDP stagnates. Alternatively, should the EU become a stronger, more credible actor in crisis response, a clearer, more formalised division of labour may emerge. Should European defence integration accelerate, there is scope for EU and NATO activities to overlap, risking duplication between the two organisations and straining already-stretched defence budgets.



International sanctions regime:

- It is plausible, and perhaps likely, that the international sanctions regime will be negatively impacted by Brexit. Unanimity on sanctions in the EU has often depended on strong support from the UK. Brexit could weaken the sanctions regime, strengthening the hand of those who support the relaxation of sanctions for political or economic ends.

4. Scotland and the UK nuclear deterrent

For further information and detailed analysis on implications for **Scotland and the UK** nuclear deterrent, please see Chapter 5 of the compendium report.



Scottish independence:

- The UK's vote to leave the EU has **sparked calls for a second independence referendum** in Scotland, which voted with a **62 per cent majority** to remain in the EU. The Scottish National Party (SNP) has called a second referendum 'highly likely', and indicated it will **explore possible legal and political measures to block any Brexit** that does not account for Scottish interests.
- However, Brexit also poses new challenges and **obstacles to Scottish independence**. The 2014 referendum focused on uncertainties such as **Scottish use of the pound** or euro and arrangements at **the border**, which were complex enough with both Scotland and the UK in the EU.
- Many stakeholders thus judged the **likelihood of Scottish independence to be low**, despite SNP rhetoric, though it would have a **profound impact** on the UK and more widely if it did occur.



Scotland's defence:

- The Scottish Government has pledged to spend **£2.5 billion** annually on defence and security in the event of independence, with **Armed Forces of 15,000 personnel** and 5,000 reserves.
- This would involve a **division of UK military assets**, including a proposed transfer of one squadron of fighter aircraft, two frigates, four minesweepers and assorted transports and helicopters.
- Scottish independence would pose **practical, financial and political challenges** to Scotland's defence, given the difficulties and costs associated with extricating Scotland from the integrated UK system. Training, command and other key facilities are often centralised in **other parts of the UK**.
- The UK may also be **reluctant to hand over** important finite equipment and sensitive systems, especially given the time it would take for Scotland to build up the necessary maintenance and support structures. As such, both sides **may prefer a transitional arrangement** whereby the UK phases out responsibility for different aspects of Scotland's defence over time.
- The SNP has **reversed its long-held opposition to NATO** and would now seek membership, though its accession may be contingent on **wider negotiations over Trident** (see below) and willingness to accept the principle of NATO nuclear weapons.
- An independent Scotland would also need to develop a new security and intelligence agency, and build up a **track record as an international partner** on sensitive matters, outside of the Five Eyes intelligence network. However, both the UK and Scotland would have a **strong continuing interest in cooperation** to ensure a smooth transition and **minimise the disruption** to security on both sides.



Ramifications for the UK:

- Scottish independence would pose similar concerns for UK Defence, potentially reducing **access to key facilities** (e.g. airbases), **Scottish tax revenues** and some **military equipment**.
 - It is unclear how many serving UK military personnel would wish to transfer to an independent Scottish Armed Forces, given many are motivated by the professionalism, reputation, adventure and travel offered by the UK military, which may not be available in a less ambitious Scotland.
 - Particular questions would be raised about the **future of UK naval shipbuilding on the Clyde**, with unions and UK officials having indicated that this may have to be relocated to Portsmouth or elsewhere. However, **relocation costs** are estimated by the UK Parliament to be much higher than the £3.5 billion recently invested in new facilities at the Clyde site.
 - As with Brexit, both sides would retain a strong interest in continuing defence and security cooperation, and still have strong personal and inter-institutional ties of mutual trust. However, the difficult wider politics of exit negotiations could risk a breakdown in goodwill and disruption to existing mechanisms for cooperation.
-



Scotland and the nuclear deterrent:

- The renewed calls for Scottish independence after Brexit bring particular uncertainties to the future of the UK nuclear deterrent. The UK has a policy of continuous at-sea deterrent (CASD), achieved through a force of four Vanguard-class ballistic missile submarines based out of HMNB Faslane in Scotland. Another nearby facility, RNAD Coulport is used to storage and repair Trident missiles.
 - The SNP have long been vocal critics of the nuclear force on ethical and cost grounds, as well as due to the proximity of Faslane to the densely populated city of Glasgow. The Scottish Government has pledged the 'speediest safe removal' of the nuclear force in the event of independence.
 - Even though alternative basing options in England and Wales exist, many face practical and political challenges, while the costs and time taken to relocate are seen as potentially prohibitive. Suggestions that the nuclear force be moved (at least temporarily) to France or the US also face difficult questions over sovereignty and the independence of the deterrent.
 - The UK could seek to negotiate a temporary or more long-term basing agreement to keep the nuclear force in Scotland until alternatives could be arranged. However, this may require concessions on other issues in exit negotiations, and would face political opposition in Scotland, as well as raising concerns that the basing deal could be reneged upon in a future military crisis.
 - NATO allies are unlikely to want to see any forced unilateral disarmament by the UK, which is the only other country to commit its weapons to the defence of the Alliance (besides the US).
-



Other challenges for the nuclear deterrent:

- Brexit also raises other potential challenges for the renewal of the UK's nuclear force, besides the Scotland issue. In particular, questions remain about the possible effect of economic uncertainty on already tight defence budgets – any retrenchment could force the UK MOD to either cut back or delay the Successor nuclear programme, or else restrict investments in conventional arms.
- Officials have also raised concern about the UK Government and civil service's finite organisational, human and political resources with which to manage major projects such as Successor alongside Brexit and other demands, meaning the potential for higher programme risk.

5. Migration, border security and overseas territories

For further information and detailed analysis on implications for **migration, border security and overseas territories**, please see Chapter 6 of the compendium report.



Migrant crisis and social cohesion:

- Brexit has raised concerns that it could further **strain attempts to build common EU responses to complex transnational issues**. This includes the potential for the UK's exit to strengthen centrifugal forces that undermine collective solutions, or else **leave the EU distracted** by Brexit negotiations, given **finite political, human and financial capital**.
- There is also the **possible loss of UK contributions to Operation Sophia**, which include Royal Navy vessels and a Royal Marines detachment for counter-people-smuggling operations. However, the UK has indicated it **may still contribute to EU missions** after Brexit, or it could alternatively shift its contributions to **similar NATO-led efforts** in the Mediterranean and Adriatic.
- There is also concern about what effect **economic uncertainty** will have on the UK international **development budget**. The UK is one of the few countries to meet the UN target for 0.7 per cent of GDP to go to foreign aid, and a **major donor to important refugee hubs** such as Jordan, meaning any reduction in spending could have **knock-on effects for migrant flows**. The fall in the **value of sterling** has meant a drop of €1.4 billion in the value of UK aid. **EU development influence** could also be diminished, with UK funding making up £1 billion or **10 per cent of the EU aid budget**.
- **Others are more positive**, with the UK Foreign Secretary arguing that Brexit will facilitate the creation of a **new transnational 'partnership'** to tackle the crisis where the EU has been unable to do so alone.
- The Brexit referendum has also **exposed divisions** within the UK and Europe, with concerns about the security threats posed by a surge in **hate crime**, potential social fragmentation and an **emboldened far-right** – especially following the **murder of British MP Jo Cox** during the campaign.



Border with France:

- Brexit adds a **new dimension to existing tensions** over border arrangements between the UK and France, which are governed through the **bilateral Le Touquet Treaty**, which effectively **relocates the UK border to Calais**, Paris and the Channel ports. The UK is **not a member of the Schengen Area**.
- A number of senior French politicians, including economy and interior ministers, have called for Le Touquet to be **scrapped or scaled back when the UK leaves the EU**. There have been rising calls for controversial migrant camps – such as the **Calais 'jungle'** – to be **relocated to British soil**, or for the **creation of an asylum 'hotspot'** allowing migrants to lodge asylum claims for the UK in France. Both governments remain publically **committed to the current agreement**, however.
- Depending on the UK's future membership of the single market and customs union, **additional checks** may be required on vehicles and goods, increasing transit times and border costs.
- There is also concern about future UK **access to information-sharing with French police**, including inputs from the Schengen Information Service and Europol. Losing the **European Arrest Warrant** would also impact on both sides' ability to extradite criminal and terror suspects across the border.



Northern Ireland border and peace process:

- EU membership has helped support the **Northern Ireland peace process**, with a majority of voters in **the region backing 'Remain'** in the Brexit referendum.
- Nationalists such as Sinn Féin have called for a **border poll on Irish unification**, arguing that Brexit **undermines the political basis** of the **Good Friday Agreement** – though in fact the agreement's text focuses more on membership of the **European Convention on Human Rights**, which is **unaffected**.
- The most significant practical and political challenge will be defining new – or defending old – arrangements for the **UK's border with the Republic of Ireland**. The border is open within the **Common Travel Area (CTA)**, which predates the EU and is **not part of Schengen**.
- Concerns include the **potential need to reimpose security or customs checks** if the UK left the customs union or restricted EU immigration. This poses **practical and economic challenges**, given there are **300 formal crossing points** and numerous small trails, with perhaps 30,000 people commuting to work across the border every day. It could also **inflare sectarian tensions**, with the terror threat level raised to 'severe' following a 40 per cent increase in bomb alerts in 2015–16.
- **Several alternative models** have been proposed to avoid a 'hard' border. One option could be to only impose **controls between the island of Ireland and the rest of the UK**, which would be easier to secure than a land border. Alternatively, the **border could remain open**, if the UK stayed in the **European Economic Area**, or the two countries sought to fall back on the pre-EU CTA. However, the UK Parliament has noted that under EU law any future border arrangement would have to be agreed **not only with Dublin**, but also with the rest of the EU.
- Northern Ireland's economy is **uniquely exposed to Brexit** in several ways. It received €1.3 billion of **EU funds for mitigating violence** and dealing with the legacy of conflict in 1995–2014. An additional €229 million has been allocated for the **PEACE IV programme**, though the long-term future of this beyond the current funding round was already uncertain. EU subsidies also account for **82 per cent of local farm revenues**. The UK is **Ireland's largest trading partner**, receiving 17 per cent of exports, while the **UK sells more to Ireland than to China, India and Brazil** combined.



Gibraltar:

- Brexit also raises unique economic and security concerns for Gibraltar, which voted by an overwhelming **96 per cent majority to remain** part of the EU. The Gibraltar Chief Minister has called the UK's decision to leave an **'existential threat'** in the event of any 'hard Brexit' that introduced barriers to trade or free movement with neighbouring Spain.



Sovereign Base Areas and Cyprus:

- The two UK military bases in Cyprus have a **special status**, sitting **outside the EU** but applying **specific elements of the EU Treaties**. This could potentially provide a model for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar, if they wished to remain in the UK but close to the EU.
- Brexit raises related concerns about **EU-NATO relations** over the **'Cyprus issue'**, with the UK one of the **most vocal supporters of NATO ally Turkey** achieving EU membership.



Falkland Islands and other Overseas Territories:

- **EU funding and market access** also play an important role in other Overseas Territories, with some concerns that economic uncertainty could affect **defence spending** on the **Falkland Islands**.

6. Counterterrorism, organised crime, cyber and resilience

For further information and detailed analysis on implications for **counterterrorism, organised crime, cyber and resilience**, please see Chapter 7 of the compendium report.



Challenges from terrorism and organised crime:

- Regardless of Brexit, both the UK and EU face **significant common threats** from terrorism and serious and organised crime. Official figures report a total of 211 failed, foiled or completed terror attacks in the year to July 2016, causing **over 230 fatalities**; with particular concern about the threat posed by fighters returning from Iraq and Syria or radicalisation by so-called Islamic State.
- Potential **risks or benefits of Brexit** for UK and European security formed an important element of the referendum debate, with Remain supporters emphasising the **importance of security cooperation with EU allies**. Leave campaigners argued for the need to take back **control of the UK's borders**, and emphasised the importance of **non-EU cooperation**, such as the Five Eyes Treaty on intelligence sharing between the UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and US.



The UK's role in Europol:

- The UK will need to define a **new relationship with Europol** after Brexit, having previously played a leading role within the agency. Around **40 per cent of Europol casework** is thought to have a British focus, and in 2015 UK authorities initiated some 2,500 cases for cross-border investigation. Since 2009, **Europol's Director has been a British citizen**, former MI5 official Rob Wainwright.
- A number of possible post-Brexit models exist. The UK could try to negotiate a **special deal for full membership** of Europol; many security officials think it more likely that EU members will insist the UK reapply to **become a second-tier member**, as is already the case for non-EU states like Canada and Norway. This would mean losing full **access to security databases** and the ability to lead operations, as well as **reduced UK influence** over the future agenda. Alternatively, the UK could follow the example of the US and sign a **supplemental agreement** for the exchange of some data.
- **Losing access to Europol** could have a significant impact, both for the UK and EU. The UK carries out 250,000 searches of Europol databases each year; in turn, it has been a key contributor to Europol operations and is a **valued partner**, given its law enforcement expertise.



Other security cooperation and information-sharing:

- The UK **already has a special 'opt out'** from most EU criminal justice measures, but Brexit raises concerns about future access to key tools such as the **European Arrest Warrant (EAW)**, **Eurojust**, **Schengen Information System**, and the **European Judicial Network**. The EAW has been particularly useful for dealing quickly with criminals and terror suspects who attempt to flee across borders.
- **Sharing of information may be more affected** than that of intelligence after Brexit. The UK is likely to invest more in alternative **bilateral and non-EU mechanisms**, such as Five Eyes, Interpol, or the Financial Action Task Force. However, this raises concerns about **increased fragmentation**, administrative costs, and the potential for critical information to **'fall between the cracks'**.

- There is a perception among security experts that international cooperation is **‘too big to fail’** given its **enduring importance to all parties**, but Brexit risks disrupting or politicising the issue.



Critical infrastructure and cybersecurity:

- Brexit also comes at an **important point** in the political and institutional development of cybersecurity measures **in both Europe and the UK**. The UK is updating its national cybersecurity strategy in 2016 and has committed £1.6 billion over the next five years. EU initiatives potentially affected include the EU computer incident response team (EU-CERT), the **European Network and Information Security Agency** (ENISA) and the **European Cybercrime Centre** (EC3) within Europol.
- The UK’s decision to leave the EU raises questions about the possibility of future UK–EU divergence on issues such as **data protection, privacy, critical infrastructure** protection and **cyber skills**. The UK may have to continue to follow EU standards, especially if hoping to **access the single market**, but with **diminished influence** over the future direction of cybersecurity policy in Europe.
- Brexit may also affect the UK’s future **willingness to embrace foreign involvement** in key infrastructure projects and sensitive technology, given the desire to promote non-EU trade deals.



Space:

- Though the referendum focused on more terrestrial concerns, **space** is an area of **growing interest and investment** for both Europe and the UK, which risks losing influence over future EU policy.
- The UK will **remain a member** of the **European Space Agency**, as this is a non-EU body. However, problems may arise from **diminished access to flagship EU programmes**.
- This includes the **Galileo** and **EGNOS** satellite navigation systems and the **Copernicus** Earth-observation project, which all have military and dual use applications. Non-EU nations can take part in the Galileo programme, but have to **negotiate a security treaty** to do so, and do not gain access to secure encrypted signals for military use, nor to the UK’s current high industrial involvement.



Energy and environmental security:

- The UK National Security Strategy has emphasised the **importance of having a strong voice** in the EU to reinforce UK **energy security**; after Brexit, this influence is likely to be diminished.
- There is also concern that Brexit could **undermine environmental standards** in the UK and the EU’s recent **global leadership** on environmental policy, with knock-on effects for resilience and security.
- The EU has also provided **direct funding** and support to the UK to both prevent and recover from damage caused by **major floods**, including €162 million after floods in 2007.

7. Emerging themes and reflections

7.1. Context of deep uncertainty

Barring constitutional crisis or a reversal of British public sentiment (perhaps at a General Election or second referendum), ‘Brexit means Brexit’. It is less clear, however, quite which Brexit that might be. The UK ballot offered only a binary choice of ‘in’ and ‘out’. Political leaders on both sides of the Channel are now working to define a more concrete vision for what they want to achieve from Brexit negotiations and the framing of new relationships that will continue after Britain leaves the EU. This process of reflection and debate is also taking place both within and between institutions – in parliaments, government departments, military organisations, security agencies, police and industry – and in European electorates. All sides will have to accept trade-offs between their competing visions, and the degree to which the eventual outcome proves positive or unsatisfactory to different parties will depend not only on the effectiveness of negotiating strategies, but also on external and as yet unforeseen events out of any one actor’s control. The timelines to develop new post-Brexit arrangements remain uncertain, too, and the tools untested. Mechanisms such as Article 50 were not designed to be used; by being invoked, like all deterrents, the clause has failed its primary objective to keep members within the EU, and may not necessarily prove the most suitable framework for both sides to reach the best possible outcome.³⁴

This study does not seek to predict what the future *will* look like after the UK’s withdrawal. Rather, the analysis has sought to outline the spectrum of plausible futures, exploring the ‘left and right of the arc’ for what *may* occur in

different policy areas, as well as the main drivers and constraints that will determine the nature of those outcomes. Where possible, it has also sought to identify some of the interdependencies and dynamics that will make Brexit negotiations so complex and their eventual outcomes so difficult to predict. How might one policy option both depend upon and reinforce goodwill with European partners? Where might decisions in one area close off options elsewhere, with what net effect?

Given deep economic and political uncertainty, the experts and literature consulted through this study outlined a wide spectrum of potential outcomes, opportunities and risks. On many issues, the study team found more questions than answers. However, despite the many disagreements and ambiguities, a number of common themes and considerations did emerge. These are outlined in the chapter below, comprising:

- Implications of Brexit for defence and security in the UK and EU
- Knock-on effects of Brexit for cooperation with non-EU institutions and allies.

7.2. Implications of Brexit for defence and security in the UK and EU

7.2.1. Brexit may pose more immediate practical challenges for security than defence, though both are subject to deep long-term uncertainty

- The immediate day-to-day impact of Brexit may be felt less keenly in defence than other policy areas, such as trade, market

regulation or social policy. This reflects the continuing focus on the nation-state as the primary actor on defence matters, while international collaboration is predominantly at the intergovernmental rather than supranational level. Despite its ambitions and future plans, the EU is not yet a major defence player; in no small part, of course, due to the UK's strong opposition to past European initiatives that it felt might duplicate or impact NATO.

- The UK will continue to work closely with allies even after Brexit, doing so through the wide range of extant bilateral, regional and international forums: some very operational or technocratic, others more strategic, such as the UK's permanent seat on the UN Security Council. Institutional cooperation with NATO, OCCAR, the OSCE and others will endure, albeit with some indirect complications arising from Brexit. Despite increased uncertainty about its future role and economic resources, for the foreseeable future the UK should remain a global actor able to project a combination of 'hard' and 'soft' power far more than any other EU nation, besides France.
- Compared to defence, leaving the EU presents more immediate practical challenges for security. The UK and its European partners will need to urgently reaffirm or redefine existing models for cooperation on transnational issues such as terrorism, organised crime and cybersecurity. Experts express particular concern over the potential loss of UK access and input to EU information-sharing platforms and the European Arrest Warrant. For many stakeholders, security cooperation is seen as 'too big to fail', given the potential human and political costs of weakening UK or EU security at a time of such substantial threat. This suggests that a solution will have to be found, perhaps with greater urgency than developing new frameworks for cooperation on defence. While other bi- or multilateral

mechanisms do already exist, shifting towards a more fragmented approach may entail higher administrative costs, unwanted delays and the risk that potential threats might 'fall through the cracks' when institutions manage lots of different interfaces.

- Indeed, Europol has already provided one of the first tests of progress towards a new UK–EU relationship, with the UK Government having had to decide whether to renew or reject membership in a reformed Europol alongside moving towards the launch of wider Brexit talks.
- Some other aspects of security cooperation may be less affected, however, with the UK remaining a member of the important Five Eyes network, and most intelligence sharing with and between European agencies continuing to take place outside of EU frameworks.

7.2.2. The UK leaves the EU at a critical juncture for defence and security, with reduced influence over the EU policy agenda increasing the risk of long-term divergence

- Even before Brexit, Europe was facing a number of significant security threats, including a resurgent Russia, terrorism, the migrant crisis, conflict in the Middle East, and the disruptive effects of new technologies and actors in cyber and space. The UK decision to leave the EU thus comes at a moment when European institutions are already planning a more ambitious role or collective response to these issues. This includes plans for: direct funding of defence research; the introduction of a new EU border force; an increased role for Europol; the promotion of new cyber regulation and the Digital Single Market; and the development of flagship space programmes like Copernicus and Galileo.
- The UK's vote to leave the EU adds further uncertainty and new potential complications

to this changing policy landscape. These include practical challenges, such as the possible loss of the UK's contributions of funding, talent and important capabilities (e.g. HQ for Operation Atalanta), as well as political issues, such as the risk that leaders become distracted by Brexit negotiations.

- The UK may well have reduced influence over the EU's long-term agenda. Depending on the outcomes of wider negotiations over the single market, it may therefore have to learn to accept imposition of EU rules in important areas, such as defence procurement or cybersecurity, where it no longer has an input to European policy. The EU, in turn, will need to still consider the concerns and priorities of the UK after Brexit, either through informal channels or mechanisms for non-EU consultation. Both sides otherwise risk divergence to the detriment of both parties, undermining cooperation on issues of mutual interest by both government and industry.
- For defence, the withdrawal of the UK offers a number of opportunities for the EU to move forward with an increased EDA budget and proposals for further integration (see below). There is concern among some Europeans, however, over the loss of UK involvement for the credibility of the EU as a military actor, as well as for the outcome of internal debates over issues such as the relationship with NATO, the liberalisation of defence markets or levels of defence spending.
- On the security side, the EU risks losing one of its most experienced and capable security, policing and intelligence actors from decisionmaking, reflected in very practical terms by the loss of UK representatives from leadership roles in the Commission, the European Parliament and Europol. Experts noted that, despite opting out of many JHA measures for political reasons, the UK has often been a driver behind EU reform in many of these areas, and influential in sharing best practice (e.g. disseminating its

police criminal intelligence model) with other EU members.

7.2.3. Defence has emerged as a central theme of the EU's response to Brexit, which offers opportunities for further integration, though other obstacles remain

- In terms of defence spending, global footprint and high-end military capabilities, the loss of the UK could leave the EU significantly reduced as a defence and security actor. At the same time, Brexit raises questions about the EU's future credibility and ambition in this field, particularly if Europe hopes to be a counterbalance to US influence within NATO, or to Russia and China.
- However, the UK has in recent years already scaled back its involvement in CSDP, meaning that the practical and financial ramifications for extant missions are mostly comparatively minor; the UK has also indicated its willingness to continue contributing to EU operations after Brexit, where these align with national interests. Some experts suggest this may in fact mean greater UK input, whether to buy goodwill and demonstrate solidarity, or because of diminished domestic political opposition due to reduced fears of being drawn into a European army.
- For the EU, then, Brexit offers an opportunity and potential catalyst for increased defence integration, with many experts ascribing slow progress to date in this field on the UK's veto. Defence has thus emerged (perhaps surprisingly, given the minor role it has played in the referendum debate, or in European politics more generally) as a central theme of EU rhetoric and proposals issued since the Brexit vote to demonstrate the EU's enduring relevance despite the loss of one of its largest members. It remains to be seen whether the EU's increased focus on defence and security will endure, or if proposals for integration in this policy area

were merely seen as ‘low-hanging fruit’ and politically expedient in the immediate post-referendum period.

- The UK’s withdrawal from the EU may thus mean further steps towards European defence integration, especially with regard to comparatively uncontroversial issues and ‘quick wins’ such as increasing the EDA budget, promoting more defence research or potentially setting up an EU operational HQ. EU member states have also issued proposals for new ways to finance defence, including tax breaks, European defence bonds or opening up access to EIB and EFSI funding. The result could be an EU that is more capable, coherent and assertive on defence matters, with the net effect of improving European security despite the loss of UK capabilities.
- However, experts also caution that considerable challenges remain, even after Brexit. One concern is that the EU’s post-Brexit focus on defence integration could merely be rhetorical, meant to demonstrate political unity, rather than signalling meaningful intent to develop Europe’s military capabilities after years of declining investment. Another is the potential the EU could undermine NATO, as the UK has long argued. Other stakeholders worry that increased ‘pooling and sharing’ or ‘defence bonds’ could provide political cover and efficiency savings to allow EU member states to do less at national levels, using EU integration not to do more with the same, but rather to do the same with less. This would leave Europe weaker after Brexit.
- Indeed, the UK has not been the only obstacle to European defence integration in the past (and has even championed it, on various occasions). Other barriers remain, with a concern among stakeholders that the UK veto has hitherto provided a convenient ‘alibi’ masking disagreements between other EU members reluctant to commit to EU initiatives. Europe after Brexit

still faces the long-standing difficulties posed by the divergent strategic cultures, threat prioritisation, financial and military means of 27 members. These include major differences in the positions of its two largest powers, Germany and France, with Berlin’s latest White Book suggesting a more proactive military role, but Germans still more reluctant to use force than the French.

7.2.4. Brexit also raises questions about the future strategic goals of the EU, including the balance in focus between the east and southern neighbourhoods

- As well as post-Brexit uncertainty about Europe’s ways and means to act collectively, the UK’s decision to leave throws up questions about what ends the EU will hope in future to achieve.
- The launch of the EU Global Strategy marks a significant moment for Europe’s ambition as an international diplomatic and security actor. Experts noted, however, that it had inevitably been overshadowed by the UK’s vote, necessitating potentially not only a renewed political focus to regain momentum but also updates in subsequent guidance (e.g. a potential EU defence White Paper) to take account of the new post-Brexit reality.
- There is much disagreement as to whether Brexit will change Europe’s foreign and security policy priorities. One area of concern is the impact of a diminished UK voice on the EU’s sanctions policy, with the UK having been one of the most vocal critics of Russian aggression in Ukraine and the Baltic region. The loss of the UK could similarly destabilise the current power dynamic between those southern member states primarily concerned with the migrant crisis and terrorism, and those particularly in Poland and the Baltic States that emphasise collective territorial defence.
- Others note that the UK has traditionally held a more global outlook than the rest of the EU

(with the possible exception of France). One concern is that Brexit could thus see the EU become more inward-facing and parochial, particularly if the UK's departure exacerbates internal discord over difficult issues such as the migrant crisis. Another possibility is that the EU reorients its 'global' strategy to those regions where its members retain a larger footprint, entailing perhaps a focus on Africa (where France and Spain have particular expertise and interests), compared to the UK's greater and growing emphasis on the Middle East and Asia-Pacific. Other experts disagreed, however, suggesting that Brexit may catalyse a more ambitious and engaged EU more generally.

7.2.5. Leaving the EU may also accelerate trends towards a changing role for the state, including increased emphasis on influence and prosperity through defence

- Changing political, strategic and economic circumstances after Brexit may not only require government doing different things, but also doing government differently. Experts focused in particular on the open question of whether the UK Government's pre-Brexit architecture (with recent amendments in the form of new departments for Brexit and for international trade) will prove best suited to its new post-Brexit goals and functions.
- One concern is over human and organisational resources in Whitehall. The UK embarks on Brexit with a civil service 18 per cent smaller than in 2010, and a Foreign and Commonwealth Office that has lost a quarter of its budget and hundreds of staff. The MOD, meanwhile, plans to reduce the number of civilians on its payroll by another 30 per cent by 2020. Managing Brexit alongside developing a new role in the world may further strain tight resources, or else incentivise UK Government to invest in growing skills and capability in key, outward-facing areas.
- Cross-government cooperation may become even more of a priority after Brexit. In recent years, the UK Government has promoted a 'comprehensive approach', with deepening institutional collaboration between the UK MOD, the Armed Forces, government departments, intelligence agencies, police and others. Some stakeholders expect this trend to accelerate following the decision to leave the EU, with the risk of reduced influence or financial resources after Brexit incentivising enhanced coordination across government (or potentially even a reorganisation of the current distinctions between departments for defence, foreign policy, development and trade).
- In particular, Brexit may presage a growing need for UK Defence to contribute more to promoting influence abroad. This builds on existing recent trends: the 2015 SDSR, for instance, promised to make defence 'international by design' and made defence engagement (e.g. international cooperation, capacity-building activities) a funded, core MOD task for the first time, including the establishment of British Defence Staffs in the Middle East, Asia-Pacific and Africa to better understand and influence those regions. Stakeholders noted that these 'understand' and 'influence' functions would become even more important after Brexit, given the diminished access to the EU or EEAS and a potentially reduced ability to shape wider European solutions. Defence engagement and capacity-building efforts to support overseas allies also offer the UK a means of leveraging the expertise of its Armed Forces in support of diplomatic efforts to build new security and trading relationships outside of the EU; investing more in preventing conflicts early on would also reduce strain on uncertain defence budgets.
- One challenge, however, will be managing an already-planned but perhaps accelerated shift towards a mix of contingency and defence engagement activities in such a way

as to proactively develop the capabilities and force structures that the military needs in the long term, rather than make ad hoc reforms and respond principally to urgent requirements, as has been the case in some recent decades. This may be difficult given the challenge of making long-term reforms and investments when faced with deep economic and political uncertainty.

- Brexit may similarly accentuate the recent trends towards greater collaboration between UK Government, armed forces and industry. Stakeholders noted that the increased demand for language specialists, trade negotiators, EU law experts and more due to Brexit could require increased outsourcing (an area where UK Government already outstrips many other EU states). Similarly, for defence, any additional strain on defence budgets in this period of uncertainty could increase the already-strong emphasis on achieving efficiency savings and access to a wider pool of skills through the 'Whole Force' approach, which brings together regular military personnel, reservists, civil servants and contractors. Indeed, this model could arguably provide some inspiration to other parts of government as the UK reconfigures after Brexit – one potentially more palatable to those Leave proponents who also argue for a smaller public sector.
- The growing emphasis in recent years on supporting UK defence exports is also likely to continue and may become increasingly important as a means of boosting the UK economy, driving down unit costs for the UK's own acquisitions and promoting new relationships with non-EU markets. Brexit also opens up potential opportunities for a more flexible procurement regime, or more interventionist UK defence industrial policy in future years, depending on the extent to which the UK remains subject to European single market rules or wants to diverge from current policy.

7.3. Knock-on effects for cooperation with non-EU institutions and allies

7.3.1. The UK will need to reaffirm or else redefine its ambitions to be a global actor after Brexit, including investing more effort in NATO and bilateral partnerships

- Though Brexit does not directly affect many of the UK's most important defence and security relationships, withdrawing from the EU will have consequences for the political, economic and military resources the UK is able to invest, as well as its strategic role in multilateral institutions.
- Experts focused in particular on the uncertain implications of the UK's diminished role as an interlocutor between the US and Europe or between the EU and NATO. This will not only have consequences for the influence and agency of the UK, but also may result in a growing duplication of effort between the EU and NATO on defence, or else a beneficial new arrangement between the two institutions, were they to seize upon Brexit as an opportunity to reshape the model for cooperation, perhaps with a more coherent 'EU bloc' within the Alliance.
- The UK may need to invest more heavily in NATO and its bilateral partnerships, especially in the near term, in order to demonstrate its continuing or reenergised engagement with the world after Brexit, as well as to offset its diminished influence as part of a European bloc. The need also to establish new trading relationships with the rest of the globe may accelerate an already-growing shift towards a UK security interest in securing global lines of communications and partners in Asia-Pacific, the Indian Ocean and other economies.
- The UK's ability to demonstrate clout on the global stage will, however, be a function not only of political ambition but of economic resources and the degree to which any

uncertainty affects defence and foreign office budgets. Any additional pressure on defence spending as a result of Brexit could, however, further incentivise the UK to invest in further 'pooling and sharing'.

- The vote to leave the EU has also exacerbated constitutional tensions within the UK, particularly in relation to the Northern Ireland peace process and Scotland's place within the two unions. Though Brexit would in fact pose new practical difficulties for any independent Scotland, even the threat could leave it more inward-facing and constrained in acting on the global stage.
- In the event of any Scottish independence, there are particular uncertainties about the future of the UK nuclear deterrent, Scotland's relations with the UK and NATO, and the consequences of break-up for the UK's global ambitions and influence – a challenge analogous to that of Brexit, but potentially only exacerbated further by coinciding with it.

7.3.2. Other EU and non-EU nations will also be concerned to mitigate any disruption to their own defence and security relationships

- Brexit raises particular challenges for France. The French Government may find itself torn between its desire to deepen bilateral ties with the UK through the Lancaster House Treaties, its interest in deterring France's own Eurosceptics through a more punitive approach to Brexit, and its commitments to NATO and to further EU defence integration. The upcoming decision of the next stage of Anglo-French investment in a Future Combat Air System may provide an early test or signal of the two countries' continuing interest in their bilateral partnership.
- The loss of the UK presents both a challenge and an opportunity to France's own place in multilateral defence organisations. It could potentially destabilise EU defence if Germany, Italy or other member states do not emerge to replace the UK as France's

essential partner, but also offer Paris the possibility of supplanting London as the bridge between the EU and NATO.

- Other EU nations with which the UK has close bilateral defence ties will also need to appraise the implications of Brexit for their strategic priorities, in particular Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and the Baltic countries. Above all, the Republic of Ireland faces unique challenges to its own security, border and economy after Brexit, which will likely influence its wider engagement with the EU as Brexit negotiations unfold. Spain and Cyprus also face potential challenges arising from their borders with UK Overseas Territories, with further potential knock-on effects from Brexit on the relationship between Turkey, NATO and the EU.
- All EU member states will require new diplomatic strategies for engaging with, and maximising national influence within, multilateral institutions such as the EDA, where the balance between the UK and other large nations has hitherto been a defining feature of internal politics.
- Outside of Europe, the US retains a close partnership with the UK on defence and security matters, including deep ties on intelligence sharing, interoperability and nuclear technology. It will have a strong strategic incentive to push to minimise any negative consequences from Brexit for both its British and European allies, as well as the wider effects of economic and political uncertainty on its own national interests, regional stability and global order.

7.3.3. Alongside these challenges, Brexit also presents opportunities to rethink approaches to cooperation between overlapping groupings, NATO and the EU

- In many areas, there are several extant models which the UK could choose from when seeking to define a post-Brexit

relationship with the EU. This is true for high-level economic relations: the UK could look to differing options in Norway, Switzerland, Canada and Turkey, for example. It also applies to individual institutions: one option would be associate status in Europol; another would be an Administrative Arrangement with the EDA.

- All models involve trade-offs, however, and imply a reduction in UK influence over EU affairs. It may be that existing models do not suit UK–EU relations in the long run, designed as they were for smaller states without the UK’s economic, military or security clout. However, they are likely to prove much more politically and administratively expedient than negotiating a bespoke model, and could provide a useful interim step while the UK took more time to define post-Brexit roles.
- The potential need to develop bespoke new models for institutional cooperation to suit the specifics of the UK could set precedents for other states such as Norway, Switzerland or even the US, which input to EU institutions but remain formally at the Union’s periphery.
- In the longer term, Brexit could thus become an opportunity to re-examine how different groupings with overlapping memberships cooperate with each other on transnational issues. The most immediate example is the question raised by Brexit about the UK’s role as an intermediary between NATO and the EU; in practical terms, this may require at a minimum some reform (or reallocation) of the current Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR) role. More broadly, however, Brexit has prompted debates about how groupings can ‘plug into each other’. These have included suggestions of a possible ‘EU27+1’ model to continue involving the UK in some EU deliberations, for instance through the Foreign Affairs Council. It is also reflected in debates about whether to pursue EU defence integration through the mechanisms of Permanent Structured Cooperation, or through a more ad hoc and flexible ‘Schengen for defence’, potentially involving non-EU member states.³⁵
- Some stakeholders suggested Brexit could thus provoke a ‘Berlin-Plus 2.0’, helping create new frameworks for transnational and multi-institutional cooperation on complex issues such as collective defence, terrorism or the migrant crisis. Alternatively, however, the EU may be more focused on showing unity after Brexit and resistant to any suggestion of a multi-speed Europe.

8. Future directions for policymakers and researchers

In light of the emerging themes outlined above, this final section of the report considers:

- The potential short-term challenges facing policymakers when integrating defence and security into the UK's exit talks with the EU.
- The outstanding questions and unknowns facing strategy-making and the research community in a period of deep political and economic uncertainty.

8.1. Integrating defence and security into the wider Brexit negotiations

8.1.1. Defence and security were not the main political issues in the referendum, nor are they expected to be among the highest priorities in Brexit negotiations

The UK's decision to leave the EU has thus raised a number of concerns and challenges, not least in relation to how international cooperation on defence and security issues will be reconfigured – either through the conscious policy choices of the actors involved, or through the imposition of different or reduced ambitions due to external factors such as economic performance or the threat environment. As shown throughout the report, there are a number of alternative models that the UK and EU could look to adopt after Brexit, and strong bonds of mutual trust and common interests are likely to endure at many institutional levels. The design of a new post-Brexit architecture and ways of working for defence and security will not take place in a vacuum, however. Outcomes for both the UK and Europe are likely to be

intimately tied up with the question of how wider Brexit negotiations pan out, the new model for economic and political relations that is agreed, and the degree to which these complex and controversial talks present political barriers not only to a mutually beneficial compromise, but also to wider strategy-making in a world with many other coinciding issues and threats.

Defence and security did not constitute the main focus of Brexit referendum debates. While of obvious concern to the military, diplomatic and security officials consulted for this study, even this community of experts expected both UK and EU governments to prioritise other issues – most notably market access, financial passporting and migration controls – in upcoming Brexit negotiations.

8.1.2. UK and EU defence and security will remain deeply entwined, but Brexit risks the onset of a politics that treats cooperation as a 'zero-sum game'

Experts and literature emphasise that common security interests will endure, even after Brexit. Both sides face external threats (e.g. Russia) or transnational issues (e.g. migrant crisis, terrorism, cyber) that cannot be dealt with effectively alone. Neither stands to benefit from any weakening of the other (notwithstanding the UK's concerns that a more assertive EU could undermine NATO). The 2010 Lancaster House Treaty between Britain and France affirms a mutual dependence that could as easily be applied to the UK and Europe: the two allies 'do not see situations arising in which the vital interests of either party could be threatened

without the vital interests of the other also being threatened’.³⁶

Both the UK and EU therefore share a strong operational incentive to develop new institutional arrangements, compromises and mechanisms that facilitate continued cooperation after Brexit. This is reinforced by the organisational and personal bonds of trust and mutual respect between British military, civil servants, intelligence officials, police, industry and their European counterparts, built up over decades of increasingly close joint working. The UK also possesses key capabilities that Europe lacks and values – for instance, the global reach of its intelligence network, or its high-end military equipment for power projection – while the UK in turn benefits from the expertise and resources of European partners.

Stakeholders, however, express deep concern that the difficult and potentially bitter politics of the wider Brexit negotiations (in particular, wrangling over access to the single market, financial passporting and the principle of free movement) could get in the way of more ‘bottom-up’ efforts to maintain close cooperation between UK and European institutions. Within the UK and EU, defence and security actors are likely to push for greater compromise and openness in Brexit talks than some other lobbies and political bodies. Defence and security researchers and industry in particular are likely to oppose proposed restrictions on access to the European single market or free movement of high-skilled labour. Defence ministries will similarly have an interest in maximising economic certainty and positive outcomes for trade as a means of underpinning defence budgets, though foreign and treasury departments may have competing concerns, such as deterring other Eurosceptic members or competing for national advantage in trade or financial services.

Setting aside wider issues such as trade, tariffs or migration, then, an adversarial approach and debates as to which ‘side’ is likely to benefit or suffer most from Brexit may not sit well with questions of defence and security. In the scenario that Brexit proves advantageous for UK security, as per the arguments of Leave proponents, for example, by boosting control over UK borders and freeing London to invest more in NATO, the net effect for the UK could still be deleterious if its withdrawal from the EU were to also leave the European neighbourhood fragmented, more inward-looking and less secure. The same would be true were EU defence integration to move forward and prosper without the UK’s veto, but with Europe’s closest ally, the UK, suffering deep military cutbacks due to economic uncertainty and difficulty trading after a punishing experience in Brexit negotiations.

8.1.3. Unlike other areas of policy, the UK is seen as a net contributor to European security and defence. This perception raises difficult questions for both sides about whether, when and how to leverage this in wider Brexit negotiations

Given the UK’s military, intelligence and security capabilities and expertise, many stakeholders perceive these as areas where Britain has been a net contributor to Europe – even if the UK has been more disengaged on certain issues, for instance CSDP missions, in recent years. The UK is Europe’s largest defence spender, one of only two nuclear powers, and in possession of high-end equipment and global connections (not least with the US) that other EU member states lack. There is thus an inevitable temptation for the UK to use defence and security cooperation as potential leverage in Brexit negotiations to secure more favourable terms elsewhere, for instance on immigration or the single market. EU

36 Ghez et al. (2016, ch.2)

leaders have of course argued against any such transactional view, both because cooperation remains in the common interest, and as the EU may want to focus on those areas where it has most bargaining power.

However, lots of uncertainties need to be considered, despite this temptation. Experts consulted in this study noted that the value of UK contributions to defence and security is based on perception, not an objective quantification. The UK and the EU may have differing perceptions of their relative strengths in this area, as well as of the degree to which negotiating goals are prioritised or not over outcomes in other policy fields. Within the EU, similarly, member states are likely to have very different views of the issue and the UK's significance; Ireland has different national interests in security cooperation with the UK than Croatia, for example, while the Baltic States and Italy place contrasting levels of emphasis on collective defence or the migrant crisis. There is thus a risk that the UK could overplay its hand, if it has misjudged the importance ascribed by its negotiating partners to continued UK–EU defence and security cooperation.

Furthermore, there are risks associated with the degree and the timing with which defence and security issues enter into Brexit negotiations. Many stakeholders suggested that the UK should move early on to demonstrate its continuing commitment to supporting European defence and security, for instance through making clear it will not veto planned steps towards EU defence integration, or by reaffirming and investing further into Europol, bilateral partnerships and NATO. This would help minimise the risk of any disruption to important cooperative mechanisms and generate goodwill for the UK from EU partners which could be beneficial later in negotiations. Conversely, it could also restrict the UK's room for manoeuvre further down the line. Holding off on reaffirming the UK's commitments could, however, risk losing goodwill, introducing additional

damaging uncertainty to long-term planning and investments, and potentially leaving defence and security cooperation vulnerable to unravelling (despite common interests on both sides) if wider Brexit negotiations turn sour over time.

In addition, policymakers on both sides will be wary of any perception that defence and security is becoming overly transactional, given the likelihood this could provoke a domestic and international political backlash. If the UK is to be involved in future EU CSDP missions and so on, however, new political narratives may be needed to justify this involvement to post-Brexit public audiences, both those more Eurosceptic in the UK and those in Europe seeking to move forward with EU-only integration. This could be particularly difficult if Brexit negotiations create resentments between negotiating partners; the UK electorate may be increasingly reluctant to (in its view) subsidise European security through higher defence spending by British taxpayers, for instance, if the UK economy were to suffer as a result of a punitive post-Brexit trade deal with the EU.

Given these concerns, a number of stakeholders raised the possibility that policymakers could try somehow to insulate agreements on defence and security from the thornier economic and political issues to be negotiated, as a means of preventing them from being undermined to all parties' detriment. While the UK and EU could agree to separate security-related issues from other policy disputes informally, creating a more formalised 'firewall' between different policy areas would likely depend on the structure and format of the UK's eventual Brexit deal (which remains without precedent). One possibility, for instance, would be for the UK and EU to push for a more limited type of Brexit deal: for instance, a stripped-back withdrawal agreement focused only on those areas such as trade that are the exclusive competences of the EU (as with Common Commercial Policy arrangements),³⁷

which would be comparatively limited in scope and require only a qualified majority, rather than a more comprehensive ‘mixed agreement’ that would require all 27 EU members to agree.³⁸ This would open up the possibility of the UK and EU then concluding separate deals on post-Brexit arrangements in other functional areas (either sequentially or in parallel), including a deal for defence and security cooperation that would be less exposed to any veto or spoiler behaviour from individual states on unrelated issues.

8.1.4. Managing the interdependencies and complex timelines of Brexit alongside other potential shocks will strain the UK and EU’s political, institutional and intellectual capacity for proactive strategy-making and collective action

Organising the process of Brexit will be a major challenge in and of itself. It will require the UK to rebuild lost capabilities (e.g. trade negotiating skills) and pose a major administrative burden on bureaucracies, legislatures and executives across both Britain and Europe, which have finite human, financial and political capital to devote to Brexit alongside other issues or potential future crises. Competing interests of different parties and the problematic timelines of elections in France and Germany and at the EU level create scheduling issues for when and how to proceed with issues that could be interdependent with progress elsewhere. These difficulties are reflected already in the debates about when the UK should trigger Article 50, an important but comparatively clear choice compared to some of the political dilemmas that may come once negotiations begin.

Furthermore, Brexit adds an additional lens through which other policy decisions must be considered. In the UK, this has already been seen in public debates over French and Chinese

involvement in Hinkley Point C. How might a seemingly unrelated energy policy decision impact on the French approach to Brexit talks? How might it affect the chances of a post-Brexit trade deal with China? How might it constrain future freedom of action based on domestic political considerations? These sorts of questions could tax policy and decisionmakers during a period of complex, shifting circumstances and deep uncertainty.

Indeed, many experts interviewed for this study expressed concern that this all could undermine the UK and Europe’s ability to develop proactive and effective strategy-making in the near and medium term (regardless of the wider merits or risks of Brexit). One concern is that the UK and/or the EU could be forced into a state of constant ‘crisis management’, with short-term urgent decisions and the politics of Brexit negotiations reducing the ambition and the capacity to think more strategically about an engaged global leadership role. There is also uncertainty and concern about the best mix between ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ decisionmaking. Political leaders may not be best placed for the highly technical task of unpicking or reshaping institutional and operational-level arrangements between the EU and UK; at the same time, seemingly technical decisions ‘at the coal face’ of defence and security cooperation could have unintended, unpredictable and cascading political consequences for post-Brexit relations, given the complexity, sensitivity and unprecedented nature of the situation.

Many stakeholders noted that the UK and EU may well have to face these challenges in parallel not only with ongoing problems (e.g. the migrant crisis), but also new and as yet unforeseen ‘strategic shocks’. Given interviews for this study took place in the final months of the US presidential election, many experts raised the question of whether the UK, EU and NATO

38 van der Loo and Blockmans (2016)

had sufficient intellectual and organisational capacity to handle the change brought about by Brexit alongside that of any overhaul in US policy resulting from Donald Trump's victory. Other examples raised included the potential for a major terrorist attack, economic or financial crisis, or external opportunism or aggression, perhaps by Russia. Worse, some experts feared that adversaries would actively seek to exploit the West's temporary inward focus on Brexit and diminished ability to think about other possible 'Black Swans' – making further strategic shocks potentially more damaging.³⁹

8.2. Towards a framework for strategic decisionmaking in the context of deep uncertainty and lessons learned for 'the next Brexit'

The UK's decision to leave the EU has thus provoked a period of deep uncertainty. This represents a challenge to policymakers and the research community that supports them.

This report has sought to signpost throughout some of the key outstanding questions and areas for further investigation. Many of these fall into the following areas of consideration across a sliding scale from reflection on the past to prediction of the future:

- **Historical analysis:** What precedents or analogous past situations could provide useful lessons for the UK and EU in dealing with Brexit?
- **Evaluation of the status quo:** How beneficial or effective has UK membership of different EU initiatives and institutions been (e.g.

Europol, EDA)? How should this influence decisions on whether to pursue continued collaboration after Brexit? How might the UK's departure create new opportunities and risks for both the UK and EU?

- **Options analysis and benchmarking:** What are the strengths and weaknesses of different potential models for the UK and EU after Brexit? What trade-offs are involved in each? How does the UK compare to other countries using different extant models, e.g. Norway, Switzerland?
- **Policy and negotiation planning:** How best to achieve the desired ends for the UK and/or Europe from upcoming Brexit negotiations and the post-Brexit settlement?
- **Forecasting and prediction:** What possible futures exist as a result of Brexit? What will the consequences be for economic performance, election results, or other specific issues?

Throughout the study, many stakeholders thus discussed how and whether institutions could have done more to prepare for the questions and decisions thrown up by Brexit. In the UK, the Government did not engage in any contingency planning for the eventuality of losing the EU referendum, outside of some limited efforts by HM Treasury and the Bank of England to plan for any immediate financial shocks from a Brexit vote.⁴⁰ This contrasts with the approach to General Elections, where the civil service produces a range of different briefings and plans for both the incumbent government and the opposition, so as to ensure a smooth and speedy transition no matter the result.⁴¹

39 The term 'Black Swan' is a metaphor used to describe unexpected, hard-to-predict and highly impactful events that appear as outliers, but in fact play a dominant role in history given their magnitude and consequence. See: Taleb (2007)

40 Besch and Black (2016)

41 The UK Parliament's Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee has launched an inquiry into the lessons that can be learned for future referendums, including a review of whether government planning for the possibility of a Leave victory was adequate, and whether the civil service should adopt a model similar to General Elections, with contingency planning for both possible outcomes.

Within the UK Parliament, the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy has also strongly criticised the lack of consideration of the possible consequences of Brexit in the latest 2015 SDSR, arguing that this placed politics over security.⁴² Experts also noted the lack of academic or other research on the subject ahead of the referendum, a challenge also encountered ahead of the 2014 vote on Scottish independence (see Chapter 4).⁴³ At the same time, going forward the UK Government and EU leaders face the task of striking a delicate political balance between exposing their plans and negotiation strategies to parliamentary and public scrutiny, while also retaining freedom of manoeuvre and confidentiality ahead of talks, as the new UK Prime Minister has argued.⁴⁴

8.2.1. Tools and techniques already exist for ensuring robust decisionmaking in the face of deep uncertainty, as is the case for defence and security after Brexit

Indeed, Brexit has shown the potential fragility of some of the basic assumptions underpinning strategy and policy planning in the UK, EU and more widely. This raises questions about what could be ‘the next Brexit’ – if the election of Donald Trump as US President has not already claimed that mantle.⁴⁵ A number of stakeholders expressed concern about other upcoming election outcomes and the rise of populism. Others feared leaders could be insufficiently

worried about Scottish independence, disengagement within NATO, or the risk of other EU member states following the UK’s example.

One potential response to this context of deep uncertainty is to try to project possible futures. Certainly, many techniques for doing so exist – governments and indeed military organisations invest significant effort in horizon-scanning and futures studies. The UK MOD for instance produces its Global Strategic Trends analysis looking out to 2045,⁴⁶ and the UK Government maintains a ‘Futures Toolkit’ of different futures methodologies.⁴⁷ Other European⁴⁸ and US agencies conduct similar work, as do the private sector, think tanks and academia.⁴⁹

Alternative tools exist, however, aimed not at predicting the *one or several most likely futures*, but rather at interrogating the assumptions that underpin these predictions (and could prove false, as with the belief that Brexit would not occur). They then seek to construct strategies that would be effective *across the greatest range of different plausible futures*. This analytical approach is known as ‘robust decisionmaking’ (RDM) and has been applied across numerous policy areas such as technology foresight, energy, resources planning and resilience. There are also specific techniques developed in relation to military planning: in the 1990s, for example, RAND first developed an approach for the US Army called ‘assumption-based planning’ for strategy-making in the context of

42 Foster (2016)

43 Dorman (2014)

44 Mardell (2016)

45 Bershidsky (2016)

46 UK Ministry of Defence (2014)

47 Cabinet Office and Government Office for Science (2014)

48 One EU-level example is the European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS), which provides a framework for collective long-term strategic thinking and research across EU institutions. Previous RAND research for this platform includes Hoorens et al. (2013).

49 The US National Intelligence Council produces its own Global Trends Report every four years, with the sixth iteration of the report (looking out to 2035) due in December 2016, in time to inform the new US President-elect.

very high uncertainty.^{50,51} A brief description of this method and an indication of the way in which such an RDM approach could be applied to the issue of Brexit may be found in Annex B of the compendium report.

It is clear that work is only just beginning on providing answers to the pressing and long-term questions thrown up by the uncertainty of the UK's decision to leave the EU. This is true of defence and security matters and more widely. Given the criticisms made by many stakeholders and political leaders of the uncertain evidence presented by both sides in the UK referendum campaign, many interviewees felt that Brexit should serve as an opportunity to reconsider the ways in which research and analysis are used to inform public debate.

8.2.2. Finally, Brexit exposed a deep divide between many policymakers in Westminster and Brussels and the general public, with implications for how to conduct public debates over issues such as defence and security

It is important finally to emphasise the point made by many interviewees for this study, as well as political leaders and others responding to the UK's referendum result: the Brexit vote exposed a divide between so-called 'policy elites' in Brussels and Westminster – with debate over the balance between 'experts' and public will an important feature of the referendum campaign⁵² – and the general public, who may sometimes prioritise rather different issues (e.g. immigration) to the democratic institutions that represent them.⁵³ Brexit may provide lessons and warnings for other countries with significant populations

within society that may not feel their voice is adequately heard by the current politics; similar trends can also be discerned in the unexpected political rise and eventual election to the US presidency of Donald Trump.⁵⁴

For some stakeholders, the Brexit vote entails a need to reopen national conversations about the identity, role and ambition in the world of both the UK and the EU. It also raises as yet unanswered questions about how policymakers, the military and the research community can better engage with the public and inform political debate. Much analysis has focused on how 'ways' and 'means' might be affected by Brexit; but what 'ends' do the general public want the UK armed forces or EU defence integration to pursue in a post-Brexit world?

This RAND study shares the limitations of many others in the research community, focusing as it does on the opinions and concerns of senior military, policy and academic experts. Further investigation is needed of public preferences and priorities, and thus the type of defence and security cooperation the public would wish to see and the trade-offs they are willing to accept in Brexit negotiations. What balance should be struck, for instance, between controls on immigration and trade, or between privacy, liberty and security in Europe?⁵⁵ Building sustainable post-Brexit solutions for defence and security could require not only compromise and continued engagement between the UK and EU, but also deeper engagement within societies to reach out to different audiences, testing and communicating the value of initiatives like Europol membership or EU defence integration to everyday lives, fears and aspirations.

50 Dewar et al. (1993)

51 Dewar (2002)

52 Mance (2016)

53 Hockley (2016)

54 Economist (2016f)

55 For one example involving stated preference experiments with 26,000 EU citizens, see Patil et al. (2015).

Annex: References and sources

The analysis summarised in this overview report is based on a combination of literature review and stakeholder engagement. For an extensive list of references, please consult the main compendium report, which is available here: www.rand.org/t/rr1786

Further information on the stakeholders consulted through key informant interviews

and the expert workshop is provided below. In addition to those listed in the tables below, a number of stakeholders requested that their contributions be made anonymous and thus have not been named. This includes senior military and civilian officials currently serving in a range of UK, European and US institutions.

Table 1. List of selected interviewees

Name	Position	Organisation
Knud Bartels	General (retd.); former Chairman of the NATO Military Committee (2011–15); former Danish Chief of Defence	NATO, Royal Danish Army
Sophia Besch	Research Fellow	Centre for European Reform (CER)
Ian Bond	Director of Foreign Policy	CER; formerly FCO, NATO
Vincenzo Camporini	General (retd.); former Italian Chief of the Defence General Staff	Italian Air Force
Inge Ceuppens	Project Officer Dual-Use Technologies	EDA
Claire Chick	Defence Analyst	Franco-British Council
Lindsey Clutterbuck	Former Senior Research Leader, RAND Europe; retired counterterrorism police officer	RAND Europe, King's College London, New Scotland Yard,
Jonathon Conder	Head of Strategy	Marshall Aerospace
Paul Cornish	Former Research Group Director, Defence, Security and Infrastructure	RAND Europe, Chatham House
Tim Cross	Major General (retd.); former commander of British forces in Iraq	British Army
Paul Davies	Partner	Latham & Watkins
James de Waal	Senior Consulting Fellow, International Security	Chatham House
Giovanni Faleg	Associate Researcher	Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), World Bank
Jon Freeman	Research Group Director, Innovation, Health and Science	RAND Europe; formerly Dstl, UK MOD
Jan Gaspers	Head of Research, European China Policy Unit	Mercator Institute for China
Benoit Gomis	Associate Fellow	Chatham House, IHS Jane's

Christophe Goussot	Specialist in Anglo-French cooperation	Délégation aux affaires stratégiques
Bill Hughes	Former Director General UK Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA)	SOCA
Rem Korteweg	Senior Research Fellow	CER
Anand Menon	Professor, Director of UK in a Changing Europe Programme	King's College London
Tim Oliver	Dahrendorf Fellow	LSE, New York University, School of Advanced International Studies
Sir David Omand	Former Director of GCHQ; now Visiting Professor, King's College London	GCHQ
Max-Peter Ratzel	Former Director of Europol	Europol
Tristram Riley-Smith	Associate Fellow, Centre for Science and Policy	University of Cambridge
Jonathan David Shaw	Major General (retd.); former Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (International Security Policy)	British Army
Sir Richard Shirreff	General (retd.); former Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR)	NATO, British Army
Luis Simon	Professor of International Security, Institute for European Studies	Vrije Universiteit Brussel
Brooks Tigner	Chief Policy Analyst, EU/NATO affairs correspondent	Security Europe, IHS Jane's
Richard Whitman	Professor of Politics and International Relations	University of Kent, Chatham House
Nick Witney	Former Chief Executive of the EDA; Senior Policy Fellow, ECFR	European Council on Foreign Relations; formerly EDA
Stuart Young	Head of Centre for Defence Acquisition	Cranfield University

Table 2. List of selected workshop participants

Name	Position	Organisation
Sir Anthony Dymock	Vice Admiral (retd.); former UK Military Representative to NATO	NATO, Royal Navy
Stewart Herron	Civil Servant	UK MOD Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre (DCDC)
David Howarth	Professor of Law and Public Policy; former Member of Parliament	University of Cambridge, Electoral Commission
Tim Lawrenson	Director General, Europe	BAE Systems
Jocelyn Mawdsley	Senior Lecturer, Editor of European Security	Newcastle University
Tom McKane	Former Director General for Strategy and for Security Policy, MOD; Senior Associate Fellow	UK MOD, Royal United Services Institute, London School of Economics (LSE)
Sir Kevin Tebbit	Former Director of GCHQ; former Permanent Under Secretary of State for UK MOD	GCHQ, UK MOD